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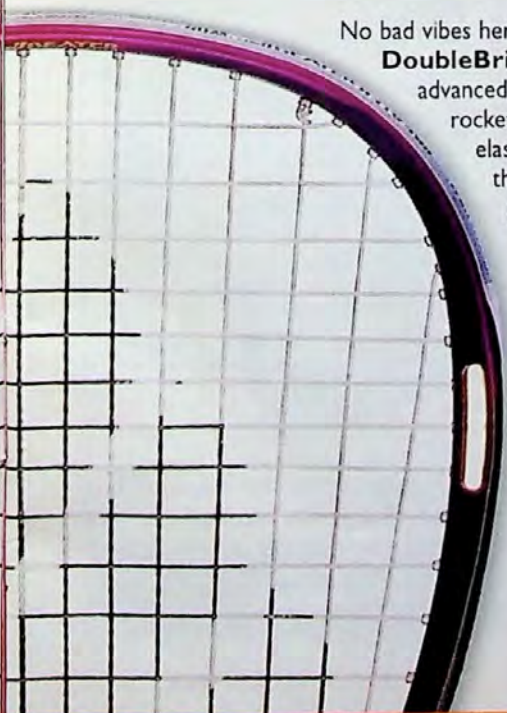
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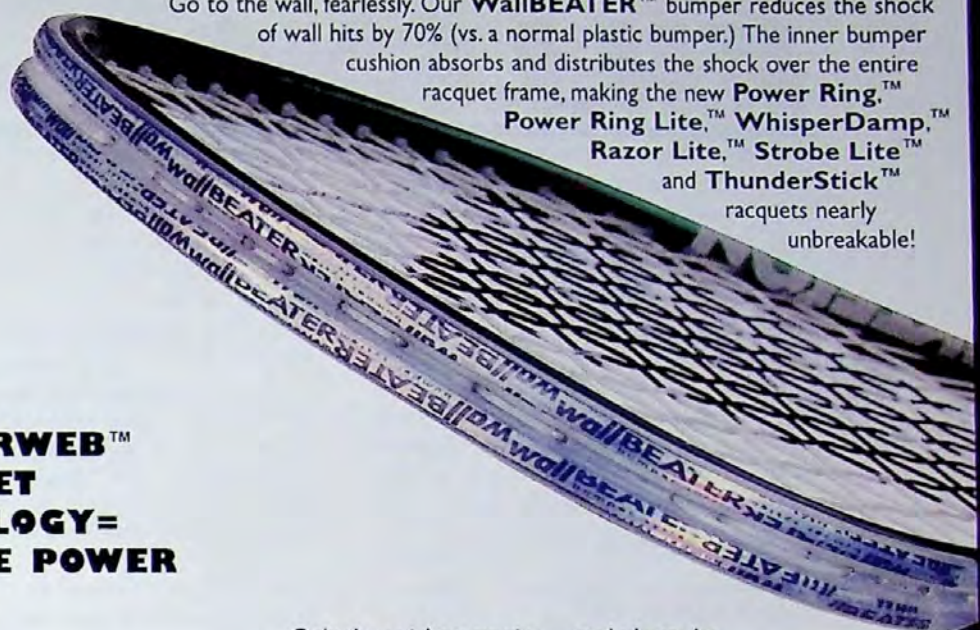
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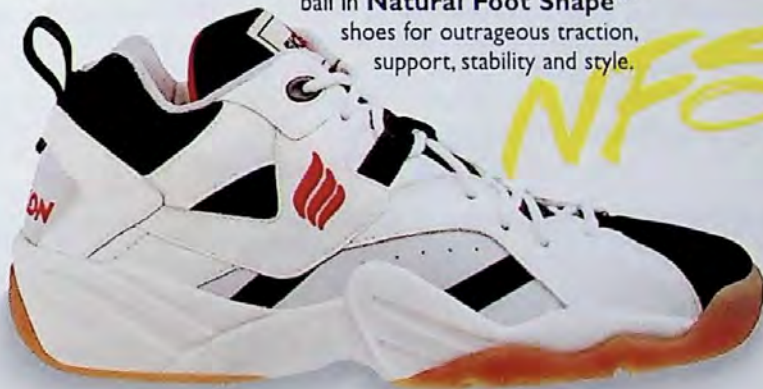


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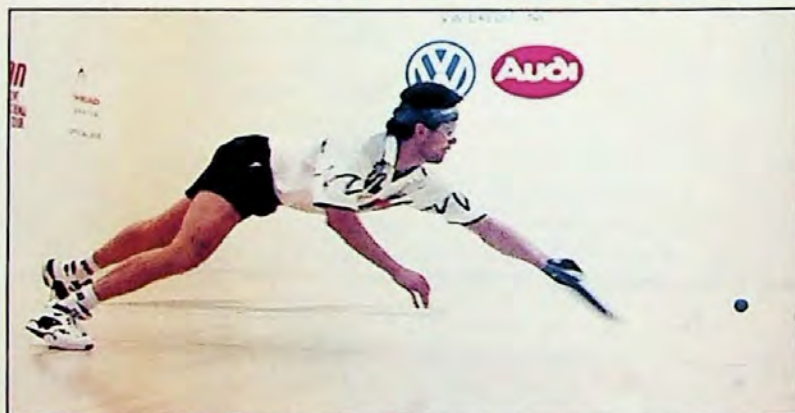


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Jack Newman, Andy
Roberts, Ruben Gonzale-
lez; Cliff Swain; Egan
Inoue; Mike Ray and
Michelle Gould.



Cover: We've chosen a few covers that represent some of our favorites over the years and some that have brought in the most positive responses. Mike Ray Premiere Issue. Drew Kachtik Chainsaw. Marty Hogan. Lynn Adams Holiday. Andy Roberts Terminator.



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the International Racquetball
Tour

Are We Having Fun Yet?

This issue of **KILLSHOT** has probably been the most fun to put together since that premiere issue five years ago. We spent days going through thousands of photographs and slides in an attempt to find those that truly represent what has gone on around here, and in the world of professional racquetball, since 1991.

Some of what we found made us smile with the memories of people and events that we had forgotten. Others made us want to spit on the ground and make comments about the subject's parentage (or lack thereof). It's true that every picture tells a story, some worth repeating, some better off forgotten, and some nobody would believe anyway.

We found photos of Ronald MacDonald with a racquet, firefighters in full emergency gear holding racquets, all sorts of antics both on and off the court, unusual acrobatics and bizarre expressions.

But the thing that made us smile most was the fact that we are still here. Some people are happy about that, more than a

few upset, and still others that could care less. The road has been a long one. Sometimes it has been fun but never easy.

Our premiere issue is featured on the cover. We mailed 50,000+ copies to racquetball players and clubs all across the U.S. and Canada free. Then we did it again for the second issue with Michelle Gilman on the cover. As subscriptions began to come in we were furiously buying lists of anyone we thought might be interested in racquetball: sports doctors, athletic directors, coaches and sporting goods stores. The first five issues each mailed to over 50,000 people.

We got some really strange letters, too; mostly people offended that we wanted to call our publication **KILLSHOT**. After all, didn't that promote violence? We also got quite a few requests for free subscriptions from people who thought it only fair for us to honor their unfulfilled subscriptions to *National Racquetball*.

The weirdest response to our free magazine mailings came one morning in

the form of a phone call from upstate New York. It seems that one of the recipients of the publication was being stalked by an unknown pursuer who was threatening to kill her. We purchased her name on a list of doctors and nurses in the sports medicine industry. At the time we were mailing in a polybag and the only thing visible within the bag was the masthead: **KILLSHOT**. She saw that in her post office box and immediately called the police. It took some talking to convince the detective that no one had sent her the publication as a prank and that her name was just one of thousands on a list.

Most of our letters and contacts from readers have been positive though, even those unhappy about something we've said or done. And that's what has made the whole process worthwhile. I think there is a lesson in that. This sport is not for the publications or the manufacturers or the organizations. It's for the players. And, yes, they're having fun.

--SQ

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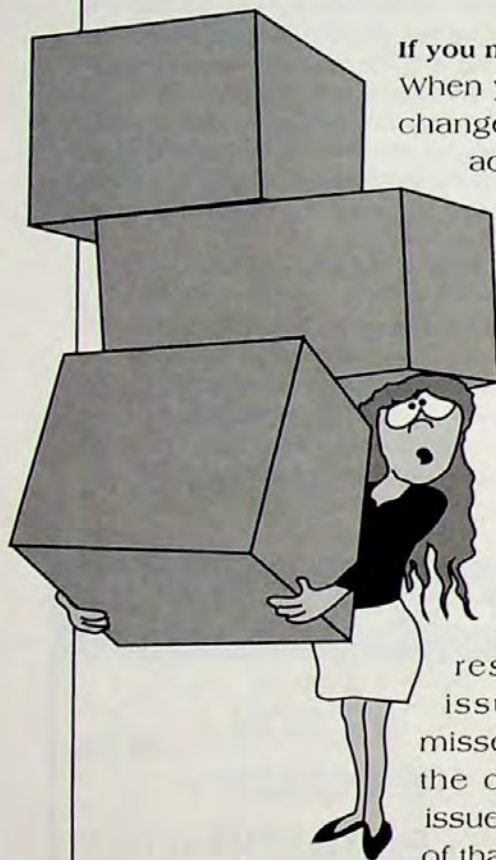
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Letters

Tapes to Train?

Thank you for a fine publication. I have been a subscriber since 1994 and I find each issue interesting, entertaining, and informative.

I have been playing for about 16 years and know that the future of the sport requires introducing it to young players. I am trying to generate interest in the local high schools and at this time have the opportunity to start a program at one of the schools. I have been searching for training videos and books and have had little luck. I have gone through the past issues of **KILLSHOT** and have some excellent articles. One item in the Summer 1995

issue very much interested me. It is on page 42 and it is a training program put out by Lawrence Adams, Inc. If you could let me know how to get in touch with them I would appreciate it.

Additionally, if you have any suggestions on videos or books, or anything that would help me to get started please let me know.

Keep up the good work.

B. Gire
Spokane, Washington

The tapes from Lawrence Adams, Inc. are called *Mastery of Racquetball* and combine over three hours of video taped instruction with printed workbooks and laminated practice cards. Contact Lawrence Adams, Inc. 46 Ravenna St., Ste B-6, Hudson, Ohio 44236. Another excellent instructional video is Cliff Swain's *The Winning Edge*. Contact Cliff Swain Enterprises at (800) 757-3839.

An excellent book is Ed Turner & Woody Clouse's *Winning Racquetball* published by Human Kinetics, P.O. Box 5076, Champaign, Illinois, 61825-5076. Call (800) 747-4457.

Why don't you just apologize?

Although I am not a subscriber to your publication, I have recently read your Summer 1996 edition. In the article "Class of 96, Grading the Pros" by Messrs Katz & Muller, I came across an item of interest which I am now pointing out to you.

In your review of Dan Fowler (p 43) you mention his recent suspension from AARA events. I was surprised to see this since as the State President of MWRA, I have never received any notification from AARA to this suspension. In checking this out, I spoke with Mr. Luke St. Onge and found out the real story. Dan was NOT suspended from AARA events but had been disciplined by the U.S. National Team. There is quite a difference, don't you think???

I feel that you owe Dan not only a retraction in **KILLSHOT** but also a personal letter of apology for this error which tarnishes his fine reputation.

Larry Seidl
President, Maryland Amateur
Racquetball Association

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Sudsy Monchik

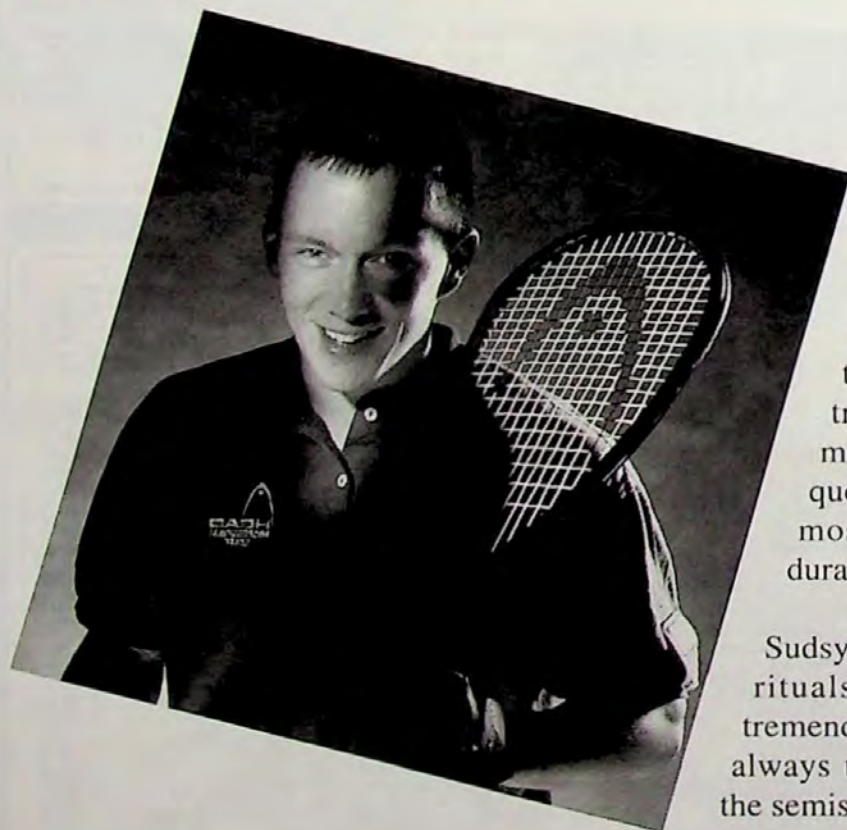
Ranking:
#1

Racquet:
HEAD Big Bang

String:
Forten Boss

Tension:
34 pounds

**Average Number of Racquets
Strung Per Tournament:**
6



Comments:

Since Sudsy hits the ball harder than most any player on the planet, he doesn't worry about trying to increase his power with low string tensions. Sudsy prefers tensions in the mid thirties to maximize control. This is quite different from most of the pros who prefer racquets strung in the twenties. He is most concerned with control and durability from his strings.

Sudsy credits his many traditions and rituals on and off the court for his tremendous success. One of these is to always use a freshly strung racquet for the semis and the finals of tournaments.

Richard A.
Honaker, M.D.

Fire & Ice

Using ice or heat
for racquetball injuries.
Which and when?

Are you confused about whether to use ice or heat for your racquetball injuries? Do you know how much to use and for how long? Let's try to straighten this out.

Injuries to soft tissues result in swelling. This swelling causes tissue damage by blocking oxygen delivery to cells and by the release of chemicals which cause further cell damage. Reducing this initial swelling is critical in order to improve your recovery time. This swelling, along with pain, encourages muscle atrophy and joint stiffness, further prolonging recovery.

Application of cold decreases the initial swelling, bleeding, pain, and inflammation of the tissues. The damaging, inflammatory response and cellular injury from swelling is reduced by cold applications.

Heat does just the opposite. It increases and encourages blood flow and reduces muscle spasm and joint stiffness. Heating tissues accelerates metabolism and improves the flow of lymphatic fluid and blood.

After an injury you should start with ice. Initially apply it constantly for one to two hours after the injury. Then use it 30 minutes per hour during the first 24 hours. An ice pack on top of wet towels is more effective than dry towels. Alternatively, you can use ice massage in slow, circular strokes for 10 to 20 minutes per hour. This is done by freezing a small paper cup of water and then peeling off the bottom of the cup so that the ice can be massaged like a roll-on deodorant.

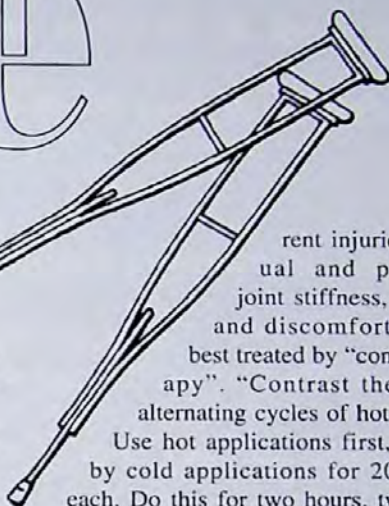
During the second 24 hours, neither ice nor heat should be applied. This should be a time when you start gradual range of motion exercises to loosen stiff tissues and assess the degree of pain and discomfort.

During the third 24 hours, you should resort to heat. Moist heat is best. You can

use a hydrocollator pack or a moist towel insulated with plastic or Saran wrap and then covered with a heating pad. Heat should be applied for 30 minutes every hour or two. Whirlpool baths are a wonderful alternative.

When you return to play, it is a good idea to warm the area before playing. Use heat for 1/2 to 3/4 hour before your match. Immediately after your match, apply ice for one hour. Do this the first couple of matches when you restart playing.

A final note about chronic and recur-



rent injuries. Residual and persistent joint stiffness, swelling, and discomfort is often best treated by "contrast therapy". "Contrast therapy" is alternating cycles of hot and cold. Use hot applications first, followed by cold applications for 20 minutes each. Do this for two hours, twice daily as needed.

As with any injury, you should seek medical care from your physician to be sure your injury is only minor.

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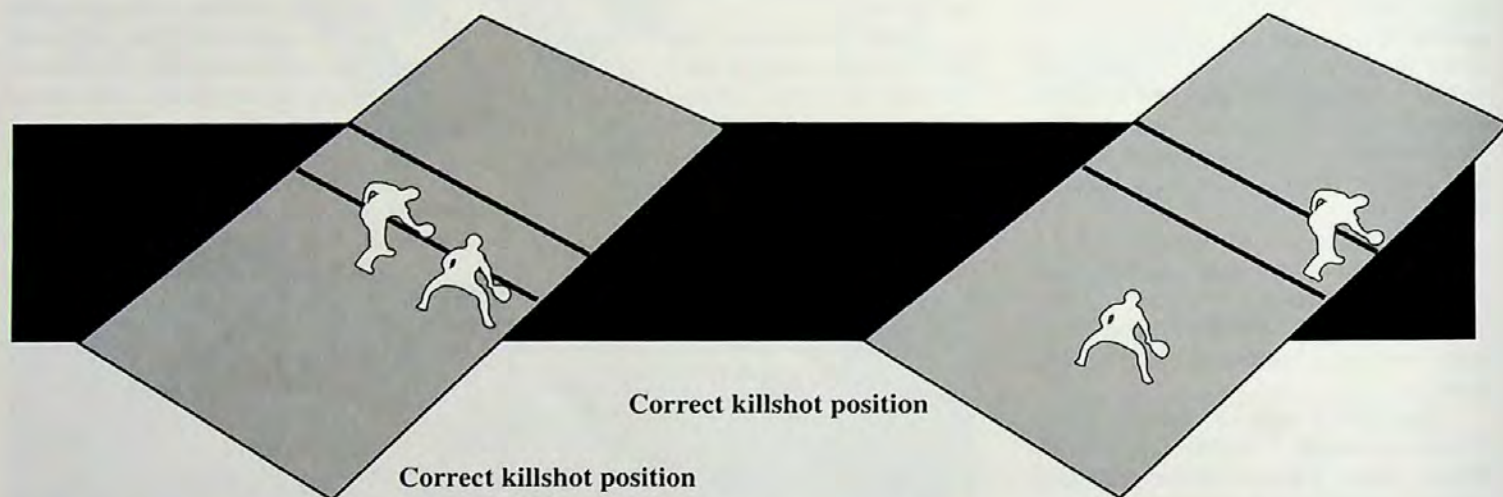
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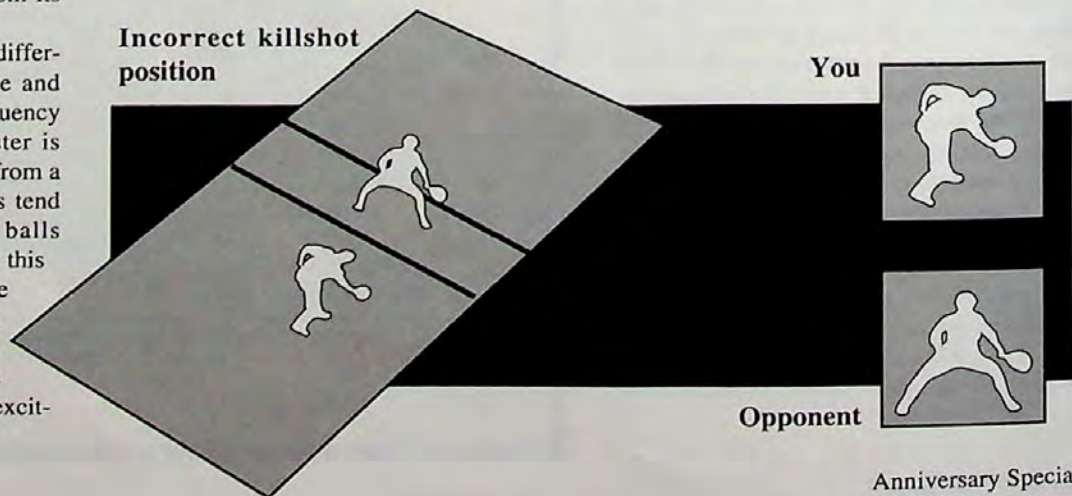
The killshot is certainly the most exciting weapon in racquetball. The prospect of hitting a shot that is so perfect that it is unreturnable by any player holds appeal like nothing else. In fact, the blistering killshot gives racquetball its aggressive reputation. It is what separates the game from its more congenial cousin, squash.

One of the biggest recognizable differences between the solid intermediate and the advanced or pro player is the frequency of successful killshooting. The master is able to consistently put the ball away from a disadvantaged position. Mere mortals tend to see far more skips and left-up balls resulting from their kill attempts. For this reason the kill has never been the bread-and-butter of any developing player. Even at the pro level, the pass is still the weapon of choice. But since it is human nature to opt for the most excit-

ing element of the game, it is important to know how and when to shoot for the winner.

The killshot is simply a rally-ending shot. It is a shot that is unreturnable even to an opponent whose attempt to cover it is

without error. This takes the form of a down-the-line, cross-court, or pinch that bounces twice before the other player could ever possibly reach it. In the best possible case, it is a flat roll. The most amazing part of the pro game is the pros' ability to return



near kills that would have been clear put-aways against the average competitor.

We see the IRT pros kill successfully from every position and every situation. That's why they're pros. They didn't always do that. They got to be pros by playing smart. Playing smart dictates attempting a kill only when two conditions are present. Those two conditions are a good set up, and the right court position.

The good setup means that you have time to position your feet and prepare your racquet. It also means being able to wait until the ball is very low to hit it.

The right court position for a kill usually means you are in front of your opponent, and/or you are in center court. The closer you are to the front wall, the greater your margin for error on kill attempts. Your opponent behind you means the ball has more time to bounce twice because he has farther to go to try to pick it up. Your being in front also allows you to legally obstruct his view of your own shot. Holding center court means you have the entire side of the court where he is not at your disposal in case your kill attempt pops up. Use passes and ceiling balls to your advantage to engineer this situation.

Remember...

...the kill is usually a low percentage shot. When in doubt, don't.

...you have the choice of the down-the-line kill, the cross kill, and the pinch or reverse kill.

...if you miss, miss up. You have an outside possibility of recovering from a left up kill. You have no chance of recovery from a skip.

...killshots not only end the rally, they take the wind out of your opponent's sails!

For a perfect Killshot:

You must...

...bend your knees to lower your center of gravity to hit the ball low.

...hit with your racquet face flat.

...hit at least hard enough to get the ball to the front wall.

...keep your head down in order to keep your shot low.

You should...

...only kill when you are in a good position should your attempt pop up.

...only kill when you can afford a skip.

...practice hitting low before you count on a kill in a match.

...practice accuracy and timing first, work on velocity later.

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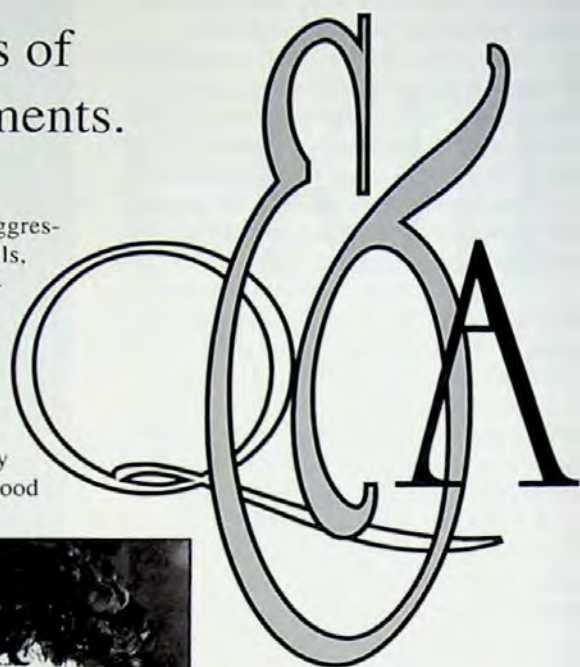
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Words of Wisdom from five years of **KILLSHOT** interviews and comments.



One of **KILLSHOT**'s goals has always been to give the leaders on and off the courts a forum for expression. Our hope has been that by including interviews, quotes, and comments, readers would be informed and challenged. What we have gotten has been controversy and plenty of surprises. Never ones to shy away from controversy, we always forge ahead and print it just as they said it. We hope for reader responses, and boy have we gotten them. So whether you agree or disagree, like it or not, here are some of the most memorable quotes from our first five years.

"The biggest compliment that anyone can give me is to say I'm a natural. It means that they appreciate my talent and my hard work looks like no work at all."

Cliff Swain
Issue #9 M/A 1993

"It took something different to dominate in the '70's than it does today. The best at any sport are the ones that can accurately size up what it will take to win under given circumstances, then perfect the skills to accomplish it. Brumfield and Hogan could do that. But I have to tell you, racquetball today is at its highest level"

Mike Yellen
Issue #17 Winter 1995

"I can't describe the level of intensity in the Brumfield days. Winning meant winning at all costs. We would drill and train for literally ten to twelve hours a day, seven days a week...Most of today's players would be standing around with their tongues hanging out after only a few of the marathon rallies we used to have."

Marty Hogan
Issue #17 Winter 1995

"...when I was twelve, I saw Lynn Adams play for the first time. I had my picture taken with her and she wrote on it, Don't get too good too fast 'cause I'll be waiting...It explains a lot about being at the top."

Michelle Gilman (now Gould)
Issue #1 Aug. 1991

"...someone who is young, aggressive, and has good marketing skills, can make a lot of money in racquetball."

Andy Roberts
Issue #2 Sept. 1991

"...when I was growing up, like everybody else, I used to sit by the glass court and watch all the good players and try to emulate what they were doing."

Tim Sweeney
Issue #6 S/O 1992



"I'm not as physically talented as a lot of players, so I have to use my head...I learned to take nothing for granted; to use everything I could recognize. Things like body language on the court, or anything else that would intimidate an opponent..."

Caryn McKinney
Issue #3 Oct. 1991

"...right from the start, we started training Lynn to dominate...It became a goal and sort of an obsession for both of us throughout our working together, our marriage, and our friendship."

Jim Carson
Issue #13 Spring 1994

"To a large extent they have dropped the ball. There has been a misguided focus on the Olympic picture, neglecting the needs at the grass roots of the game"

Aaron Katz
Issue #18 Spring 1995

"I would say that that work was directly toward that end. Meeting the criteria for the USOC has made us a much better organized sport...Striving and meeting those standards has made us very organized and in a good position now to reach out to clubs."

Luke St Onge
Issue #23 Spring 1996

"...the fact that they kept some of their courts open for racquetball is one of the biggest positives. It would have been easier to close even more courts and more clubs entirely when participation declined from the boom. The clubs with vision kept their courts open, and now are starting to be rewarded as the sport is slowly becoming more solid and players are coming back to the courts."

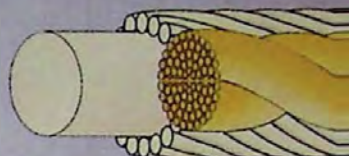
Mark Wentura
Issue #14 Summer 1994

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KILLSHOT Retrospective

When the first issue of **KILLSHOT** rolled off the presses in the summer of 1991, the playing public saw the

It's all in the game. Early court greats Marty Hogan and Charlie Brumfield battle in the glory days. The small-frame days are so well-remembered, we've run a number of pictorials commemorating them.

first politically incorrect racquetball magazine. We had seen publications come and go in racquetball, and we knew that to succeed, we had to do things a little differently. We set out to

make a magazine that was what we would like to read. We would fill the thing with truly colorful personalities, real information, good or not so good, and usable instruction. We set out to produce a totally professional product and promised never to take ourselves too seriously in the process. We knew we would rock a few boats. We had no idea how much fun it would be to rock them!

Five years later, we're still rocking boats. We still say things some people wish we wouldn't, hear things they wish we hadn't, and do things they can't believe we would. Funny

thing is, our readers seem to like it. Interesting coverage of the pros, useful instructional items, and important information about equipment seem to be the things racquetball players want most.

Reader's calls, letters, faxes and E mail all shape the publication. And in many ways, the publication has helped shape the industry. Building on one another's success, the pro tour and **KILLSHOT** have pushed one another forward. Instead of just covering tour events as publications had done in the 70's and 80's, we formed a sort of partnership. A tour that lacked interest and was headed nowhere joined forces with a young entrepreneur named Hank Marcus and an upstart publication to build the most solid tour in history and a united voice in the industry.

continued on page 16



Power racquetball. Blaster Egan Inoue demonstrates the power serve at a match in Japan in '93.



A foreshadowing of greatness. In one of the first events that we covered in 1991, Jason Mannino (left) and Sudsy Monchick (right) battled in St. Louis at the AARA High School Nationals.

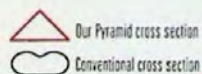


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Sudsy Monchik
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Cliff Swain
4 Time IRT World Champion.



-- The New PP 175 G
NOW WITH PYRAMID POWER!

Sudsy's hot and right now he's the number one player on the tour. Just ask him and he'll tell you all about it. It's really when he stops talking that you'd better be ready to play! He chooses to play with the Big Bang, one of six in the Pyramid Series.

Cliff, the legendary 4 time IRT Champion, is currently ranked #2 in the world. He doesn't like to say much, most of the time he lets his racquet do the talking. The one he's speaking with currently is the New PP 175 G, One of six in the New PP G Series.



Head Rules!

Sudsy Monchik - The New IRT World Champion. / Cliff Swain - 4 time IRT World Champion and currently number 2 player in the world.

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Even celebrities can't get enough. Comedian Marty Allen has a tough time deciding which will help him most on the court, the workout from which he's resting, or the issue of **KILLSHOT** he can't put down. In well-earned time off both courts, John Ellis and Sudsy Monchik let Dominique hang with them for awhile.



The great outdoors. The three wall game always provides a welcome break from trying to shoot photos through thick glass and strange court lighting. The only official AARA Outdoor Nationals ever (held in Jacksonville Florida in 1991) gave us these shots of Florida coed Rachel Smith (below large photo) AARA executive director Luke St. Onge in a rare playing shot (right), and the all-time king of the three walls Brian Hawkes (below right)



Feeding frenzy. During the grueling schedules at pro stops, food rockets to number one on everybody's priority list. Late night after the quarters on a hot August night in Stockton in 1992, Mike Yellen hydrates while Egan Inoue and Hank Marcus attack desert. Brian Hawkes was never far from his infamous cooler from which he produced an endless supply of turkey and tuna sandwiches, bagels, yogurt, and the like much as a magician produces rabbits.



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#1 ranked professional

**Z Leader®
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Cliff Swain
#2 ranked professional





Hey, take my picture. Sometimes the editors couldn't resist the temptation to get into the photos. Left: Lynn Adams hangs around with the Quertermous brothers. Below: Deep in conversation with Marty Hogan on his ranch. Bottom: Teaching Egan a new hold?



The road was bumpy, especially in the beginning. The publication's polished look and color pages mean that it must be printed by a magazine printer, and so must compete for a place in line against publications with huge press runs. We are the little guy in the magazine world,

which means we've had to ask for your patience many times in the wake of inherent delays. We try our best to make doing this look easy but, in truth, it's not. If we took ourselves seriously at all, I would be describing the gargantuan amounts of time, money, and sacrifice all this requires.

But if we look at the road behind and the road ahead, it becomes impossible to be serious. This issue takes a brief respite from traditional format to reflect on our first five years. We've included information on the tour in an abbreviated form to make room for our trip down memory lane. We've also skimmed a little on instruction, and left out two favorite features entirely, Norm Blum's *Passing Shots*, and Aaron Katz' *Outside Looking In*. Rest assured, the columns and more instructional features will return next issue along with our more extensive tour photos and coverage. We'll also include a closer look at the recent Promus Hotels US Open whose results appear in this issue.

From its beginnings as the Women's Professional Racquetball Association, the women's pro tour evolved into the Women's International Racquetball Tour. Below: Dee Ferreira-Worth, former president of the WPR. Center: Jackie Paraiso, a dominant force in the early '90's she's back with a vengeance. Right: Still in the forefront of women's racquetball Michelle Gould won't release her stranglehold on the rest of the tour. Here Gould battles it out in a match at Las Vegas in 1996 with #2 ranked Cheryl Gudinas.



Five
Years
Old



A picture is worth a thousand words. Above left: It was tough for the three amigos to keep their composure in a photo shoot in Chicago. Jack Newman, Andy Roberts, and Ruben Gonzalez. Above right: Andy Roberts and wife Kim in front of Charlie Palek's camera in Houston in 1991, and the finished product. Bottom right: Mike Ray and Michelle Gould clown around at a photo shoot in Houston in 1991. Both were number 1. Bottom: Mike and Holly Ray after a Mike Ray tournament win, 1991.



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Then & Now



#1 Ranked Mens Pro fall 1991:

Mike Ray

#1 Ranked Pro fall 1996:

Sudsy Monchik



#1 Ranked high school player 1991:
Sudsy Monchik

#1 Ranked Women's Pro 1991 & 1996:
Michelle (Gilman) Gould



Number of stops on the MPRA (Men's Professional Racquetball Association) tour 1990-91:

6

Number of stops on the IRT (International Racquetball Tour) 1996-97:

24+



Oldest player on the tour in 1991:
Ruben Gonzalez

Oldest player on the tour in 1996:
Ruben Gonzalez



I'll be back...

Most solo **KILLSHOT** covers:
Andy Roberts (3)

Most **KILLSHOT** interviews:
Andy Roberts (2)



Now & then



Most Dominating Pro pre-1991: Marty Hogan, Mike Yellen

Most Dominating Pro post-1991: Cliff Swain



Most Dominating
Women's Pro
pre-1991:
Lynn
Adams

Most Dominating
Women's Pro
post-1991:
Michelle
(Gilman)
Gould



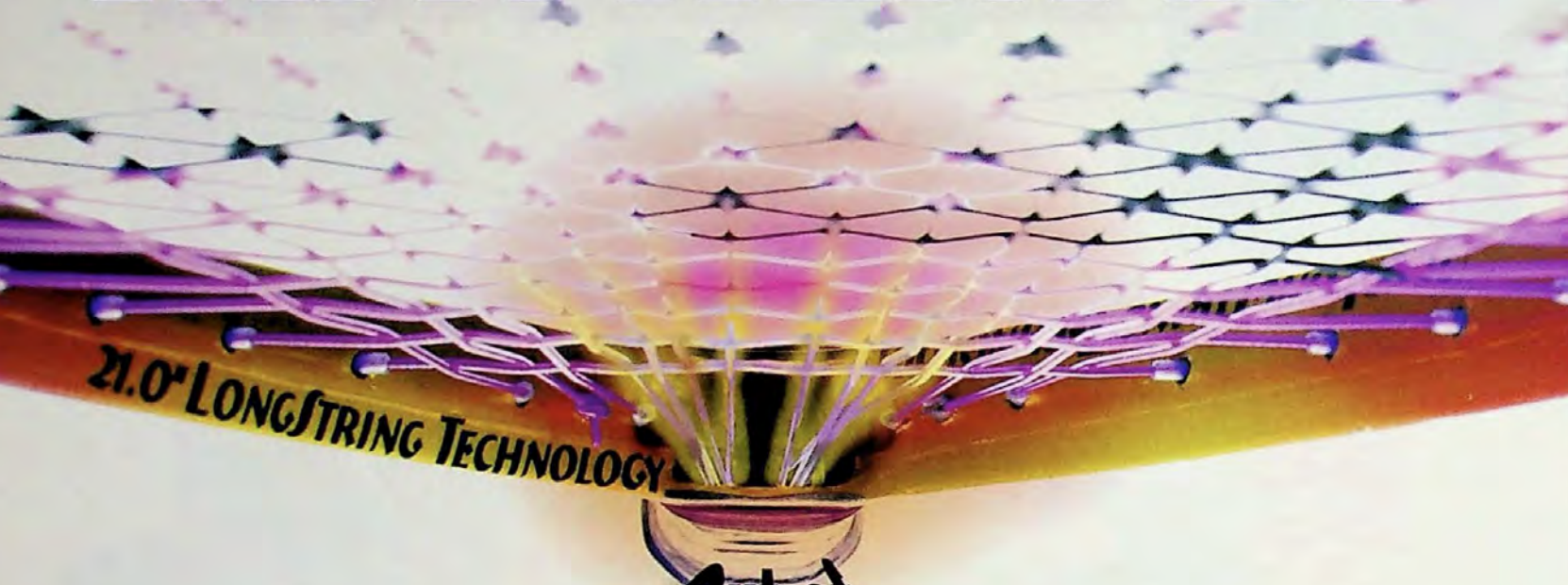
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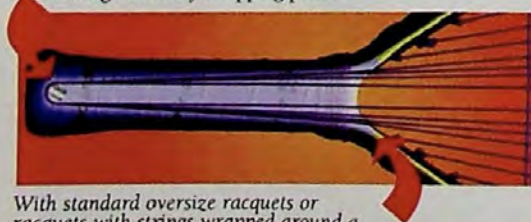


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IRT Travels to Japan

I.R.T.
World



In 1996 efforts to extend the International Racquetball Tour into Japan took a major leap forward. Several of the IRT pros were warmly received for a series of satellite events and clinics that are the ground work for full pro stops in Japan. Newly appointed IRT International Director Buz Sawyer and Koichi Kitamura of IRT Japan and Moonlight Workshop

Asia's most competitive tournaments, saw exceptional play from Mr. Higashi and Mr. Saito in the quarterfinals. The satellite in Sapporo, Hokkaido provided a look at the talents of Mr. Furuta, Mr. Sibata, and Mr.

McCarty. In the finals, Sawyer prevailed in both events.

With the coordinated efforts on both sides of the Pacific from Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Kitamura well underway for more and more IRT Trips in the near future, look for Japan to begin hosting full pro stops as well as become a feeder for top players into the IRT.

Center: Mr. Konishiki in action against Mr. Takanonami in the Autumn Grand Sumo Basho.

Right: Buzz Sawyer attended the Sumo tournament as the guest of Mr. Konishiki, Japan's most adored wrestler.

Left: Sawyer and Ruben Gonzalez in racquetball action.



Teruhiko Okimino



have combined efforts to form the largest base of IRT sanctioned events outside North America.

The returning IRT pros raved about the eager crowds and the quickness and playing skills of the top players of Japan. They were also impressed with the abundance of fresh seafood and the excitement of seeing sumo wrestling. In fact Sawyer, was even introduced to Konishiki, the largest and most adored wrestler.

Baltimore's Mike Engel was especially impressed with the level of play. He concluded that the main difference between the top players of Japan and those of the US is playing experience. Japan's national team members such as Bunia Hasegawa and Shoichi Sakai could easily be contenders in the IRT. Ruben Gonzalez, Brian Rankin, Mike Ray, and Kelly Gelhaus (all recent visitors) had similar observations.

So far, Sawyer has been the most dominate player in the satellites, drawing on his experience from the pro tour, as well as from his year in residence in Nagoya. The Heart Staff Open, traditionally one of

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KILLSHOT cafe

Appetizer

How can I get the most from the time I spend on drills?

Do most of your drills at less than full speed. This saves your arm. Work on accuracy at about three quarter speed. Hit only a few repetitions at full speed to keep you familiar with that velocity.

Always work from simple to complex. I do very basic drop and hit drills every time on the court. Then I move on to the more complicated stuff. No matter how fancy you get, start out and hit just as many or more basics.

Concentrate on drills that simulate game situations. Passes and pinches win games, practice more on them. You cannot practice too much on good serves. You should also practice with the intensity of a game. It keeps you loose and relaxed but alert in a rally if you feel the same pressure when you do your drills. This also keeps your attention from wandering during long practice sessions.

Finally, drills work because of the repetition. Practice makes perfect. Also, the recurring patterns used in drills can help speed up the learning sequences in skills acquisition.

Woody Clouse
IRT #11

Today's Special?

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Question too stupid? Don't worry, we promise not to print your name.

Entrees

I need help setting up. When I stay on my toes, I miss my shots. When I try to set my feet, I usually set up too soon. What can I do?

The timing for setting up varies a lot depending on your anticipation, your speed, your opponent's knowledge of shot selection, his power, etc. Before anything else, get into center court position (or as close as you can based on your opponent's position and the ball) as soon as you have hit the ball. Stay "light" - up on the balls of your feet. Don't "settle in" until just before he hits the ball. You need maximum mobility until that point, but once he is just about to hit, you have the best idea of where you need to be based on his swing prep, his stance, and his shot tendencies.

You are correct in your thinking that you will hit better shots with your feet set up in the proper position. That solid base is necessary for accuracy, and essential for utilizing the power in your legs for your shot. But never plant your feet until just before he hits the ball.

Mike Ray
IRT #4

What can I do to make my ceiling ball more effective? Every time I hit, even a good one, my opponent seems to put me away on the next shot.

The problem may be with your court coverage, not your shot. Remember, a ceiling ball affords you center court position every time. If you don't take advantage of this, your opponent will probably kill a bad ceiling shot or win with a weak pinch or some kind of dink off a good one.

Hit the ceiling ball, then get to center court to cover his shots. From deep court, he is at a disadvantage. If your ceiling ball sets him up, there may be nothing you can do. But if your ceiling ball falls as it should, his weak return should be no match for your coverage from center court!

Woody Clouse
IRT #15

Dessert

I've seen Mike Ray rip balls down-the-line and even hit a kill-shot from an overhead swing. My own overheads never do that. It even hurts my shoulder and elbow every time I try. How does Mike do it?

The whole key to a good overhead shot is using the "inside-out" motion. That is, as you start your overhead swing, your palm (and so your racquet face) is facing slightly "in" or toward the midline of your body. As you swing through, your wrist snap on the overhead turns your palm (and your racquet face) outward from the midline of your body. Many players end their motion with their palm still facing them, causing the shot to miss and their arm to hurt. I don't mean that you should change the arc of your swing, just the rotation at your wrist snap. If you think about your wrist snap on your low shots, the overhead should do the same thing, only in a different position.

I'll bet if you pay close attention to the "inside-out", both your accuracy and your soreness will improve.

Mike Ray
IRT #4



Pro Tour Results

An abbreviated
look at the
results of the IRT
and the WIRT

The International Racquetball Tour and Women's International Racquetball Tour battled through early season events at a fevered pace on the road to the Promus Hotels US Open.

For the players of the IRT, the events were familiar stops on a diverse array of courts that favored very different styles. Still, it was the top three, Sudsy Monchik, Cliff Swain, and Andy Roberts who dominated the finals. The spotlight was shared only briefly by Tony Jelso, and Tim Doyle in doubles action from Las Vegas, and by Drew Kachtik at the event in Riverside. With only about 500 ranking points separating Swain and Roberts, mid season events will make all the difference.

For the WIRT, Michelle Gould continued to be unstoppable, with a tough Cheryl Gudinas running a distant second. Laura Fenton and Jackie Paraiso posted the next best efforts, while former National Champ Caryn McKinney made a surprise comeback run to the semis in Memphis.

The Fall season also provided an opportunity to assess the great new official tour products. Spalding returned as the

official racquet of both tours, as did Penn with the ProPenn green ball and ProPenn gloves. Ektelon climbed on board with the new NFS footwear for both organizations, and Head introduced the official Pro Bag line. Leader provides the official eye protection for the IRT. Babolat is the official string sponsor of both tours. Rad Athletics provides the WIRT with eye protection.

For the true blue tour fans (which just about covers 99% of **KILLSHOT** readers) don't despair over the abbreviated photo and narrative coverage in this issue. We'll be back in the next issue with your usual fix, including shots from some of these events,

and lots more shots and information from the Promus Hotels US Open.

Sudsy Monchik

11-8, 11-9, 11-3

Andy Roberts

SEMIS

Monchik d. Clouse
11-4, 8-11, 15-13, 11-4
Roberts d. Swain
11-9, 11-4, 10-12, 11-0

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Kachtik
3-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-6
Clouse d. Ray
11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9
Roberts d. Guidry
11-5, 11-4, 11-7
Swain d. Ellis
8-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-5

IRT US Open

ProPenn Bonus Pool

Mike Ray
Jason Mannino
Louis Vogel
Woody Clouse
Adam Karp

penn.

Tacki Mac Pro Bonus Pool

Jason Mannino
Louis Vogel
Woody Clouse
Adam Karp
Tony Jelso

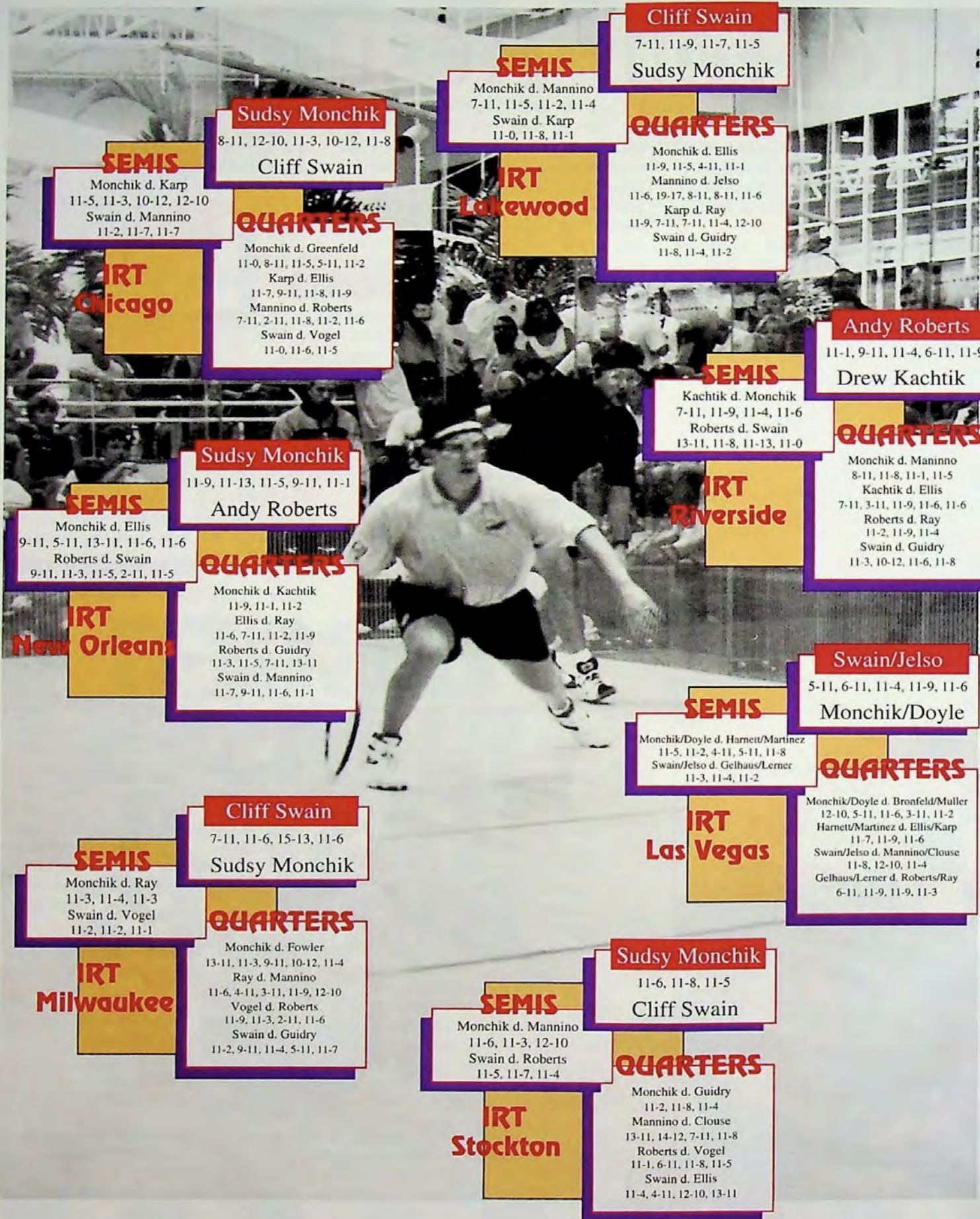
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Cliff Swain

7-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-5

Sudsy Monchik

SEMIS

Monchik d. Mannino

7-11, 11-5, 11-2, 11-4

Swain d. Karp

11-0, 11-8, 11-1

Sudsy Monchik

8-11, 12-10, 11-3, 10-12, 11-8

Cliff Swain

SEMIS

Monchik d. Karp
11-5, 11-3, 10-12, 12-10

Swain d. Mannino
11-2, 11-7, 11-7

IRT Chicago

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Greenfeld

11-0, 8-11, 11-5, 5-11, 11-2

Karp d. Ellis

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

Mannino d. Roberts

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

Swain d. Vogel

11-0, 11-6, 11-5

IRT Lakewood

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Ellis

11-9, 11-5, 4-11, 11-1

Mannino d. Jelso

11-6, 19-17, 8-11, 8-11, 11-6

Karp d. Ray

11-9, 7-11, 7-11, 11-4, 12-10

Swain d. Guidry

11-8, 11-4, 11-2

Andy Roberts

11-1, 9-11, 11-4, 6-11, 11-9

Drew Kachtik

SEMIS

Kachtik d. Monchik

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

Roberts d. Swain

13-11, 11-8, 11-13, 11-0

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Maninno

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

Kachtik d. Ellis

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

Roberts d. Ray

11-2, 11-9, 11-4

Swain d. Guidry

11-3, 10-12, 11-6, 11-8

Sudsy Monchik

11-9, 11-13, 11-5, 9-11, 11-1

Andy Roberts

SEMIS

Monchik d. Ellis
9-11, 5-11, 13-11, 11-6, 11-6

Roberts d. Swain

9-11, 11-3, 11-5, 2-11, 11-5

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Kachtik

11-9, 11-1, 11-2

Ellis d. Ray

11-6, 7-11, 11-2, 11-9

Roberts d. Guidry

11-3, 11-5, 7-11, 13-11

Swain d. Mannino

11-7, 9-11, 11-6, 11-1

IRT Riverside

Swain/Jelso

5-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-9, 11-6

Monchik/Doyle

SEMIS

Monchik/Doyle d. Harnett/Martinez

11-5, 11-2, 4-11, 5-11, 11-8

Swain/Jelso d. Gelhaus/Lerner

11-3, 11-4, 11-2

QUARTERS

Monchik/Doyle d. Bronfeld/Muller

12-10, 5-11, 11-6, 3-11, 11-2

Harnett/Martinez d. Ellis/Karp

11-7, 11-9, 11-6

Swain/Jelso d. Mannino/Clouse

11-8, 12-10, 11-4

Gelhaus/Lerner d. Roberts/Ray

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

Cliff Swain

7-11, 11-6, 15-13, 11-6

Sudsy Monchik

SEMIS

Monchik d. Ray
11-3, 11-4, 11-3

Swain d. Vogel

11-2, 11-2, 11-1

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Fowler

13-11, 11-3, 9-11, 10-12, 11-4

Ray d. Mannino

11-6, 4-11, 3-11, 11-9, 12-10

Vogel d. Roberts

11-9, 11-3, 2-11, 11-6

Swain d. Guidry

11-2, 9-11, 11-4, 5-11, 11-7

IRT Las Vegas

Sudsy Monchik

11-6, 11-8, 11-5

Cliff Swain

SEMIS

Monchik d. Mannino

11-6, 11-3, 12-10

Swain d. Roberts

11-5, 11-7, 11-4

QUARTERS

Monchik d. Guidry

11-2, 11-8, 11-4

Mannino d. Clouse

13-11, 14-12, 7-11, 11-8

Roberts d. Vogel

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

Swain d. Ellis

11-4, 4-11, 12-10, 13-11

IRT Stockton

IRT Milwaukee

Michelle Gould

11-6, 12-10, 11-9, 11-9

Cheryl Gudinas**SEMIS**Gould d. Levine
WBF (Injury)
Gudinas d. Fenton
4-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-3, 11-6**QUARTERS**Gould d. Paraiso
11-5, 11-6, 1-11, 11-7
Levine d. Lynch
11-4, 7-11, 11-5, 11-3
Fenton d. Myers
11-6, 11-2, 9-11, 11-4
Gudinas d. Moreland
11-4, 12-10, 11-2**WIRT
Annapolis****SEMIS**Gould d. Paraiso
12-10, 11-3, 11-9
Gudinas d. Fenton
10-12, 7-11, 12-10, 11-0, 11-6**Michelle Gould**

11-3, 11-5, 11-0

Cheryl Gudinas**QUARTERS**Gould d. Kilbane
11-8, 11-1, 11-1
Paraiso d. Levine
11-4, 11-3, 11-7
Fenton d. Moreland
16-14, 11-4, 11-5
Gudinas d. Coburn
11-4, 11-7, 11-8**WIRT
Baltimore****Michelle Gould**

12-10, 11-6, 11-0

Cheryl Gudinas**SEMIS**Gould d. Moreland
11-0, 11-5, 11-0
Gudinas d. Paraiso
11-3, 8-11, 11-4, 10-12, 11-4**QUARTERS**Gould d. Fenton
11-3, 11-2, 11-6
Moreland d. Friedman
11-4, 11-3, 11-3
Paraiso d. O'Brien
11-5, 11-0, 11-2
Gudinas d. Coburn
11-7, 11-1, 11-7**WIRT
Canoga Park****Michelle Gould**

11-1, 11-2, 11-1

Cheryl Gudinas**SEMIS**Gould d. Paraiso
11-4, 11-5, 12-10
Gudinas d. Fenton
11-7, 11-6, 7-11, 13-11**QUARTERS**Gould d. Myers
WBF
Paraiso d. O'Brien
11-5, 12-10, 11-4
Fenton d. Lynch
11-5, 11-6, 3-11, 11-7
Gudinas d. Hammock
11-7, 11-5, 11-7**WIRT
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Michelle Gould

11-5, 11-4, 11-3

Cheryl Gudinas**SEMIS**Gould d. Paraiso
11-5, 11-5, 11-1
Gudinas d. McKinney
11-3, 11-6, 9-11, 2-11, 11-6**QUARTERS**Gould d. Coburn
11-3, 11-6, 11-6
Paraiso d. Moreland
11-7, 11-8, 11-5
McKinney d. Levine
11-7, 13-11, 12-10
Gudinas d. O'Brien
11-3, 11-8, 11-8**WIRT
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Interview Scott Winters

By Marvin Quertermous, Managing Editor



From a start as the creator of one of the most ambitious court club programs in the sport, Scott Winters has climbed the corporate ladder to the helm of the Ektelon Racquetball division of the Prince Sports Group. In an industry full of numbers crunchers, he has built a career on the idea that the club player drives the industry. He has maintained that the individual player wants and deserves a sport that grows everyday, offers more rewards, and becomes more fun.

With the inside knowledge of the workings of several companies, and hands-on experience playing, teaching, and programming all part of his resume', Scott occupies a unique position in the game. His quiet confidence and soft-spoken manner contrast an irrepressible passion for the game and a tireless professionalism. When he refers to the grass roots of the sport, he counts himself one of the enthusiasts.

In this rare interview, Scott speaks candidly about his triumphs and setbacks, about his new power position and the state of the industry, and about his vision for the game as a whole as well as for the individual player he recognizes as the heart of the sport.

Q: Scott, tell me something about your background and your introduction to racquetball.

SW: My initiation into the world of racquetball came in 1977, while attending the University of California at Irvine. I was on the baseball team and one of the jobs the athletic department placed me in was supervising the racquetball facility. One of my teammates would come in to play each night when we closed. I loved the game from the start because it was so much fun while cross-training for baseball.

Q: Did you become involved directly with racquetball immediately after college?

SW: After college, I attempted to pursue a pro baseball career for a couple of years. My attempts failed to produce, so I drew upon my racquetball interest from school and immediately took a job as assistant manager at the University Athletic Club in Newport Beach. Racquetball eased the disappointment I carried from baseball. From Newport, I became the general manager and racquetball pro at the Irvine Clubhouse. This was during the time that it seemed like everybody was playing the game. The members of the club became like family and I developed long deep friendships from the experience. From there I took a position

at Racquetball World where I became the Executive Director of the racquetball programs at three locations. I wanted to build the RBW system into the most powerful program in the sport. Although I was able to build a very active program, I also realized then that racquetball participation was starting to decline dramatically after the boom.

Q: The Racquetball World system is legendary. Is that the biggest program ever?

SW: I don't know for sure, but it was definitely racquetball programming at a high volume level. The average RBW location had 27 courts and over 3,000 members. I had top pros at each location including big names like Ed Andrews and Brian Hawkes. I was teaching between 300 and 350 students a week, running over 80 leagues, a tournament and four "shootouts" a month, four open tournaments a year, the Southern California Junior Team and a variety of mixers, promotions, and pro exhibitions. That junior team, made up of elite players under the age of sixteen, was my most rewarding program. The neat thing is how many of them are still playing and teaching today. I was thrilled that Jim Carson stepped in to head the RBW program when I left because I knew he would keep the

program going. Unfortunately, his position was deleted a few years ago following the most unfortunate trend of racquetball during the past ten years. The dramatic lack of support for the sport among some health facility owners and managers has been devastating. I commend the ones that have kept racquetball active in their facilities and realize its value for today and for the future. The lack of programming and promotion is one of the main reasons that the game is not growing and that there are so few women and kids playing the sport. Not enough people are working at the game at the grassroots level. This is why the RIA [Racquetball Industry Association] initiative and AmPro [teaching organization] are so critical to the success of the sport.

Q: Did you have any time to play?

SW: The RBW job gave me the opportunity to play pros like Mike Yellen, Ed Andrews, and Brian Hawkes on a regular basis. I also played exhibitions against legendary players such as Jerry Hilecher, Lynn Adams, Craig McCoy, Rich Wagner, Bret Harnett, Charlie Brumfield and Bud Muhleheisen. I once beat Jerry Hilecher. He was a little off and I was "unconscious" on the court. Dr. Bud [Muhleheisen], beat me something like 31 to 4! Although I played a

lot during the 1980's, I never really took my game as seriously. My goal has always been to work within the industry, and to become good enough to play at the open level and play competitively with the best players in the game. I've been able to do that. That job did leave me pretty burned out from being on the court so much. During the past seven years, I have enjoyed playing mainly for workouts and play testing products I have developed. However, I'm starting to get the competition bug this year for the first time in years.

Q: Tell me about your experiences in the racquet industry.

Q: You captured serious attention in the industry with Team Richcraft.

SW: My best memories were of molding that team. Dan Obremski rose to the #3 ranking. I recognized John Ellis at an early age as the next phenomenon of the sport. I had worked as the AARA National Junior Commissioner for several years. Ellis stood along side Jeff Conine and Sudsy Monchik as the most impressive junior players I ever saw. However, at the time of the company move to Miami, there were many changes, and I had to cut Caryn McKinney from our team. Caryn is one of the most professional players to ever play the game and she was a pure world class champion. I think she

knew that the situation was out of my control and handled the situation like a pro. It was really unfortunate because Caryn's deal was very lucrative by racquetball standards. When the cut came down it had to be devastating to Caryn as a player. It was very unfortunate, racquetball could really use her talent and professionalism today.

Q: What was the transition like for you when Richcraft sold?

SW: After the Richcraft deal went south, I hooked up with Estusa. This seemed to be a good match since they wanted to build a new

racquetball category from scratch and I wanted to broaden my racquet sports experience into tennis and squash. Jimmy Connors had just come off the US Open where he made it to the semis with a bright yellow Estusa tennis racket. The phone was ringing off the hook for that yellow racket. We also had the Boris Becker line and the Jahangir Khan squash line. I brought Obremski with me and we promoted him along side of Connors and Khan as he rose to the height of his game with Estusa's newly developed racquetball line. Each of these players was amazing, but to the public, Connors was the rage. He has a rock star's magnetism. Traveling with him was an amazing experience. Unfortunately, the Estusa deal started falling apart after only about a year and a half. I don't know if anybody will ever

know exactly what really happened behind the scenes. A major factor was that when we couldn't deliver the yellow tennis rackets fast enough to meet demand, it killed our squash and racquetball categories. They died before we could get them into enough hands to build a solid base in the market.

Q: From there?

SW: After Estusa, I began some consulting for Fox tennis and did some key account sales for Transition racquetball. I also started my own sales agency selling Transition, Hi-Tec, Fox, Sergio Tacchini and fitness products. After my experiences with Richcraft and Estusa, I knew I had to build my own situation or become involved with one of the top companies in racquet sports.

Q: Hence the move to Prince/Ektelon?

SW: The position that would become my opportunity to join the Prince Sports Group came when they decided to transition Ektelon to their headquarters in Bordertown, New Jersey. It's very easy to see how we have become so successful when you look at the talent that makes up the company. When I first joined Prince, I worked with Rob Ahrens as Ektelon product manager. We were a good team because he had great classical marketing skills and was a good manager and visionary. I had the relationships and knowledge within the industry. But we had to fight to stay successful. Dave Peck fought the battles in the field where everyone was saying that we were a tennis company that didn't care about racquetball. We made some mistakes by not changing our line during our first year. This added more fuel to the fires. We thought we were doing retailers a favor. The clear message we had gotten was that they were tired of wholesale Ektelon line changes every year. It was confusing to them and to their consumers. We also spent too much time concerning ourselves with the growth of the game when we were at our weakest point for competitors' attacks. We lost some market share during those two years, but we've gained almost all of it back based on the strengths of PowerWeb technology and our NFS shoes.

Q: You moved into the senior manager's seat by hitting the ground running with some bold ideas and innovations. The same has been true since your recent promotion to Director of Indoor Court Sports.

SW: When I became Senior Manager of Ektelon in April, I wanted to make sure that we aggressively attacked the market. We had a tremendous new product line.



SW: I became a consultant for Richcraft in 1988, and then their National Sales and Marketing Manager in 1990. The Richcraft experience was a great introduction to the sporting goods business. We handled all company administration, marketing, and manufacturing under the same roof. You could see the racquets being made from scratch just footsteps outside my office. We developed a good reputation for having innovative products made in the USA - including some with a lifetime guarantee! The relationship with parent company FTM was the best and worst thing that ever happened to Richcraft. While we were able to increase profits and customer service levels, the rug was pulled out from under us when our parent company's whole structure was dissolved.

The PowerWeb, WallBeater and Vision Grip Cushion handle system technologies are just a few examples of the innovations in our revolutionary new line. We introduced the NFS footwear line which was immediately embraced by the pro tours. We had gone to the drawing board with one idea in mind: to introduce new technologies and designs that actually make the game easier and more fun. How could we go wrong with that concept? I've learned that it takes good communication and customer service to back up the new technologies. People wanted to know what we were about - what we were made of. I think we've shown them more than they bargained for, with plenty more yet to come. We are already working on new projects engineered the same way - to be better and more fun - which we will be bringing out over the next few years. I think we have the best R & D team in the business. We stay in front of the playing public by being in the field and through our "Game Face" newsletter instead of moving behind the scenes. The real challenge going forward is to develop new vehicles for distribution and to keep supporting the grass roots efforts. Aside from our product line, I am most proud of our player program. Dave Peck has done a great job of keeping it together through the transition. His enthusiasm is tremendous. Remember when the Peck brothers were playing the pro tour? Dave was the only National Champion to break the Hogan-Yellen stronghold. I often joke with him that it was his brother Gregg the "good guy" on the court that was my idol, not the more confrontational Dave.

Q: What individuals do you see making a difference in the game?

SW: I think first you have to acknowledge the huge things Hank Marcus has accomplished in building the pro game. He has built something big from what was a big mess. I have seen the pro game change so many times it's amazing. Hank has brought stability to the tours. Because of this, we have come on board as the official footwear sponsor of the IRT and WIRT. I realize that, even so, it is still on fragile ground. I like the maturity level of the pros I'm working with now - I think Hank is mostly responsible for that. We're lucky to have great players like Mike Guidry and Kelly Gelhaus who will eagerly travel to play in places like South and Central American and Japan. In addition to being the stars of the game, Andy Roberts, Drew Katchtik, Michelle Gould and Cheryl Gudinas are all

active clinicians. In fact, I've managed to pull in Andy and Michelle on more of the day to day business issues with Ektelon. The Boudmans have kept enthusiasm building in the sport for years. They are also behind some of our biggest innovations. Doug Ganim has been a great visionary and executor for the sport through all of the positive things that have come about in recent years. His leadership in Ohio and the AARA as well as his consulting work for some of our competitors is impressive. I look for some big things from him in the future if he can succeed in bringing in sponsorship from outside the racquetball industry. His incredible efforts on the first US Open could turn some things around for the sport. Luke St. Onge and the AARA staff all deserve tremendous credit since not many people know just how hard they work and just how much they really mean to the sport. I couldn't imagine where the sport would be without them. I've been fortunate to work with Luke, and with people like Jim Hiser Margo Daniels, Keith Caulkins, Van Dubolsky, and many others through the years.

Q: Any concerns about the way things are going?

SW: I'm definitely very concerned about the game at the club/grassroots level. I think we have to be working from both ends, the high visibility/portable court/ESPN route and grassroots/AMPro/courtclub programs. It's easy to focus too much on one or the other, but the real growth will come from building both ends and using the success of each to fuel further success for the other. Racquetball needs hoopla and heroes, and it also needs programs that meet the needs of players to keep them playing, get them to play more, and encourage beginners.

Q: Looking ahead, do you see negatives or positives?

SW: I see positives, but not without a lot of effort and a lot of cooperation. Cooperation from within the industry as we have been putting together for the past year or so through the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, and the AARA, and support coming directly from the playing public.

Q: What is your message for the playing public?

SW: PLAY RACQUETBALL! Actively support the key initiatives with AARA, AmPro, RIA, the US Open, etc. The tennis community joined together to rebuild the



sport several years ago through the TIA and some timely TV coverage of the pro game. Racquetball is now poised for the same type of occurrence. As the sport grows, it just gets better and more fun for everyone involved. LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!

From Scott Winters' early days of teaching and programming racquetball in Southern California.

Above: Winters shakes hands with touring pro Jerry Hilecher.

Opposite: Winters on court in a match with Bud Muhleheisen.

Service with a Smile!

A few basic principles can take the stress out of serving.

By Fran Davis
U.S. National Team Coach

Effective serving capitalizes on an opportunity to hit from a perfect set up. If not unreturnable, effective serves should always yield a weak return that sets up an offense third shot. Still, serves require ball placement within a limited area. Unlike any other shot in a rally, the receiver need only cover the back half of the court. Covering a smaller area allows the receiver an opportunity for a good set up off a weak serve. This places the server in jeopardy from the onset of the rally. Since the serve often affects the outcome more than any other factor in a rally, it only makes sense to make every serve count. Serving effectively requires a firm command of the general principles of variety, timing and deception.

Variety

Just as a pitcher in baseball strives to eliminate the batter with a strike out or a weak hit that can be caught, so does the server in racquetball strive to eliminate his receiver with an ace or a weak return that

can be put away. The pitcher wields fast balls, curves, knuckle balls, and sliders. The server pulls from an arsenal of drives, lobs, half-lobbs, and Z's. By maintaining variety, each keeps his opponent guessing. He keeps his receiver off balance and denies him any advance preparation or movement to the ball.

You can begin to add variety by altering the height, speed, and angle of each serve you already use. You can create infinite variations of the serves on which you already rely. Serving from different positions within the service box can add some interesting and unexpected angles. To further broaden your arsenal, you'll have to practice to gain proficiency at any serves you don't already use.

Analyze your opponent's preferences and weaknesses to determine which of your weapons to use. Test for weaknesses or injuries that limit effectiveness against various assaults. Capitalize on a weak backhand, weak lateral movement from a bad knee, etc. Analyze style preferences to see how to best throw off timing.

Service Checklist

1. Analyze your opponent
2. Develop a game plan
3. Vary your serves
4. Concentrate on weaknesses
5. Control the tempo
6. Deceive the receiver



Timing

As the server, you have (or should have) control of the match. Use that to your advantage. Just as a pitcher begins a sort of ritual on the mound from the time he receives the ball from the catcher, so too should the server in racquetball establish a ritual. It inspires confidence. It delivers a clear message to the receiver that you are in control. If you watch pros like Sudsy Monchik, Michelle Gould, Andy Roberts, and Cheryl Gudinas, you'll notice that they have very deliberate, methodical routines to prepare to put the ball into play. Your ritual and the security that comes from it will help to unbalance your waiting opponent.

Remember, work within your tempo, not your opponent's. Set the pace that makes you most effective while making him the most uncomfortable. Slow the pace against the shooters. Do this with more strategic shots such as lobs and Z's. Heat things up against the rest. Be aggressive with dives and wraps against those who prefer more time to set up. Bottom line, if you are serving, call the shots.

Serve from various positions in the service box.



Types of Serves

Aggressive

Drive
Jam
Wrap Around
Hard Low "Z"
Overhead Hard "Z"
Overhead Jam

Strategic

High Lob
Half Lob
Lob "Nick"
Soft High "Z"
Three Quarter "Z"
Off Speed

Deception

The pitcher's windup is the same for every pitch. He never lets the batter know

what's coming until he releases the ball. Deceive the receiver with a similar motion for every serve. Give him no advance notice of your intentions. Becoming proficient with any serve from any position in the box helps you do this. A deceptive service motion will make the most of your work with variety and timing.

Improving these three aspects of the service strategy will help any player's game at any level. Remember, like any strategies

in sports, the concepts are only as good as you can execute them. It takes hours of practice to insure the shots are there when you need them. It takes planning and visualization to make sure you use your weapons to your fullest advantage. If you can master these strategies, you have the mind set to utilize the specific serves effectively as we discuss proper execution of each one individually in upcoming issues.

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Photo by John Foust

VCI Spreadsheet

IRT

1. Sudsy Monchik (1)
2. Cliff Swain (2)
3. Andy Roberts (3)
4. Mike Ray (4)
5. Jason Mannino (7)
6. Mike Guidry (6)
7. John Ellis (5)
8. Drew Kachtik (8)
9. Dan Fowler (9)
10. Louis Vogel (11)
11. Woody Clouse (15)
12. Adam Karp (12)
13. Tony Jelso (9)
14. Michael Bronfeld
15. Kelly Gelhaus
16. James Mulcock
17. Todd O'Neil
18. Scott Reiff
19. Derek Robinson (16)
20. Ruben Gonzalez

WIRT

1. Michelle Gould (1)
2. Cheryl Gudinas (2)
3. Jackie Paraiso (8)
4. Dina Moreland (9)
5. Laura Fenton (16)
6. Robin Levine
7. Lynne Coburn (10)
8. Molly O'Brien (7)
9. Marcy Lynch (4T)
10. Janet Myers (13)
11. Amy Kilbane (3)
12. Lydia Hammock
13. Doreen Fowler (14)
14. Anita Maldonado (4T)
15. Kim Machiran (6)
16. Caryn McKinney
17. Randy Friedman
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19. Chris Evon (11)
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#6 Sept/Oct '92. Mike Yellen cover. New format. Tim Sweeney interview, evaluating a string job, Mike Yellen profile, instruction and tournament coverage. \$5.00.

#7 November '92. Drew Kachtik "Chain-link" cover. **SOLD OUT!!**

#8 January/February '93. Ruben Gonzalez cover. Ruben Gonzalez profile, tennis elbow, Gregg Peck's basics, instruction and tournament coverage. \$5.00.

#9 March/April '93. Cliff Swain cover. Cliff Swain interview, a look at racquets, eating for performance, instruction and tournament coverage. \$5.00.

#10 Summer '93. Marty Hogan/Charlie Brumfield cover. Special instructional issue. Evolution of the racquet, Strandemo, Dynamic Duo, America's Most Wanted, Heflin on climbing the walls, tournament coverage. \$5.00.

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#24 Summer '96. Sudsy Monchik Cover. Sudsy Crash Course, Deliver with a Purpose, Personal Trainer, US Open info, Natural Selection, Grading the Pros, **KILLSHOT** Cafe. \$5.00

Taking Care of Business

TCB

Industry news and announcements

If the Shoe Fits

Ektelon has been named the official footwear sponsor of the IRT and the WIRT. Their new NFS (Natural Foot Shape) performance line delivers lightweight traction with a durable gum rubber outsole. The shoes feature nylon quarter support straps and a thermoplastic heel counter to provide the rugged stability to hold up to the demands of racquetball.

Web of Power

For 25 years, Ektelon has captured racquetball's biggest market share through innovative technology. Continuing in that tradition, they have introduced the new PowerWeb racquet technology. Featured on Ektelon's new Power Ring and Power Ring Lite racquets, it features a frame design which creates uniformly longer main strings to deliver a 25% power boost. The two frames are the flagship of the new line of Ektelon racquets that includes a variety of models and price points. Six of the new frames incorporate Ektelon's WallBEATER bumper, which (according to early testing) reduces the shock of wall hits by 70%. The Whisper Damp frame features new DoubleBridge technology and claims advanced vibration dampening.

Holding the Bag

Head Racquetball has signed an agreement with the IRT and the WIRT to produce the Official Racquetball Bag of the tours. We will get our first glimpse of the new IRT bag line by Head at the Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association Super Show in February in Atlanta.

Seen' Green

After the overwhelming success of the inaugural U.S. Open Racquetball Championships the AARA has adopted Penn's ProPenn green ball as the official ball for National and Regional tournament play. Professionals and amateurs both competed using the Pro Penn green ball for the first time at the U.S. Open.

The ProPenn green ball was developed in 1994 in conjunction with the IRT for tournament play. The ball was designed to provide better and more consistent play and claims better visibility than the blue ball.

The Penn Ultra Blue isn't going anywhere though. It will continue to be the official ball of the AARA.

Penn and the IRT have signed an agreement naming the ProPenn green ball as the official ball for the IRT until 2001.



Penn Pals

In another move solidifying the bond between Penn Racquet Sports and the IRT the #1 ball producer in the country is producing a new Pro Penn glove line. The two top-of-the-line models feature exclusive lycra padded fingers for wall and dive shots and terry cloth wipe on the thumb and top of the hand. Both gloves are made of hand-selected, premium grade Cabretta leather—one of the finest glove leathers in the world.

The agreement names Penn's Pro Penn Tackified and Pro Penn Cabretta gloves as the official gloves for the tour for three years.

Stringin'-A-Long

After the success of last year's long string technology in the Chaos and Havoc frames by E Force, the San Diego based company has once again lengthened its main strings. The Mayhem, released for the current playing season, takes long string technology even further - to a whopping 20.5 inches for the eight center main strings. The mains run from the frame tip to the bottom cap of the handle. The added length is intended to increase power much the same way as a longer bow string increases power for the archer.

The new Stealth and Weapon gloves have brought E Force's accessory line into the same high tech realm that the racquet line has already reached.

A group of Pro Penn green balls awaits the addition of the logo and packaging at the Penn manufacturing plant.

The String is the Thing

High tech meets old world craftsmanship at Ashaway



"Ashaway," and "USA". The two words go together. Ashaway Racket Strings is the only company making string for racquetball, tennis, squash, and badminton in the USA. While all other racquet strings are imported (mostly from the Far East), Ashaway strings are made in the tiny New England mill village of Ashaway, Rhode Island.

If you were to visit the Ashaway plant, you would find production in full swing, with thousands of braiding machines making such a tremendous roar that conversation would be nearly impossible. Steve Crandall, Vice President of Sales and Marketing is part of the sixth generation of Crandalls to run the business, and a direct descendent of Captain Lester Crandall, who founded the company to make line for commercial fishing back in 1824 - more than 170 years ago.

"We've kept the best of the old textile-making technology, and modified it to meet modern production needs," said Crandall. "It's nice to have a company with a real history, but you've got to stay on top of new developments in technology to remain competitive."

Ashaway may be old but the company is far from old-fashioned. It has been responsible for some significant technical innovations, including the first use of nylon in a commercial product (1939) and the first use of Kevlar® in a racquet string (1977).

According to Crandall, the manufacturing process begins by twisting together strands of yarn to produce the "core" of the string. Ashaway purchases

five-pound bobbins of yarn from chemical companies like DuPont, and loads dozens of these onto twisting frames. Several strands of the hair-thin yarns such as Kevlar® or Zyex®, are led across rollers, through guides, and onto an empty bobbin near the bottom of the machine. This bobbin spins at several thousand rpm's and when full holds about 3,500 feet of twisted core.

Elongation and resiliency is controlled by varying the number of twists put into the yarn for each inch of core produced. Subtle, yet sophisticated measures such as this, and careful selection of the chemical polymers that make up the yarns, are what string makers use to engineer different play characteristics in their string.

When twisting is complete, the core is transferred to the braiding mill where antique braiding machines put "jacket" layers over the cores. Each braider has several small bobbins, arranged in two concentric circles. The core strand passes through the middle of the circle, and the bobbins do a fast and furious dance around the core. Half of the bobbins run clockwise, and half counterclockwise, constantly exchanging places on the inside and outside circles. In this way, the yarns for the covering layer are woven together over the core.

Through fine adjustments in machine set-up, the manufacturer can engineer subtle differences in the construction of the jackets, which again change the playing characteristics of the string. For example, the braid can be relatively open to provide more texture and "bite" to the string, or relatively closed, to provide more protection to the core, for greater durability.

In spite of the speed at which the bobbins rush around, braiding is a slow opera-

tion, jacketing only about 30 inches of racquet string per minute. Subsequent processes happen a lot faster. The braided string is then given a coating to bind the fibers together and reduce abrasion. The string is drawn through a coating bath, and then, running over pulleys, it shoots 40 feet up into a drying tower. The string may go through this process as many as six times to apply the right amount of coating.

The string then goes to a computer-controlled ink-jet printer that silently prints the Ashaway name at 3,000 inches per minute, then dips quickly through another, different coating bath to make it easier to string into racquets.

The string runs off the drum a final time and is inspected for flaws, then it is metered off and cut into appropriate lengths -- 36 feet for single racquetball sets, and 360 feet for reels. Then the string is packaged and shipped.

Superficially, string seems to be a simple product but it is actually a highly refined, technically sophisticated piece of sporting equipment, and each manufacturing step is necessary to produce the final product. The process is complex because it has to be.

So, while string may seem basic, players have learned that details of string design and manufacturing can significantly affect court performance. String is, in fact, anything but basic; it is an intriguing mixture of technologies, where sophisticated polymer chemistry combines with 90-year old processing equipment. While the basics of line-making haven't really changed in all that time, Ashaway has continually refined and upgraded the process, and the materials that go into it, so that its racquetball strings are as high-tech as anyone could desire.



Above: On the twisting frame, thin strands of high-tech yarns like Kevlar® and Zyex® are carefully twisted to produce the core of the string.

Left: The wear layer, or jacket of the string, is produced on braiders: although these are about 90 years old, they're still "state of the art."

Racquet Science



Basic physics teaches us that there is a balance point for every racquet. As that point moves closer to your hand, the racquet swings faster. Farther from your hand, the racquet swings slower.

Of course, higher racquet speeds mean greater ball velocity. But it also means that if you hit the ball too late or too early in your swing, you can change your balance point to hit the ball in the optimum "midpoint" zone in each swing. The result is more power with better control than ever before.

Even though it's basic science, only Gemini offers the technology to customize the center of gravity for each frame to make every shot better...lots better.



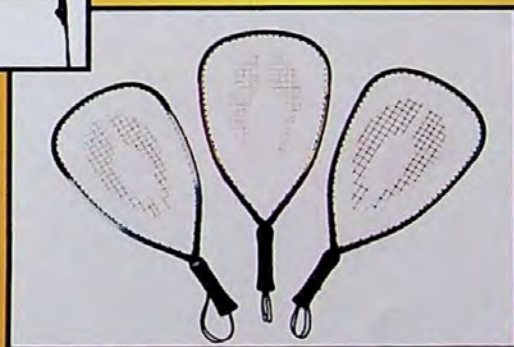
The space age frames of the Triple Balance Series deliver the optimum measure of power and control in a light, mid, or heavy frame, balanced head heavy, head light, or neutral to suit the unique swing characteristics of each serious player. Combat-proven in national level competition, they make the most of any player's potential.

The new Power Wave by Gemini employs powerful and innovative new WAVEX technology by adding mass and stability to an enlarged sweet spot. The revolutionary WAVEX frame configuration offers unmatched power while naturally minimizing racquet head vibration. The Power Wave comes customized to your ideal balance and weight and carries the same unbelievable commitment to quality and service as the original Gemini Triple Balance series.

As the president of Gemini Racquetball, I feel my reputation is on the line with each racquet that leaves our Richmond, Virginia headquarters. That's why it's important to me that each player receives the racquet that offers the best combination of weight and balance to play to the top of his or her potential. To make this happen, Gemini offers customized, powerful racquets, the knowledge and experience to perfectly match them to your individual swing mechanics, and a commitment to service that is the most personalized in the industry.

Gemini doesn't sell through discounters or middle-men or pay professional players to endorse racquets. We work with individuals who want the perfect weapon to play better racquetball. I personally guarantee that the experts at Gemini can individually fit you with a racquet that will improve your game. It is my belief that once you own a Gemini that has been customized for you, you will never play with anything else.

Ron Halloran
President



**Call today.
We'll build
one for You !**



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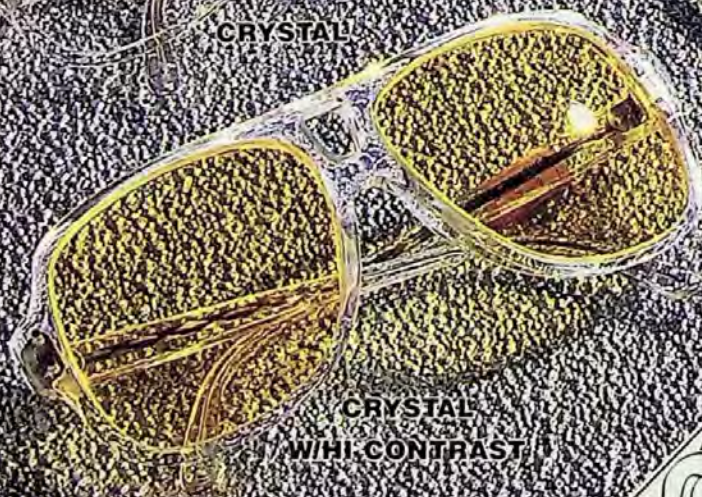
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