

National Racquetball®

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JAY SCHWARTZ: CAN HE SWEEP AGAIN?



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— Hulk Hogan, World Wrestling Federation Heavyweight Champion and Amateur Racquetball Player



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Contents

Short Lines	3
Editorial	4
Letters	6
Features	
Jay Schwartz: The Anonymous Super Champion! by Charlie Garfinkel	8
Tournament Preview: Who's Likely To Win What, When And Where	12
Sandra Kahn's Racquetball Strategy Includes Mental Health by Jean Sauser	15
Racquetball And Exercise Programming: How The Marriage Works In Arizona by Mort Leve	18
The Fitness Center	
My Bodyguard	21
Aerobic Exercise by Gerri Tipton-Empey	22
Glute Strength For Racquetball	26
PRO-files In Fitness: Lynn Adams	27
Reader Survey	
Tell Us About Your Racquet	29
Tournament Results	
Cliff Swain Shocks Pros In Tulsa	30
Panzeri A Surprise Finalist As Adams Takes Charge In Essex Junction	34
New Products	36
EXTRA!	38
Instructional	
Ask The Champ by Mike Yellen	41
Championship Shot Selection by Marty Hogan	42
Shot Selection For B And C Players by Charlie Garfinkel	45
The Hogan Way by Marty Hogan	48

On the cover . . .

In 1984 seniors player Jay Schwartz captured every major national championship in his age category (DP, Ektelon, AARA and others), a feat never before accomplished. This year, the question is whether or not he can repeat. For an in-depth look at Schwartz and his rise to the top of the 35 and older bracket, turn to page 8.

Next issue . . .

Sharlene Wells, the current Miss America, is an avid racquetballer who must go to extraordinary lengths to find time for a game. We tracked her down in Chicago on one of her seemingly neverending promotional trips and Everyman's Dream gave NR the inside scoop on the pageant, and life in general as Miss America. Don't miss it.

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Short Lines

The Modest Millionaire

Short Lines features personal stories of racquetball pros, celebrities and industry leaders. *Short Lines* is about the off court performances of racquetball people around the world, their personal bests and their personal sides!

Who Was That Masked Man? . . . **Karen Haberlach**, an employee of **Pacific Nautilus Fitness Center** arrived in Reno to attend the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) National Convention and shared a cab with a racquetball player she thought was of no particular importance. His name was **Mike Yellen**.

"He told me he was a player and I asked him if he was any good," explained Karen who has played racquetball and participated in a few amateur tournaments. "I've not followed the pro tour so when he told me he was a pro I asked him if he'd ever won any money."

Mike Yellen, a modest millionaire.



Yellen who recently signed a million dollar contract with Ektelon modestly explained that he had won some money but was too modest to say who he really was.

Later on during the convention, Karen checked out Yellen's credibility with **Hugh Morgan**, publisher of *National Racquetball*. Needless to say she was shocked to hear who Yellen really is.

A Visit From The Stork . . . **Lynne Farmer** has not disappeared. The former **WPRO** touring pro and member of the **WPRO Board of Directors** gave birth to daughter Erin on August 31st last year. Lynne and husband Jim couldn't be prouder of their first child.

"She goes to the club with me and seems tuned into racquetball already," says Lynne who is continuing her dedication to racquetball by consulting with the **Glass Court Swim and Fitness Center** in Lombard, IL.

Lynne is also a partner in **Speakers of Sports**, a sports management firm that specializes in professional baseball contracts. The firm's most notable clients are Bruce Sutter (Atlanta Braves) and Dan Quisenberry (Kansas City Royals).

With two jobs and a new baby does Lynne plan to return to the tour someday? "Not immediately, but maybe someday when Erin can travel," says Lynne.



Future W.P.R.A. member Erin Farmer with current member - mother Lynne.

The Boys of Summer . . . **Chuck Leve**, former NRC pro tour director and current Senior Editor of *National Racquetball* has always had another sport close to his heart. As a little league baseball coach every summer, Leve helps many young juniors learn the finer points of baseball.

This summer Leve and **Ken Kozil** (*National Racquetball's* National Sales director) will be coaching the Northbrook Trust and Savings major little league teams in Northbrook, IL.

Additionally, the two are not abandoning the racquetball courts either. **Leve**, **Kozil** and Associate Editor **Jean Sauser** will be putting together the Northbrook division of the National Teenage Team Racquetball program. That's a summer program for boys and girls under 14

The Graduate . . . **Steve Mondry** has attended numerous award ceremonies in his life for his on-court performances but there's an off-court performance he's especially proud of too. This month, Steve graduates from the **University of Illinois - Chicago** with a psychology major. Will he eventually

Dr. Mondry? Not yet. The best is yet to come.



become Dr. Mondry? Not in psychology, claims Mondry, who will continue his education in September by enrolling in a masters program for Broadcast Media. Steve is currently the host/producer of a local sports talk show called **Steve Mondry's Sports Talk**.



years old. Conducted under the direction of **APRO**, the summer program sponsors are **AMF Voit**, **Leader Sport Products** and **Saranac Glove Co.** All three *National Racquetball* staffers agree that summer is the time for little league as well as junior racquetball. ●

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From The Editor . . .

Long, Hot Summer



My friend was at it again; but I'll take the long way around to tell you about it.

It's springtime, sure enough. The snow has melted, the rains are here, the tulips are blooming. That breath of optimism and feeling of joy that come with a deep inhalation of crisp, spring air—those feelings are all around us.

"Not so in our racquetball club," said my friend. "Over there everybody's acting like they're about to lose their best buddy."

"What's the problem?" I asked, somewhat naively.

"Everybody's talking about the summer," he said. "Summer, summer, summer. One guy's talking about how he can't wait to get out on his boat and do some serious fishing; another guy's gonna be gone a month camping; and almost everybody's talking about goin' to the beach, the resorts and all that."

"Nobody's gonna be left to play racquetball with," he moaned.

★ ★ ★

They say it happens every summer—the exodus from racquetball clubs to other activities. The summer seems to turn racquetball players into jocks of a different color. Our players become joggers, fishermen, water skiers, golfers, and even (shudder) tennis players.

Why?

My theory is that they are struck with mass insanity. Anybody who would for-
sake a good workout in an hour of racquetball, for a non-workout in four hours of golf has to be nuts. Anybody who would pass up all those kills, passes and pinches for a half hour of avoiding pot holes, automobiles, and dog doo must also be split a bit at the seam.

I know that summertime brings the outdoor urge to all of us emerging slowly and cautiously from our winter hibernation, but I really could never understand how the sun during the day could affect the court occupancy at night.

Oh sure, I'd rather be at the beach watching and contemplating the various attractive sights than pounding the ball against the wall. At least once in a while. But for a steady diet, if you ask me, racquetball wins out almost every time.

That's why places like San Diego, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Miami and other points south and west have developed into racquetball hotbeds. Despite the gorgeous weather all year 'round, racquetball has and continues to attract more and more players in those areas. And that's because racquetball is such a great game that these people make room for their 20x40 excursions.

So why is it that we palefaces in the north and east don't do the same?

My friend, of course, was ready with an answer.

"Fat and ugly," he said. "Fat and ugly."

"Come again?"

"Fat and ugly," he repeated. "You know that those who don't play racquetball in summer come back in the fall fat and ugly. They think they can jog until the temperature hits a point or two over 80; they think they can play tennis until they rapidly remember how they hate chasing the ball between the rallies; they think they love fishing until they come home empty or with a load of contaminated carp."

"As a result, they give up quickly on their summer 'loves.' However, rather than immediately getting back to the club to regain their muscle tone, stamina and agility on the court, they stay home and do nothing except become fat and ugly."

"Brilliant," I said. "Absolutely brilliant. Can I use that in my column?"

"Sure," he said. "No problem. Say, could you pass me your suntan lotion?" ●

Chuck Lane

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Letters

A Happy Subject

Dear Editor:

I am the subject of the article written by Shaileen Kopec in the January 1985 issue of *National Racquetball*, and I wish to commend you on an excellent job.

Carol Sheredos - a courageous double amputee as she appeared in the January issue.



I was kind of concerned that it would come out too "syrupy." It didn't, and I hope that it will help someone else.

Carol Sheredos
Wappingers Falls, NY

Far from being a syrupy subject, in our opinion, Carol Sheredos is one of racquetball's heroes. —Ed.

In Favor of Eyeguards

Dear Editor:

Your feature article in the February 1985 issue about eyeguards was very informative. I agree with Mort Leve that eyeguards should be made mandatory.

All those who complain about eyeguards have probably never given them a chance. All you have to do is use them several times and you get used to them!

Comfort, to me, is the most important feature (you certainly won't wear a pair of eyeguards if they are not comfortable). I feel that there are enough different brands and styles that everyone can find a pair that are comfortable.

Bob Kronberg
Reisterstown, MD

We agree. —Ed

Eyeguard Issue Reconsidered

Dear Editor:

Just thought I would drop you a quick note in regards to your February issue. I found it odd that you were making a big push for eyeguards yet almost all the pictures that you used in the rest of the issue showed players in action without eye protection. I am very much in favor of mandatory eye protection and more clubs and your magazine should promote or demand eye protection at all times. I also noticed in your March issue that there were also a fair number of photos with players without eye gear. If you intend to take a stand on this you should start by not using photos of players without eye protection. Besides that I enjoy your magazine very much. Thank you for your time.

John B. Melster
Waukesha, WI

It's really not odd at all that we are making a big push for eyeguards and at the same time publishing pictures of players without them. We can take an editorial stand but additionally our job is to print and report the news about racquetball and print photos of what's really taking place, not what we all wish could happen.

Marty Hogan makes eyeguards mandatory where it counts. He starts with himself.



If a player in a tournament is photographed without eyeguards, that is the truth and what the readers need to know. You'll be happy to know that in browsing through the issue you mentioned there was one ray of sunshine. Marty Hogan, this year's number one pro, even had his portrait taken wearing his eyeguards!

We hope, as you do, that all of the players and clubs across the country will eventually follow Hogan's example and that is to make eyeguards mandatory! —Ed

Close Those Eyeguards

Dear Editor:

Again, my salute to *National Racquetball* for discussing and promoting eyeguards. In Canada, where eyeguards are mandatory, we have yet to have an eye injury reported from a player wearing a closed eyeguard.

In contrast, some 90 players wearing open eyeguards reported injuries where the ball actually penetrated the eyeguard. The United States Squash Racquets Association has made closed eyeguards mandatory at all levels of national play with very little, if any, complaint from nationally ranked players.

National Racquetball, keep up your good work. Any of us who play squash and racquetball knows somebody who has been injured.

Michael Easterbrook, M.D.
Toronto, Canada

Gar is Great

Dear Editor:

Charlie Garfinkel is one of the most memorable characters anyone has ever met!

Don Scales
Euleuss, Texas

We think so too! —Ed

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Eleanor is Idolized

Dear Editor:

Thank you for your recent article on Eleanor Quackenbush. I truly love this lady as she taught me everything I know about racquetball!



Eleanor Quackenbush (front row, 2nd from right) enjoys the conversation at the IRSA Convention with National Racquetball publisher Hugh Morgan (second row, right), and staffers Jean Sauser (front row, left) and Ken Kozil (front row, right). Friends Dick and Bev Chamberlain round out the group.

I started playing racquetball in Dec. of 1984 in Eleanor's Wednesday play day. Thanks to her continuous support, skill and teaching techniques, I am playing in a "C" league today.

She is truly a fantastic person and a tremendous friend.

Thanks for your article as it described her to a "T." Terrific!

Sharon K. Mulles
Salem, OR

We had the pleasure of meeting Eleanor during our appearance at the IRSA convention (International Racquet Sports Association) in Reno, Nevada. She came to our booth and brightened our days too! We certainly agree with your opinion!—Ed

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Poetry By Tom Grobmisi

Big Match

The finals are tomorrow
And my opponent's really tough.
Will my kill shot be on target?
Will my Z-serve be enough?
I've just got to win this match . . .
It's the biggest of my life!
How will I ever face my friends again
If I don't beat my wife!

Color Me Purple

This circle on my back
Made by your racquet, really stung.
And this big, red welt upon my leg
Sure wasn't any fun.
This donut on my neck,
Was from a kill shot gone astray;
I dove when you hit this one,
But you got me, anyway.
Please remember, if we play again,
That I'm not into pain;
And be sure to bring a gun . . .
It would be far more humane.

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Jay Schwartz: The Anonymous Super-Champion!

by Charlie Garfinkel

Everyone knows the old joke about "mixed emotions." That's the one about your mother-in-law driving and going off the cliff in your new Mercedes.

Although it had nothing to do with his mother-in-law or automobile, Jay Schwartz had similar mixed emotions about a year and a half ago. Working for a computer company in Florida, he was informed by his boss that he was going to be laid off. Naturally, he was disappointed.

"The sun was shining and the 1984 Ektelon Regionals were just around the corner," he said, smiling. *"It was time to begin some serious racquetball training."*

Schwartz, a "good old boy," and seemingly easygoing off the court, is a fearless competitor in tournament play. Working out and playing two to three hours a day, six days a week, Schwartz started refining his already solid game into an even higher plateau. It wasn't easy. Losing a leadup tournament before the Ektelon Regionals, he knew how hard he was going to have to work. But even he didn't have an inkling of the incredible feat that he would eventually accomplish over a two month period.

All Schwartz did was win the Ektelon National 30 & Over Championships in Anaheim in early May of last year. He then won the AARA National 30+ and 35+ Championships in late May in Houston. Finally, he completed his extraordinary run of championships by winning the DP Nationals 30+ (actually 27 & Over) and 35+ Championships in Atlanta in mid-June.

At 38 years old, Jay Schwartz had become the first man in racquetball history to win all five of these championships. And, he did it in the space of less than two months!

Schwartz, who was born in Brooklyn, NY, has always done well in sports. He says, *"I've traveled throughout the United States playing in racquetball*

tournaments. However, even as a kid I was used to moving around a lot."

Schwartz's father, an Air Force major, was constantly being transferred. At the age of six, Jay and his family moved to Spokane. A year later they moved to Luxembourg, then on to Munich, and Weisbaden.

"It was really scary going to school in Germany," he said. *"When I attended school there, it wasn't too long after the war. There was still a lot of ill feelings against the Americans. And, because there were only two Americans in my school, they'd let us out early every day. Otherwise, we'd have been beaten up."*

"I didn't realize it at the time, but I was probably preparing myself for the quickness that I would need on the racquetball court, by literally sprinting home day after day."

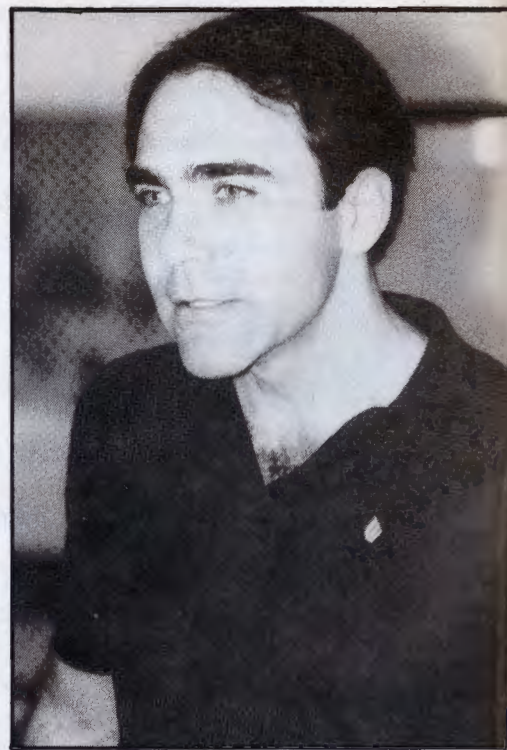
Fortunately, Schwartz's father was transferred back to Virginia, where he was stationed at the Pentagon. Jay started to play Little League baseball and then one year of high school baseball. After his freshman year, his dad was transferred to Hawaii.

There, Schwartz played three years of baseball at Radford High School. He also played one year of varsity basketball, and tried out for varsity football. *"I loved baseball, tolerated basketball, and hated football,"* he said. *"In football, I lasted exactly one scrimmage. I'll be honest. I hated to get hit."*

Playing third base and batting over .350 for three years, Jay established himself as an outstanding infielder. His uncanny batting ability to make contact with the baseball was amazing. As hard as it is to believe, he went through an entire season without missing a pitch! Although he fouled off some pitches and was called out on strikes twice when he didn't swing the bat, he made contact every time he swung.

Graduating in the top 10 of his senior class, which included over 500 students, he recalls Bette Midler, a fellow

Jay Schwartz: "Me mean? No way. . .



classmate. *"She was a great girl, very witty, with a tremendous sense of humor,"* he said.

Although Schwartz won a military scholarship to North Carolina University, he was hoping to win a baseball scholarship. His cousin, the renowned basketball coach Larry Brown, tried to help him get the baseball scholarship, unfortunately, to no avail.

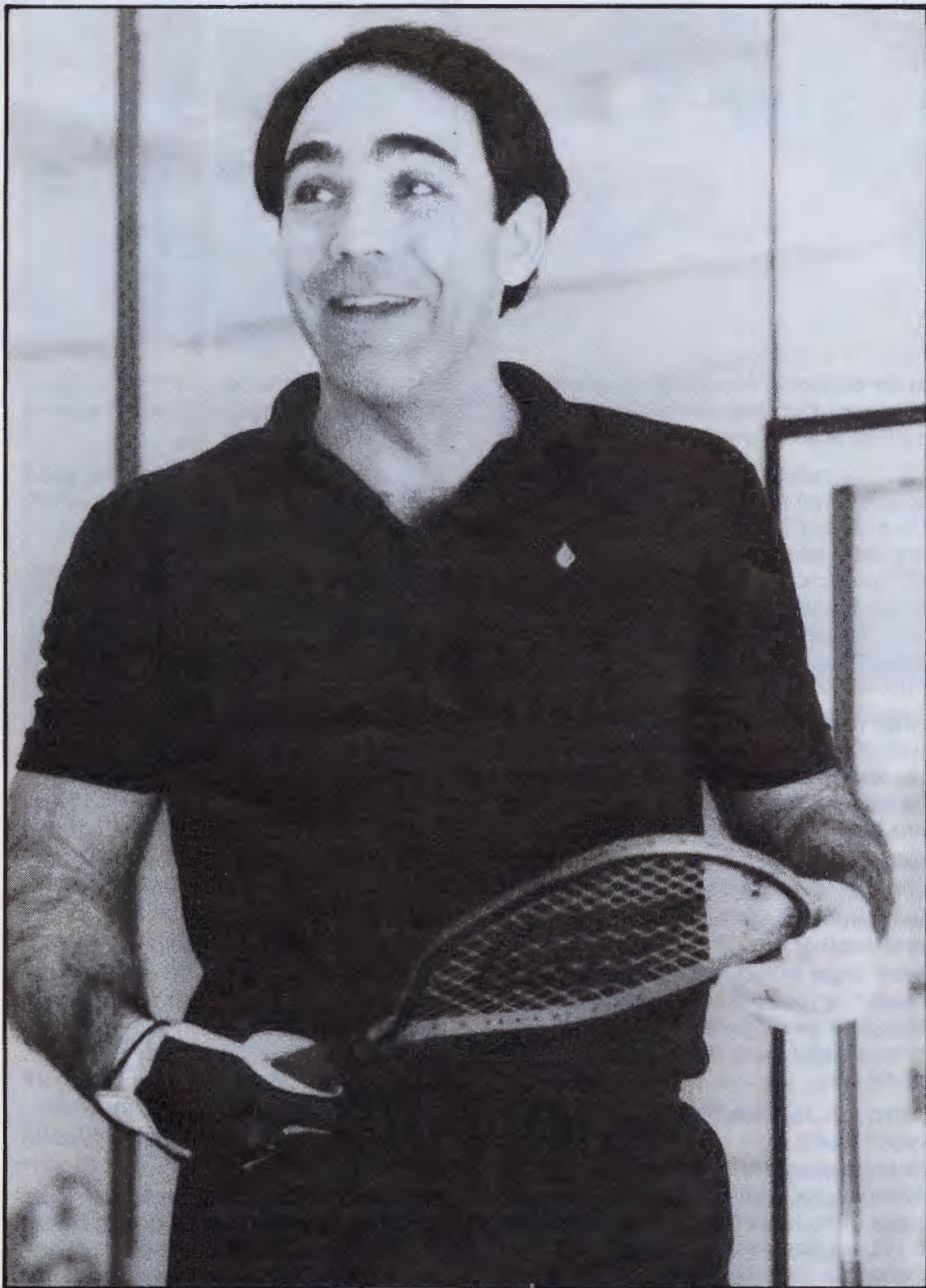
Even though Jay made the freshman team he quickly found playing without a scholarship would be very difficult. *"Ever since I was a kid in Little League I had envisioned myself playing major league baseball,"* he said. *"But I quickly became disillusioned during my freshman year at North Carolina."*

There were two players on scholarships playing ahead of him. He felt that he was as good, if not better, than they were. Naturally, they played and Jay didn't. Then he finally got his big chance. Starting at third base, he hit a home run, double, and a bunt single in one game.

"The coach rewarded me by keeping me on the bench the rest of the way," he said. *"The next year in varsity batting practice I was allowed three swings and a bunt. Even though I felt that I could've played extremely well if I was given the chance, I quit."*

Although Schwartz quit the baseball team, he did not quit sports. For the next three years he was a terror in the

"... I'm just a pussycat."



— photos by Norm Stulzer

Although he was chosen to play on the All-Navy team, he decided that it was time to leave the service.

At 28 years old he entered the insurance business. Although he worked at it for the next few years, he said, *"Truthfully, I only really worked at it when I desperately needed money."*

Although he stayed in reasonably good shape through various athletic activities, Schwartz didn't start playing racquetball until 1978, when the Pensacola, FL Racquetball Club opened. *"Although I had batted the ball around a few times in the Navy,"* he said, *"using a wooden racquet on a wooden court meant I had never really played the game."*

intramural leagues, becoming a stand-out in tennis, handball, volleyball, badminton, softball, (flag) football, basketball, wrestling, and table tennis. He culminated his brilliant career by being named the outstanding athlete in fraternity intramurals in his senior year.

After graduation, he was Navy pilot for six years, flying a P-3 Reconnaissance plane—a four engine turbo propellered aircraft, with an 11 man crew. His home base for three years was Hawaii, with different assignments stationing him in Alaska and Japan.

While in the Navy, Jay had one harrowing experience in the air that nearly cost him his life—one of the four engines quit. Because he had too much

fuel in the tank he was over the recommended landing weight. In short, he couldn't land. A few minutes later, a second engine blew. Now, he had no choice—he *had* to land.

Fortunately, the landing gear was down. If it had been up, he would've had to make a belly landing. Even though the landing was precarious, there was no telling what might have happened if he would've had to make that belly landing with all that fuel aboard.

During his last three years in the Navy, Schwartz played softball for his home base team. His last month of enlistment he played all over the east coast.



In the weight room, champion Jay spends plenty of time tuning up the strength necessary to win the big ones.

That's Jay with girl friend Babette Bell, but where's the famous shorts?



He and his girl friend, Babette Bell, would play literally for three to four hours at a time. Schwartz said, *"I didn't know anything about the game. All I knew was that I loved it. I loved the feel of the racquet against the ball and the great workout I was getting. It also was an ideal way of spending more time with Babette."*

After he had been playing only eight months and not knowing any better, Schwartz entered his first tournament. Boy did he ever enter! Open Singles, B Singles, and B Doubles! *"I didn't win anything,"* he said. *"But I learned one thing quickly—to eat between matches. I played and reffed so much and ate so little that I developed horrible cramps. But, I saw some great play and learned a lot by watching. I also asked many players their advice about strokes and strategies."*

Although Schwartz was still basically a novice player, he won the second tournament he played in, a B event in Atlanta. What stood out in his mind was the incredible comeback he made to win. He had lost the first game and was losing the second game 19-6. Miraculously, he came back to win.

"I'll never forget the look on my opponent's face," he said. *"He was in a*

state of shock. He couldn't believe that he'd lost. For that matter, I couldn't believe that I'd won.

"But, somehow I knew that I was going to win, even though I was way behind. I'd only had that feeling once before in my life—when I was playing baseball in high school. The opposing pitcher had a no-hitter going into the last inning. I just knew that I was going to get a hit—and I did. I laced a double into the outfield."

After the Atlanta tournament Schwartz was completely hooked on racquetball. He and Babette would travel to tournaments throughout the south, averaging two to three tournaments a month.

"Four or five of my friends would travel with us," he said. *"We loved it. When we weren't playing we'd be cheering one another on. I'm really at my happiest when I'm at a racquetball tournament. The people are down to earth. No one puts on the airs. And, best of all, they usually don't allow smoking in the clubs."*

Although Jay was practicing a lot, he didn't really start perfecting his swing until he saw Matt Matthews, one of Florida's top players, playing in a tournament in Jacksonville. *"Matthews left a lasting impression on me,"* said Schwartz. *"His concentration, his picture-perfect swing, and his uncanny ability to watch the ball, whether he was hitting it or his opponent was hitting it, was outstanding."*

Watching Matthews and reading many instructional articles in *National Racquetball* really got Schwartz pumped up. He started perfecting the powerful forehand and superb backhand that he has today by doing 100 repetitions of both the forehand and backhand strokes—about an hour a day. In addition, he'd play two hours and on alternate days he'd do weight work and sprints.

"Believe it or not I was doing this because I enjoyed it," said Jay. *"I really had no specific goals in mind. But, I did have to laugh. Because I spent so*

much time on the court and training, rumors were flying that I was married to a rich heiress."

Schwartz's aspirations soon changed. After playing for only a year and a-half, in 1980 he entered his first national championships in nearby Miami, remarkably reaching the semi-finals.

Unbelievably, he trained even harder after the tournament. His hectic tournament and practice schedule for the following year culminated with his winning the 1981 DP National Seniors (35 & Over) Championships in Tempe, AZ. Not only had he stunned the star-studded field by winning the title he had pulled off the upset of the entire tournament, regardless of division, by defeating highly regarded top seed Jay Jones in the semi-finals.

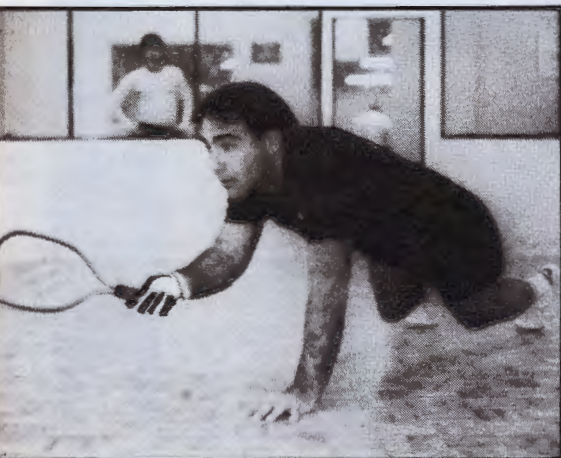
Jones, who not long previously had been ranked in the top 10 on the professional tour, simply ran out of gas in the third game. Schwartz won the tie-breaker in a dazzling display of shot-making and retrieving, 11-1. Even more impressive was the incredible conditioning that he had exhibited throughout the tournament.

"Although I had trained extremely hard for the tournament, most of the credit had to go to Babette," he said. *"She made the beautiful flowered shorts that I wore throughout the tournament. That was all the inspiration I needed."*

In 1982 and 1983, Schwartz continued to play in the Ektelon Nationals, reaching the finals both years. However, he didn't play in the AARA or DP Nationals either year.

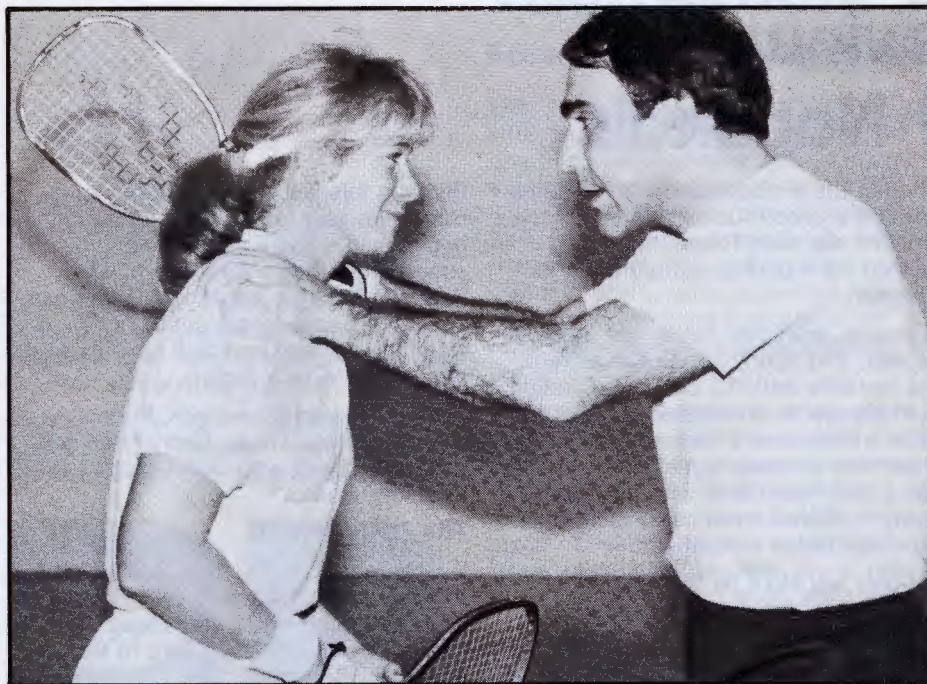
"I had an excellent reason for not playing," he said. *"I didn't have any money to travel."*

As stated, Schwartz started training extremely hard after he lost his position with the computer company in late 1983. His main goal was to play in the Ektelon Nationals again in 1984, but he almost didn't make it. In the qualifying Ektelon Regionals against Mike Carr, Jay was down 12-8 in the 15 point tie-



All-out effort marks Schwartz' style. Diving for that impossible "get" is not an unfamiliar sight when he's on the court.

How could you have forgotten my favorite shorts?!



breaker. "I had to win," he said. "Babette had already won a trip in her division to the Nationals in Anaheim. I couldn't let her go alone. Fortunately, I rallied to win the third game."

Things weren't going to get any easier. In the Ektelon Nationals 30+ finals, he and Stan Wright, many times national doubles champion, engaged in a real donnybrook. The score reached 14-14 in the third game when, at match point, Schwartz hit a 39 foot, shoulder high, backhand roll-out.

"It was supposed to be a straight-in kill shot, but it turned out to be a backhand pinch," he said. "Either way, I was thrilled to win."

Moving on to the AARA Nationals in late May, Schwartz entered both the 30+ and 35+ divisions. When asked why he always plays two events, he said, "In regional and local tournaments the first two days are easy. I can pace myself in the early rounds by using lob serves. I also prepare myself mentally for each match. The tougher the opponent, the tougher I'm going to play."

"Also, in the AARA and DP Nationals, after the first two or three days, you only have to play one match a day in each division, so that's only two matches a day."

"However, I was very fortunate to win both divisions. In the Men's 30+ finals I defeated Bob Wilhelm in the first game. In the second game I had a big lead but he came way back. I was leading 14-12 or 14-13 when he was all

set for an easy putaway. Unbelievably, my shot cracked out. I won the next point to win the match."

Schwartz's final against Fielding Snow in the Men's 35+ final wasn't any easier. Snow, who looks about 25, is in incredible shape. Their match was one of the most exciting and best played of the entire tournament.

"Every point was close and tiring. I never worked so hard in my life," said Jay. "Snow's overheads were so good that I was afraid to hit a ceiling ball. When I finally won the last game 11-8, I was mentally and physically exhausted."

Schwartz's feat in the AARA nationals was as mind boggling. Because of the depth of the field and the many close matches that he played to reach the finals, most players and spectators felt that his chances were slim, at best. But, his incredible shotmaking and superb physical conditioning proved superior.

The DP Nationals in Atlanta were almost anticlimatic. "I realize I was going for a Grand Slam, so to speak," he said. "I was also hoping that some sponsor would come up with a million dollars as they did for Martina Navratilova, when she won the grand slam in tennis. Needless to say, no sponsor did."

Schwartz destroyed the field. He defeated former men's professional champion, Davey Bledsoe, in the Men's 30 (27 & Under) finals by the amazing scores of 15-10, 15-3. He then defeated

former Men's National Senior Champ, Ed Remen, in two straight games in the finals.

Although he was ecstatic, Schwartz was humbled for a moment. As Remen and he walked off the court, Remen's young son said, "I hate you Jay." Schwartz said, "I really felt badly for a second. I said, 'I'm sorry Matt.' However everything was fine later on, as his dad, mom, he, and I enjoyed a liquid refreshment."

When Jay was asked to reflect on his incredible season, he thanked his sponsor.

"I'm fortunate to be associated with Ektelon," he said. "I believe their racquets and equipment are the best on the market. The pros that represent them are not only known for their ability as players, they're well respected for their conduct off the court as well."

The modest Schwartz, after much prodding, divulged his main strengths.

"My backhand, conditioning, and mental toughness are my strengths," he said. "My ability to analyze my opponent's weaknesses and to capitalize on those weaknesses has played a large role in my success. I can play a wide variety of styles, including fast or slow."

"I try to maintain concentration at all times on the court. In fact, my friends tell me that I really look mean when I play. That's not true. I may look mean, but I'm actually a pussycat."

When asked about his amazing affinity for winning close matches, Schwartz says, "If the score is 8-8 in the tie-breaker, I'll usually win. I might be nervous once the match starts, but I'm never nervous near the end. Fortunately, I've got a great winning ratio in tie-breakers."

"I didn't think that I could do it last year, but I did," he said. "I don't think that I can do it again this year, but there may be some magic in those shorts yet." ●

Tournament Preview: Ektelon And DP Nationals

Has Marty Hogan regained his dominance over professional racquetball?

Will Mike Yellen make one of his vaunted season-ending races to the top of the pro ladder?

Is Cliff Swain for real and can he prove himself with Hogan and Yellen in the draw?

Will Bret Harnett repeat at the Ektelon Nationals? Can he stay healthy?

Will this be the year that Gregg Peck breaks through?

All these questions, plus many others will be answered in the next 60 days as the racquetball world prepares for the professional culmination to the 1984-85 season—the Ektelon and Diversified Products (DP) National Championships.

The Ektelon Nationals

While this event does not carry the super big prize money that is at the DP Nationals, it does carry something as important, if not more so. That is, namely, ESPN national coverage. And the prize money, over \$20,000 to the men, is nothing to sneeze at, either.

But the true distinction of the Ektelon Nationals is that the winners know that for the next 12 months they (men and women) will be seen periodically on ESPN—racquetball's only consistent, national television exposure. This is a title, therefore, not to be taken lightly.

A year ago Harnett worked his way through the difficult number five seed position to emerge the champion, stopping the surprising Jerry Hilecher in the finals. The victory pushed Harnett to the verge of the number one ranking, which would have been his had he duplicated his Ektelon success with a win at the DP Nationals a year ago. Instead, he got hurt and couldn't compete at the DP's.

Harnett, the lanky lefty with a booming forehand and great court coverage has fought nagging injuries throughout the current season and frankly, would be a surprise to emerge the winner at the Ektelon Nationals, again held at the Sports Gallery in Anaheim, CA, May 1-5.

The favorite will undoubtedly be the amazing Hogan, who is solidly entrenched in the number one ranked position on the men's tour, more solidly than at any time in the past five years.

Whether it's a rededication to his game or just a stubborn unwillingness to concede the top spot, Hogan has proclaimed his intent to capture them all this year.

Of course, arch-rival Yellen will stand in his way, and rightly so. As the current and two-time national champion, Yellen must always be considered a major factor in this or any tournament in which he's entered. A year ago Mike was a first round loser and if incentive is any motivation, you can expect a ferocious Yellen in Anaheim.

Not only will Mike be trying to erase the memory of last year's dismal performance (in front of his sponsors—Ektelon), but he'll also be trying to live up to the million-dollar, 10 year contract he recently signed with the firm.

To put it mildly: look out for Yellen.

Those who pay attention to such things are saying that Gregg Peck is having the finest year of his career and is about to emerge as a solid top four player. In order to be solid top four, you've got to reach the finals more than occasionally and this would seem to be Gregg's time.

But Gregg, like many other excellent players, has yet to consistently beat the tough finalists above him, Hogan and Yellen. And Harnett, who beat him at the Ektelons a year ago, will probably stand in the way again. It will take a great effort on Gregg's part this year, but then it will take that of any player.

And, of course, there are the unknown factors. Swain, the hard serving easterner, will definitely have something to prove. Many say his win in Tulsa (page 34) was a fluke, not only because Hogan and Yellen weren't there, but also because of the combination of lively balls and front wall glass.

It's true that Tulsa was a server's tournament, far from the reputation of the Ektelon Nationals, which demands the complete game with back wall glass only. So the 18-year-old Mr. Swain needs this one badly to silence his critics and make believers of the rest of the field.

Perhaps this will be aging Jerry Hilecher's year to rise up from his bridesmaid's role a year ago, and squeeze out that one more win. Like Bill Schmidtke an era ago, Hilecher can sometimes spin magic out of his vaunted forehand and he'll have to do it again here to be a factor.

That still leaves Dave Peck, Ruben Gonzalez, Scott Oliver, Gerry Price and a host of others who could capture the title. Who knows?

The DP Nationals

Diversified Products, never a company to allow complacency to settle in, has re-located their National Racquetball Championships from Atlanta to Boston, bringing the northeast their first major professional national championship ever.

It's one man's opinion that there will be many a surprise in store for the pros as they go up against some of the finest players in the nation—the eastern contingent, a group that rarely has the opportunity to display their talent under the scrutiny of a national title.

Through no fault of anybody, it seems most of the important national titles take place thousands of miles from New England. Only the winners of the Ektelon Regional qualify for trips to the Ektelon Nationals; the AARA National Singles is in Houston, and most other major events fall west of the Great Lakes. Now DP has done a great service to racquetball by bringing their nationals east.

As a result, look for two or three top amateur players to make life miserable for some of the touring pros—meaning there will be some upsets in this one in the early rounds. Most observers don't expect an unknown (like Swain) to rip through the field en route to the biggest pro payoff of the year, but don't be surprised to see one or two of them in the quarters.

And Swain, from nearby Braintree, MA might be a good bet to be one of them. No matter how he does at the Ektelons, playing in his back yard will be great incentive and he should have the gallery on his side.

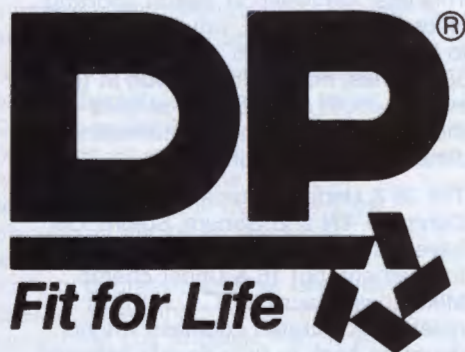
EKTELON

Tournament Preview: WPRA

Fast Finish Takes Sting Out of Lean Year

One player who will stand in his way should be Hogan, who dominated the DP Nationals for many years and would like nothing better than to dominate it once again. Marty, who a few years ago passed up a lucrative DP contract to begin his own racquet company, would love to cash another juicy DP check.

Another player with mixed emotions about the DP Nationals would be Dave Peck, who failed to cement his number



one ranking here in 1983 and then nearly lost his leg in a freak injury two years ago—saved by Cal James, DP president, whose quick thinking and action got Dave the proper treatment.

Peck is now fully recovered from that injury, although he's not yet silenced those who say he's a half-step slower moving into front court. Still solidly in the top five, Dave should be itching to cap this, his best season of the last three, with a DP victory.

His brother Gregg has an extra incentive, being one of DP's top two touring pros (Harnett is the other). Gregg has responded to DP's faith in him by having his best year ever and both he and Harnett understand that a victory here would help tremendously.

Both the DP and Ektelon Nationals are part of the newly created Racquetball Manufacturers Association (RMA) pro tour and while the Ektelon event occurs a bit early for any big announcements, by the mid-June date of the DP tournament, there could be lots of news about the fall schedule, sponsors and prize money figures.

It all adds up to a great deal of excitement, outstanding action on the court and the promise of entertainment and action off the court as well. It's gonna be fun, for sure!

Ever since the women pros left the NRC pro tour in 1979, they have done one thing exceptionally well—they've stuck together through thick and thin. Once the WPRA was formed under Dan Seaton, the women immediately set up their own tour, new ranking and scoring systems, and a set of rules and regulations that kept them together in one nice, neat, tidy package for sponsors to bid on and clubs to host.

On the thin side however, prize money available for the women began to dwindle due to two circumstances beyond their control. First, there was the fitness boom that began in 1980. Instead of being a premier activity in clubs, racquetball became one of many fitness activities that clubs were offering to members. Then, second, the men's pro tour fell apart.

As clubs began to promote fitness first and racquetball second, the promotional appeal of the pros took a detour. In 1983, the men's tour became non-existent. Professional racquetball was left with only one half of its original showcase potential.

"We were indirectly affected by the men's pro tour falling apart," says Heather McKay, the WPRA's current number one.

"Potential sponsors always look at the men first. If they like the men, then they are willing to work with the women too. When the men disappeared, so did a lot of our potential club hosts and sponsors."

This season (1984-85) was the leanest for the women pros yet. After their season opener in Auburn, Maryland in October, the women were inactive until February when the tour picked up again with a stop in Essex Junction, Vermont for only \$6,000 total prize money. The women seemed farther than ever from realizing former president Fran Davis' 1981 dream of 50 women being able to eventually support themselves as pros on the WPRA tour.

"I was real disappointed when I found out that were no stops after Auburn," explains WPRA member Sandy Robson, who also doubles as Head Pro for Lehmann Sports Club in Chicago.

"This was going to be my year to break into the pro ranks as a professional player. I found it very hard to stay motivated; to train during the period between October and February. It was just too much time off and not a lot of promise for a better future."

Just when things were looking bleak for the WPRA, several potential tour sites signed contracts to become confirmed pro stops and once again the women pros were up and running.

Susan Douthit of International Management Group, the sports management firm that currently handles the WPRA, explains what happened.

"The first half of this year's tournament season just fell apart. Certain clubs pulled out of the circuit at the last minute. The second half of the season has shaped up better than ever and even though it's too early to tell, next fall is looking good too."

Douthit goes on to describe a trend that has just begun to surface with the women. It involves the older, more experienced clubs around the country wanting to take a crack at running a major professional event.

"I'm now negotiating with clubs that in years past were very successful in running amateur events. They are now ready to add a new dimension to their events and that means more business for the women pros."

So now the women find themselves on the verge of finishing out this season with four more pro stops in the months of May and June. Three of those stops are over \$10,000 total prize money. Additionally, those same three events are carrying the prestige of national titles.

First, there's the Ektelon National Tournament May 1-5 in Anaheim, CA offering \$18,000 prize money for the women. After that the women fly to the Riverbend Athletic Club in Fort Worth, TX for the WPRA Nationals and a purse of \$25,000. The final title will be decided on June 21st in Boston at the DP Nationals.

Additionally, between the Ektelon and WPRA Nationals, there's a \$10,000 tourney in Lawton, OK on May 17th. All four tournaments seem to be confirming the fact that after a dry spell for the WPRA, when it rains, it pours.

So, what originally looked like just another lean year has just blossomed into a decent season. The members of the WPRA will be spending the next



Tournament Preview: AARA

two months playing for three national titles at more prize money than ever before. The possibility of one player achieving a "grand slam" (winning all three national titles) has become an exciting reality. Doing one thing exceptionally well, i.e., staying together through thick and thin, payed off this year for the women of the WPRA.

Grand Slam Quick Picks

Pick #1: Lynn Adams . . .
Current WPRA Ranking: #2

This 27-year-old native of Costa Mesa, CA, was the national singles champion in 1982. During the 1983-84 season she won 24 of 28 matches and claimed her second straight doubles championship (with Terri Gilreath). However, in 1983 and 1984, she lost in the finals of the WPRA nationals to Heather McKay. Adams says it's a temporary thing and she seems hungrier than ever to not only regain a number one ranking, but to ink her name in the record books. A grand slam title could do that for her and she's ready to make it happen.

Pick #2: Heather McKay . . .
Current WPRA Ranking: #1

What can you say about an 18-time national squash champion and three-time national racquetball champion that hasn't already been said? Heather has the experience and the potential for a grand slam title but there's something standing in her way. She's injured. A pinched nerve in her neck has kept her out of the finals of the last two tournaments allowing Adams to climb within three points of her in the rankings.

If Heather is healed and can attend the three national events in good health, she can be a grand slam winner. If not, it's a no go for one of the finest athletes to ever hold a racquetball racquet.

Pick #3: Vicki Panzeri . . .
Current Rank: #3

This may be more of a wish than a pick, but Panzeri has won pro stops before. In fact, she recently won the Seattle pro stop; and has beaten Heather. She's the only other player who has the ability to win a national title or three for that matter. What's standing in her way is her self-image. Sometimes it looks as if she doesn't believe she can consistently beat Heather or Lynn and consequently she doesn't.

There's an outside chance this season that her defeat of Heather in February and her pro tour victory in March has changed all that. The momentum she's carrying with her going into the three national tournaments could bring her a grand slam title. She's a dark horse, but what are predictions without dark horses?

Entries are pouring into the American Amateur Racquetball Association's Colorado Springs, CO headquarters for the annual tournaments which begin next month.

The AARA, which hosts the Intercollegiate Championships, the U.S. National Singles, the U.S. National Juniors and the U.S. National Doubles, begins its tournament season each year around this time with *increased* excitement over the previous season.

One might wonder, is that possible again? And the answer is undeniably: Yes!

Once again Memphis State University was in the spotlight for intercollegiate racquetball on April 12-14. Not only did they again host the event, at the Racquet Club, but the MSU Tigers also tried to maintain their domination of college racquetball. Coach Larry Liles was confident in his returning stars Toni Bevelock and Andy Roberts, both Memphis State students and racquetball champs and both racquetball champs in other AARA events. Results will be published next month.

California team CSUS promises to add an element of challenge to the Intercollegiate match. Boasting an impressive team with former 18 & Under Women's National Champ Trina Rasmussen, present 16 & Under champion Mike Lowe, and 18 & Under champ Doug Ganim as well as three time National Champion in Women's 16 and 18 divisions, Mona Mook and three members of the current Canadian National team, CSUS will present the biggest threat to the Memphis team.

Following the intercollegiate championships, amateur singles players from across the country will converge on Houston, TX, May 23-27, at the Downtown YMCA for the AARA National Singles Championships presented by Lite Beer. Each year this event grows in number, with last year's 922 entries being the greatest number of players ever to compete.

Last month, AARA Regional Singles Championships were held throughout the country. The AARA requires that players qualify for the National Singles by playing in their Regionals.

The Houston YMCA (with their 32 courts) will again host the event. The Hyatt Regency will be headquarters for the tournament with the AARA holding its general membership meeting and report as well as board elections at this time.

Will Dan Ferris and Marci Drexler, last year's open winners, be back to defend their places of honor in the racquetball world? Rumors abound that Drexler is

going professional, after successful years in the amateur circuit. Ferris would be vying for his third title, but would be up against Juniors champ, Ganim, who qualifies for this year's Singles Tournament.

Along with Open play, which clearly draws everyone's attention, it's always interesting to watch the other divisions, especially the Men's and Women's 60+, 65+, and 70+ which grow in number every year. They may not have the speed or finesse that Open players have, but their racquetball is exciting to watch, and encouraging to all.

The excitement of the National Singles barely dies down when attention turns to the National Juniors Tournament. This year the Newport Beach Sporting House, Newport, CA, will host the event to be held June 22-26. Of last year's 584 entries, many winners won in two events—both doubles and singles—for the age group, adding an interesting dimension to the tournament.

The 18 & Under champs, Bevelock, Dunmore, TN and Ganim, Solom, OH have graduated to National Singles tournament, but 16 & Under champ Mike Lowe, Bacaville, CA, with his quiet, concentrated coolness will no doubt be back to face equally talented Dave Simonette, Baltimore, MD.

Elaine Mardas, Columbus, OH, last year's 16 & Under champ, will make an attempt for the 18 & Under title, after enjoying a great season.

Add to the Juniors the excitement of both singles and doubles events occurring simultaneously, and the fun of watching 8 & Under Any-Bounce Racquetball, and you have a tournament uniquely its own.

The tournament season quiets down a bit after the Juniors. The AARA will



again host its National Elite Training Camp in August. The first was such a huge success, that plans are for a bigger and more demanding camp.

Then on October 24-27, the Rocky Mountain Health Club, Cheyenne, WY, will host the U.S. National Doubles Championships, presented by Lite Beer. Dan Obremski and Kelvin Vantrease upset five time champs Stan Wright and Steve Trent for the coveted Men's Open Doubles title.

Will Wright and Trent return for revenge? And who will win the women's titles? In any case, the doubles tournament, the only one of its kind, will bring all the excitement and entertainment one might expect. ●

Sandra Kahn's Racquetball Strategy Includes Mental Health

by Jean Sauser

Making people feel good is Sandra Kahn's business. Playing racquetball is her sport. As a psychotherapist, author, lecturer and public speaker, Sandra Kahn has established herself as a national expert on topics related to sexuality, the dynamics of male-female relationships, depression, anxiety and other issues. As a racquetball player, she uses the sport for her own enjoyment and recommends it as a fitness activity to many of her clients.

Currently one of the most successful psychotherapists in America today, Chicago-based Sandra Kahn is fast becoming an expert at using the media for her messages. She has been featured on the Phil Donahue show discussing the subject of sexuality and will appear again soon to address the topic of depression. Other television appearances around the country have included AM Los Angeles, People Are Talking (Baltimore), Pittsburgh Today, and AM Northwest (Portland, OR).

The key factor that turned Sandra Kahn from an ordinary psychotherapist into a media celebrity was her 1977 study on sexual preferences. The Kahn Report on Sexual Preferences received local media attention almost instantly. At the same time, the Donahue Show was monitoring some of its local competition (at that time Donahue was based in Chicago). One of Donahue's staff saw Sandra and she was contacted about appearing on Donahue.

"Phil Donahue is a tremendous person," says Kahn about the talkshow superstar.

"I love to do his show because I know he really cares about helping people."

After her appearance on the nationally syndicated Donahue show, more offers concerning the Kahn Report came her way. The Kahn Report was published as a book and soon became a best-seller.

To promote the book, Sandra conducted a nationwide tour through 12 cities across the country appearing on numerous television and radio shows. The media was good to her and things began to snowball.

For a time, Sandra hosted her own local radio show, "Shared Feelings With Sandra Kahn," where she discussed a wide variety of topics with her listeners and conducted interviews with notable celebrities such as philanthropist W. Clement Stone.

"Then I just got too busy," she states. "I found out that I was human. My family and personal life began to suffer as I ran from my practice, to television shows to my own weekly radio show. Something had to give so that I could have a healthy balance in my life. I chose my radio show."

Periodically, she still hosts a local cable television version of "Shared Feelings."

In keeping with a career of firsts, Sandra Kahn's first experience on a racquetball court was actually before there was such a sport called racquetball. Her father, Chester Sutker, was a competitive handball player. As Sandra was growing up, he would take her over to the Jewish Community Center to play handball with him on Sundays. The year was 1952 and Sandra Sutker was only 11 years old at the time.

"I was a very athletic child," Sandra recalls. "I played softball, volleyball and other team sports. My father recognized this and on Sundays he would sneak me onto the handball courts because women weren't allowed on the courts in those days. Then he would give me a pair of handball gloves and we'd hit the handball around the court together."

"It was so exciting to me," Sandra remembers. "I can remember liking the court even then. I liked the closeness. It gave me an intimate feeling and a close feeling to my father that I probably wouldn't have felt if we had gone to play tennis or some other open court type of game."

With handball being her first exposure to an individual sport, Sandra continued to participate in team sports through high school and college. Upon graduation from the University of Miami (class of '64), she married Jack Kahn, moved back to Chicago and started a family.

Sandra Kahn



Almost immediately after her second child was born, she went back to school in 1968 to earn a degree in Clinical Psychology from Roosevelt University in Chicago. Upon graduation in 1976, Sandra started to build her private practice as a few lucky breaks came her way.

"I had done an internship at a local state hospital," she remembers. "Between the contacts I made there and referrals from some of my colleagues, my practice got a good start almost from the day I opened my office."

Word of mouth built her practice the rest of the way full as clients referred her to their friends and families. At the same time she published the Kahn Report as a study. A colleague who was impressed by the study referred Sandra to a local talk show.

As one thing was leading to another in her professional life, a racquetball club opened one block away from her office and Sandra Kahn became a racquetball player.

"I was looking for a sport that would be physically healthy for me when I was not running my practice, writing my

book, lecturing or doing personal appearances. I'd been reading and researching exercise for its contributions to a healthy mental state. In terms of tension release combined with the element of competition (both of which I felt I needed personally), racquetball seemed like the most logical choice for me.

"I remember that I liked handball and in comparison to that, tennis was just too boring to me. The timing was right when the club opened down the street from my office. Racquetball was getting tremendous publicity at the time as an up and coming sport so I originally picked it to be my sport."

Sandra immediately joined the club down the street with a friend and both of their families. They played regularly every week. Sandra and her partner took lessons.



Sandra Kahn and husband Jack during a Saturday afternoon game of racquetball.

"I'm a big believer in lessons. I've always thought that if you are going to take up a new sport, you should learn the basic fundamentals before you can develop any bad habits that will prevent you from playing to your fullest capacity later."

Throughout the late seventies, Kahn promoted her book in the media across the country, continued to build her practice and managed to find time to play racquetball. It was during this time that Sandra began to see a direct correlation between physical fitness and mental health.

In her private practice, she began to make suggestions to her clients to take up racquetball, or start a fitness program. She wrote a mail order pamphlet called "How To Stop Depression . . . A Practical Guide" and for the first time in her publishing career, made workable recommendations for exercise and diet.

Since most of her clients are those who are suffering from depression, anxiety or who are in life crisis situations (such as divorce), Kahn works on helping them develop a well balanced emotional life while working on the psychological roots of their problems.

"It's been a hidden secret for too long in my profession that exercise helps in the treatment of depression and anxiety. Depression causes a slowing down of one's physical system and emotional responses. Exercise stimulates the physical system and most times the emotions follow the body on an upward swing created by exercise.

"Anxiety involves a speeding up of the emotional and physical state in an unconstructive manner. Anxiety ridden people are anxious and sometimes scared. Exercise, especially racquetball, is a good tension reliever for anxiety ridden people. In both cases, with exercise, clients get happier, and more optimistic. From there I can work on the other psychological elements that are causing their problems."

"I tell some people to join a club," Kahn says. "That way they meet happy, healthy people. Meeting happy people under the right circumstances is always an uplifting and healthy experience. You very seldom walk into a racquetball club and see people sitting around depressed the way you might if you walk into a bar."

In fact, the last thing Sandra Kahn wants her clients to do once they leave the office is to go to a bar.

"I am adamantly against the use of drugs and alcohol for coping with personal problems. The down side after the initial artificial uplifting experience leaves you in worse shape physically

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Both Kahns admit that they are a better match off the racquetball court. "He's so much better than I am," explains Sandra, "but he does try to help me with my game and I appreciate that."

around the country on behalf of her pamphlet on depression. She'll also be promoting her new book, "The Myth of Parenthood."

"My new book is about how vulnerable we are to our children and how it affects our lives in a destructive fashion," says Kahn. "In it, I make recommendations about how to accept the fact that none of us are perfect parents and through understanding that fact, I suggest how we can become better parents."

In the meantime, Sandra Kahn remains one of the racquetball's most enthusiastic supporters.

"I'll continue to recommend racquetball to those clients I really feel it would benefit," she says. "It's a great life sport for mental as well as physical fitness." ●

as well as mentally. There is a downward spiral that ends at the bottom of the barrel when you try to use artificial stimulants to pull yourself out of a mental slump."

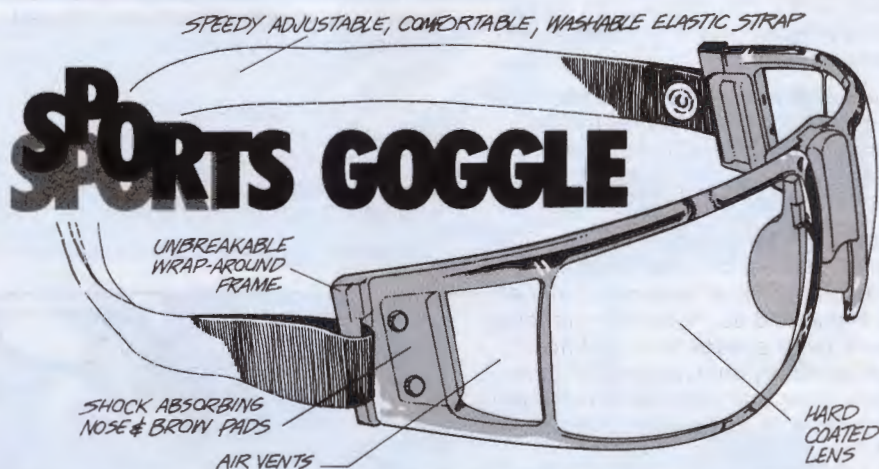
In her advice on getting emotionally sound in a healthy way to fight depression, stop anxiety, or get through a life crisis, Kahn explains to her clients that getting physically active creates a physiological process; the release of endorphins into the blood stream. Endorphins actually create a healthy euphoric state on a regular basis. She also encourages her clients to increase their chances to once again be emotionally sound by following a good nutrition program.

Because Sandra Kahn is a psychotherapist who's practice has been built on getting good results with her clients, she says that above everything she's accomplished so far, she treasures the accomplishment that comes when one of her clients doesn't need her services anymore. She also believes that although there is not a standard timetable for recovery, most clients should be feeling better after three or four months of counseling. Most of Sandra Kahn's clients show signs of improvement in those few short months even though they may remain in counseling beyond that.

"I'm not a miracle worker," claims Sandra, "But I do love it when miracles happen. Recently, I had a client who was struggling with self-destructive tendencies. She seemed to be making all the wrong moves for herself in life and was very depressed. After three appointments I began to make suggestions about playing racquetball, getting fit and following a more healthy diet. It was remarkable. She took my advice

and the depression stopped! She's happier and more optimistic. Now we are working on the psychological causes of her problems without the added problem of depression."

Future plans for Sandra Kahn include more appearances on the Donahue show, another media appearance trip



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Racquetball and Exercise Programming: How The Marriage Works In Arizona

by Mort Leve

It is more or less an educating process with the multi-purpose clubs of the 1980s, as they find more and more of their membership parlaying racquetball play with regimens of weight training and aerobic dance classes.

And, it isn't always a case of the fellow or gal starting off with the racquetball bug and then finding the addition of utilizing the computerized stationary bicycle, circuit weight equipment, and/or joining in the aerobic classes enhances their court performance.

Bruce Heide was a Springfield, NJ national runnerup prep shot putter who gained an athletic scholarship at Arizona State University. At ASU Bruce was the strong man of the track team in both the shot and discus throw and qualified for the 1980 Olympic trials that were subsequently aborted.

Now, Bruce maintains physical conditioning with a four-time-a-week conditioning program at the Scottsdale (AZ) Clubhouse facility.

"I have always used free weights mainly but do use the lateral pulley for the back muscles," says Bruce who holds the Arizona dead lift mark for the 275-pound class with a 788 pound lift!

"In college I weighed 280 pounds (this on a 6'5" frame) but now find myself feeling better for all around activity at 250," Heide told us. *"I ride the stationary bicycle twice a week for a half hour each, do occasional jogging for three or four miles and participate two mornings a week in the aerobic class at the club."*

Bruce's girl friend, Jean O'Hara, originally coaxed him onto the racquetball court and they now have some spirited sessions.

"He hasn't been able to beat me yet," Jean says, *"but I can forget about the ceiling shot against him."*

Jean is an eight-year veteran of the game, having previously been the teaching pro at a club in Del Mar, CA, where she was fully indoctrinated in the hotbed San Diego racquetball scene.

"Originally I learned the game in my home town of Stamford, CT and had a second place in a New England open tournament," she said.

In her final months of gaining a degree in broadcasting at Arizona State, Jean finds decisively that the exercise programs of bicycle-weights-aerobics has greatly strengthened her racquetball performance.

"Since moving here I have won the Phoenix area A's, and have no difficulty in coping with many of the club A players here," she said.

Miss O'Hara's training regimen is staggering in that she rides that Lifecycle six days a week for one hour at a stretch. When asked how she overcomes the monotony for that period of time Jean answers that she often will read over her school texts or magazines. I mentioned that it would be ideal if they would set up the bicycles in an atmospheric environ and a wide screen TV, and she totally agreed.

In addition to the bicycling Jean does her circuit training, some bench pressing, and participates in aerobic classes two or three times a week, along with racquetball four times a week.

"I've gotten my comeuppance on the

A solid portion of their overall workout regimen is the aerobic cycles.



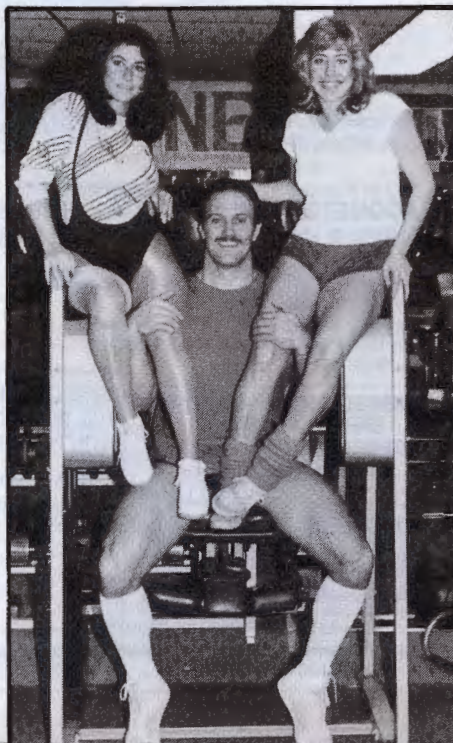
courts from Steve Stone" (the former baseball Cy Young award pitching star now WGN-TV sportscaster), *"But, I keep trying,"* says Jean.

Barbara Rubin would be considered practically an Arizona native. She came here from Ohio as a toddler and is now in the senior class with a marketing major at Arizona State. Her racquetball game has come along strongly, first winning the State B title at the LaMancha club, and now competing in the A's.

The counterbalance also applies to Barbara. She has her own 10-speed bike, has regular 5-10 mile runs around Scottsdale and also uses the club's aerobic cycles. In addition, she has become one of the aerobic instructors, leading three classes weekly.

"In the summer months I have used the weight equipment but with the heavy school schedule haven't stayed with it," she said. *"I play as much racquetball as time will permit and enjoyed playing in the club's Sunday softball league."*

In delving into nutritional habits of this trio it was found generally that while they do not religiously adhere to strict levels all of them feel they have a healthy diet with a limit on red meat, more chicken and fish . . . and try not to eat junk food.



Strongman Bruce Heide shows off two of his more attractive "weights," Barbara Rubin (l.) and Jean O'Hara.



A little bit of two-on-one helps sharpen Barbara's already tough game.

—Photos by Jess Wells

You can be sure when Jean and Barbara battle it out on the glass back-walled court at the Clubhouse they draw an appreciative wide-eyed group of professional girl watchers. Several of the male players when playing against either one of the curvaceous young lasses complain it is most difficult to keep their eyes on the ball.

In the last analysis it is clearly apparent that the complete fitness program as exemplified by this trio is ideal for those who want to gain the ultimate in physical conditioning and court performance. Stamina and dexterity are the two main bonuses achieved. ●



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The Fitness Center

My Bodyguard

The untimely death last summer of runner Jim Fixx was an unpleasant reminder to me about my own life in a very special way. It reminded me that I was overdue for a complete physical exam!

Like Jim Fixx, I find myself in a position of providing information about health, fitness and, of course, racquetball, to thousands of readers. There's an obligation with that position. That's to be accurate with your facts, keep learning about your field, and to be a good example of the things you are encouraging others to do.

I've always felt that great sense of obligation as a racquetball player, fitness enthusiast and writer. In my efforts to be a shining example of everything I write about and tell other people to do, I sometimes fall short. I guess you could say that I am human!

So, when Jim Fixx died and the news came out that he had not kept up with his physical exams over the years, the negative publicity began. It filled me with a sense of dread. You see, I too was overdue for my annual physical exam!

Here I was, writing about the benefits of fitness and racquetball, playing and training almost daily, but neglecting step one of the entire process; my physical exam.

At first I made many excuses to myself about why I hadn't had a physical exam in over two years.

After all, I told myself, I'd moved across the country from Portland to Chicago, made a career change and had been very busy adjusting to a new town all over again.

With all the changes I had been making over the last two years, there just hadn't been time for a physical, I told myself. Then it happened. The very week I accepted responsibility for the Fitness section, Jim Fixx died and I realized abruptly that I was out of excuses for delaying my physical exam any longer. So, I made an appointment with my physician to catch up on the "real" state of my health.

It is amazing what went through my mind while on the verge of taking my physical. I found myself reflecting on my life. It had not been a life without its share of stress. Like all Type A personalities, my reflections consisted of trying to have three careers going at all times and never getting enough sleep.

Socially speaking, I had never been an angel. I began to wonder if my excess coffee drinking at work combined with my occasional all night disco outings might have taken its toll over the years. I was afraid that somehow these two items would show up in black and white on the results of my exam. I had visions of my doctor scratching his head and saying to me, "*Miss Sauser, your blood chemistry analysis shows a composition of 60% caffeine and 20% lite beer!*"

Jean Sauser



Briefly, I entertained the thought of immediately giving up caffeine and alcohol but decided that I couldn't reverse in one month any potential damage I'd been doing to myself for 16 years.

Then there was the temptation to postpone the physical altogether. I kept telling myself that I was too busy the week of the exam and that I should postpone it until I was more organized at work. I decided that since I would probably never be more organized at work I was looking for a cop out. It was with the utmost of willpower then, that I kept my original appointment.

When the big day finally arrived, the first question from my doctor was in reference to when my last exam was. All of the fear and guilt just poured out of me as I told him that it had been three years ago. My confession must have made his job easy for him because he just simply reinforced what I said when I told him that I knew I had to get back on a regular routine of physical exams again.

Aerobic Exercise

by Gerri Tipton-Empey

After that it was smooth sailing. I checked out more than okay and really enjoyed discussing my life and physical fitness programs with my doctor as he did the routine things like listen to my heart, take my blood pressure, test my reflexes, etc. In fact, I don't think I ever stopped talking the entire time. I had so much fun at my physical and learned so much, that I made an appointment for next year on the spot.

This year's physical really reinforced my sense of obligation to myself, my loved ones and my readers. It gave me an understanding of why so many of us fall out of the habit of a yearly check up or neglect our physical exams until it really is too late. It also helped me understand and still admire Jim Fixx.

More importantly, my bodycheck made me realize why it is so tempting for many of us to simply work out and neglect the "real" tests of health and fitness. That reason is that because we are human, we sometimes want to avoid knowing the real truth about our physical health. The kind of truth that only a regular physical exam can provide.

If you are out of the habit of regular medical checkups, do what I did. Ask yourself if you feel "lucky." Your answer to yourself will probably be what mine was. Without a regular physical exam, you could be wasting your time working out. ●

Jean Sauser is a veteran professional racquetball player, instructor and author of five instructional books on racquetball. A club owner, she also holds a teaching degree in Art with a minor in Physical Education from the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse.

Bubba Smith does it. Professional football and basketball players do it. College athletes do it. Somehow these folks got the message—they have enhanced the quality of their athletic performance by exercising to the pulsating beat of Prince, the Time, Billy Ocean and Tina Turner. What are they into? Aerobic exercise!

It's important to know what participating in a good aerobic exercise program can do for you—the racquetball player, male or female.

Aerobic exercise improves cardiovascular endurance during play. In other words, you will have better "wind." Often times during a lengthy, close-scoring match that is peppered with long-lasting points, it's the player with the best cardiovascular conditioning who holds out while his opponent poops out. You'll develop better staying power during those longer moments of play and have the definite advantage over your less aerobically fit opponent. That's just for starters.

Flexibility

You will become more flexible. Of all the athletes I've tested, one of the least flexible is the racquetball player. Racquetball movements promote tightness and inflexibility. The stretching done in quality aerobic exercise classes will counteract these effects. Stretching keeps your muscles supple, prepares you for movement and prevents sore or injured muscles. Low balls will be easier to get down to because your muscles, joints, ligaments and tendons are more supple, better oiled. A good aerobics class will include exercises and stretches that will increase your range of motion, reduce muscle tension and prevent muscle strain. Flexibility is one of the important components of being fit. As you age, the joints stiffen, fluid movement is reduced; consequently, your racquetball game suffers. A good aerobics

class is preventative medicine for this ailment.

Agility

Aerobic exercise improves your quickness and agility on the racquetball court. Have you ever tripped over your own feet while going for a shot? Could your 80 year old aunt beat you to a ball? Not to worry! Aerobic exercise can help you out here, too. If you are strong, have good hand-eye coordination, but lack speed and agility, your game could really benefit from the agile movements of aerobic dancing. Aerobics helps improve your coordination and agility through easy to follow choreographed movement.

Muscular Strength and Endurance

A good aerobics class increases your muscular strength and endurance. During a typical racquetball game, a player relies heavily on his legs (hamstrings, quads, calves) as well as buttocks, lower and upper back, shoulders and arms. An aerobics class will include exercises for increasing the strength and endurance of each muscle group involved in racquetball movement. As your muscles become stronger you will notice an improvement in agility and on-court mobility. You can also punch-out your opponent if he beats you!

Injury Prevention

Aerobic exercise decreases injuries. Unless you're into pain, this is one advantage that's going to appeal to you. And if you've ever been injured while playing your favorite sport, you know what I mean. Not only does it hurt, it's also expensive (doctor's bills, therapy, etc.). Also when you're injured, sometimes you have to take precious time away from racquetball in order to recuperate. Aerobic exercise decreases your chances of injury simply because you're more fit. You are more flexible, agile, stronger, have more en-



duration both ways—cardiovascular and muscular.

Weight Loss

You lose weight, look good and feel good. Aerobic exercise burns calories more efficiently than does racquetball; consequently you will lose weight, look and feel better. With a loss of excess weight, you will move with more ease, grace and speed on the court. Who knows? Maybe your love life will improve.

Change of Pace

Aerobics enables you to develop a new athletic interest. Most people get bored after an extended period of repeating the same activity. Adding aerobic dance exercise to your athletic repertoire will help you improve your outlook, give you something new and challenging to engage in and open up the opportunity to meet new friends where the atmosphere is non-competitive and fun.

How To Pick A Class

Aerobic exercise has had an incredible growth since its inception fif-

teen years ago. There are aerobic classes in many styles: jazz dance exercise, ballet exercise, Christian music exercise, yoga, stretch class with piano background. You name it and it's available! International Dance Exercise Association is developing certification standards for class content and instructor qualification, but meanwhile, it's up to you to pick a quality class suited to your needs.

Shop around! If you belong to a club that offers aerobic exercise, ask attending members their opinions of the various classes and instructors. Try the different classes at your club.

If you do not belong to a club that offers aerobic exercise, keep shopping around. Ask friends who go to different classes. Call International Dance Exercise Association in San Diego and perhaps they can give you a recommendation (619-274-2770). Most clubs/instructors/programs offer the first class for free.

What to Look for Once You're There

Three most important components of

an aerobics class are the facility, the instructor and the class format.

Look at the floor. If you see concrete—*leave!* Do not participate in this class because your legs, knees and lower back will hurt a lot. If you can't tell what the floor composition is ask the instructor. If the instructor doesn't know, leave even faster—this instructor is not for you. Here in the order of best to worst are the most commonly found floor compositions:

1. Wood over airspace (BEST!)
2. Flat carpet covering wood over airspace (OK).
3. Wood or linoleum over concrete (Not Good).
4. Thick, cushy carpeting over anything (Worse).
5. Plain concrete (WORST!).

Does the facility have mirrors? While not mandatory, mirrors help you improve the effectiveness of your exercise by allowing you to watch your body alignment and correct it if need be. Mirrors are a good teaching tool for your instructor because she has a better view of each student. She can direct you to

observe yourself in the mirror and to change a misalignment (protruding abdominals, pelvis not tucked, etc.). Once you exercise in a mirrored room, you'll find what a great advantage it is.

Proper room ventilation contributes a lot to the quality of your workout. Thermostatically controlled air-conditioning is ideal. A room without good ventilation can get mighty uncomfortable once all those bodies start heating up. If no air conditioning is present, an alternative is windows or doors that offer access to fresh air.

Class size is important. If the class is too crowded, your chance for injury will increase, and the quality of your workout will decrease.

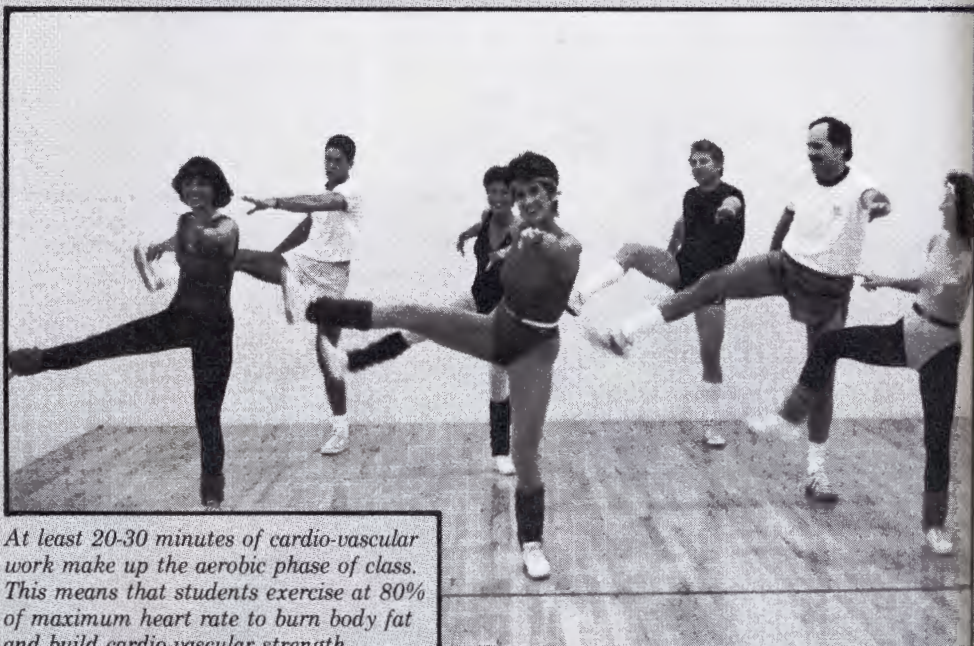
A drinking fountain or cups of water should be available for replenishment of lost fluids. By the way—it's an old wives tale that you should not drink anything while participating in physical activity. There should be a toilet available so that you can urinate right before beginning exercise.

Ideally, different class levels should be provided. A beginning, intermediate, and advanced level should be offered, along with an explanation of each class format. This will help you decide your level.

OK, the facility passes the test. On to an equally important component, the instructor. Don't be afraid to ask what the instructor's qualifications are. After all, it's your body you're entrusting to her! Avoid an instructor who lacks experience. A good instructor knows her stuff!—Anatomy, physiology, kinesiology. She should be trained in aerobic dance exercise and know how to teach it. Ideally, she has a degree in health or physical education. If not, she should have trained with a reputable organization. She keeps up on the latest exercise information. A good instructor is motivating and fun. She explains what to do and what *not* to do. Her exercises are safe, effective, and easy to follow. She tells the class of modifications of different exercises. She does not show off because she knows she's there to



A professionally conducted aerobic exercise class has a warm-up period for starters and a cool down period at the very end of class.



At least 20-30 minutes of cardio-vascular work make up the aerobic phase of class. This means that students exercise at 80% of maximum heart rate to burn body fat and build cardio-vascular strength.

assist you. Consequently, she watches the class carefully and is always reminding you of these important things: correct body alignment, to breathe, to hold in abdominals, and to keep heel to floor contact during aerobic phase. A good instructor will never put your body in jeopardy with dangerous movements—she's particularly cautious with your ankles, low back and knees. For your safety, she is CPR trained.

A good workout is safe, effective and

fun. Depending upon class length and level, it should include:

- 10-15 minutes warm-up.
- 20-30 minutes cardiovascular work (aerobic phase).
- 20 minutes muscular strength & endurance (toning).
- 5-10 minutes cool and stretch.

The Warm-up (10-15 minutes). This should include movements that slowly raise the heart rate in preparation for the aerobic phase. During this period your body's largest muscles (quads, hamstrings

and gluteals) are used to slowly elevate the heart and warm the body. A slight sweat should be broken. At this time stretching should be light and easy—nothing heavy duty. Absolutely no ballistic (bouncing) stretches—just static (no bounce).

20-30 minutes cardiovascular. Heart rate should be 65-80% of your working heart rate. Some authorities advocate 65-85%, I feel 85% is too high and not necessary. Your instructor should explain how to determine your target heart rate. If she doesn't—ASK! If your heart rate is too high, do not stop abruptly. Rather, eliminate the hopping movements and walk through the steps for awhile. The aerobic phase should include upper body movements—not just foot movements.

Twenty minutes muscle strengthening and endurance. This segment tones and strengthens key muscle groups: *all* abdominals (obliques, rectus and transverse—you have more than one stomach muscle!), buttocks, inner and outer thighs,

hamstrings, upper back, shoulders, biceps and triceps. It's also a good idea to strengthen muscles in the lower leg including muscles supporting the ankles. Arm strengthening should also include chest muscles. Watch for unsafe abdominal muscles—knees should always be bent, pelvic area tilted, abdominals pulled down to a concave, hallowed-out position and the movement should be controlled. If your back begins to hurt, stop immediately. As a matter of fact, if *anything* hurts, stop right away. Be patient with yourself. Give yourself time to build your muscular strength and endurance. Do not overdo!

5-10 cool and stretch. Again—no bouncing stretches!! All stretches should be held for at least 10 seconds. During this time your body will welcome more strenuous stretching because your muscles are warm. Three things should occur during this phase. Your muscles will get properly stretched, your body temperature cools down to normal, and your heart rate returns to its resting rate.

What To Wear

Don't run out and invest a small fortune in aerobic clothing. Just wear comfortable clothing—your racquetball clothes will do just fine at first. Most important are your shoes—they should be comfortable and supportive. Among the best aerobic shoes are Avia, Lotto and Reebok.

Don't give up if you didn't like your first class—try a different class, a different facility, a different instructor. There's someone for everyone—that's why we have chocolate and vanilla. Hang in there and be picky!

If you get "hooked", remember do not do anything that hurts—listen to your body. The old cliché, "No pain, no gain" is not only outdated thinking, it's ridiculous. Give yourself time to get into good shape. You can't be the class star the first time there. After you have intelligently picked out the best class for you, go for it, have fun, and don't forget to laugh at yourself once in awhile. Buy some aerobic clothing and enjoy it. Attend a class at least three times a week, and don't be selfish, tell your racquetball buddies about it. They'll thank you for it, and who knows, maybe they'll have to be the ones to pay for the beers after your next match! ●

Also included in a well-rounded aerobic exercise class is 20 minutes of muscular strength and endurance exercises.



Gerri Tipton-Empey, 40, has a B.S. in English and Physical Education and a M.A. in Education. She has been participating in and teaching aerobics classes for six years. She presently teaches aerobics classes in three establishments in Portland, Oregon: Willamette Athletic Club, East Side Athletic Club and St. Vincent's Hospital's Health and Lifestyle Center. She is a charter member of International Dance Exercise Association. She was Portland, Oregon's 1984 Chairman of American Heart Association's aerobic dance-a-thon, Dance For Heart.

Glute Strength For Racquetball

by Jean Sauser

Racquetball has always been a sport described by its players as an activity where you have to move your behind! Many a player has been heard on the court telling himself to move it or lose it (in more graphic terms, of course) after failing to successfully run down an opponent's pass shot.

Far from just being an expression, however, having a strong gluteus maximus will actually help you become faster on the court.

Players who have strong butt muscles are faster sprinters. The ability to sprint in racquetball is a highly desired attribute.

Additionally, strong gluteus maximus muscles enable you to step into your shots with more force, thus creating more power for your game.

If you don't have access to weight machines or would simply prefer to build strength at your convenience instead of at your club, a simple exercise can be done at home that will strengthen your gluteus muscles.

Hip Raises

Step One: Lie flat on the floor with your legs bent so that your heels are right behind your butt and your arms are outstretched alongside you flat on the floor (photo 1).

Step Two: Raise your hips to the count of 2 by contracting your butt muscles. Elevate them so that there is a straight line from your knees to your shoulders. Exhale as you do so and hold your position at the top for four counts (photo 2).

Step Three: Lower your hips, to the count, inhale and rest for a count of two.

Additional Tips: Repeat this exercise 10 times in a row. Rest for one minute. Repeat two more times.



Photo 1



Photo 2

After you can comfortably do three sets of 10 exercises, keep increasing the number of exercises in a set.

Summary

After a few weeks, if you are playing on a regular basis, you should see a slight increase in the power

of your game combined with some additional quickness on the court. Add this exercise to your pushup and curl up program to insure an increase in strength combined with the ability to move it and not lose it! ●

Pro Files in Fitness —Lynn Adams

An appearance by Lynn Adams in the finals of a professional racquetball tournament is rapidly becoming akin to death and taxes among life's inevitabilities.

The 27-year old native of Costa Mesa, Calif. earned a berth in the finals of each of the seven WPRA tournaments in which she competed last year, winning three times. In fact, she won 24 of 28 matches during the 1983-84 season (an .860 winning percentage), claimed her second straight national doubles championship (with Terri Gilreath) and won her fifth consecutive outdoor singles championship.

Almost anyone but Adams would have been more than happy with such impressive credentials. However, after holding the WPRA's number-one ranking for two seasons, she reluctantly (and she says, "temporarily") relinquished her crown to Heather McKay, an opponent she has beaten 11 times since 1982 . . . each time in the finals of a WPRA tournament. Now the number-two ranked player in the game, Adams' goal, like the nationally known car rental company, is to try harder to regain and retain the top spot.

Sponsored by Ektelon and Nike, Adams is regarded as a quick and agile player who can hit well on the run. She is an intelligent, strategic player who rarely wastes a shot and, though many players consider her backhand to be her most lethal weapon, Adams is equally adept with her forehand.

Like most players on the pro tour, conditioning plays a major role in her preparation for competition. Articulate and personable, Adams commented on her conditioning to *National Racquetball* just prior to participating in a recent WPRA event.



NR: Your game combines both physical strength and endurance. Which do you emphasize in your conditioning routine?

Adams: Definitely endurance. I do a lot of speed work, such as hill sprints and court sprints. I like to work out on the stationary bicycle. If I'm ever given the option of choosing between doing something aerobic versus doing weights, I'll always choose the aerobic workout.

NR: You do use weights as part of your conditioning routine, don't you?

Adams: Yes, but I confine my weight work to the upper body, because of the amount of work my legs get through my off-court workout program and in the course of regular racquetball play. Usually, I combine free weights with universal equipment. I don't use a lot of weight, so I do a lot of reps . . . like three or four sets of 15 reps. I'd say I spend about four hours each day on my speed work and weight work combined.

NR: Do you maintain a specific nutritional program?

Adams: I've done a few things on and off in the past, but generally I don't have a weight problem because of my workout and playing schedule. One thing I did at the beginning of this year is give up all sweets. I have not

enjoyed losing my number-one ranking and felt my performance last year was generally poor. Giving up sweets was part of my commitment, both mentally and physically, to returning to number-one to stay. Sometimes, I feel like grabbing a big cookie and shoving it into my mouth, but I've been able to overcome that temptation. I actually have lost a little bit of weight pretty easily and I really feel so much better and have much more energy . . . I never feel like I need to take a big nap in the middle of the day.

NR: As a professional racquetball player, you *have* to maintain a stringent exercise program. What are your recommendations for the thousands of recreational players who want to stay in condition?

Adams: I think most people are restricted by time, so if they can only pick one thing to do in order to stay in shape, it should be something aerobic. Maybe they could ride a bike for half-hour, or swim and kick their legs for about 20 minutes. Jogging for 15-20 minutes is a good idea, too, but even walking for that same amount of time is better than doing nothing.

NR: Because of the amount of traveling you do as a member of the team Ektelon professional staff, you find yourself in a lot of hotel rooms. Are



there any kind of conditioning exercises that can be done in a confined area?

Adams: I'm the wrong person to ask, because I don't do anything when I get to the room. My hotel room is sort of a sanctuary for me away from my busy personal appearance and competitive schedule. When I'm away from home, I usually try to find a nearby club where I can do my weight training and on-court practice, then find someplace to jog and do my hill sprint work. For the person who

travels and wants to get an aerobic workout in the room, I would suggest traveling with a jump rope. It's easy to pack and doesn't require a great deal of space to use.

NR: If you were to name your biggest conditioning problem, what would it be?

Adams: I don't really think I have a particular conditioning problem. Most people have a problem sticking to a certain regimen or routine, but my experience in track has produced a sort of mental toughness that keeps me on

schedule with my conditioning and practice. I've learned how to mentally prepare for getting physically prepared.

NR: What are some of your immediate goals?

Adams: Well, aside from wanting to dominate the sport of racquetball for the next five to seven years as the number-one ranked player, I want to continue to devote time to my role as a spokesperson for the National Arthritis Foundation and possibly do even more than I have in the past. Also, I'd like to get involved with helping women learn more about themselves through competition and sport. But basically, I just want to remain in racquetball because I truly enjoy my lifestyle . . . it's a fantasy lifestyle really. My association with Ektelon has provided the ability to travel extensively, meet a lot of different people, and enjoy a lot of interesting opportunities. I'm 27-years old and feel great, and I'm looking forward to the rest of this year and the years ahead in racquetball. ●

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Reader Survey

Tell Us About Your Racquet

Eyeguards and racquets are the two equipment surveys which generate a lot of response from our readers. Eyeguards provide a point of controversy for the sport and, of course, no one could play racquetball without a racquet.

But, then the question arises, what racquet does one use? With so many different types to choose from, the reader has quite a time deciding what's right for him.

We'd like to know what you think about racquets. Fill out the survey below and mail it back to us by June 15. We'll publish the results in our August issue and present you with a complete guide to racquets that are out in the marketplace.

Mail your completed form to National Racquetball Reader Survey, 4350 DiPaolo Ctr/Dearlove Road, Glenview IL 60025.

1. How often do you play racquetball during the year?

- ☐ 3 or more times per week
- ☐ 2 times per week
- ☐ 1 time per week
- ☐ 1 time per month or less

2. What is your playing level?

- ☐ Beginner
- ☐ Intermediate
- ☐ Advanced
- ☐ Open
- ☐ Professional

3. How many racquets do you personally own?

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four or more

4. What kind of a racquet do you usually play with?

- ☐ Aluminum
- ☐ Fiberglass
- ☐ Steel
- ☐ Graphite
- ☐ Wood
- ☐ Other

5. What is the name of the firm that manufactures your racquet?

- ☐ AMF Head
- ☐ AMF Voit
- ☐ DP
- ☐ Ektelon
- ☐ Hogan/Pro Kennex
- ☐ Omega
- ☐ Wilson
- ☐ Richcraft
- ☐ Other _____

6. Have you had your racquet restrung in the past 12 months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. How many racquetball racquets did you buy in the last 12 months?

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three or more
- ☐ None

8. What was the cost of the last racquet you bought?

- ☐ \$20 or less
- ☐ \$21 - \$40
- ☐ \$41 - \$60
- ☐ \$61 - \$100
- ☐ \$101 - \$150
- ☐ \$151 or more

9. What will most likely influence your next racquet buying decision?

(Rank in order of your first three preferences; i.e., put a number 1 next to your first choice, a number 2 next to your second choice, etc.)

- ☐ Playing test
- ☐ Price
- ☐ Appearance
- ☐ Local instructor's advice
- ☐ "Feel"
- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Touring Pros endorsement
- ☐ Another player's advice

10. What do you like most about the racquet you're now using?

(Rank in order of first three preferences.)

- ☐ Grip
- ☐ Appearance
- ☐ "Sweet Spot"
- ☐ Power
- ☐ Control
- ☐ Weight
- ☐ Balance
- ☐ Other _____

11. Where did you purchase your last racquetball racquet?

- ☐ Local club pro shop
- ☐ YMCA/JCC
- ☐ Sporting Goods Store
- ☐ Discount Store
- ☐ Mail Order
- ☐ Other _____

12. What do you dislike most about the racquet you're now using?

- ☐ Grip
- ☐ Appearance
- ☐ "Sweet Spot"

- ☐ Power
- ☐ Control
- ☐ Weight
- ☐ Balance
- ☐ Other _____

13. Are you male or female?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

14. What is your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65 or over

15. Please make any comments you'd like about your racquet:

16. (Optional)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Name of facility you play at _____

City/State of facility _____

Tournament Results

Cliff Swain

In one of the most remarkable performances in memory, 18-year-old Cliff Swain made a mockery of the men's professional rankings by upsetting four of the game's top 10 players and winning the \$10,000 Tulsa Pro-Am Racquetball Championships. Riding on the strength of a ferocious drive serve, the #24-ranked Swain stunned heavily-favored Scott Oliver in the final, 11-10, 9-11, 6-11, 11-5, 11-10, to become the only unseeded player in the history of racquetball to win a ranking professional tournament.

The Tulsa event, which was sponsored by Clark Resources and Michelob, was played at the Tulsa Racquetball and Aerobics Club, February 6-10, as the fifth stop on the newly created Racquetball Manufacturers Association (RMA) Pro Tour.

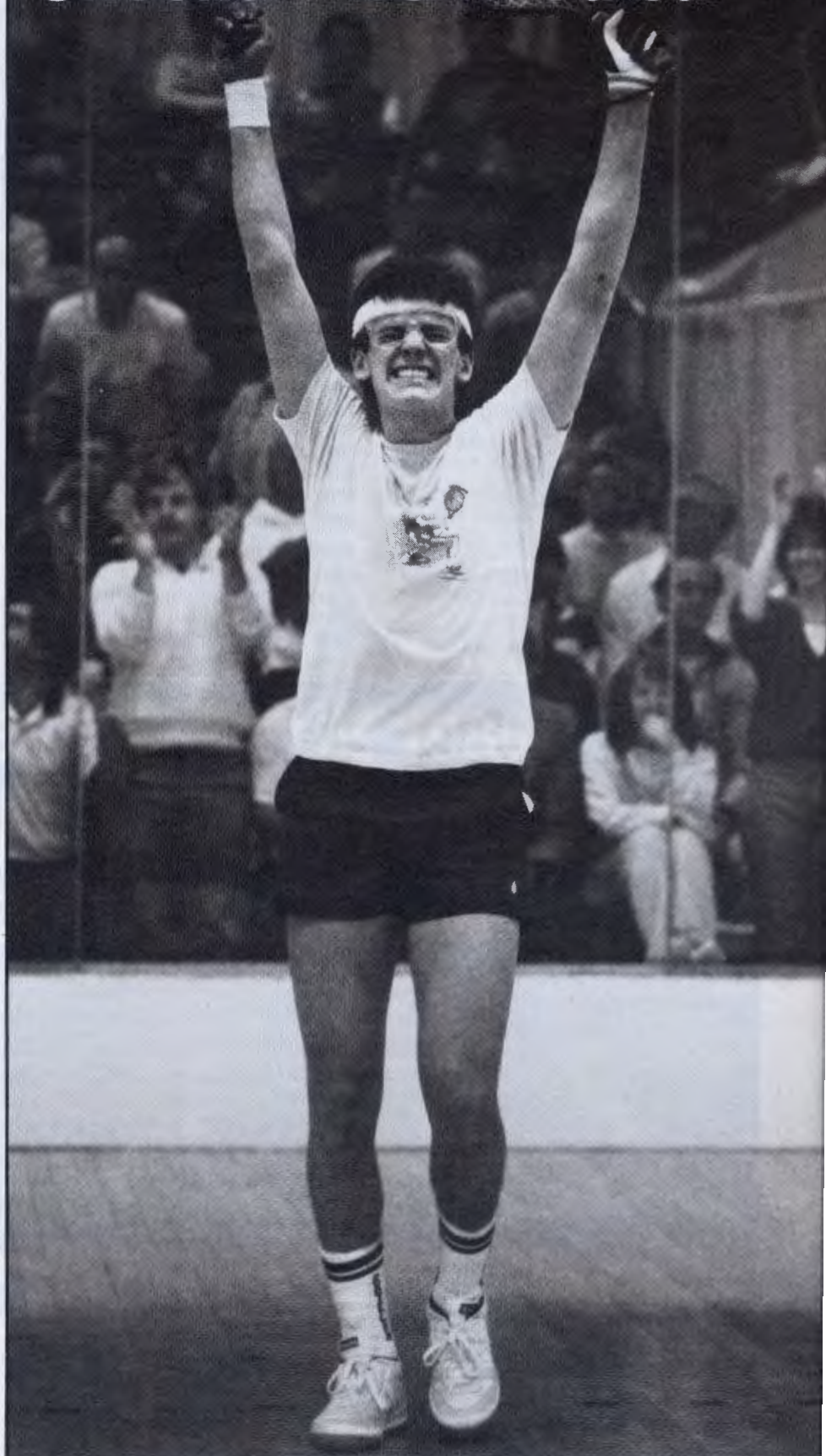
It was the first pro stop ever for the state of Oklahoma, and the location was at least partly responsible for the surprising outcome. The tournament was played on two unusual exhibition courts which sported both full back and front-wall viewing, making it the first front-wall-glass pro competition since 1979. The unusual playing characteristics, combined with the absence of both Marty Hogan and Mike Yellen, made Tulsa a time-bomb just waiting to explode.

Enter Cliff Swain—a quiet college student from Braintree, MA. Swain, a lanky lefthander, had hardly built himself a fearsome reputation prior to Tulsa; in a sporadic 18-month career as a pro, his highest finishes have been in the round-of-16.

So while the Peck brothers were salivating at the prospect of their first meeting ever in the finals of a major event, no one noticed when the youngster from the Northeast outlasted Steve Lerner in five games in the 32's. They weren't very concerned when he came from behind to take out a sputtering #5 Bret Harnett in the 16's; after all, Harnett frequently struggles in the early rounds.

But when Swain drubbed #7 Jerry Hilecher, 11-4, 11-8, 7-11, 11-4, in the quarters, most of the top seeds were there to watch. What concerned them was not that he won, but how he won—untouched aces. Swain is a die-hard

Shocks Pros In Tulsa



Swain reacts to the moment of victory.

The unusual front wall/back wall glass made for lots of aces and upsets in Tulsa.

power drive server straight out of the Hogan mold, and he was consistently firing his rockets into a corner of the front-wall glass that made them virtually invisible to the receiver.

In fact, the quarter-final matches left no doubt that Tulsa was a server's tournament. Fifth-seeded Oliver, one of the fiercest servers in the game, had little trouble taking out #4 Ruben Gonzalez, 11-9, 1-11, 11-9, 11-2.

Dave Peck couldn't get his drive serve cranking, and fell easily to Gerry Price, 11-3, 11-5, 11-9. And top-seeded Gregg Peck needed every ounce of concentration he could muster to fight off a strong serving challenge by a resurgent Doug Cohen, 11-3, 11-3, 9-11, 5-11, 11-3.

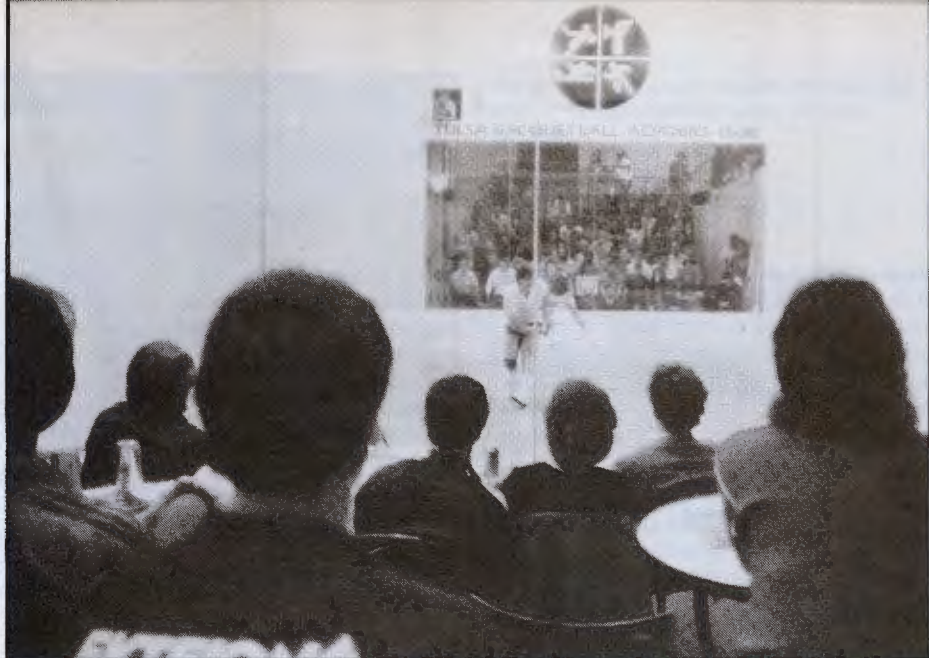
If there had been wagering in Tulsa, the bookmakers would have closed their windows for the semi-final matchups. The line said that Gregg Peck, who is by far the hottest player in pro racquetball today, was a cinch to take out Oliver. And Price was a prohibitive favorite over the upstart Swain who was playing in his first pro semi-final. That was the line; and had it not been for two incredible serving exhibitions, the line might have been correct.

Oliver made no attempt to conceal his game plan against Gregg Peck. He took a quick 6-0 lead in game one on three outright aces. Unlike Swain's hard drives, however, Oliver made judicious use of what had become the most popular serve of the Tulsa tournament—the hard Z.

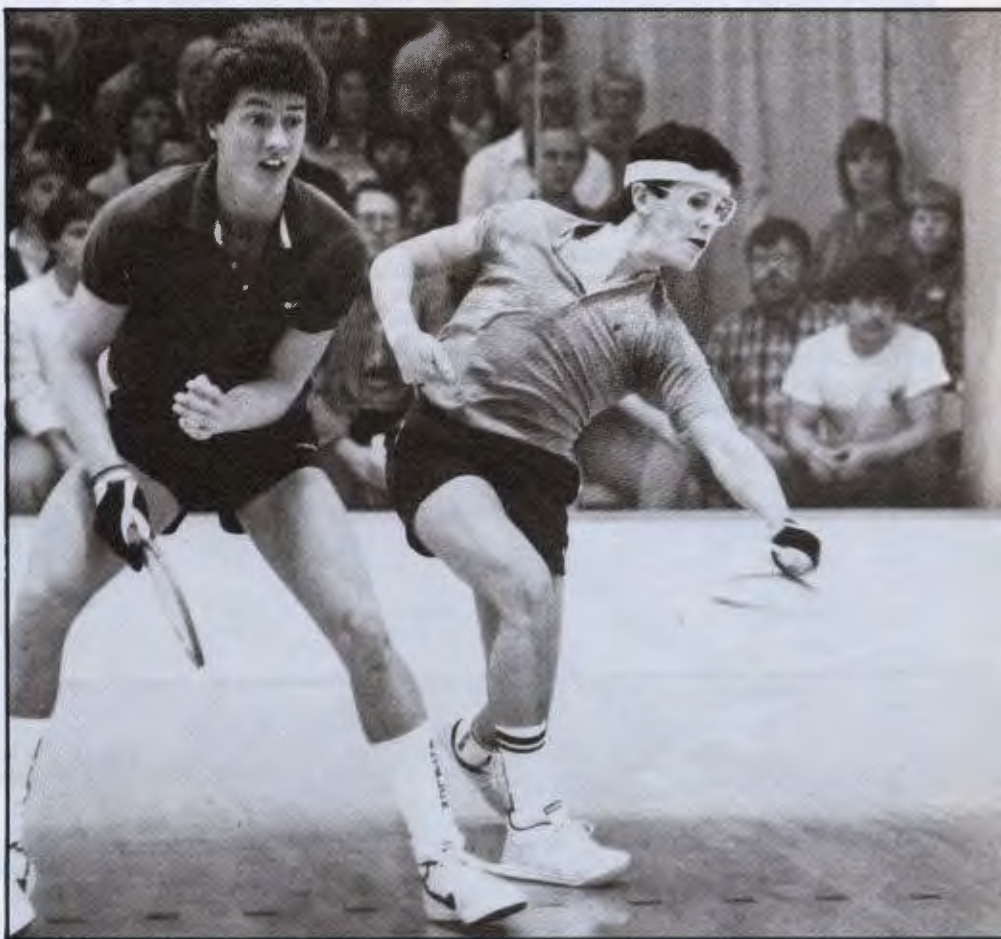
Because the ball became more difficult to pick out of the glass the higher it went, the hard Z—which hits the front wall about six feet up—simply vanished until the receiver had already committed himself far in the wrong direction. Peck guessed wrong nearly every time.

Oliver breezed through the first game 11-4. Gregg reached down and found some aces of his own to win 11-1 in the second. But after Peck moved to a 3-0 lead in game three, Oliver turned it on and broke Peck's back with 11 straight points on six aces, adding four more aces in the fourth to upset the number-one seed, 11-4, 1-11, 11-3, 11-6.

Despite the loss to Oliver, Gregg Peck's semi-final finish further established him as one of the tour's most consistent players; in the five events this season he has chalked up three semi's, one second, and one win. The Tulsa finish



Oliver strains while Swain rips a forehand down the left wall in the finals.



brought him within one point of overtaking Mike Yellen for the #2 position in the men's rankings.

Unlike the Oliver-Peck semi-final, the Swain-Price matchup featured two players who were gunning for their first trip to the finals of a major tour stop this season.

It didn't take long for Swain to find out on Saturday night that he wasn't the

only great server in the club. Price is one of the best, and the two squared off so evenly that neither player was able to build any lasting momentum. Swain took the first game, Price stole the next two, and Cliff tied it in the fourth.

With both players matching each other on the serve ace-for-ace (and about 30% of the serves were aces), the tie-

breaker came down to who could score in the precious few rallies that came along. Price took control early, and zeroed-in his backhand to build what appeared to be an insurmountable 10-4 lead.

But Gerry failed to score at match point, and watched in despair as Swain stubbornly fought his way back into the match. With the help of three untouched drive serves and a pair of errors by his opponent, Cliff heated the walls and stopped Gerry cold as he scored seven straight to win by an eyelash, 11-7, 5-11, 1-11, 11-8, 11-10.

Swain was ecstatic, but his last-second comeback shattered Price. The following afternoon, Gerry told a local newspaper reporter: *"My heart is still broken. It hasn't healed, but I can't get it (the loss) back."*

The odds were stacked so heavily against Swain in Sunday afternoon's final, that only a handful of the 200+ spectators on hand gave him any chance at all of winning. His opponent, Oliver, seemed primed for a win; he was playing in his third final of the last 12 months. Swain was playing his first, and no pro player had ever won a title match on his first try. No unseeded player had ever won a ranking pro stop. And only twice in history had anyone under 19-years-old gone all the way.

To no one's surprise, the final turned out to be one of the most flawlessly played and exciting matches of the season. Both Oliver and Swain served, moved, and shot with perfection. Scott came out hot, serving up a pair of aces while rolling to an 8-1 lead in the first game before Cliff was able to shake off the initial butterflies. The youngster fired-up his arm, and gave Oliver his first taste of the giant-killer serve. With five aces, four of which were rifled to Oliver's forehand, Swain nailed the first game, 11-10.

Despite sputtering a bit on his own serve, Oliver was able to put Cliff on the defensive in the rallies and won a tight second game, 11-9. Scott's drive serve to the right (Swain's backhand) was back in game three, and he won going away, 11-6. Swain returned the favor and breezed through the fourth game, 11-5.

Oliver is recognized by his fellow players as one of the best "clutch" players in the game; it's widely accepted that if you can't beat him before you go into the tie-breaker, you've got a big problem on your hands. But Swain apparently hasn't been around long enough to know that, for it was Cliff's game that caught fire in the tie-breaker.

He dominated every phase of the game

and rolled to a 9-1 lead, while Oliver desperately groped for something, anything, that could cool the challenger down. Surprisingly, he found something—a high lob Z serve that is common in most pro tournaments, but had been almost unseen in the matches at Tulsa.

For the first time in a week, Swain's inexperience proved almost fatal. His timing went haywire as he impatiently went after Oliver's perfectly-placed "balloon ball" serves, and Scott brilliantly turned a 1-9 deficit into a 10-9 lead. Twice he served for the match, and twice Swain denied him with sprawling forehand kills to the right corner.

Standing in the service box at 9-10, Swain had no choice but to rare back and let fly with his most potent weapon. As Oliver set himself in backcourt, and glued his eyes to the transparent front-wall, Swain rifled two perfect drives into the crotch of the

Tulsa Pro-Am Tulsa Racquetball & Aerobics Club February 6-10, 1985 Men's Professional Singles

Round of 32: Fairbairn d. Yellen, forfeit; Swain d. Lerner 11-10, 9-11, 11-4, 4-11, 11-1; Andrews d. Gilliam 10-11, 11-2, 11-4, 11-5; Price d. Kahlainen 11-6, 11-9, 11-3; Gonzalez d. Smith 11-3, 11-5, 11-9; May d. Obremski, forfeit; A. Gross d. Plotkin 11-1, 6-11, 7-11, 11-4, 11-3; Harnett d. Norris, forfeit;

D. Peck d. Hammock 11-1, 11-2, 11-1; Green d. Terry 1-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-1, 11-9; Egerman d. Nolan 11-7, 11-8, 11-9; Oliver d. Botello 10-11, 11-9, 11-5, 11-1; Hilecher d. Arnovitz 11-10, 11-3, 11-10; Cohen d. Inoue 11-6, 11-1, 6-11, 11-7; D. Gross d. Negrete 11-4, 11-7, 7-11, 11-6; G. Peck d. Atwell 11-4, 11-4, 11-4.

Round of 16: G. Peck d. Fairbairn 11-2, 11-8, 11-4; Cohen d. Andrews 6-11, 11-10, 11-4, 11-10; Oliver d. A. Gross 11-4, 11-4, 2-11, 11-9; Gonzales d. D. Gross 11-9, 11-7, 11-6; Swain d. Harnett 11-3, 1-11, 11-4, 11-10; Hilecher d. Ray 10-11, 11-2, 11-0, 11-6; Price d. Egerman 10-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-0; D. Peck d. Green 11-9, 11-3, 11-1.

Quarter-finals: G. Peck d. Cohen 11-3, 11-3, 9-11, 5-11, 11-3; Oliver d. Gonzalez 11-9, 1-11, 11-9, 11-2; Swain d. Hilecher 11-4, 11-8, 7-11, 11-4; Price d. D. Peck 11-3, 11-5, 11-9.

Semi-finals: Oliver d. G. Peck 11-4, 1-11, 11-3, 11-6; Swain d. Price 11-7, 5-11, 1-11, 11-8, 11-10.

Finals: Swain d. Oliver 11-10, 9-11, 6-11, 11-5, 11-10.



Gregg Peck licks his chops as Oliver leaves up a forehand in their semi-final battle.



Price drives a backhand toward the front left corner in his quarter-final upset win over Dave Peck.

All photos © Racquetball Manufacturers Association

Official RMA Professional Rankings as of 2/10/85

1. Marty Hogan	96.66
2. Mike Yellen	70.00
3. Gregg Peck	69.00
4. Dave Peck	63.00
5. Bret Harnett	60.00
6. Scott Oliver	52.22
7. Ruben Gonzalez	50.00
8. Gerry Price	48.00
9. Jerry Hilecher	47.50
10. Cliff Swain	42.50
11. Doug Cohen	34.00
12. Ed Andrews	32.00
13. Jack Newman	27.77
14. John Eggerman	27.14
15. Brian Hawkes	27.14
16. Mike Ray	25.00
17. Richard Wagner	25.00
18. Andy Gross	22.44
19. Bill Sell	21.42
20. Corey Brysman	21.11

right side wall that sent Oliver to his knees, and brought the already frenzied crowd to their feet. Match to Swain 11-10, 9-11, 6-11, 11-5, 11-10.

So appreciative was the Tulsa audience of the racquetball exhibition they had seen, that when Swain and Oliver came back on the court for the award ceremony they were treated to a long—and emotional—standing ovation.

"I lost two games 11-10 that should have been mine," said Oliver. "I was obviously favored to win and I didn't. His serve was just better than mine—better in the clutch."

"I've been to the finals three times now and haven't won. This was the first time he had even reached the quarter-finals and he beat me. I guess it's fate—God's gift."

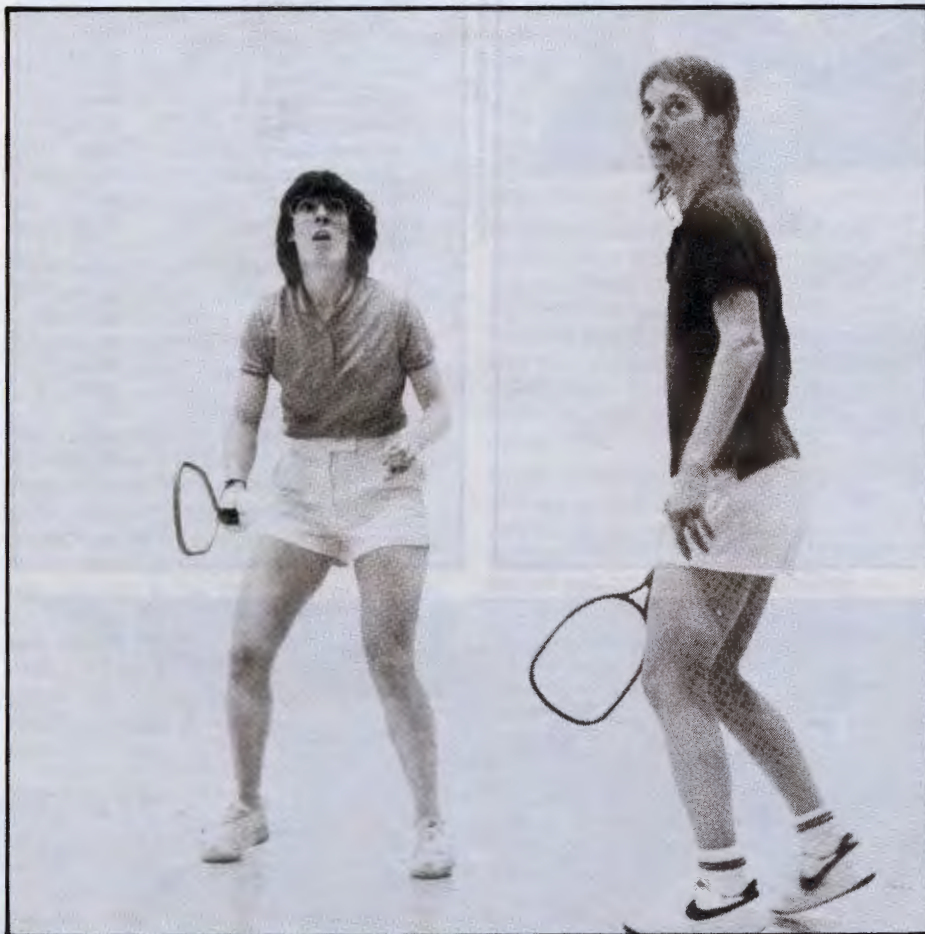
"My serve pulled it out in the end," said a proud yet humble Swain. "I thought I played well today except for that bad streak of nine points in the tie-breaker. Overall I was pretty consistent. I've dreamed about winning, but I didn't know if it was really possible. Dreams do come true once in awhile, I guess."

The rankings of both players were given a big boost by the surprising outcome. Oliver, who went into the tournament tied for seventh, passed Ruben Gonzalez for the #6 position. Swain, who collected \$3,000 for his victory, moved his ranking from 24th to 10th.



Gonzalez (r.) races to cover as Oliver sets up to put one away in their quarter-final match.

Panzeri A Surprise Finalist As Adams Takes Charge In Essex Junction



Lynn Adams with her not-so-familiar final opponent, Vicki Panzeri. Vicki has been there before against Adams, but not as many times as Heather McKay. Tour watchers agree that Vicki may be in the finals more often in the future.

She skipped the next few shots and gave Vicki a chance to get back into the game. Panzeri fought hard to make the best of the momentary opportunity Adams was giving her but never got closer than three points. The result was a first game score of 21-15.

In the second game, Adams was again first on the scoreboard. Then Vicki snapped back with a couple of aces and quick points to gain a 6-3 lead. The lead didn't last as Adams came on even stronger than before to tie the game at seven-all.

It was at this point in the match that Vicki began to physically tire. The semi-final marathon of the previous evening with Heather McKay was beginning to take its toll. Vicki scored fewer points than she did in the first game. She went down rapidly with a score of 21-11.

Realizing that game three was her last chance at a pro tour victory, Vicki made every effort and started very strong in game three. Again, Lynn Adams' superior shot-making consistency came down hard and fast at 4-4. From that point on, Lynn never slowed down. In a game that seemed only minutes old, Lynn pulled the plug on the match winning the final game with a score of 21-8.

Lynn explained the reason for her victory by saying "I'm excited that I won this tournament. I've been working very hard and I really want to finish this season ranked number one."

When asked what she thought was her biggest reason for losing the finals to Lynn, Vicki Panzeri explained that it was a combination of poor service, a faster ball, and fatigue.

"My serve really disappointed me. I started each game pretty close but never did build my serve to its fullest potential. I played a little better than yesterday. Heather didn't push me as

Local residents claim that nothing ever happens in Essex Junction, Vermont. That was until Lynn Adams and Vicki Panzeri came to town for the "Stroh's Women's Pro Stop" at the Racquet's Edge Family Recreation Center, February 15-17. Adams blasted past the competition in Vermont to win the \$6,000 purse and came within three points of retaking the number one position on the tour. Thanks to Heather McKay's fine performances over the past year, the number one spot has been eluding Lynn for almost a year.

The final showdown of Adams and Panzeri in Vermont was the second time in four months the two West Coast natives have met in a W.P.R.A. event. The match was made possible by Vicki's spectacular upset over top seeded Heather McKay in the semi-finals.

Going into the finals, Adams was the odds on favorite. In her previous matches Lynn totally dominated each of her opponents. She lost only one game en route to the finals and that was a game to Marci Lynch, of Philadelphia, PA, in the round of 16. After that, Lynn yielded no more than 15 points in the remaining games she played during the tournament.

In the opening game of her final match against Panzeri, Lynn showed how hungry she was to become number one again when she jumped out to an early six-point lead. Adeptly moving Panzeri to one side of the court and then passing her the other way for quick points, Lynn gave the crowd a lesson on the importance of court strategy. Just when the first game was getting boring in favor of Lynn, at 7-1, Adams faltered.



Vicki Panzeri anticipates a famous McKay backhand in their exciting five game semi-final match.

Stroh's Women's Pro Stop Racquet's Edge Family Recreation Center Essex Junction, Vermont

Round of 16:

Heather McKay d. Marci Drexler; 21-15, 21-18, 15-21, 21-16
Babette Bell d. Janell Marriott; 21-15, 19-21, 14-21, 21-19, 17-15
Fran Davis d. Molly O'Brien; 21-13, 21-13, 8-21, 17-21, 21-8
Vicki Panzeri d. Sandy Robson; 21-7, 22-20, 21-16
Terri Gilreath d. Joyce Jackson; 19-21, 21-12, 21-12, 21-11
Caryn McKinney d. Chris Eyon; 23-21, 21-13, 21-16
Heather Stupp d. Bonnie Stoll; 21-9, 21-17, 21-17
Lynn Adams d. Marcy Lynch; 21-13, 21-8, 9-21, 21-11

Quarter-finals:

McKay d. Bell; 21-16, 21-18, 21-14
Panzeri d. Davis; 23-21, 21-14, 21-9
McKinney d. Gilreath; 24-22, 21-12, 19-21, 21-10
Adams d. Stupp; 21-15, 21-10, 21-6

Semi-finals:

Panzeri d. McKay; 21-7, 17-21, 18-21, 21-18, 21-19
Adams d. McKinney; 21-11, 21-14, 21-15

Finals:

Adams d. Panzeri; 21-15, 21-11, 21-8

W.P.R.A. Rankings (as of Feb. 20, 1985)

Ranking	Player	Total Points
1	Heather McKay	308.00
2	Lynn Adams	305.75
3	S. Wright Hamilton	127.50
4	Vicki Panzeri	117.00
5	Terri Gilreath	114.00
6	Caryn McKinney	102.00
7	Francine Davis	96.00
8	Janell Marriott	86.25
9	Joyce Jackson	71.00
10	Brenda Poe-Barrett	67.50
11	Jennifer Harding	51.00
12	Peggy Gardner	41.25
13	Bonnie Stoll	37.00
14	Heather Stupp	33.75
15	Molly O'Brien	31.00
16	Marcy Lynch	28.00
17	Marci Greer	24.50
18	Liz Alvarado	23.00
19	Martha McDonald	20.00
20	Carol Pranka	20.00
21	Mary Dee	18.00
22	Babette Bell	17.50
23	Laura Martino	16.50
24	Trina Rasmussen	16.00
25	Marci Drexler	15.50
26	Stacey Fletcher	15.00
27	Rita Hoff-Scott	12.50
28	Sandy Robson	10.50
29	Val Paese	10.00
	Monique Parent	10.00

much, and I wasn't quite as tired yesterday. The ball we played with yesterday was slower in my opinion. Lynn loves the fast ball, and after last night, I was too tired to keep up with this one."

Heather McKay's noticeable absence in the finals was a combination of fine playing by Panzeri and a sore neck which was later diagnosed as a pinched nerve.

"I had her at game point three times but couldn't put the ball away," McKay lamented. Never one to complain about physical pain, or make excuses for losing, McKay explained her neck by saying, "I wouldn't have gone into the court if I didn't think I could win. Vicki played well. No excuses."

The other semi-final match between Caryn McKinney and Lynn Adams was an example of just how tournament tough Lynn Adams can be when she sets her mind to it. Lynn completely dominated their three games. Her route to the finals was never in jeopardy as she put McKinney away with game scores of 21-11, 21-14, and 21-15.

McKinney had pulled an upset of her own on the way to her semi-final finish. She upset fourth ranked Terri Gilreath in a four game match that was hard fought but definitely was McKinney all the way.

Other tournament upsets included unseeded Babette Bell of Pensacola, FL downing 10th seed Janell Marriott of Warwick, RI and young up-and-coming Heather Stupp wiped out tour veteran Bonnie Stoll in three quick games.

The "Stroh's Women's Pro Stop" was sponsored in part by the Champlain Valley Distributors of Burlington, Vermont. Proceeds of the tournament were donated to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. ●

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Traveler..... 19.99	Ektelon Eye Sentry..... 23.99
Center Court..... 10.99	Ektelon Sentinel..... 19.99
Court Duffel..... 16.99	Ektelon Crt. Goggles..... 16.99
HEAD	Ektelon Deflector..... 12.99
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Hogan Barrel..... 16.99	 21.50

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New Products



Voit Sports Introduces New Racquet Line

AMF Voit is introducing its new racquetball racquet line. The racquets feature the most sophisticated technology available in graphite design. Constructed of double-braided graphite and kevlar, the racquets are reinforced with boron fiber for extra durability.

A computer controlled weaving process ensures that each racquet is built under the strictest standards. The AMF Voit Nova and Impact series racquets are also incorporated into the new racquet line to offer a racquet for players of every ability.

For additional information contact Marjorie Goldman, Director of Advertising, Voit Sports, 4667 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 400, Newport Beach, CA 92660.

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Versa Climber by Heart Rate Inc.

Versa-Climber is a new vertical climbing exercise machine that utilizes vertical climbing motions for muscular strength and endurance development. It provides an alternating arm and leg action with variable resistance, stroke and speed.

The intense exercise created by involving all of the skeletal muscles to use Versa-Climber provides a calorie burn twice as great as any other exercise. It can be used for aerobic as well as anerobic training for cardiorespiratory improvement.

For more information contact Heart Rate Inc., 3001 Redhill Ave., suite 106, Costa Mesa, CA 92626, (714) 850-9716.

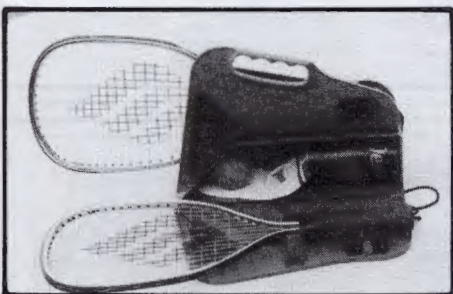


COOL BAND by Perma Frost, Inc.

COOL BAND is a sweat band designed not only to absorb moisture but to actually cool off at the player's pressure points. Wearing a COOL BAND around the head, neck, or wrists enables the body to start to cool down.

COOL BAND consists of specially designed tough jell pacs that are enclosed in head or wrist terry cloth bands and are placed into the freezer compartment until needed. When it is time to jog, walk, fish, garden, exercise, work or even when you are in the hot sun, the coolness from the jell pac is slowly released over an hour. It's like portable air conditioning. COOL BANDS are washable.

COOL BANDS are also great for reducing fevers, sprains, swelling, headaches, painful joints, etc. Prices are \$6.95 plus \$2.00 shipping & handling for one headband or two wristbands, or \$10.95 plus \$2.00 shipping & handling for a set of head and wrist bands. Louisiana residents add 4% sales tax. Colors available are: white, royal blue, light blue, kelly green, gold, red-white-blue stripes. For more information contact PERMA FROST, INC., P.O. Box 698, Mandeville, LA 70448, (504) 845-4049.

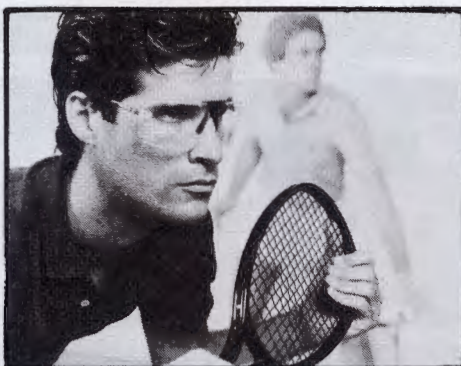


Racquet Racque From RPM Distributors

RPM Distributors introduces a handy carry-all for racquets, balls and gloves. The small and light carry-all is cushioned to keep essentials protected as well as centrally located.

Suggested retail price is \$6.90. Volume discounts are also available.

For more information contact Jerry Croskrey, RPM Distributors, 1107 Rivara Road, Stockton, CA 95207, (209) 957-3542.



Gargoyles from Pro-Tec

Combining fashion with safety, Gargoyles are so strong that they resist the impact of a pellet traveling 280 miles an hour. The lenses made from Lexan resin are the mainstay of these eyeguards.

Gargoyles are also comfortable to wear because they are lightweight and designed to fit your face. Designed to prevent fogging, Gargoyles are a welcome addition to any racquetballer's game.

For more information contact Janice Mansfield, Plastics Operations, Plastics Ave., Pittsfield, MA 01201 (413) 494-4940.



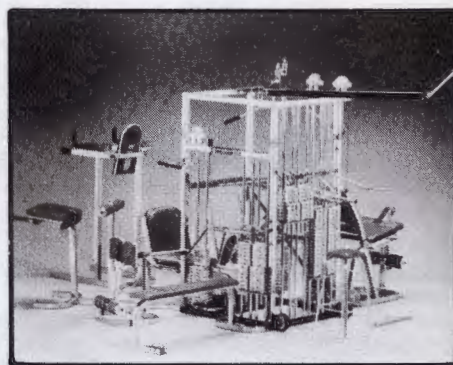
Ektelon's Optima Graphite

Ektelon has introduced the powerful and lightweight hand-laid composite Optima Graphite to its line of racquetball racquets.

The Optima Graphite contains specially-oriented graphite fibers wrapped around a solid graphite core to generate power and snap on impact. The Optima Graphite's teardrop headshape, Wishbone™ frame and Sunburst String Pattern combine to enlarge the "sweet spot" resulting in increased control and racquet responsiveness. The 240 gram, head-light racquet is geared toward the intermediate through tournament level player who desires extra power in a racquet.

Ektelon's Optima Graphite, which comes with a full-cover carrying case, is available in four handle sizes: super small (3 $\frac{1}{8}$ "), extra-small (3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "), small (4") and flared. The racquet features a full one-year frame warranty and is covered by Ektelon's 90-day racquet string warranty.

For more information contact Ektelon, 8929 Aero Dr., San Diego, CA 92123, (619) 560-0066.



Paramount's Sports Trainer

Combining the advantages of convenience and economy, Paramount has developed the Uni-flex Sports Trainer. With the Sports Trainer, it is possible to obtain optimum strength, stamina and coordination in each of the major muscle groups quickly and easily.

The Sports Trainer has 11 stations, so it offers all the training advantages of single station circuit training. Ten people are able to work out on the machine at a time. The Uni-flex system on the Sports Trainer makes unilateral limb conditioning possible, which means that variable resistance is applied independently to each limb. This permits precise unilateral conditioning to fit specific conditioning requirements. The stations equipped with the Uni-flex system are the shoulder press, chest press and leg press. Although designed with unilateral capabilities, the Sports Trainer may also be used in the standard bilateral manner.

Sports Trainer is ideal for the fitness center, school, hotel, apartment building, corporate fitness center and related facilities.

For further information and an illustrated catalog, contact the Sales Department, Paramount Fitness Equipment Corp., Los Angeles, CA 90040, (213) 721-2121.

EXTRA!

Stoddard Named to RMA Post

Drew Stoddard

The Racquetball Manufacturers Association (RMA) has announced the appointment of Drew Stoddard from Reno, NV to the newly created position of Commissioner of Professional Racquetball. A former tournament player, Mr. Stoddard has been involved in the promotion of racquetball for over 10 years.

The announcement came as a result of a decision by the RMA Board of Directors, composed of Chairman Greg Eveland (Diversified Products), Bob Beebe (Penn Athletics), Norm Peck (Ektelon) and Paul McGrath (Voit Sports), to create a central office to administer the professional game.

The commissioner's initial

task will be to finalize the nine-stop RMA Professional Racquetball Tour schedule for the remainder of the 1984-85 season. These events, combined with the already-existing Ektelon and DP National competitions are expected to generate \$150,000 in prize money during 1985 and \$200,000 in 1986.

Stoddard, former editor of *International Racquetball* magazine, has been charged with three primary responsibilities. First, he is to administer the tour; second, he is to bring order to the men's pro game by working with the players to establish a set of rules and procedures to govern the sport; and third, to expand pro racquetball by securing na-

tional sponsorship and television coverage.

While the first two portions of his job are relatively easy, the third segment is an eyebrow raiser. How does Stoddard feel about re-walking the unfruitful path already covered by such heavyweights as International Management Group, H. Marlboro Company and Charlie Drake—all of whom were unsuccessful in bringing major national sponsorship and TV to the game?

"Obviously the RMA would not spend the amount of time and money they continue to direct into professional racquetball if they did not feel those goals were attainable," said Stoddard. *"Had I not been ab-*



solutely certain that the job was do-able, I would never have accepted it."

For further information on the men's pro game you can contact Stoddard at RMA headquarters: 200 Castlewood Dr., North Palm Beach, FL 33408.

London Readies To Host World Games, Racquetball

The 1985 World Games, with racquetball a proud participant, will be hosted in London from July 26 through August 4. Eight leading venues in London will be used for this multi-sports event for sports not included in the Olympics.

The Games will bring together 24 sports and over 1,500 athletes and officials from more than 60 nations. Governing bodies of the 24

sports are deeply committed to the launch of this new showcase, which has received official sanction of the International Olympic Committee.

Besides racquetball, some of the sports included in the World Games include archery, body building, karate, rollerskating, trampoline and water skiing.

The Games are run under

the auspices of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF), which has 64 members, 27 of which are Olympic sports. The remaining sports continue to vie for those rare Olympic openings. The World Games is the only time and place where all of these GAISF non-Olympic sports hold their competition at the same time and place.

By using existing facilities—

no new ones are being built—the World Games has eliminated most of the financial burden facing many multi-sport championships. The IOC's acceptance of the World Games gives a further boost to the competition, which is expected to attract an estimated 900 million viewers via television coverage. The racquetball portion of the event will be held July 29 through August 1.

National Teenage Team RB Program Set to Debut

National Teenage Team Racquetball, for boys and girls 14 years of age and under, will officially get underway this summer, commencing with local league play and then selection of all-star teams for area, state, regional, and national playoffs.

Fulfilling a long-needed grass roots program for racquetball, NTTR is patterned after the highly successful format of Little League baseball. The key to the program are adult volunteers, mainly parents, who will serve as referees, coaches, and administrators. Local league sponsors will be obtained to provide equipment and the glamour of uniforms.

Teams consist of four players each, classified 1-4 in skills, and so competed (number one plays number one, etc.). There will be a minimum of three teams to a league, maximum of eight teams. Leagues can be organized at one facility, or number of facilities within a 25-mile radius.

There will be no fees for the registration of teams/leagues, providing such entries are received prior to June 1.

National co-sponsors have been secured: Voit Sports Inc., for balls and racquets; Saranac Glove Co. for

gloves; Leader Sport Products for eyeguards (mandatory in the program). These sponsors will enable NTTR to properly introduce the program and maintain a national headquarters.

The only variations from official racquetball rules: scoring on every rally as in table tennis, putting more emphasis on each rally and moving the matches along faster. Games will be 21 points, best of three, with tie-breaker. If necessary to 11 points with two-point margin to win.

In local league play at least two of the four players on a team must be under 14 years of age. If necessary boy and girl teams can be mixed to formulate a league, and flexibility allowed in cases where a team of boys and girls participate.

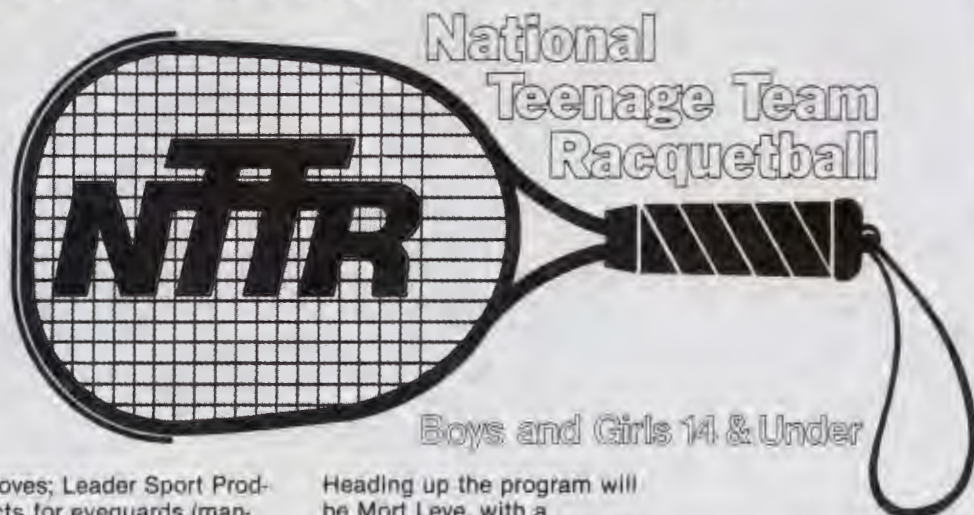
Heading up the program will be Mort Leve, with a background of more than 20 years as a coach, board member, and administrator with the national Pony Boys Baseball program; and former executive director/editor with the U.S. Handball Association; co-founder with the late Robert Kendler of the International Racquetball Association in 1969.

"After four years of probing the market and gaining an overall acceptance of this program we now have the sponsorships to properly introduce NTTR," Leve says. "We feel that NTTR provides a national introduction of racquetball to the youth masses and is not structured for the tournament talented few. Naturally, as a by-product, outstanding

players will be developed, but local league competition will be open to all on playing abilities of varied levels."

APRO (American Professional Racquetball Organization for certified teachers) will serve as an "umbrella" over NTTR to provide field personnel and supervise and assist the local league adult volunteers.

Any interested YMCAs, Community Centers, private clubs, schools, Armed Services, or other facilities with courts can contact NTTR national headquarters for further information and registration materials: Mort Leve, executive director, NTTR, 8303 E. Thomas Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251. Area Code 602-945-0143.



Fonte Named President of Penn

F. Douglas Fonte has been named President of the Penn Athletic Products Division of DiversiTech General, a GenCorp Company. He succeeds David R. Grant, who resigned to take a position with another company.

Fonte, 46, formerly served with DiversiTech General's Wallcovering Division as President of General Wall-



F. Douglas Fonte

coverings of New York. Fonte joined General Wallcoverings in 1983. Before that, he was President of Firth/Private Brands Carpet Company, a division of Mohasco Corporation.

A native of New Orleans, Fonte is a graduate of the University of Detroit.

Penn Athletic Products is the nation's largest manufacturer of tennis balls and racquetballs and is a

leading supplier to the sport of tennis worldwide. It has plants in Phoenix, Ariz., and Mullingar, Republic of Ireland.

Penn's headquarters are now in Monroeville, Pa., but this spring will be moved to a new building being constructed on a site adjacent to the plant and research and development facilities in Phoenix.

IRSA Offers Uniform Reporting System

The number of investor-owned racquet and fitness clubs across the country now stands at over 4,000, and that number is growing by nearly 10 percent each year.

To keep up with that growth, club operators need to be able to compare their financial data to the industry norms. The newly-published *Uniform Reporting System for Racquet and Fitness Clubs*, based on actual accounting systems in use at 65 facilities across the U.S. and Canada, is the tool operators need to draw

an accurate picture of the financial health of their club.

The *Uniform Reporting System* has been compiled by Patricia A. Judd, C.P.A., and Timothy W. Richards, vice-president and president of the American Club Management Corporation, and published by the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA), the professional trade organization for racquet and fitness clubs. The work contains a model format for a club's statement of income and expense, a financial statement for each of the club's

service centers (racquet sports, pro shop, fitness center, swimming pool, etc.), and definitions for the items included in each statement.

"This system is designed for the operator, as well as the stockholder or the bank," explains Judd.

In addition to this chart of accounts, the *Uniform Reporting System* also includes a numbering system to enable club owners to combine individual accounts and present them on a uniform basis. This will allow club owners to compare their club's figures

easily with the annual *IRSA Industry Data Survey*, a volume of financial statistics compiled each year by the nationally-known accounting firm of Pannell, Kerr, Forster from detailed questionnaires completed by hundreds of IRSA member clubs. The 1984 *Industry Data Survey* has just been released.

For more information on IRSA and the racquet and fitness club industry, contact Cathy Masterson, IRSA Communications Director, 112 Cypress Street, Brookline, MA 02146; (617) 734-8000.

SGMA Grants \$\$\$ To Benefit RMA Pilot Program

The Racquetball Manufacturer's Association (RMA) was one of 11 sports organizations to receive approval of funding by the Sporting Goods Manufac-

turers Association (SGMA) for specific projects taking place in 1985.

The grant is for \$7,500 to initiate the RMA's "lifetime sports program" at eight

high schools in four states (Alabama, California, Illinois and Massachusetts). Students at the schools will receive racquetball instruction as part of the program.

The RMA grant was part of \$249,500 distributed this year by the SGMA which has put back over \$1.8 million into various sports since 1976.

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Ask The Champ

by Mike Yellen

Current National Champion Mike Yellen answers questions about improving your game in this ongoing, exclusive series in National Racquetball. Mike is a valued member on the advisory staff of Ektelon. Readers are encouraged to submit questions to Mike Yellen, c/o National Racquetball, 4350 DiPaolo Center/Dearlove Road, Glenview, IL 60025.



Question: I'm having trouble with anticipating my opponent's shots. I was watching the ball throughout every rally until a friend of mine told me that this is incorrect. He said that I should watch the ball only up to the point that my opponent hits it. Then he said I should immediately turn and face the front wall. I'm trying his method and it has really fowled up my game. How long do you watch the ball to anticipate your opponent's shots?

Joan Palmer
Evanston, IL

Yellen: You were right all along! The correct way is to watch the ball 100% of the time when you are in a match, and of course to wear eye protection at all times to make sure that all your anticipatory moves are safe ones.

Question: I'm about to enter my first tournament. I've been playing recreationally for one year. Do you have any advice for me about what to expect or how to play to win?

Barbara Wolf
Cortez, CO

Yellen: It's difficult to tell you exactly what to expect and how to play to win because this is a situation where experience will be your best teacher. From a preparation point of view, try to find out how many players are entered in your division. This is extremely important because it will tell you how many matches you'll have to play to win the tournament.

If your division has 64 players for example, that would mean that over a three-day period, you would have to play six matches in three days. That's a lot of racquetball!

So take the month before the tournament to play more than one match in one day. In fact, take two weekends and over those weekends play two or three matches in one day. This will enable your body to get used to the physical strain of a three-day tournament. When you finally do enter the event, you'll have the stamina to keep on winning and you won't have to forfeit due to injury or lack of energy.

After you've physically prepared yourself for the competition, you've got to make a mental commitment also. During your practice games execute your best shots with total concentration. Practice many shots but select and concentrate on the ones you know will enable you to win.

When you are finally playing that first tournament match, concentrate 100% on your shot selection and execution. If your mind is divided between thinking about who your next opponent will be,

what's going on outside the court and your match, you'll not only lose, but you'll probably turn in the most embarrassing on court performance of your life.

By putting in many practice hours on the court and preparing yourself physically as well as mentally to play well, your first tournament experience, win or lose, will be a good learning experience.

Question: Do you play racquetball in the summer? I'm thinking about playing all summer to improve my game instead of taking my usual layoff.

Lee Spielman
Newport Beach, CA

Yellen: Of course I play racquetball in the summer! For me, racquetball is a year 'round proposition, partially because of the pro tour and partially because it's a good time for game improvement.

The men's tour usually runs through the end of June and picks up again at the end of August. That calls for me to be playing at my best in the beginning of the summer and at the end of the summer. Even during the eight weeks I have off between seasons, I never abandon the game totally.

For you, summer would be the best time to improve your game. The only problem you might run into is that some of your "less serious" partners may not want to play in your summer program. Seize the opportunity to practice on the court by yourself this summer and meet some new partners that you can carry with you into the fall. ●

Championship Shot Selection

by Marty Hogan

When I was reviewing several introductory racquetball books in preparation for writing my own, I was struck by the contradictions I found. Somewhere near the front of these books appears a claim of the *simplicity* of racquetball.

By the time I had read through to the end, I got the impression that I had to learn at least 50 shots to be a true master of the game. On the contrary, the championship player uses only a few basic shots, although with a few subtle variations.

This article describes shot selection strategy at the championship level, shows how and why it differs from shot selection at other levels of play, and explains how to develop championship shot patterns.

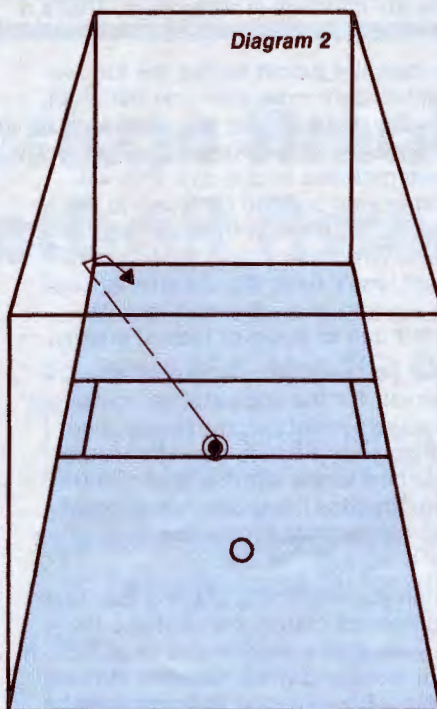
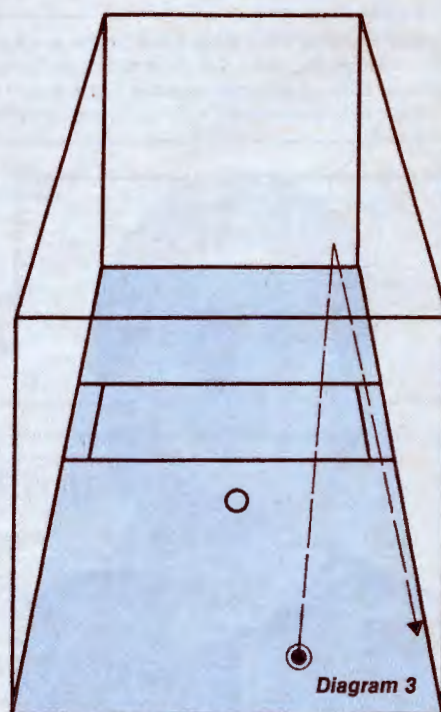
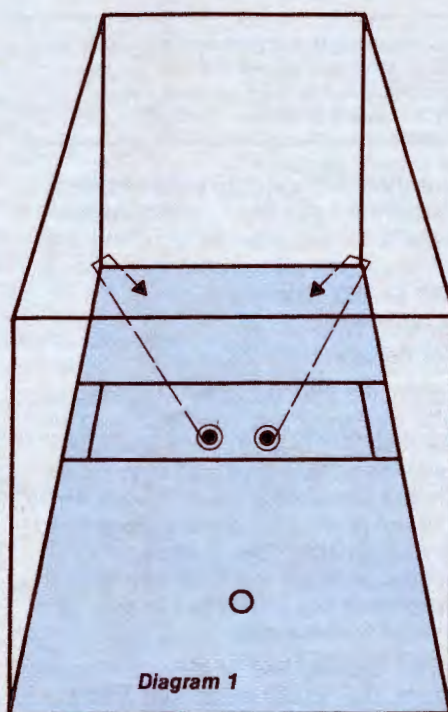
Factors

The championship player is strong, quick, aggressive, mentally tough and highly skilled. These qualities dictate a simple strategy based on presenting situations to the opposition that reduces his setup time and thus, most of the time, precludes 80 percent of the shot patterns found in introductory racquetball books.

The strategy must be simple because you are seldom given more than a split second to select a return shot and execute it. There is no time to devise a complex plan, go through the maze of decisions, and finally execute a shot which requires intricate contortion of the body. Simplicity leads to a lower number of errors and allows the championship player to concentrate his energy toward precise execution, typically under very adverse hitting conditions.

It is obvious that by reducing my opponent's setup time, my opponent will get less opportunities to score and will make more errors. But, reducing his setup time also has the other benefit—I will be able to anticipate his shots better.

By giving him less time to execute his shot, I reduce his range of options. Instead of having to cover five different shots, I need to only cover one or two. So, the unbelievable coverage that you see at professional matches isn't due to just blinding foot speed but, in fact, anticipation which is in turn due in part to good shot selection and execution.



from what a player must avoid than by what he must do. The championship player must maintain superior court position and keep the rally at a high, fevered pitch.

The basic shot patterns at the championship level are utterly simple while giving my opponents very little reaction time. When I'm in front of my opponent, from mid court on back, I hit a sharp pinch, either near-side or reverse (Diagrams 1 and 2). When I'm in back of my opponent, I hit an alley shot down along the near side wall (Diagram 3).

The Pinch Shot

The near-side pinch has always been known as the perfect complement to the alley shot from mid court. At the lower levels of competition, the pinch is usually hit one out of four times from mid court into the corner while the alley shot is hit the remainder of the time.

However, at the championship level, I hit the pinch probably three out of four times when my opponent is behind me. The pinch shot is ideal for scoring from an advantageous position because its diagonal trajectory adds an extra degree of difficulty to its return.

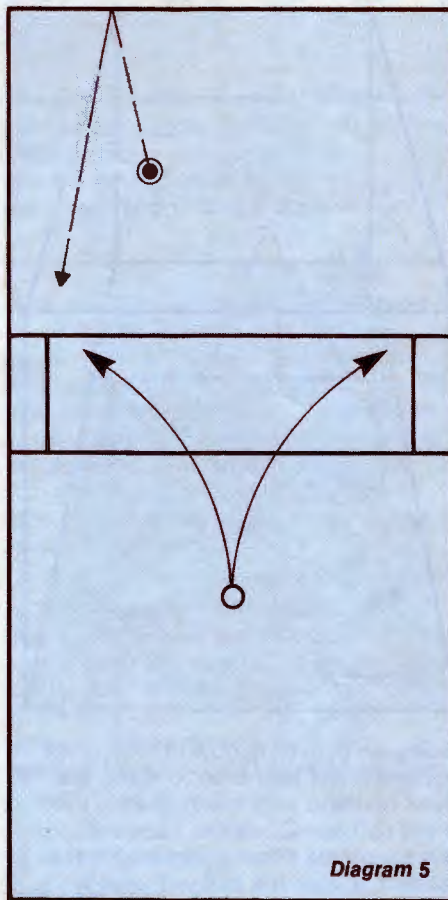
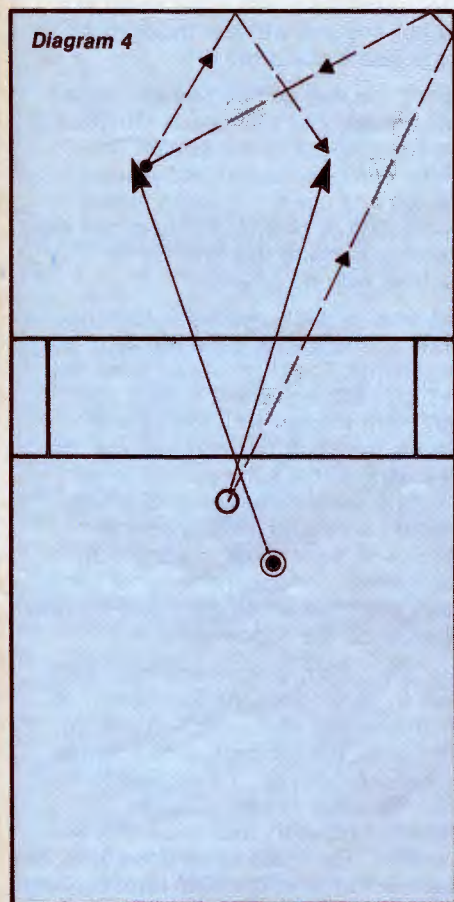
The very high motor skills of the championship player preclude most of the exotic shots described in the standard beginners' book. In fact, championship shot patterns are determined more

First, even if my opponent gets to the ball, the ball is coming across his body, requiring precise execution to keep the ball low and from popping off of a side wall.

Second, he will have to travel through my position, hesitating momentarily when he gauges the proper coverage direction.

Finally, as he moves in to return the shot, I will be behind him, reading his anticipated return. Unless my pinch was/is poorly executed, the return will usually be cross court because the combination of the diagonal trajectory and his fully stretched position leaves him few options that he can realistically perform.

If he is lucky enough to keep the ball low, I step in and punch the ball down the line (*Diagram 4*). If he is unlucky and pops the ball up, I step over and drive the ball down the line, leaving him trapped in front court.



Occasionally, he will be able to return the ball down the line. But, if so, his intentions will be hard to conceal because he will be in a fully stretched out position. I will flow with him and step in to cut off his return (*Diagram 5*).

The pinch should be hit hard and sharply, no more than a few inches from the juncture of the side and front walls. The ball should literally squirt out of the corner. This reduces the flight time of the ball and gives your opponent little time to distinguish between the pinch and alley shot. Occasionally, it can be combined with a change-of-pace, wide pinch shot that hits the side wall about one or two feet from the front wall.

I think the reverse pinch will be the next new basic shot on the pro tour and many very well supplant the near-side pinch. Many years ago, Charlie Brumfield tried unsuccessfully to educate the masses on the benefits of this shot. But, I think it's time to try

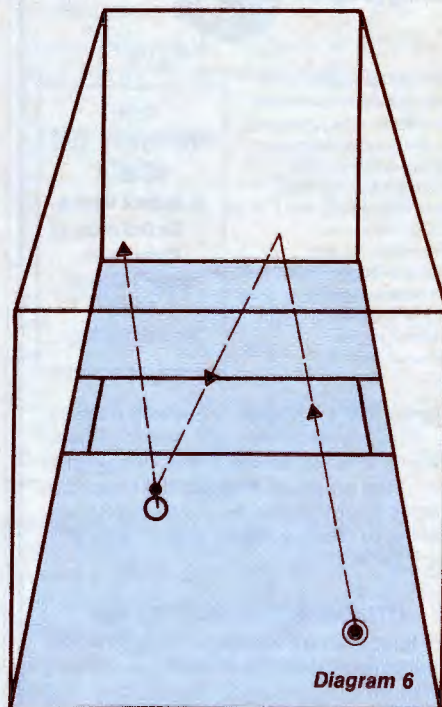
again. The reverse pinch has a natural side spin that keeps the ball low. Furthermore, the shot often has a greater blind spot than the near-side pinch. That is, the ball is partially screened by your body during its flight to the front wall.

The Alley Shot

At the lower levels of play, the cross court is usually used from back court to move an opponent out of center court and open up the middle. Beginners are taught to hit cross court from back court. Intermediates and some advanced players are taught to hit to their opponent's backhand, cross court from right-to-left or down the line from the backhand side for right-handed players.

These are correct strategies at these lower levels of play because they recognize their weaknesses and strengths. Similarly, hitting down the line from back court in championship play, recognizes the danger of the cross court and the precise execution capabilities of the championship player.

The alley shot can be a flat out kill or a high velocity drive down along the near-side wall. The situation dictates which one should be used. The shot must be



hit with high velocity because of the large distance that the ball must travel and the susceptibility of a slow one being cut off at mid court.

The cross court is the worst shot to hit at the championship level because of the large amount of time that the ball spends traveling through the air and the potential for the ball slowing down after catching a side wall.

Because the cross court spends so much time traveling through the air, it affords your opponent more time to cut it off and dump it into the corner or down the wall (Diagram 6). Furthermore, even if you get the ball by your opponent, he can still step back diagonally and drill the ball down the line if it catches the side wall (Diagram 7). In any of these cases, you will have to move completely across the court to cover his return.

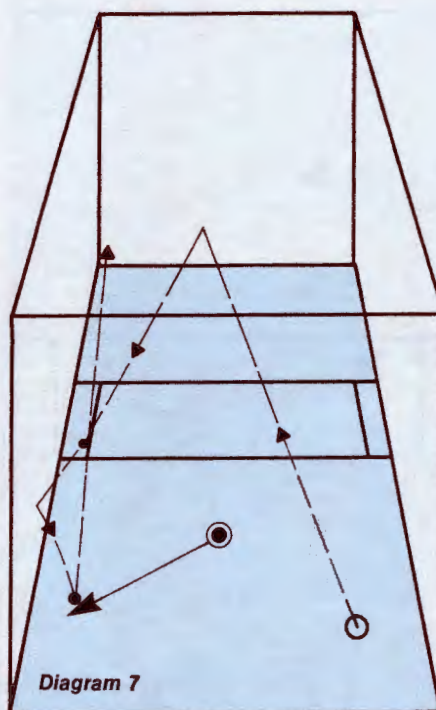


Diagram 7

However, by hitting down the line, my opponent has less time to react, and he must contend with the side wall. Even if the ball comes off the back wall, he will have little time to prepare for the return because the ball will usually race back down the wall toward the front wall where he will have to contend a second time with the side wall.

The coverage zone for his shot is simple since I merely have to see if my opponent will have time to hit a pinch. If not, he can only safely hit back down the wall. Because the ball must be hit extremely hard down the line, he will reveal his intentions earlier, giving me an early warning of the coverage zone. If he does seem to have time to hit a pinch, I can flow with the shot and make a last minute decision whether to cover the alley shot or the pinch.

So, recent critics of the professional game who can only bemoan the "stupidity" of foot high drives down the line from back court are themselves ignorant of the dangers of the classic "advanced" strategy of hitting down the line and cross court to the backhand. There is a place for the cross court but not at the foundation of a basic championship shot selection strategy. It is fraught with dangerous consequences of being parried and increasing your coverage area.

Developing Championship Shot Patterns

There is no secret technique to developing these shot patterns so that they become second nature. The basic skills of execution can still be developed by solitary practice on the pinch and alley shots. However, you must recognize that this only helps you get the kinks out of a non-fluid stroke. You need to also execute the shots in a split second. So, paramount in these solitary sessions is to hit successions of these shots after 10 or 15 minutes of ironing out some kinks. You must feel that you can release a shot in a split second in the intended direction.

This "feel" can't be achieved over night. Rather, you will probably have to gain it over long periods of practice, each time improving on your fluidity. Try the following drill to develop your alley shot. Punch a medium speed shot to three-quarter or back court and hit it down the line. Quickly chase the ball down and punch it again to the same spot and hit it down the line again. A few minutes of this drill will probably exhaust you at first and your shots will probably spray all over the court. But after a few sessions, it will seem like old hat and you will feel much more comfortable doing the drill.

During the drill don't be as concerned with accuracy as with power with fluidity, the smoothness of the stroke. The stroke can't be fluid unless you are relaxed and use the modern hitting techniques. A championship player can probably perform this drill for 15 minutes with no problem.

But what is really needed is to simulate game conditions. A good drill is to play two-on-one. The team-of-two need not be high caliber players. In fact, you may want to start with low caliber players until you feel comfortable. The idea here is that two opponents will simulate the greater speed of a high caliber player and place a greater penalty on poor shots, ones which don't drive your opponent out of center court and ones which don't end the rally when given the opportunity.

The pinch from in front and alley shot from in back forms the foundation of championship shot selection strategy. Obviously, the concept of complementary shots must still be applied to keep your opponent honest (i.e., you shouldn't hit every mid court shot into a corner). The cross court does have its place at the championship level but only as a change of pace. ●

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Charlie Garfinkel's 'Spot' Racquetball

Shot Selection For B & C Players

by Charlie Garfinkel

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



Many B and C players would improve their games greatly if they worked on their shot selection. In other words, if they hit the "best" shot in a given situation they'd find that their skill level would increase dramatically.

However, many players at these levels must be sure they're using the correct grips on their forehands and backhands before they attempt to hit the best shot. Why? Although some professional and open players use one grip for both the forehand and backhand, it isn't recommended for players of lesser skill levels. I even have my doubts about using one grip in the pro game.

To use one grip (often called a continental grip, because of its popularity in tennis) you must have an exceptionally strong wrist. Also, you must concentrate extremely hard to be sure that you're hitting the ball perfectly flat on contact with your racquet.

Some of you may be thinking, *"I use only one grip. My forehand is pretty good. However, I do have some problems when I'm hitting my backhand."*

And, therein lies the tale. Many B and C players who use one grip, use predominantly a forehand grip for both their forehand and backhand stroke. Of course, this is fine when you're hitting a forehand. But, when they have to hit a backhand, it is virtually impossible to hit effectively and powerfully. (My apologies to Jerry Hilecher, an extraordinary exception.)

An easy way to spot the B or C player who is having trouble with his backhand is to see what they do with a shot in the deep left side of the court. You'll notice that in many situations, they don't hit a backhand. They simply turn towards the back wall. They then proceed to hit a forehand as hard as they can into the back wall.

The ball carries to the front wall, bounces, and gives their opponent a seemingly easy shot. But, since their opponent is also a B or C player, he or she most likely puts the ball back into play, instead of putting it away.

Therefore, the player who has blasted his forehand into the back wall, instead of hitting the shot with his backhand, is given a false sense of security. So he'll continue to use this shot time after time.

Unfortunately, this player's game will never improve. When he does attempt to play against competition at a higher level, he'll find that he will be defeated easily. In fact, he'll have difficulty scoring points against the advanced player, once the advanced player spots the deficiency on his backhand side.

However, do not despair! The Gar has a simple solution for you. Take lessons from a respected teaching professional. He'll teach you the correct grip and stroke on the backhand. (Of course, if your forehand needs help too, he'll also help you with that.) Hopefully, after two or three lessons, depending on your rate of advancement, and considerable practice on your own, you'll develop a

backhand that will be considered a strength by your opponents—not a weakness.

Once you've mastered the correct grips and strokes reasonably well, you'll be able to start working on your mental game and strategy in earnest.

Whenever you're playing it is imperative that you hit the "proper" shot. B and C players constantly try to keep almost every shot on their opponent's backhand, regardless of where their opponent is stationed on the court. Many times, they'll pass up a sure point because they're afraid to hit the ball to their opponent's forehand.

A situation such as this occurs when both players are stationed at the short line. Player A is standing near the right side wall. Player B is positioned near the left side wall. Player A has a setup on the right side.

In many instances Player A will try to pass Player B on the left side, because he assumes that Player B has to take the ball with his backhand. Although this may turn out to be true, Player B needs only to take a step or two back to return the ball, as it has been hit directly at him.

In the same situation Player A will sometimes try to shoot a crosscourt kill, once again assuming that the ball will be hit to Player B's backhand. However, the crosscourt kill shot must be practically a roll out or Player B will have an easy shot to put away if the ball has been hit too high on the front wall.

By now, you're saying, *"All right, next time I have a setup in this situation, I'll shoot a pinch shot into the right corner. My opponent will never be able to return that shot."* Wrong!

If you hit a forehand pinch shot and roll it out, congratulations. But, if you hit the ball slightly too high on the side or front wall, Player B will have an easy

return to make. And, because the ball will ricochet towards the middle of the court, he'll be able to return it with his forehand.

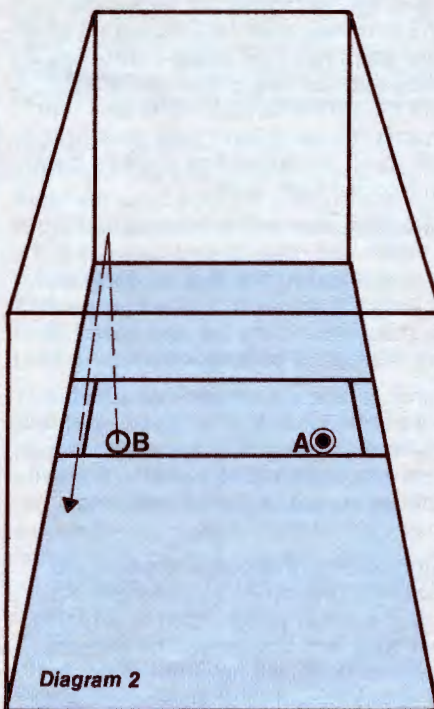
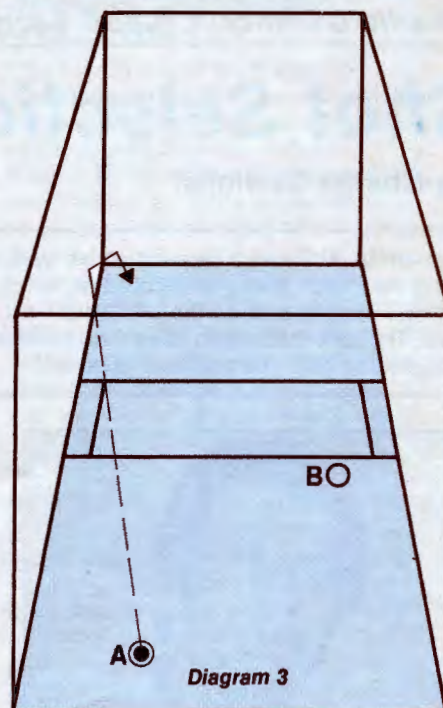
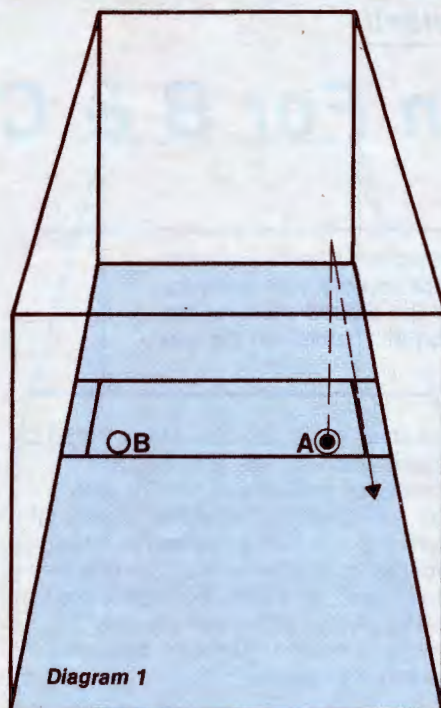
Therefore, the correct shot to hit is a forehand pass straight down the line. You don't have to shoot a flat roll out—the mistake in thinking many B and C players make. Which leads to many unforced errors. By hitting the ball 5-7 inches above the floor, a foot from the right side wall, you'll be executing a passing shot that will be virtually unreturnable (*Diagram 1*).

Another situation that occurs when two players are stationed at the short line is when Player B has a sure setup with his backhand. But what does he do? He attempts *anything* that he can in his repertoire to take the ball with his forehand! I've even seen players place themselves in such an awkward position, that their derriere is actually touching the left side wall as they attempt to hit a forehand instead of backhand.

Sadly they usually hit a ball that hits the high left side wall, front wall, that bounces directly to their opponent's forehand on the right side of the court. Of course, he easily puts this one away.

The correct shot, assuming you've mastered your backhand grip and stroke, is to hit the ball with your backhand, straight down the line, 5-7 inches high, approximately one foot away from the left side wall (*Diagram 2*). As in *Diagram 1*, the shot will be unreturnable.

Although it is foolish to run around your backhand, as described in *Diagram 2*, there are situations when you would be wise to use your forehand, even though the backhand may seem to be the appropriate shot. One of these situations occurs when a shot comes off the front wall, bounces, and then hits the back wall, 2-3 feet to the



left of center. Although the shot is technically on your backhand side, you still have plenty of time to move over and take the shot with your forehand.

An excellent shot to take from this position (30-35 feet from the front wall) is a forehand pinch into the left corner. In *Diagram 3* you can see that the ball has been hit as close to the side wall-front wall crack as possible. Because your opponent is stationed near the

short line on the right side of the court, his chances of returning this shot are very slim.

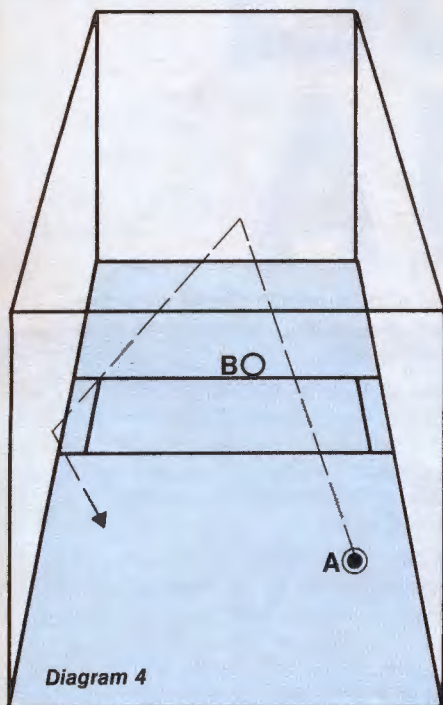
You'll find many situations where you'll be faced with the decision of hitting a forehand or backhand. My advice, assuming that you have plenty of room to hit, is to use your forehand. First, you'll have more confidence in the shot, second, because you're facing the front wall, you'll find that it's easier to recover for your opponent's next shot if you have to.

Often the B or C player will be stationed behind an opponent who is positioned at the service line in the middle of the court. They'll have a seemingly easy putaway from the deep right side of back court. Sensing an easy point they'll try to shoot a straight-in kill shot.

However, because the ball often stays up a little, the opponent quickly puts the ball away.

A better shot to use is the forehand, crosscourt pass. Because your opponent is stationed so far up in front court, a crosscourt pass that hits 1-2 feet to the left of center court on the front wall, 3-5 feet high, and then hits the left side wall parallel to where your opponent is standing, should result in a winner every time (*Diagram 4*).

Note: If you have a setup and your opponent is stationed at the short line, a passing shot is the preferred shot. If your opponent is stationed at the short line or farther back, a straight-in kill or side wall should be used.)

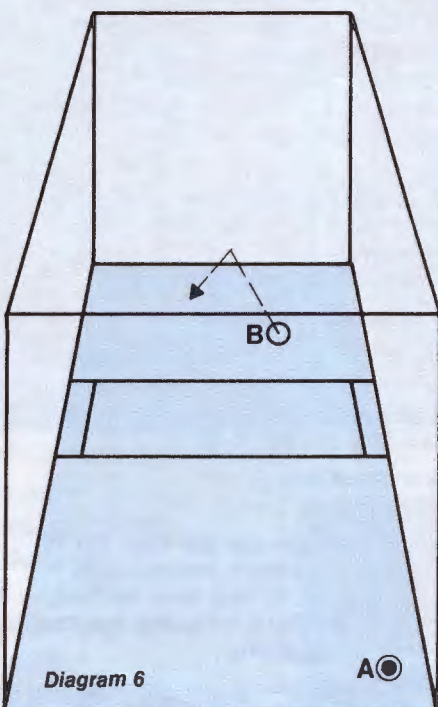
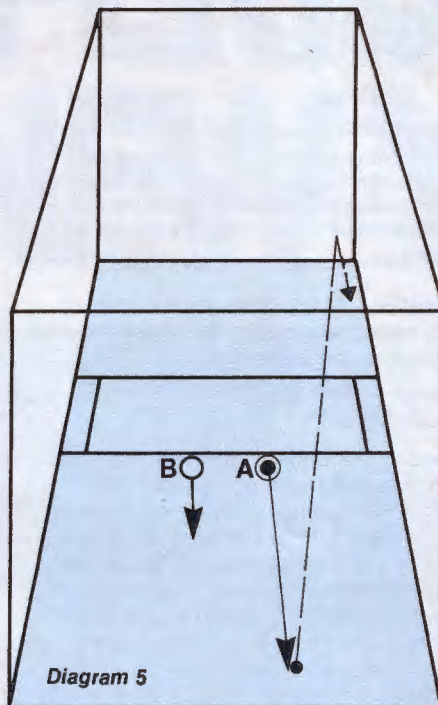


Many B and C players love to take the ball out of the air and flail at it with all of their might. It doesn't matter if the shot is hit at their feet or over their heads. I've actually seen players leap a foot off the ground to return a shot that was well over their head. Dumb! Dumb! Dumb! It is foolish to do this because nine times out of 10 you're hitting a shot that will hit the back wall, then carry towards the front wall, thus producing an easy shot for your opponent.

So, if you're stationed near the service area and your opponent hits a shot that flies past you chest high or higher (unless you're a midget), let it travel to the back wall. It will bounce toward the front wall, providing you with an easy setup.

To hit the shot correctly, let the ball go past you to the back wall. Turn towards the back wall and set up for the ball as it comes off the back wall—you'll have a "plum" to hit. Because your opponent has moved back past the short line, hit a low kill shot straight in to the front wall on the right side of the court (Diagram 5). The point is yours.

Although it is foolish to take a ball out of the air that is a setup off the back wall, trying to hit a soft drop shot when you have your opponent completely out of position, is equally foolhardy. In Diagram 6, Player A is in the deep right corner. Player B is approximately 6-8 feet from the front wall with a seemingly easy putaway, one that is often missed if Player B tries to "dump" the ball softly into the front wall. The correct shot is



to hit a hard forehand 5-7 inches high down the left side wall. Even if you hit it slightly higher on the front wall, it will still be impossible to return.

By attempting to hit the "spots" that we've discussed in this article, you'll find yourself moving up from the B or C level. And, continuous improvement could find you taking the A player's "spot" on the ladder. ●

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The Hogan Way

by Marty Hogan

Marty Hogan, five time national champion and all time leading money winner is on the advisory board of Marty Hogan Racquetball, a division of Pro-Kennex, Leader Sports Eye Guard; NIKE, RAM Racquetball, and Coor's Light. Readers are encouraged to submit questions to Marty Hogan, c/o National Racquetball, 4350 DiPaolo Center/Dearlove Road, Glenview, IL 60025.



Question: At the professional level of play today, who's winning more, the shot makers or the retrievers?

George Heller
South Bend, IN

Hogan: Currently, the shot makers are winning, but that's going to change because I'm changing my perspective on court coverage. In the past, it was my shot-making ability that got me to number one. Now it's going to be that ability combined with my ability to anticipate my opponent's shots and run them down quickly that will keep me in the number one spot.

I'm working on my first step toward the ball. I've increased my reflexive ability to take that first step and follow it up with even faster steps toward my opponent's shots. In fact, it takes me fewer steps to get up to a full speed sprint than it used to.

My message on the court to my opponents nowadays is, "You better kill every ball because if you don't, I'm going to get to your shot and kill it myself."

Question: After all the national titles you've won and the money you've made, do you find it difficult to keep motivating yourself to win?

Steve Von Klan
Tulsa, OK

Hogan: I have to say yes. Over the 10 years that I've played professionally, my motivations for winning have definitely changed, but that's not to say that they are not just as strong.

When I was a young, untitled player, I played because I had something to prove to the racquetball world. I went out on the line and told everyone that I was going to be the best. I had an intense desire to gain recognition as the

king of racquetball. Those were the days of a youthful competitive, hard-working spirit.

Then I began to win. After I had five years of national titles and hundreds of professional tournament victories, I did hit a small period of complacency because I had accomplished what I had set out to achieve.

Now I'm coming into the final leg of my career. I know I've got five maybe six more good years and I want to stack up as many wins as I did when I originally attained the number one ranking. In fact, I want to win more. My knowledge of the game is the highest it's ever been and continues to grow every year. That excites me to play even better than I did when I was a teenager.

I am also motivated to win now because I am in a unique position to dominate the racquetball record books for years and years to come, long after I've retired. The best way to sum up my present-day attitude about winning is: "You ain't seen nothin' yet!"

Question: People have said that your forehand is weaker than your backhand because you use a backhand grip for your forehand stroke. Do you agree?

Chuck Davis
Santa Fe, NM

Hogan: Absolutely not! I advocate one grip for the game and it is a backhand grip (see my April instructional article).

The reason my backhand is stronger than my forehand is that when I was young, I overemphasized my backhand. I practiced backhand shots 70% of the time and forehand shots 30% of the time, mainly because I had no confidence in my backhand. In overcompensating for what I thought was a weak backhand, mine became the strongest in the game!

Lately, I've evened it up. You won't see any pros getting free points from my forehand side this season. ●

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