

National Racquetball®

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Lynn Adams: A Profile

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Off The Wall



It is with great sadness that I find myself writing *Off the Wall* this month. It's unbelievable, but Joe Massarelli, publisher of *National Racquetball* passed away on July 4th. He was 47.

Joe was born and grew up in Chicago. He moved to Florida with his family in 1974 and when asked if he would ever move back to Illinois he always replied, "Why would anybody leave paradise?"

Joe was a vital, vigorous man to whom every day was a celebration of life. He worked hard and he played hard. He had a passion for flying, never missing an opportunity to pilot a plane, and it was not unusual for him to tell us he was "just going to drop someone off in the Bahamas". He fished the Gulf of Mexico frequently with promises of a "fish fry on Sunday", and every year he made a trip to the Baja Peninsula of Mexico enjoying flying the plane as much chasing the big game fish he went after.

An entrepreneur most of his adult life, he was involved not only in publishing, but also in water reclaim systems and carwash equipment. He was a recognized expert in the water reclaim field and acted as a consultant for the planning and installation of carwash systems.

He formed Florida Trade Publications in 1975 and founded *Water Technology* and *Professional Carwashing* magazines which became the leading publication in their industry. He sold both publications in 1981 intending to devote all his time to the carwash and water treatment industries.

But publishing was his real interest and in 1985 he bought *Florida Builder* and in 1986 *National Racquetball*.

He had great plans for *National Racquetball*. He believed strongly that racquetball could become one of the most popular sports in the nation and that the magazine could be a major factor in encouraging its growth. He quickly made himself familiar with the industry and set out to improve the content of the magazine so that it would appeal to players at all levels.

It is now left to us to continue what he began. He taught us well and with his volatile and outgoing personality left us in no doubt as to his intentions.

Each month, as we publish this magazine, we'll remember the things he told us and aim for his goal: To make racquetball a top recreational sport available to anyone interested in playing; to encourage the different factions in racquetball to work together for the good of the sport; to encourage growth at the grassroots level and visibility at the professional level.

To that end the *Off the Wall* column will be available to anyone who has something of importance to say, something which will aid the growth of racquetball. Hopefully it will become the means through which important messages are conveyed to those interested in this sport and hopefully it will reflect the optimism of Joe Massarelli.

But it's not as a business associate that he will be missed the most. It is as a friend. He was there for all of us when we needed him, ready with a kind word or a helping hand. We'll miss his warmth, generosity and trust.

Goodbye Joe. We'll miss you and we'll make this magazine what you intended it to be — the best!

— HQ

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National Racquetball®



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Exhibition & Demonstration Schedule

	TUES, AUG 25	WED, AUG 26	THURS, AUG 27	FRI, AUG 28	SAT, AUG 29	SUN, AUG 30
10:00 am-11:30 am	Court Sports Safety	TBA	Wallyball	TBA	Wallyball	Pro Exhibition Matches All Day
11:30 am-1:00 pm	Racquetball	Racquetball	Racquetball	Squash	Racquetball	
1:00 pm-2:30 pm	Wallyball	Court Sports Safety	TBA	Racquetball	Racquetball	
2:30 pm-4:00 pm	TBA	Wallyball	Court Sports Safety	Wallyball	Squash	
4:00 pm-5:30 pm	Racquetball	Racquetball	Squash	Court Sports Safety	Racquetball	
5:30 pm-7:00 pm	Squash	Racquetball	Racquetball	Racquetball		
7:00 pm-8:30 pm	Racquetball	Squash	Racquetball	Racquetball		

NOTE: TBA denotes To Be Announced



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A One Woman Dynasty

Lynn Adams

Continues To Rule

by Sigmund Brouwer

It's there in the records. Lynn Adams won her first professional tournament in Rhode Island in 1981, winning a tiebreaker against Heather McKay. The score in that fifth game was 11-10.

Not in the records is what Lynn Adams did when McKay served for the match at 10-9.

Nothing.

Adams had left the ball up in mid-court, a soft plum to McKay's forehand. With world champion Heather McKay only a routine pat away from winning the match, Adams did not bother to move from back court, did not bother to cover and still she expected to win.

"I knew I would win before I got to the tournament," Lynn says. "I had a dream I would win

11-10 in the finals, even though I couldn't see my opponent in the dream, so I told three people beforehand. When McKay had the set-up at 10-9, I didn't move because I knew, just knew, she would skip it."

It's an amazing story, but then it involves an athlete who declined a track scholarship to UCLA to pursue the pro racquetball game — *before* acquiring any skill in the sport. It involves a player who never managed to qualify for a professional tournament, yet has won a record five national championships. It involves a woman whose superstition makes her do everything the same way before tournaments, and whose arthritis vaulted her into the pages of the *National Enquirer*.

When she plays, there is no overpowering backhand, tremendous serve, or untouchable forehand. Everything is even, consistent. She steps on the court, plays, wins, steps off the court.

Who would know that because of superstition, she listens to the same music, practices in the same court, does everything the same during tournaments, down to using the same stalls in the washroom? ("I will wait as long as I have to for it to open." Gigue.)

When she turns her shoulders a certain way, and when she crinkles her face to smile, she can resemble the schoolgirl version of Kathleen Turner in her movie 'Peggy Sue Got Married'. Who would suspect Adams of having anything more than that type



of quietness?

But, of course, there is more. Nobody wins five national championships in today's racquetball without being out of the ordinary.

In high school Lynn did a little of everything. There was track; she was a good enough middle distance runner to attract that scholarship offer from UCLA. There was the softball team. There was singing and drama in the high school musical 'The Sound of Music' where she played the part Julie Andrews made famous. But there was no racquetball.

Then she played twice.

"Racquetball consumed me from the beginning. It combined all other sports. It had speed, agility, finesse, strength, stamina, hand-eye coordination. And you had to deal with someone wanting your space and position. I decided I wanted to be a pro."

So, no scholarship to UCLA. Practice and struggle in racquetball instead. For her first pro stop, she took the midnight flight from Los Angeles to Detroit, missed two buses to the hotel, threw up before playing, lost badly in her first qualifying match, went back to the hotel and threw up again, then flew back to L.A. that night.

She spent that entire season making it only a little further into the qualifying rounds each tourna-



ment. The closest she came was an 11-10 tiebreaker victory in the final qualifying round, then having the last point called back on a hinder to lose 11-10.

The next season she didn't qualify either. The tour changed from a 16 spot draw to 24 for professionals, and Lynn's hard work the season before gave her the number 24 ranking. By the end of that season she was ranked third. But then there was the Everest of obstacles, Heather McKay.

Australian born McKay had spent 20 years in world-class squash competition. In a sport where games go to nine, and matches to five games, McKay had not lost a single game in 17 years.

At the age of 37, McKay established herself quickly in racquetball. Her reputation and presence affected the much younger Adams.

"When we came into the sport together, she was the queen," Lynn says. "I felt like I was six years old. It took a long time to get over the awe."

When she did, it started a strong rivalry that continued for five years. They met 30 times. McKay won 16 matches, Adams the other 14. Adams felt like the student most of the time.

She says, "From Heather, I learned how to deal with my emotions on the court. I learned it was okay to have emotions and use them, but not let others see it."

Against each other on the court, they were fierce. When the rivalry ended with McKay's retirement to return to Australia, they finally let down the professional guard.

"After the last tournament, we went out and confessed to each other all the things we knew we could do on the court to throw off the other person's game. She couldn't deal with rude

people on the court, and sometimes I wished I could generate that type of attitude to bother her . . . What were her secrets on the court against me? I'll never tell."

Lynn won her national titles in 1982, 1983, lost to McKay in 1984, then won 1985, 1986, and this year in Fort Worth. When Adams says 1982 and 1983 were dream years for her, take it literally.

In 1982, with the nationals to be held in Denver, her only goal of the year was to win that tournament. She dreamed before the event, again without seeing her opponent, that she would win 15-14 in the final's tiebreaker.

(continued on the next page)

Profile

Five time winner of WPRA National Title

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Winner of Triple Crown 1986

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Lynn Adams

(continued from page 5)

She won 15-14 against Shannon Wright.

Lynn's rivalry continued against Heather McKay, and 1983 was the year they were to meet in the finals of the nationals which were to be held in Chicago.

Of the two, only Adams had the unswerving certainty that they would both be there. This was apparent from a short conversation just before the semi-finals, where McKay was to play her other nemesis, Shannon Wright.

Heather stopped in the hallway and said to Lynn, "I'm nervous about this one. I don't think I can win."

Lynn said, "Don't worry."

"What do you mean don't worry? I always have a tough time against Shannon." A short pause as Heather realized what Lynn meant. "You had a dream?"

Lynn nodded. "You and me in the finals."

Heather sighed. "Oh, good. That makes me feel a lot better." Another pause, and then suspicion. "Okay. Who wins?"

Adams only smiled and said nothing. The final match of the 1983 Nationals went to Adams, 3-1 in games against McKay, just as she had dreamed. To date, it is the last dream she has had.

Now, with Marci Drexler, Lynn feels much as she believes Heather felt during those years. She enjoys being challenged in a way which disappeared with Heather's retirement.

"Marci is coming up and getting closer. It's inevitable. And Marci is scary. She's the most physically gifted player I've seen. She's noticeably faster and hits the ball noticeably harder than the rest of us, and she has a bottom-board mentality.

"When she's on a high, she's hard to stop and I have to wait it out, take advantage of the middles and lows. With experience she's getting better at handling it, and I'm looking forward to the rivalry. I find it motivating."

So far, Lynn hasn't needed much to stay motivated.

She has a form of arthritis, usually mild, but when it flares, it will lock the joints of her fingers in whatever position they happen to be. They lock so badly, no amount of force will straighten them.

One night before a tournament, she sensed the arthritis would flare. She went to sleep with her hand around her racquet, and when she woke, her fingers had locked in the form of a grip.

"I could slide the racquet in and out of my hand, but that was about it. So I played like that. But let me tell you, I didn't play that well." (The National Enquirer liked that story so much, with the permission of the Arthritis Foundation for which Lynn is a national spokesperson, the paper ran the top quarter of a page on her condition.)

Lynn is so fierce about winning, she insists even practice is for keeps, and is occasionally asked by her practice partners to take it a little less seriously.

Once, years back, an opponent persisted in cheating and Lynn finally had enough; she spoke her mind on the court, and emphasized each point with a forefinger push into the girl's shoulder. The girl kept moving back and stumbled. Lynn overheard the locker-room version that afternoon, so she walked around the corner to show herself. Lynn Adams is not a big woman. She wanted them to see she was not "a huge monster who had hauled off and slugged someone".

To Lynn, successful women athletes don't have to lose what it means to be a woman off the court. "It's frustrating," she says. "Sports are male-oriented, and we still have to overcome the myth that you can't be feminine if you are aggressive . . . so what would I say makes me feminine?" There is a pause, and she smiles

to let the question answer itself — effective enough indication.

She will be the first to admit that two men in her life are a big, big reason why she is number one. Her father, who was drafted by the Boston Red Sox but decided to teach high school instead, encouraged her in all aspects of sport. Her former husband, Jim Carson, taught her the basics of racquetball and gave her the attitude, mental approach and toughness it takes to remain a champion.

Lynn works out on a daily basis. She recently told someone that racquetball was her job, she "goes to work each day like everybody else". But when she feels burnout approaching, that's it. She quits cold turkey until she feels like playing again. "People think that it's good for their game to force themselves on the court each day. I think it only hurts."

She has a concern for the sport, spending many hours teaching aspiring racquetball players her own brand of controlled aggression. She also feels very strongly that the grassroots level of the game is of major importance which is why she made an effort to go to Columbus, Ohio to watch the Juniors at their AARA Nationals, putting on a racquetball exhibition and speaking at their banquet.

As guest speaker she offered to field questions from the floor.

There, as usual she balanced the line between woman, athlete and public figure. She was confident and graceful, a good mixture for someone serving as a role model to the young female athletes. Facing 400 grinning juniors, she had to reply to the inevitable question from that age group.

"Who's better at racquetball, boys or girls?" came the shout.

There were good natured shouts and hoots from tables across the banquet hall.

"Well," she shot back, "The boys are stronger." Then she grinned. "But the girls are smarter!" ○

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Just Me And The Ball: Concentration

by Lou Fabian

Lou Fabian's Master of Science degree is in Physical Education. He was certified as a professional by the American Professional Racquetball Association in 1978, and is coaching Molly O'Brien (#4) and Marcy Lynch (#9) on the Women's Pro Tour. He has also coached Dan Obremski, currently ranked 13th on the Men's Pro Tour.

"How can I increase my concentration on the ball for long periods of time?" The following story, told by holy men in the East, and taken from Timothy Gallwey's book, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, most effectively answers this question.

"A seeker after truth sought out a yoga master and begged him to help him achieve the enlightenment of perfect union with his true self. The Master told him to go into a room and meditate on God for as long as he could. After just two hours, the seeker emerged distraught, saying that he could not concentrate, since his mind kept thinking about his much beloved bull he had left at home. The Master then told him to return to the room and meditate on his bull.

"This time, the would-be yogi entered the room and after two days had still not emerged. Finally the Master called for him to come out.

"From within, the seeker replied, 'I cannot. My horns are too wide to fit through the door.'

"The seeker had reached such a state of concentration that he had lost all sense of separation from his object of concentration."

In other words, concentration is the act of focusing your attention! Concentration means keeping your mind in the here and now; you cannot explore the limits of your racquetball ability without learning to concentrate.

The most repeated cue in racquetball is, *"Watch the ball."* This is an appeal for you to concentrate. Many players look at the ball, or the general area surrounding the ball, but fall short of achieving true concentration. As they look at the ball, they are thinking of other things, a lost

point, for example. This is wasteful of energy; the concentrating mind does not let such distractions enter; it should be totally absorbed in the object of concentration.

Concentration during practice — paint a white line on the ball

Concentration can be improved with practice. Watching the ball means focusing your attention only on the ball. The most effective way to deepen your concentration through sight is to focus on something detailed, and difficult to see, like the seam of the ball or a white line painted on the seam.

The practice of watching the white line will produce some interesting results. After a short time, you will begin to see the whole ball much better, because while looking for the seam or white line, you will naturally watch the ball until it hits your racquet, and begin to focus attention on the ball earlier. Watch the ball from the time it leaves your opponent's racquet until it meets yours. Most players who practice seam-watching find it helpful almost immediately.

To concentrate is not to stare! Your concentration should be effortless and relaxed, not tense and purposeful. When you watch the white line, allow yourself to fall into a state of relaxed concentration. If your eyes are squinting or straining, you are trying too hard.

Restriction of awareness

You must learn to focus your awareness on the present. The greatest lapses in concentration occur when we allow our minds to project to future events or dwell on past ones. How easily our mind absorbs itself in the world of "ifs".

"If I lose this point, I'll be behind 14-13, then I'll lose the first game and probably the match. I wonder what Sue will say if she hears I lost to Adam." At this point, a player frequently lapses

into a fantasy about Sue's possible reaction. Meanwhile, in the present, the score is still 13-13, and the player is barely aware of being on the court. The conscious energy needed for peak performance in the present has been leaking into an imagined future.

Similarly, the mind often draw one's attention into the past. "If the referee hadn't called that last serve short, the score wouldn't be this close, and I wouldn't be in this mess. The same thing happened to me last week and it cost me the match. I lost my concentration, then confidence, and now the same thing is happening again. Why me?"

In racquetball, before long, you or your opponent will hit the ball, summoning you back to the present, and you shouldn't be left in the thought world of the past or future. *All your awareness should be in the present.* Otherwise, the ball seems to come faster, appear smaller. Instead of "ifs", decide whether or not the ball is coming to your backhand or forehand, a drive or a lob serve?

Concentration off the court

To help improve your focus, there is a simple technique you can use away from the court. In a quiet place, watch and pay close and continuous attention to a racquetball. Watch the ball and think *only* of the ball. Each time you notice that your concentration has shifted away from the ball, return your attention to it.

This exercise is more difficult than it sounds. Most beginners lose their concentration within a minute. But once you are able to sustain concentration in this simple exercise, you will be aware of the concentration (and how to keep it) that you need on the court.

Do it twice a day, in the morning before the day's major work, and again in the evening. Since the mind seems to have a will of its own, how can you learn

(continued on page 38)

What's The Call

by Michael Arnolt



The 10-Second Rule Revisited

Q: The score is called. The server returns to the service box, takes a deep breath to relax, bounces the ball against the side wall two or three times and checks the receiver. Before the 10-seconds elapse, the server straightens up and tosses the ball to the receiver. After examining the ball, wiping it off and bouncing it a couple of times, the receiver tosses it back to the server, who now goes through his pre-serve ritual before putting the ball into play. About 20-25 seconds have elapsed. What's the call, if any? This happens most often at the pro level, but I notice it filtering to the amateur ranks.

Couple of other 10-second situations: After score is called the server, or receiver, takes about 15-20 seconds to clean his glasses before the ball is served. Is there a call?

Score is called and one of the players begins to clean his glasses, after which the referee calls the score again. Does the 10-second clock start again?

Score is called; server checks the receiver who appears ready to receive. Just as the server is about to put the ball into play, from the corner of his eye he notices the receiver has his racquet up, and stops the service motion delaying the game past the 10-second limit. What's the call?

John Greer, Casper, WY

A: Ten-second violations, and variations of them are like the sequels to "Rocky". You know there is going to be another one. (The other two items which offer never-ending sequels are screen serves and avoidable hindes.) John, let's have a go at your

questions.

First, I believe we have to separate professional play from that of amateurs. The time constraints on pro racquetball matches aren't the same as in the amateur end of the draw. You're dealing with a max of 32 to 50 matches over five days (and only three to seven matches the last two days of a tournament) in pro events, versus keeping 200 to 300 amateur matches on time over three days.

Even though the delays are intentional, only when enough pros feel it's creating an unfair advantage will they decide to deal with it. What is tolerated among the pros, however, is not acceptable in the amateur ranks. The issue of delays was addressed in the June 1987 "National Racquetball." The key is for the referee to utilize his "velvet hammer": asking a dawdling player if he wants a timeout; issuing a warning good for both players after the first violation; and making the call of point or sideout on the violator.

A second or two delay is tolerable, but if you as the player or ref are frequently counting "1001, 1002 . . . 1013" the time for the velvet hammer is now.

Keeping eyewear clean is important, though the 10-second rule allows ample time to do so. Repeated (more than three or four) extended periods of time cleaning deserves action. Two or three times draws an initial warning.

The referee seldom is in a position where the score needs to be repeated. But even if he does so just to speed up play,

(continued on page 44)

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Adams Makes It Five

Drama upsets, come-from-behind victories, surprises and athletic feats are what make sports exciting to watch. This year's WPR National Championships at the Riverbend Athletic Club in Fort Worth, TX, had all of the above, plus a little more.

There, Lynn Adams made history (again) by winning her fifth National Championship and retaining her number one overall ranking for season number five.

One would assume that, given her performance record, she cruises through these tournaments without much thought, but it was evident in watching her final's match against McKinney that she doesn't dominate the way she once did.

After the tournament, Lynn said, "I've really been struggling since January. The skill that I feel inside myself isn't coming out when I'm on the court. I don't know why. I'm going to spend some time figuring it out."

The scores of the final's match gives validity to Adam's feelings. McKinney totally destroyed Adams in the first game, 11-2. The fans could feel the player's conflicting emotions. McKinney's confidence and sureness of purpose was a stark contrast to Adams' tentative play and fear on the court.

"I kept telling myself, 'Let go of your throat, Lynn,'" laughed Adams. "I knew she knew that I was scared out of my mind."

"I thought, 'Great,'" said McKinney, "She has every reason to be scared!"

McKinney played almost perfect ball in the first game. She capitalized on set-ups and very rarely gave Adams a second chance in a rally. She hit amazing kill shots from every area of the court, and controlled the tone and pace of the game.

A very shaken Lynn Adams left the court at the end of game

one, while a very pumped up Caryn McKinney looked out and smiled at the crowd.

Game two was the opposite of game one. Adams had that determined look about her, and she left her fear outside in the hallway. She took the serve and didn't look back, winning the game 11-1. "Lynn served unbelievably well," lamented McKinney. "I didn't have any opportunities to be offensive."

Adams said later, "When I realized the first game was out of reach, my whole goal was to stay out there as long as possible and sweat out all of the bad stuff. I guess it worked, because I felt much looser in the second game."



If Adams was any looser, she could have done the splits. She controlled the rallies — what there was of them. Most of the play consisted of three shots: Adams' serve, McKinney's return, Adams' put-away shot.

Game three's outcome was totally unexpected by the crowd, by Adams, by everyone except a confident and calm Caryn. She proceeded to aggressively let Adams know that she was not going to give in, and that she fully intended to win this championship. McKinney's 11-4 win was even more impressive than her 11-2 win in game one; Adams, with her uptight play, con-

tributed to that game, but in this game it was clearly a matter of McKinney playing at a much higher skill level than Adams. ("I knew I was in trouble when she killed an overhand drive with her forehand," said Adams. "She never makes those. Hell, that's supposed to be one of her weaknesses.")

With the score 2-8, and trying her patented talking and walking routine, Adams managed to score two more points, but an icy McKinney stopped her cold and went on to tally the remaining three points. Advantage McKinney, two games to one.

The crowd was buzzing by this time. Were they going to see an upset? Never before had Adams been beaten so thoroughly in any game. Both players had a steeled look when they entered the court for game number four.

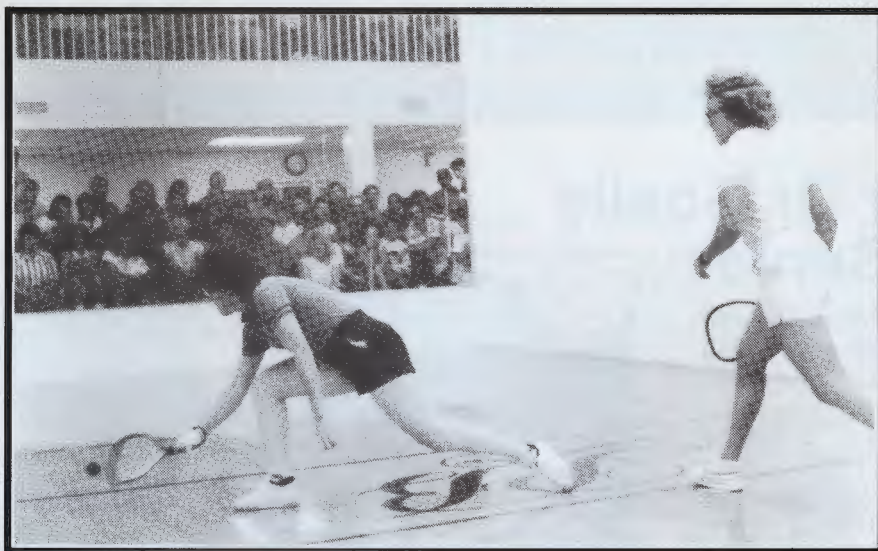
McKinney was hoping to take advantage of a sterling opportunity, and Adams had her back against the wall.

Again, in a strange turn of events, Adams took game four in the same way that McKinney won game three. The players had never played such a topsy-turvy scoring match against each other. It was obvious from the start of game four that Adams was not about to roll over and play dead. Showing her characteristic will and desire, she fought her way to an 11-4 win to push the match into a tiebreaker.

The stage was set. One game to determine who could lay claim to the title of National Champion. How did the players feel?

"I felt so good going into the tiebreaker," said McKinney. "I figured all the pressure was on her, and I'm past the point of being intimidated by her, or her reputation. The last time we played in a tiebreaker, I had won, so I thought I had an excellent chance of winning the match."

On the other hand, Lynn did not mind the situation. "I play my best racquetball when there's something on the line," Adams said. "I've played in more cham-



Lynn Adams and Caryn McKinney fight it out in tiebreaker.

pionship finals than anyone else, and I know what it feels like and what it takes to come out on top. I thought, 'She's in my territory now'."

McKinney found out just what that territory looked like as Adams relentlessly pursued her fifth championship. Adams took an early lead by driving her serves to McKinney's forehand. Two pinches and one pass later she was up 3-0. McKinney came right back with a few winners of her own, and the score narrowed to 3-2. Adams turned out some amazing gets and left McKinney flat-footed and surprised that the rallies weren't over, and that resulted in some uncharacteristic McKinney skips. Add to those skips some fabulous wide pinches and straight kills by Adams and suddenly the score was 9-2. McKinney came up with three points, but it was too little, too late to stop Adams from reaching her goal.

Adams splat-killed a backhand for point 10, and hit a perfect down-the-line pass to win the match.

The crowd, which had been appreciative and noisy throughout the match, gave the players a standing ovation. The two athletes had put on quite a show.

"Boy, am I glad this is over," said Adams. "I wasn't prepared for how hard Caryn would fight for this match. She's an amazing competitor and I take off my hat to her."

Caryn, naturally, was disappointed. "This was a tough one to lose. I was ready to win." She warned, "I feel really good for next year. I already know several areas where I can improve significantly."

The semifinals illustrated some of the new depth in women's racquetball. Kaye Kuhfeld showed why she received the WPRA's Most Improved Player Award. Kaye had a great season, moving from a ranking of 32 all the way up to number six. Her performance at the Nationals was an exciting finish for the year.

First of all, to reach the semi's, it took fighting and clawing all the way up from the round of 16. She beat another hot newcomer, Joy Paraiso, in an 11-10 tiebreaker in that round. Then she pulled the upset of the tournament by overtaking Marci Drexler (The Dreaded Drex) by losing the first two games 10-11, and winning the next three in the quarter finals. What was amazing about the win was how cool Kuhfeld stayed throughout the match. She let a 10-2 lead slip away in the first game, and did the same with a 10-6 lead in the second. After two devastating losses like that, one would expect her to be down, and she was all the way to the losing end of a 9-3 score and looking squarely at defeat.

"I was infuriated with myself," said Kuhfeld. "I had to redeem myself and I told myself to play

(continued on page 41)

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Be The Infielder Or Goalie To Return The Serve

How many of you know your return-of-serve percentages? How many return-of-serves do you skip or leave too high? And how many serves ace you?

Ask yourselves these very important questions to determine how efficiently you move to the ball on return-of-serve. It's an art. Chances are if you are not getting to the ball on your opponent's serve, you are standing flatfooted with your knees straight. In order to get a good "jump" on the serve, make sure your knees are bent, and you are on the balls of your feet (see figure 1).

This problem can be easily solved. Imagine yourself either as an infielder in baseball/softball (see figure 2), or a goalie in soccer (figure 3). Make sure your legs are slightly wider apart than shoulder-width, your knees are slightly bent, and you are on the balls of your feet.

With your body in this position you can come out of the return-of-serve position more quickly, and get to the ball more efficiently. This will lead to fewer unforced errors.

Remember to get into a good ready position (figure 1) so your return-of-serve will take a jump! ○



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Fran Davis is sponsored by Head, Penn, FootJoy and California Fitness.
Jim Winterton is sponsored by Ektelon.

Portable Court Debuts in Southern California

by Felice Juhrend

In the lazy days of late August, while most people are worried about summer's final days at the beach or feeling the last cool mountain breezes, Joe Garcia will be inside the Santa Anita Fashion Park Mall in Arcadia, CA.

How well Joe Garcia does in that shopping mall may very well affect the future of racquetball around the country. And Wallyball. And Squash, too.

For six days, starting August 25 and ending August 30, Garcia will unveil the nation's first portable court, a playing area with see-through walls that he expects will bring all the court sports out of the obscurity of small clubs and racquetball centers and into the limelight before TV cameras and thousands and thousands of spectators.

For those who have heard the tale of the portable court before and react to Garcia's vision with skepticism, understand that he is not alone.

Already providing him with moral and financial support are the DuPont Company, Ektelon, Embassy Suites, Esco International, Exerflex, Fiberesin Industries, Head Racquet Sports, Leader Sport Products, National Racquetball Magazine, Racquetball Manufacturers Association, Reese Industries, the U.S. Squash Racquets Association and the World Professional Squash Association.

Garcia says that more sponsors are on the way.

What is a portable court with see-through walls? How will it help court sports like racquetball and squash? And who is this guy Garcia?

Often incorrectly referred to as a glass-walled court (the Garcia court will feature Lucite

walls by DuPont), the court will be a traveling playing arena that can be set up one day in a mall in Schaumburg, IL, then at a county fair outside Los Angeles, and then in Madison Square Garden in New York City.

The court is no dream. It exists. It weighs 14,000 pounds. It measures 40 feet in length, 20 feet in width, and is 20 feet high. It has a ceiling and a maple floor. It's valued at about \$70,000. It was designed by Houston manufacturer, Al Reese.

For the moment, the court will have just two lucite walls. "It's a prototype," says Garcia. "We'll see how it goes with two walls. If the players and the public like it with two see-through walls, then they'll probably love it with three."

Garcia, who created the popular sport of Wallyball eight years ago, realized early on that all the court sports suffered from small audiences and limited access to national television exposure. And he has seen more and more court-sport facilities convert their courts to weight/aerobic rooms.

Individually, Garcia believes, none of the sports can attract television cameras or major corporate sponsorship. But collectively, whether it be in a tournament or an exhibition, the court sports of racquetball, wallyball and squash, are more attractive. Early this year, Garcia resigned as the president of Wallyball International and formed Court Sports Productions.

In August, the first court sport mall exhibition tour begins. "We're going to offer the thousands of people who go to malls the opportunity to see all these sports," Garcia says. "We'll bring youth organizations and church

(continued on page 44)



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Inoue Wins Minneapolis

The tumultuous 1986-87 men's professional racquetball tour ended in a positive note in Burnside, Minnesota. Thanks to Ed Speer from A'ME Grips, and Debbie Nohstadt of Head Racquet Sports, the tour's final event was held at one of the nation's most beautiful racquetball clubs, the Burnside Racquet and Health Club. After the cancellation of both the Ektelon and DP Nationals, A'ME and Head teamed together with former professional player, Ron Strom and his crew at the Burnside club to host one of the season's most successful events. As has been the case in recent years, the season's final event would determine who would win the season's national championship.

Bret Harnett entered the Minnesota event 22 points ahead of four-time national champion Marty Hogan, and 43 points ahead of last year's winner, Mike Yellen. It seemed that Bret would only have to reach the semifinals to capture his first national title. But what everybody failed to

realize was that the men's professional ranking system requires an individual with a Ph.D. in mathematics, and accomplished in computer wizardry to tabulate each tournament's results.

The system does not rate every tournament equally. The season's final event is worth 92 percent more than the first event, with every event leading up to the final having an increased ranking priority. (This system has been changed for next season so that every tournament will be of equal value.) Although it looked as if Harnett and Hogan would battle it out for the national championship, the results proved different.

The Round of 16

Dave Johnson continued his upsets by defeating 14th ranked Andy Gross. Johnson's style of play reminds one of Bret Harnett; when he's hot, impossible shots look easy, and every exchange is an opportunity for a kill.

Egan Inoue, coming back after last tournament's second place finish, barely escaped by defeating Steve Lerner. Although Steve has never made it to the semifinals this season, he is one of the most feared competitors on the tour. Steve's quickness and persistence almost always results in five-game matches. It is only a matter of time until Steve breaks his tiebreaker jinx, and claims a tour victory.

Cliff Swain revenged his Phoenix loss to Gerry Price by easily defeating him in four games. Swain's serve kept Gerry on the defensive, as Gerry never really got in the match.

Corey Brysman continued his surge by defeating Jerry Hilecher. Ed Andrews, hitting the ball harder than ever, outlasted

Dan Obremski; Ed won in four games.

Mike Yellen quietly, but methodically, continued his march toward the finals. Although not spectacular, Yellen's execution and game plans are almost faultless. Aaron Katz was able to win one game, but eventually succumbed to Yellen's expertise. To the novice spectator, Yellen's wide angle passes and high-percentage shot selection looks unimpressive. To the accomplished tactician, Yellen's execution is astounding, so easily performed that it would seem anyone should be able to do it. But no matter how you analyze his game, the end result is usually the same — he wins.

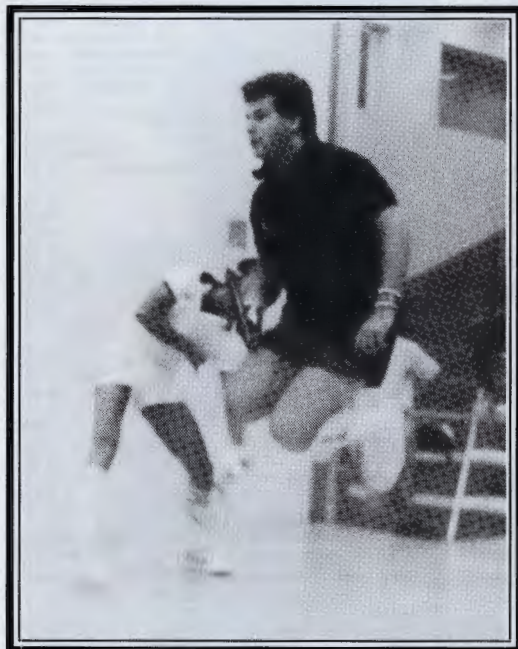
Ruben Gonzalez literally dove his way past Brian Hawks. Hawks was unable to overpower Ruben and shots that were passes in his earlier matches were retrieved by Ruben. Although the game's elder statesman, Ruben is far from retiring to a rocking chair in his Staten Island condo. Still one of the game's greatest retrievers, Ruben forces opponents into going for the low percentage kill. Hawks fell in the trap, and made numerous unforced errors, resulting in Ruben's win.

Bret Harnett, determined to capture his first national title, squeaked by Roger Harripersad. Roger came from a two-game deficit to force the tiebreaker, but was unable to cool Bret's deep court backhand splats.

The Quarter Finals

Egan Inoue brought Dave Johnson's best season's performance to an end. Although Johnson continued his "do-or-die" shooting philosophy, Inoue's power forced Dave into hurrying his shots. Johnson managed to go to a tiebreaker, but Egan's superb conditioning and bullet-like serves proved the difference.

Corey Brysman reached his first semifinals of the season by

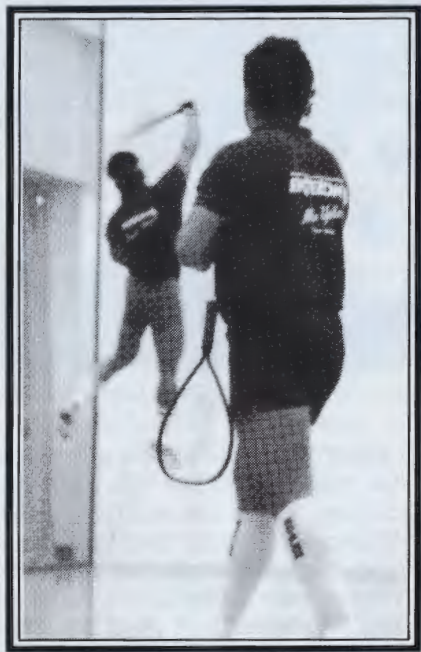


Bret Harnett has Mike Yellen (front) hopping.

defeating Ed Andrews in four games. Corey's Yellen-like game style kept Andrews on the move, resulting in some uncharacteristic Andrew errors. If there was any doubt about Corey's return prior to this match, it was quickly resolved after his 11-7 fourth game win.

Mike Yellen, in an amazing display of shot selection and court positioning, held Ruben Gonzalez to a total of eight points in three games. Ruben's confusion and frustration was evident in game three when he turned to the crowd and smiled as if to say, "What can I do?"

Number one seed Bret Harnett marched forward to his national championship duel with



Egan Inoue jumps for joy.

Mike Yellen by defeating Cliff Swain in four games. Cliff seemed to tire as the match progressed as Bret pressured him with a go-for-broke shooting style. Swain's inability to cool Bret's hot shooting hand resulted in Cliff's exit.

The Semifinals

Egan Inoue aced his way past persistent Corey Brysman. Egan's ability to get two or three aces per game, including three of the last five points of the match in their tiebreaker, gave him the edge he needed for victory. Another advantage for the Hawaiian was the backhand glass. Even when Egan didn't ace Brysman,

the combination of his "faster-than-light" serve, and inner box glass, made it difficult for Corey to see the ball.

Corey, though, countered Egan's blistering serves with effective high lobs which hit the sidewall just short of the back. Egan could not short-hop the ball, and his inability to hit good ceiling ball returns kept Corey in the match.

At 5-5 in the tiebreaker, Egan forged ahead with two straight ace serves, and finished the match with another to win 11-6, allowing him to advance to his second straight final.

The other semifinal would determine this year's national champion. With Marty Hogan out early, the race for this year's title was between Harnett and Yellen.

Going into this match, Bret had the edge over Mike. He had defeated Mike under similar conditions at last year's DP's, and had beaten him in three of their last four meetings. But Yellen wanted to accomplish what no other player had ever done — win five consecutive national titles. Could he do it?

The result was a match which should be analyzed and described in every future racquetball book on strategy.

Mike Yellen, in his season's best performance, completely neutralized Harnett's awesome power and shooting ability. By mixing high lob Z serves to Harnett's backhand — serves too accurate to be short-hopped and too precise to be shot from back court — Yellen forced weak returns after weak return.

After each rally began, Yellen continually had Harnett fully extended to retrieve pin-point cross-court passes to the backhand side. Combining that with almost errorless play, Yellen dissected Harnett with the precision of a world-class surgeon. The end was inevitable as Yellen won in three games.

But confusion still existed in the status of the national champion because the results of the matches still had to be put into a computer to be certain of the winner. Everyone would have to wait until Sunday for the answer.

Prior to the Sunday finals,

(continued on page 38)

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Nothing But Heat!

AARA National Junior Championships in Columbus

The kids came to play racquetball. Not just move the ball around long enough to win rallies, but to play. As in hotter than the muggy Columbus weather. As in blurred pass shots, smoking roll-outs, and with an intensity that ended a week of big-league racquetball with the two top guns reaching 10-10 in the last tie-breaker of the final match.

A couple of juniors named Wes Miller and Shane Brown held court in their finals match with short hop kills, 90-mph rollouts from 39 feet and diving gets that kept sizzle at full. A crowd of 300 watched enthralled. Wes and Shane were fighting for the 10 and under championship. *Ten!*

There was a 16-year-old who plays well enough to have qualified at a pro stop, and he *lost* to someone who last year was still young enough to play a lower division.

Girls slugged it out from front court with the bang-bang of open stance forehands that would scare grown men. Tykes, larger only than their oversize racquets, swung with the precision of a Rolex, or even a Bret Harnett.

At the end of the last two finals — Boy's and Girl's 18 & under — two formidable athletes

became U.S. Team members.

Cindy Doyle from Buffalo, NY, shone early in her event to upset #1 seed Elaine Mardas of Ohio, then continued all the way to the finals to meet Michelle Gilman of Ontario, OR. But Cindy could not handle the tremendous pressure of Michelle's serves, losing two games straight. Cindy "played up", choosing the tougher 18 and under age bracket, although eligible for the 16 and under. She will have a shot next year. And Michelle, with her booming serves, tremendous concentration and disciplined power racquetball, will be an asset to the U.S. Team.

Cindy's brother Tim, overheard commenting during one of his sister's matches that he would have to ask her how to hit that kind of backhand, played the kind of racquetball that makes you wonder how anyone could be called the "loser" of that finals. He is big and plays hard, fast and tough.

Doyle was up 7-1 in the tie-breaker, and 9-6, but Simonette found the trigger three crack-ace serves among other shots, and would not give up with his tireless

retrieving that made the court look small.

Simonette tied Doyle at nine, then went ahead to serve at match point. Doyle would not crumple. Doyle got back the serve, needing two points for the national championship.

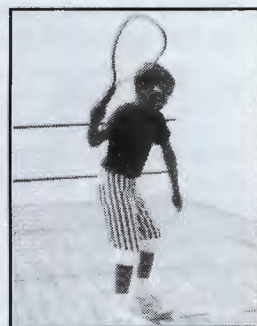
Doyle ripped a low drive to Simonette's backhand. Simonette



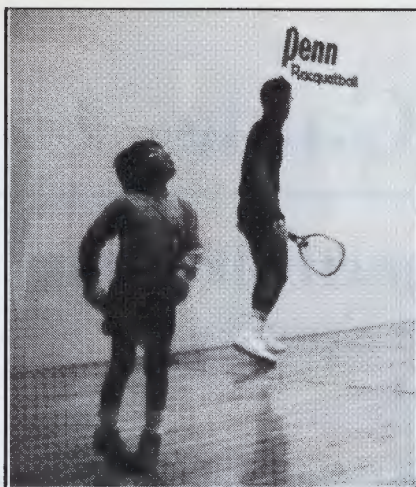
Team California - No. 1

ripped it back, flat rolling the ball in the front left corner and danced to the server's box, ready to serve again for the title. Doyle appealed, asking for a foot fault on his own serve, and got it, the first called foot fault of the match. Doyle served at second serve, and scored one.

Simonette deflated, and now



Pictures from left to right: 1) Dawn Marie Gates, IL, double gold medal winner both in 8 and 10 & under. 2) Boy's 16 & under champions, left, Joey Pariaso, CA, gold medalist and Robby Walden, FL, silver medalist. 3) Girl's 18 & under champions, left, Michelle Gillman, OR, gold medalist and Cindy Doyle, NY, silver medalist. 4) Boy's 18 & under champions, left to right, Tim Doyle, NY, silver medalist, David Simonette, MD, gold medalist and Jimmy Floyd, MI, bronze medalist. 5) Blake Hansen warms up with style.



Jerry Hilecher takes on a young challenger, Shane Vanderson during the exhibition.

at 10-10, Doyle served an ace into the forehand glasswall that Simonette just watched. But he who lives by the sword, must beware the cutting edge in return, and foot fault number two was called, taking away the ace. Still 10-10, and Simonette won the serve back, and one rally later, the match, the title, and a berth on the U.S. Team.

At least 450 people watched that match. But at least 450 people watched a half dozen equally intense finals on that glass court. The biggest indication of the entertainment value was among the spectators themselves as they watched each match with rapt attention.

That the weekend was especially for the juniors was not hard to tell. Lynn Adams, Jerry Hilecher and U.S. Team members put on an exhibition and accepted challenges from all. At the banquet, Lynn fielded questions from all sides when she offered a question and answer session instead of a speech and Kay Pudelski, manager of the hosting Sawmill Athletic Club complimented the juniors on their behavior and standard of play.

Andy Thompson of Sun Prairie, WI, won the Sportsmanship Award, given in part because he had offered to play the match his opponent had first forfeited by arriving late. Unfortunately, Andy then lost the rematch.

It was an exciting Junior Nationals and the level of play and the dedication of these young people bodes well for the future of racquetball.

(Results on page 39)

Team Standings

California — A	198	Colorado	35	Indiana	15
Florida	149	California — B	34	Iowa	8
New York	97	Michigan	33	New Mexico	6
Ohio — A	75	Missouri	33	Maryland — B	4
Maryland - A	51	Minnesota	30	Ohio — B	3
Wisconsin	49	Illinois	29	Rhode Island	2
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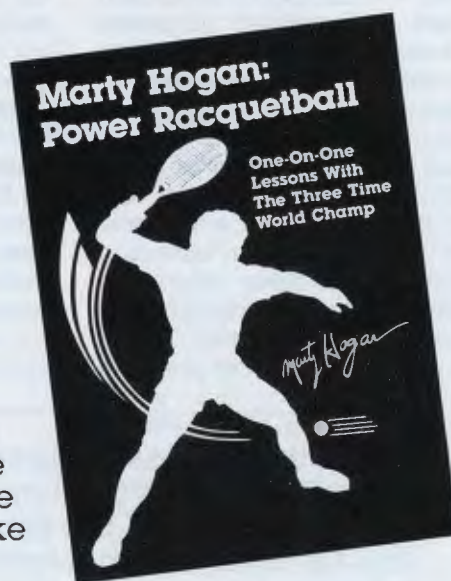
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It's More Than Just A Game



Racquetball Helps Some Special People

A racquet in the hand of a child will immediately stimulate and motivate movement. Organize this natural energy, and you've got motor skill development in a nutshell.

For years racquetball professionals have been trying to figure out the best way to teach racquetball to people who have taken up the game for recreation or competition. Now, other professionals are looking at racquetball from a different standpoint. They are finding ways to

cher and Debby is an ex-racquetball pro who works in special education administration.

The idea for the program was conceived when Wes approached Debby for old racquets to donate to his adaptive physical education classes. Pajaro Valley U.S.D. has 14,500 students attending school, with 1,500 of them in special education programs for those with learning or physical handicaps.

As an elementary school physical education specialist, Wes

play. Put it in the hand of a child, and the heart accelerates; the child will begin to swing the racquet wildly. If the child is not fed a racquetball within a very short time, rocks and sticks can begin to fly, as he found out when they were playing outdoors!

Much to his surprise, Wes found that enclosed racquetball courts are not required to teach beginning, or even advanced racquetball skills; skills that promote overall perception and improved motor-skills, as well as lifetime fitness techniques. He could use the multi-purpose rooms found in most schools, or even playings fields or asphalt playgrounds.

Ektelon was very supportive of the idea to use racquetball as a means of teaching children with problems and provided over \$1,700 worth of racquets, balls, and of course, eyeguards which helped to get the program off the ground.

The children were delighted to see this equipment, and Wes started using various racquetball techniques and strategies to help his students learn more about physical education. They had fun, and at the same time were provided with ways to develop basic skills such as motor/body motion, hand-eye coordination, speed per-

Now, other professionals are looking at racquetball from a different standpoint. They are finding ways to use the game as a teaching tool for children with learning or physical handicaps.

use the game as a teaching tool for children with learning or physical handicaps.

A program using racquetball as a means of catering to the needs of these special children has been developed by Wes Johnson and Debby Beck. Both are affiliated with Pajaro Valley Unified School District in the central coast area of California. Wes is an adaptive physical education tea-

Johnson is concerned with preparing young students for the best things in life. This includes whacking balls with racquetball racquets if it will help in this preparation.

He knew it came down to this: a racquet in the hand is a very exciting experience. Place it in the hand of an enthusiast, and the athlete's heart will give a leap and the muscles will tense for



Left to right: Teachers Nancy Soares, Wes Johnson and Debby Beck accompanied by their special class.

ception, and "how to get their bodies to move as their minds wanted them to move".

So there you stand, on a blacktop playground or in a multi-purpose room behind the gym, at the mercy of 25 or 30 children armed with racquets and little blue balls. What you do next is of major importance. This is an opportunity, which used properly, can have a major impact on the future of these young people.

Wes and Debby developed simple constructive drills that allowed the children to have fun using their natural impulse to swing and hit; drills that worked with large groups in playing areas away from a racquetball court, as illustrated in this example:

Basic Lesson #1 — Ball and racquet exploration

One racquet, one ball per subject is a good place to start. The class may be spaced in a large circle, two long parallel lines or randomly spaced so that all have room to move.

1) Hold the racquet out in front of the body and let the ball roll around on the surface mesh until it can be controlled and brought to rest at the center of the racquet. Now roll the ball around the

circumference of the racquet without losing it.

2) Bounce the ball up and down off the racquet until you can tip it up in the air ten times without it hitting the ground. Try this, hitting the ball a bit harder, giving it more flight time.

3) Bounce the ball to the ground using the face of the racquet ten times, keeping the ball bounce beneath shoulder level. See if you can do this without moving your feet or changing directions.

4) Divide into triplets (threes) and take away two thirds of the balls so that the three person group is working with one ball. Practice volleying as in hackey-sack. Add competition! Which group can keep it in the air the longest? Once the ball hits the ground, the trio must sit down. Keep it going until two or three groups are declared winners.

5) Reduce the groups to pairs, each pair with a ball. Learn to volley back and forth on a one bounce from about 15 feet apart. Try this without letting the ball bounce. Try from further apart or closer together.

We're up to about 15 to 20

of play time right now, and hopefully getting the feel of the racquet and the flight of the ball. The real excitement is yet to come.

These are just a few of the drills which they have developed and are now using successfully, and although very basic they are an excellent introduction to the rest of the program.

Wes and Debby have enjoyed seeing a new use for the game they both enjoy. According to them, "The skills involved in playing a good game of racquetball carry over into many parts of people's lives. Being able to utilize a not-so-typical sport like racquetball to provide education to our children in schools is fun and different. Everybody loves hitting that little blue ball with a racquet for all sorts of reasons, and if we can help our children learn while having fun, what more could we ask for!"

They hope that other school systems will utilize their program and will benefit from the experience they have gained at Pajaro Valley U.S.D.

A complete explanation is available to any teachers or coaches who are interested. Please write to: Debby or Wes at Unicorn Sports, P.O. Box 1074, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1074. ○

National Amateur Champion

Jim Cascio

by Keith W. Strandberg

Keith W. Strandberg, is a prolific writer and a professional member of the National Writer's Club.

The third time at the AARA National Amateur Championships was the charm for Jim Cascio. Placing second in 1983, and third in 1984, Cascio took a layoff from amateur racquetball to concentrate on the pro tour, then decided to compete again as an amateur — and this year he took it all, beating Andy Roberts in the finals in Houston, 15-9, 15-12.

It feels great," the 24-year-old Cascio said, relaxing in his home in Lancaster, PA. "Winning in Houston was a huge personal accomplishment for me, being away from it for two years and coming back in really cold to go through the draw and play the kind of racquetball I know I can play.

"In the pros, I didn't have a chance to shine like I know I can. The Houston crowd was fantastic, rooting me on, supporting me. It was all very satisfying."

This time in Houston, Cascio had it all figured out. He planned to go in early, get acclimatized, settled and comfortable — all with an eye towards making the most serious run of his career at the title. "I went out two days early to get used to the club," Cascio explained. "I tried to get a pattern set of meals, hitting, sleeping, and so on because every little thing counts.

"For example, the bed in my hotel was too soft," he continued. "I had to sleep on the floor the second night. If I hadn't gotten in early, the soft bed would have affected my play, but this

way it didn't."

Cascio was also careful that the lifestyle of Houston didn't interfere with his concentration. "I made sure I was in bed early, got plenty of rest and paced myself," he said. "I thought I played the tournament smart, didn't hang out at the club, because that can really wear you out," he explained.

"I even had reservations going home on Monday (the scheduled day of the finals), but then I found myself in the finals, so I came back Tuesday morning instead. People kept asking me, 'Don't you think you're going to win?', but I told them it wouldn't bother me to change my reservations at all. That would be the least of my problems."

Sponsored by Head Racquet Sports, Cascio plays with a stan-



bulky and heavy to me. They aren't suited to the kind of game I play."

For Cascio, the Houston National Tournament was quite a bit different from the pro stops he's been playing. Because of the larger draw in Houston, and the number of rounds, he feels that the "tournament gives you a chance to get your momentum going. At a pro stop, right away you're up against a top player. You don't get a chance to get into it. That may be why I haven't been able to do as well in the pro

**"I went out two days early to get used to the club . . .
I tried to get used to the club . . . I tried to get a set
pattern of meals, hitting, speeling and so on . . ."**

dard size racquet, a throwback considering that most players he beat on the way to the title played with oversized racquets.

"I use a racquet that's been discontinued, the Head Apex, so I will be switching to the Head Impulse, their new racquet, which is very similar.

"The majority of players are now playing with oversize racquets. It seems the oversize is becoming more and more popular, but I like the standard size racquet because I feel I'm more versatile with it — I can pick shots off the back wall and out of the corners better with a smaller frame. Oversize racquets feel

stops."

The crowd in Houston was larger than most crowds at pro stops, and really got behind Cascio, spurring him on to victory. "In the quarter finals, I had a couple hundred people cheering. It made a big difference in my motivation.

"I'm hoping that this win will give me the confidence to go into the next tournaments and knock off some of the pros I've been losing to," he concluded, smiling.

But isn't that against the rules? How can the U.S. National Amateur Champion play as a pro and keep his amateur status?

According to Cascio, as long

as he doesn't touch any of the money he wins, and sends it to the AARA offices, he still qualifies as an amateur. "If you want to play on the pro tour and still retain amateur status, you have to send any pro winnings to the AARA, which holds the money in a trust until you show expenses for tournaments, and then they reimburse the money," Cascio stated.

Going back to amateur status certainly paid off for Cascio, with a gold medal and the number one position on the Pan American team, but for a man who was at one time ranked 11th in the world, what was the motivation?

Cascio, who had been managing and teaching at the Lancaster racquetball club, wanted to make sure he was in a position to take advantage of any opportunity that came along.

"I wanted to keep my options open. As an amateur, if something big comes along, I can pursue that and still stay with the pros."

Now, as an amateur, he's on his way to Colorado Springs for the Pan American Games, and, depending on the success of the current move to include racquetball as an exhibition sport in the '88 Olympics, maybe even Seoul, Korea.

Aside from those major competitions, Cascio still plans to play in all the tournaments he can. "The pro tour looks very positive for next year, with a minimum of eight stops," he said. "I'm excited about continuing the way I am — I have my amateur status and I can go to pro stops."

He's also excited about his upcoming marriage in September of this year, when he weds Kim Wiggins. They will live in Lancaster, where Cascio will continue to play, train and push racquetball.

"Racquetball's sort of at a standstill right now," Cascio said, drawing from his experience running clubs and observing other clubs all over the country. "It's ready to do something, really boom. Now's the time, with the right promotion that racquetball can really take off again. It's beyond the fad stage, because it's strong all over the country."

"We need a new resurgence, complete with new blood. We



Cascio at the Nationals.

have to get juniors and younger people into the sport somehow. We have to have clinics, include racquetball into the school curricu-

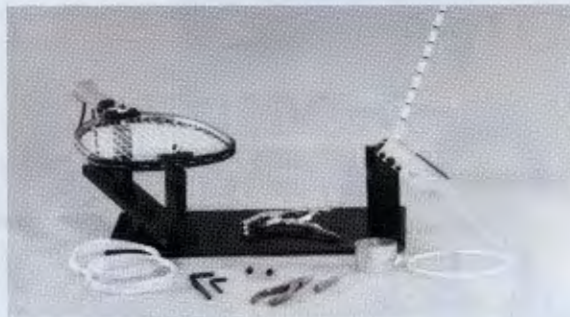
lum, get the students involved, have schools play each other — anything to get people excited about racquetball again."

When asked about advice for people wanting to get into the competitive side of amateur racquetball, Cascio replied, "It takes open competition to improve. If you want to improve your game, you have to play (outside your club). All it takes is going to a couple of open tournaments, watching the big matches, then playing different players."

"My biggest jump in performance came when I was going to a different tournament every weekend. I was up against a new opponent, a new atmosphere every time — you learn to be competitive, be consistent. Every time I go to pro tournaments, I come home with new ideas, new ways to practice or play."

Jim Cascio, fresh from an impressive Amateur National Championship, is looking forward to more challenges in his chosen sport. ○

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"It's the greatest feeling in the world. The player comes off the court with a broken racquet and he is devastated. I reach in my bag, pull the warranty tag off a new racquet and stick it in the guy's hand. You see his face light up, and he goes back in and he wins." John Boudman is describing the elation he feels when he is able to help a budding racquetball player get on top of his game.

Boudman is a racquet stringer. But unlike most stringers, who may weave their handiwork in the dingy backroom of a mall sporting goods shop, John brings his shop to the players at pro tournaments and smaller events.

stringing. But it became clear that it was a service the members wanted." As an unusually responsible club manager, John reluctantly volunteered to do it himself.

His first stringing machine was a small table-top model. But after only eight months of careful work, he suddenly found himself overwhelmed by the demand for his service. "I kept trying to train people to string, but nobody wanted to do it," he says with a laugh. Without a hired hand to help with the volume, John did the next best thing: he invested in some higher technology.

The spiffy new Ektelon stringing machine made him a better stringer, which in turn brought him even more

Frame by Frame: String Doctors At Work

by Mark Toljagic



John and Linda Boudman own and operate The Racquet Stringer, a highly-successful firm which specializes in serving racquetball players. While the operation is based in Doylestown, PA, northeast of Philadelphia, in recent years they've taken their service on the road, by van and airplane, to tournaments all over the country. The Boudmans logged in excess of 40,000 travel miles last year.

John started stringing in 1976 while managing a racquetball club and health spa in his native Pennsylvania. "Members were clamoring for stringing and racquet services because the closest place you could get a racquet strung was a 70-mile round trip," he says. "I was working 80-90 hours a week and I certainly didn't want any part of any racquet

customers as word spread of his talent. A member of the U.S. Racquet Stringers Association, it was no rubber stamp and bumper sticker initiation. Of the 350 applicants seeking certification in a typical year, about 16 pass the written exam and stringing test.

Volume of business finally prompted John to leave his position as therapeutic recreation supervisor at Temple University in May, 1984. His wife joined him in the business in November last year. So reputable is their work that people have been mailing their rackets to Doylestown to get the Boudman touch. Cliff Swain sent five racquets to be restrung and had them couriered to a tournament the next day.

John stresses quality above quantity, but he is no

(continued on page 26)

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Frame By Frame

(continued from page 24)

slouch when the stopwatch comes out. He once strung a CBK in seven minutes, "But quality control goes out the window," he adds. A typical stringing job takes between 15 and 30 minutes, depending on the frame and material used.

Consistency is the Boudman's claim to fame. "It takes a tremendous amount of belief in the person stringing your racket when you're on the pro circuit. One player brought all three of his racquets to me to be restrung. He went down to the courts, hit with those racquets, came back up and was awed. He said, 'My God, they all hit the same. They never hit like that before.'" Egan Inoue was the player. His 160-mph serves are at least partially attributed to Boudman's handiwork.

Ruben Gonzalez and Fran Davis are regular customers of The Racquet Stringer, as are many other players on the pro tours. "They just like that presence," John says, referring to his firm's ability to be at the right place at the right time. "Everybody has a pet racquet." Before a crucial game, players tend to want to have their pet fixed in an emergency rather than switch to a back-up. For this reason, pro stops are five very long days of hard work for the couple. "We don't function too well on five, six hours of sleep," says John.

The Racquet Stringer is particularly popular at the smaller tournaments where most of the competitors don't own good second racquets. John always has a bag full of "demonstration" racquets he lends to players free of charge. The firm's slogan, "Service to the player," rings very true at times like that.

With the company's fine reputation continuing to spread, the Boudman's are once again getting bogged down with volume. The couple, both certified, serviced 4,800 racquets in 1986, dispensing some 27 miles of string. They are training one person to help with the load and looking for additional stringers. John prefers a trainee who has some knowledge of racquetball or, tennis: "I

need someone who knows and likes the game. Too many stringers want to be known as tennis stringers, because they think that's the cool sport, that's where the money is."

About the hardware itself, John quietly gripes that improvements in stringing material has not kept pace with the space-age frame technology. "Some manufacturers are still using string that they were using back in 1978," John points out. Nine years is a long time given the changes he has witnessed in sports equipment engineering. John cautions that every make of racquet is susceptible to losing tension in its string, but the better the string quality, the more durable the stringing job tends to be.

The Boudman's are not entirely surprised by the booming business they've built with straightforward, high-quality service. "My whole life orientation has been service," says John, citing his previous work with mentally-handicapped children and adults through the university.

Linda has a comparable background serving clients in the banking industry. She can't help but draw a comparison between her old job and her newfound craft. "There's a lot more appreciation," she says of the racquetball players who come to see her with barren frames in hand. It sure beats the heck out of arguing over credit card statements, even if your customers are sweating profusely. ○

Racquets and Stringing

by Charlie Garfinkel

I use an oversize racquet that is perfect for me, because in addition to the racquet's huge sweetspot, I get more power, touch and control than I've had with other racquets.

I also like to remind my opponents that I need the extra length and hitting area that the racquet provides to return even more shots. Of course, when you're 6'6" as I am, with a wingspan of 84 inches, you do receive some inquisitive stares.

If you're a practice player only, you should have at least two racquets. Each racquet should be of approximately the same weight, size and length. They should both be strung at approximately the same poundage, and the grips should be similar as well. I have found that players with different racquets are constantly having trouble adjusting to the racquets.

Being a tournament player, I have found that I need a minimum of four racquets for tournament play. Although this means carrying two huge tournament bags for all my equipment — one bag contains my two books, 15 personal scrapbooks, and the hundreds of fan mail letters that I receive daily — it's well worth it.

If you are thinking, "Four racquets, be serious, Gar," let me tell you what happened to me in the nationals two years ago. During the tournament, I broke the strings in two racquets, and had left another in my hotel room. Fortunately, I was able to continue play with the fourth, and that let me continue play without worrying about adjusting to a different and unfamiliar

racquet.

Racquet stringing is also extremely important. I have always had my racquets strung at the tension that the manufacturer recommends because, in my opinion, experts have determined what the correct poundage should be for each particular racquet. I have known players who have driven themselves crazy by stringing their racquets tighter or looser than recommended.

As a player on the court five or six times a week, I have my racquets restrung every four to six weeks, even if the strings have not broken, because extended play loosens the strings considerably.

I also play sporadically during the summer (and also during tournaments, some have mentioned), but I still have my racquets restrung when the new season starts in late August or early September, because even though the racquets may not have been used for three months, the strings tend to loosen.

How do I know if the string tension is slipping? Simply with a string tension tester, which is quite accurate.

As for grips, I've found that rubber grips, when used with a glove, are far superior to conventional leather grips. Once I became accustomed to using them over a decade ago, I found they gave a better feel for the racquet, with far less slippage than leather.

Once you've chosen a racquet that you really feel comfortable with, do as I do. Find, keep and use a respected stringer, and maintain your racquet with stringing and repairs as needed. ○

New Directions

by Luke St. Onge



I have just returned from the U.S. National Junior Championships which were sponsored by Diversified Products and Penn Athletic Products Company.

I can honestly say that racquetball has come of age. The Sawmill Athletic Club has to be one of the finest facilities in the world for a major tournament. Under the direction of Manager Kay Pudelski, and Racquetball Programmer, Rene Penley, is plush, bright, cheery, and sets the pace for future clubs. The club which has been open for five years is immaculate. When entering, you would swear that it had just opened.

The Club, however, does not make the tournament, people do. Every employee of Sawmill was extremely friendly in a genuine sense and extremely involved in the Jr. Nationals. Signs throughout the Club read "The Juniors are coming". This was a positive statement not a prophecy of doom. The 2,000 players, parents, and friends responded to the club and management in a most positive way. The club and employees were treated with great respect more than in any previous tournament I've ever experienced. It was heartwarming to see a 10-year old reach down, pick up a paper cup that had just been dropped on the floor and throw it away. Time after time we heard from parents telling their children, "be careful, don't damage anything".

We knew the first day that we were in for something very special. You could sense it at once. I apologize for not having the writing skills to convey to you the environment created by the

(continued on page 38)



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Off Court Fitness

by Jean Sauser



Over The Hill

A few months ago, I walked into a Hallmark store and discovered a new section. There it stood in all its glory, gag cards and gag gifts in ominous black-with-white lettering you couldn't miss. It spelled out "Over The Hill" — Hallmark's way of saying happy birthday to those of us turning 40, and to those of us already over that mark.

"Swell," I said sarcastically to the 16-year-old counter girl, "This is what my birthday party will look like in four years, a funeral. Seems like only yesterday my mom and dad rented me a pony."

"You don't have to worry," she assured me, failing to subtract four from forty, "That's for old people."

About two weeks after my new card discovery, I received a letter from Pam Harris of Cheyenne, WY, that reminded me of the "Over The Hill" experience in the Hallmark store.

"Dear Jean," it read. "I am very interested in receiving information or advice concerning very active racquetball players over 40. I want to be able to perform at my peak ability. Are there special considerations for older players?"

"While I've found a sports medicine physician in my town, he does not install confidence, nor shows an understanding of my avid desire to participate in an active sport like racquetball."

It continued. "I warm up before, and cool down after playing or practicing. There are daily exercises and a walking program I do faithfully.

"I want to make sure I'm do-

ing the right things to keep myself healthy and active not only now, but in the years ahead.

"Thank you for your assistance and time."

Well Pam, fasten your seatbelt, because we're going over the hill.

First and foremost, get rid of your sports-medicine physician immediately! He is obviously prejudiced against you because of

Tina Turner . . . says that the one thing she learned in rebuilding her singing career was to get rid of anyone in her life bringing her down . . .

your age. Worse still, the guy is robbing you of your self confidence.

While it is unfortunate that we live in a society that worships youth and laughs at people as they get older, you can have the last laugh in this case. Don't put up with this boob. In fact, it is essential that you don't.

Tina Turner, who recently made a comeback as an over-forty entertainer in the most youth-oriented business of them all — rock and roll — put it simply enough in her best-selling book, *I, Tina*. She says that the one thing she learned in rebuilding her singing career to new heights was to get rid of anyone in her life bringing her down or telling her she can't do some things she

wants to do.

Take it from Tina and get this guy away from you. Replace him with someone who wants to help you achieve your goals.

The right trainer will not only encourage you, but he or she will make sure that you are properly exercising aerobically three or four times a week in order to increase your stamina on the court. Walking may not be doing the job, especially if you're telling me that you are not playing at your peak.

For a workout, such as walking, to be aerobic, it must be done for a minimum of 15 minutes at your training heart rate. Under the supervision of an expert, you'll learn to conduct your aerobic workouts at that training heart rate, thereby increasing your on-court stamina.

Also, the older you get, the more important it becomes to get on a good weight training program. Weight training builds the kind of strength that prevents injuries on the court, and it enables you to hit the ball harder, while at the same time, prevents a younger opponent from being able to overpower you.

Lastly, keep in mind something that I call the "big four". Eat right, sleep right, don't smoke, and avoid the use of alcohol (drugs). Nothing brings out the negative effects of aging as much as the abuse of one or all four.

Getting older can mean getting better when you have the right attitude, the right routine, and the right people around you.

Good luck! ○

Tips For Beginners

by Mark Kessinger

The step taken during the stroke is called the stroke-step. It is critical in determining timing, momentum and balance. Stepping into the ball with the stroke-step is a part of the stroke, on the serve and during the rally, which should remain constant.

— Since it is the only step that carries additional momentum during the stroke, on the serve, only the stroke-step needs to be included. For beginners, additional steps into the ball are superfluous. They may distract your opponent and screen the serve to a degree, but they also distract you. Better results will come from putting the time and effort of those extra steps into any other part of your stroke.

— During the rally, the stroke-step is often overlooked. Moving around the court during the rally requires fast and smaller steps. Short steps are quicker and allow for better timing, better adjustment to the ball so that it falls into the stroke within the power zone.

— Dropping the stroke-step from the swing during the rally throws off timing and robs the stroke of some power. Always try to step into the ball during the rally.

— When trying to follow the ball down court from a backwall rebound, be sure that the ball is at least one step ahead of you. Staying even with the shot means that you will not take that stroke-step, or, more likely, that you will

take the stroke-step and overtake the ball, putting the ball further back in your swing than you intended. If all your off-the-back-wall shots are going into the side walls before the front, you have outpaced the ball on the stroke step.

— Beneath the ball is home plate. As the ball moves around the court, home plate moves underneath it on the floor like a shadow. To line the body and stroke up with the trajectory of the ball, you will want your stroke-step to step just past the imaginary home plate as you hit the ball.

Tips for Beginners are excerpts from Mark Kessinger's book Unlimited Racquetball, which is in the publishing stage.

Results of the WPRO Tournament in Texas

Quarter Finals

Adams d. Lynch - 7, 1, 5
O'Brien d. Panzeri - 7, 1, (10), (6), 4
Kuhfeld d. Drexler - (10), (10), 9, 4, 4

McKinney d. Evon - 2, 1, 4

Semifinals

Adams d. O'Brien - 6, 5, 0
McKinney d. Kuhfeld - 8-11, 11-5, 11-4, 5-11, 11-4

Finals

Adams d. McKinney - (2), 1, (4), 4, 5

(Story starts on page 12)

Results of the RMA Tournament in Minneapolis

Quarter Finals

Harnett d. Swain
Yellen d. Gonzalez
Brysmen d. Andrews
Inoue d. Johnson

Semifinals

Yellen d. Harnett
Inoue d. Brysmen

Finals

Inoue d. Yellen

(Story starts on page 16)

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Ektelon Introduces Ceramic Racquet Line For All Levels of Players: Integra, Symitar, 250G Mid

Ektelon has introduced a complete line of new ceramic racquets for all levels of players. "Beginners through experts can benefit from the added control advantages provided by the new ceramic racquet line," announced Mark Wentura, Ektelon products manager.

The new midsize Integra is the only ceramic model specifically designed for the beginner in the entire sport. The expanded "sweet spot" on the larger midsize head begins close to the throat and extends out to the head. This larger "sweet spot" facilitates more ball returns and longer rallies, thus making the game more enjoyable for the beginner. The quadriform head shape, resembling a square, enables a less skilled player to return tight corner and roll-out shots with more ease because the racquet head can get closer to the floor.

The new oversize Symitar offers the largest hitting surface in the sport and is designed to provide more responsiveness, less wind resistance and a larger "sweet spot."

The racquet head is aerodynamically designed — the face profile of the frame head is thinner than the width profile and the string pattern is

a more open design — which increases reaction time. The Symitar is intended for the intermediate player, but the beginning or advanced player can adjust its sensitivity by experimenting with string tensions.

Ektelon's standard-size Composite 250G broke into composite technology in 1979; now, the new midsize 250G is breaking into ceramic technology. The advanced player will benefit from the ceramic 250G's new pentagon head design. This design, never before seen in racquetball, creates a more defined "sweet spot" in the midpoint of the racquet while re-

ducing the torsional twist created by a mishit. "The new 250G Mid is one of Ektelon's only racquets that offers superior control without sacrificing power. Out of Ektelon's entire line of racquets, this racquet provides the most control for the advanced player," said Wentura.

Suggested retail price for the Integra is \$45. Suggested retail price for the Symitar is \$100. Suggested retail price for the 250G Mid is \$130.

For further information contact: Ektelon, 8929 Aero Drive, San Diego, CA 92123.



Viking Cabretta Stay Soft Glove

Viking Sports introduces the first Cabretta Stay Soft Glove to retail for \$9.95 or less! Made with specially tanned water resistant Sheep Skin Cabretta, Buckskin Cabretta joins the popular Buckskin Wash and Wear synthetic for the racquetballers best buy. Both models available in XXS, XS, S, M, L, or XL. Suggested retail \$9.95 and \$8.95. For more information, contact: Viking Sports, 5355 Sierra Rd., San Jose, CA 95132.

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Racquetsports' Most Dangerous Game

by Stephen Wallenfels

I have heard too much about test pilots, astronauts and race car drivers. And enough about rock climbers, hang gliders, sky divers and the people who photograph Great White sharks in their natural habitat. It is time to acknowledge the unsung heroes in our health club world.

They may lack the charismatic flair of Hollywood stunt men, but they do possess the necessary amount of insanity and beguiling indifference to physical danger that makes them true "thrill seekers". I am talking about those who participate in racquetsports' most dangerous game, racquetball's very own Novice Doubles Players.

Novice Doubles is not for the meek of heart. I would not even encourage young children to

times they wear the eye protection around their neck in open defiance of all Murphy's Laws.

There is little or no pre-game stretching. A brief warm-up period is used to hit the ball as hard as possible, especially into the back wall at about head level. Balls are fired at the side wall, front wall, ceiling, and at each other with no apparent control or concern.

Body positioning in Novice Doubles is a study in the art of personal sacrifice. Players consistently place themselves directly in the most likely flight path of the ball. They stand close enough to each other so that it is nearly impossible not to be struck by a back swing or follow-through. They offer their rear ends as fleshy targets that beg to be hit.

Balls are fired at the side wall, front wall, ceiling, and at each other with no apparent control or concern.

watch. I have seen things happen within the confines of those four walls that go beyond the twisted imaginations of contemporary horror film producers. Heavy bodies crashing into concrete walls, graphite racquets swung in head severing scythe-like arcs, and a little blue ball travelling with the speed and random lethality of high velocity shrapnel. It isn't pretty.

Clothing worn by Novice Doubles Players is simple and unimpressive — they should be wearing body armor. Instead, all they wear are t-shirts, shorts, and even running shoes if they can get away with it. Apparel like that does nothing to protect them from the ravages of speeding ball and deadly racquet stroke. Sometimes they wear eye protection, sometimes they don't, and some-

It does not take long for the carnage to begin.

Within moments the small white room is filled with the distinctly sickening sound of hard-hit rubber balls impacting sweaty skin. Some players react by thundering a string of obscenities. Some bite their lip and act as if nothing happened at all. A performance like that can drive a normally sedate crowd of spectators into a frenzy. It becomes more than a game. It becomes a pain threshold test.

Collisions of body and wall occur frequently and with bone-crushing force. Players run into, and over, each other in panic stricken dashes to retrieve impossible shots. Eyebrows dodge the racquets that take 360 degree arcs to complete follow-throughs. Only the angel of grace prevents

dots of blood from spattering the hard wood floor at the end of a typical Novice Doubles match.

When the contest is over, those who can still stand normally, lead those who cannot, off the court. Spectators, like witnesses at a highway accident, ooh and aah admiringly at the colorful collection of angry purple welts appearing on leg, back, shoulder, neck and throat. There is no animosity between contestants, only camaraderie and good will. The idea was not to win, but to experience the bitter/sweet thrill of danger, and to survive.

There should be a more respectable place for Novice Doubles in the spectrum of racquetball events. It may be just what the sport needs. (Look at the surprising popularity of professional wrestling.) The spectator appeal of this life-threatening sport has sadly remained unexplored.

Most tournaments do not offer the event and directors laugh madly at the thought. Ignoring it will not make it go away. As long as there are four novice doubles players and only one court to play on, and as long as there exists in the human spirit a desire to face danger and spit in its eye, Racquetball Novice Doubles will be with us. Let's make the most of it.

So move over divers, climbers and matadors. There's a new game in town.

They sweat, they dive, they take physical pain in stride, and they are a whole lot braver than I will ever be. They are the players of racquetsports' most dangerous game, Racquetball Novice Doubles. ○

Stephen Wallenfels is a free-lance writer from Kennewick, WA. He last appeared in National Racquetball in May, 1986, with a fictional piece called "The Magic Racquet".

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HEAD
RACQUET SPORTS

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A'ME

Canadian Report

by Sigmund Brouwer



Carrying The Flag

At first thought, a solitary match in Columbus, Ohio, even if it involved a Canadian player, is a fragile link to a column written about racquetball and Canada.

Columbus, of course, was the June site for the 1987 AARA Junior Nationals. In the Boy's 18 & Under, #4 seed James Floyd of Michigan won all his matches to the quarter finals. There, he met fifth seed Simon Roy.

Simon Roy is from Quebec, Canada. And for all his matches, whether he realized it or not, he was Canada to his opponents, and the spectators.

Most of those people were his own age. By the comments made during the match between Floyd and Roy, most of them knew little about Canada, except the abstract notions about a land that has lots of snow, Eskimos and wilderness.

But with Simon Roy playing racquetball in front of them, suddenly Canada became something concrete. Here was a person that lived in that other country, and he was playing "their" sport.

None of Jim Floyd's friends knew that last year Simon Roy had won the 16 & under at the Canadian Junior Nationals. None of them knew that he is the #1 seed in the 18 & Under this year. They just knew Floyd was beating him badly.

Jim Floyd does not have an intimidating look. He is not big, doesn't scowl or have a look of fierce concentration. Between rallies he bounces and grins at his friends behind the glass, at the linesmen and at the referee. Floyd

could almost be the Michael J. Fox (another Canadian) of racquetball. But for a game and-a-half, during rallies Floyd played destruction racquetball.

Simon Roy tried everything but Floyd rolled and rolled. Floyd had won 15-5, and was ahead 14-6. To that point, Canada, the country, had little significance or merit to the American spectators. (And to Canadians who find this a little unsettling, think of how much thought and importance is

**... for all his matches,
whether he realized it
or not, he was Canada
to his opponents, and
the spectators.**

given to, say, the Northwest Territories in Canada's arctic.)

After Floyd hit an overhead that flat rolled out of the front left corner, it looked all but over. Then Simon dug in, and stayed tough. Slowly, he built up his points and around 10-14, the game suddenly did not look all but over. Simon simply hit one shot more than Floyd each rally. Simon made no more errors, and kept screwing down the pressure. It was incredibly mature racquetball.

Simon, tall, lean and intense, staved off nearly half a dozen match point serves by Jim Floyd and continued marching.

The comments among the spectators changed. As new faces joined the crowd (somehow at tournaments there is a group sense for the unusual), mostly

teenage faces, those already there explained patiently, and with a sense of ownership, what they knew about this mysterious opponent with the expressionless face.

"Yeah, the kid's from Canada. He plays tough ball."

"Ruh-wha, that's how you say it."

"Look, that kid don't skip nothing."

"Didn't you know they play ball up there?"

"Floyd had him down, but he's doin' it man. He is some kind of good."

"Not Simon, Simm-ough."

"I'm telling yuh, that kid's from Canada."

Simon Roy won the second game. Floyd was in trouble, and he knew it. The racquetball they played in the tiebreaker was superb. Floyd jumped to a five-point lead and Roy fought back again. It was superb all the way to 10-10. Each played and faced, three match point serves.

That's what counts, isn't it? They both played as hard as they could, and that level for each of them was the level of excellence. Simon Roy gave Jim Floyd and all his friends something to know about Canada, little as it was, but still a good impression. Floyd proved, in a battle, he could be just as tough as anyone from Quebec.

In all, it shows perhaps that on second thought, a solitary match in Columbus, Ohio, is not that fragile a link to something Canadian in a column written about racquetball and Canada.

(continued on page 41)

Passing Shots

by Norm Blum



WATT? — You'd think the most persistent salespeople who call on racquetball clubs would be pedalling racquets. Not so, say several club owners. One club owner told us he heard from 10 lightbulb salesmen in one week.

PARI Update . . . The first seminars of PARI were held throughout the nation during the last two months, and early reports from attendees are positive. The sessions are informative and demanding. The best news is that attending the session does not mean automatic teaching certification. Several attendees have been told they are in desperate need of clinics themselves before they attempt to enter the teaching field . . . Dumbest question asked: "Where do you hit a ceiling ball?"

GET IN SHAPE . . . Perhaps the biggest misconception about racquetball is that you can play two to three times a week, drink a few beers and classify yourself as being in shape. That's not the case, says traveling instructor **Fran Davis**. She maintains you need to get in shape to play racquetball and not the other way around. One sure-fire method is "suicides". Run from the first hash mark on the court to the back wall, back to the hash mark, touch the front wall and return to the backwall. Repeat several times and see how you feel.

RAMBO RACQUETBALL . . . Forget the score of the game. It's who stands up at the end that counts. One club in Chicago has a fun night out at the courts with about 10 players. You play one game to 11 and move on to the next court. The winner is the player who doesn't quit after the marathon session.

LEFTOVER NOTES FROM THE AARA NATIONALS . . . If racquetball isn't a spectator sport, then why was there a mad rush to the bleachers when a court change was announced for the match of **Egan Inoue**. Egan's serve, timed at 170 mph, must be seen to be believed. When **Nolan Ryan** strikes out a batter at the Astrodome, a group of spectators line the stadium with K's. Well, racquetball players should mimic the Ryan Express. Someone should flash a sign every time Egan aces his opponent. His serve is so hard opponents literally reel toward the backwall when the ball hits the racquet . . . A ton of new rules were passed by the AARA, including making eye-guards mandatory for all AARA sanctioned tournaments beginning December 1 . . . You can be a life-time member of the AARA for \$250; currently there are 14.

Two Florida gals, **Libby Laney** and **Agatha Falso** love to embarrass each other in public. At the nationals awards banquet, with more than 600 people in attendance, Libby arranged for a male dancer to wish Agatha a happy birthday . . . Houston will be the site for next year's Nationals for the sixth straight year. A Baltimore club made an attractive bid, but the Houston Sports Commission did some strong lobbying. Personally, I feel the tournament site should be different each year . . . While neither were sponsors of the national, AMF Head and Ektelon made their presence known at the tournament. HEAD's **Debbie Nohstadt** organized a party, and EKTELON had a hospitality suite for its sponsored players . . . The longest distance a player travelled for the nationals

was from a military base in Spain . . . If anyone was looking for a bargain, the auction to raise money for the U.S. National Team, held after the banquet, was not the place to be. Any clothing item with the U.S. Olympics logo generated a minimum of \$100 . . .

Mr. Referee, Otto Dietrich of Atlanta, was probably hearing balls in his sleep. Otto, who is becoming a crowd favorite, reffed 60 matches during the week . . . Florida women dominated the singles competition with the first-place finishes in the open, 19+, 30+, 35+ 40+ and 45+ . . . And how 'bout **Susan Morgan**? The 30+ national champ went into the tournament unsponsored and left with an Ektelon sponsorship which included having her name printed on the back of her shirt. What are the odds of two champions coming from the same club? **Morgan** and **Kersten Hollander** (19+) both play out of the Jacksonville Athletic Club . . .

POTPOURRI — Trivia question from a Colorado publication: "What was the name of a racquetball racquet, made by Ektelon, that was long, black and named after a player? A, Yellen Flex; B, Beau Mark; C, Schmitike XL; D, Zirkle XT". The answer is C . . . **Lynn Adams** has signed a five-year sponsorship contract with Ektelon . . . The club I belong to has had more name changes than Doan's has pills . . .

Things I like: Large towels that can wrap around large waists, club floors that are swept, properly air-conditioned courts . . . Things I dislike: Playing four times a week and getting dusted each time, slippery courts and losing to people you used to be able to beat. ○

Concentration

(continued from page 8)

to keep it in the present? By practice; there is no other way.

Every time your mind starts to slip away, simply bring it back. Use a verbal cue, "ball". Repeat that cue, silently or aloud, while fixing your eye on the ball. Look past the seam to the texture and crevices on the ball's surface. This technique will significantly improve the length of your concentration on the ball.

It may sound mystic to sit and watch a racquetball. But when you try it, you will see how difficult it is, and how "real" this kind of practice can be. Concen-

tration can be practiced, and this technique will help tremendously.

During the game, concentration will seem to slow down time, giving you more awareness to see and place the ball. You will only be aware of what is happening at that instant, and that is when you know you are concentrating.

And when you are at that level, the other critical time is **between** points. After the last shot of a rally, the mind's focusing on the ball may wander. Thoughts of the score, your erratic backhand, business, the children, tend to siphon concentration and energy from the present situation on the court. Come back to the ball with

your verbal cue, "ball".

Remember, with concentration, the greater the use, the quicker and more accurate your reactions will be. And think what that will do for your game! ○

Minneapolis

(continued from page 17)

the long-awaited results were announced. Mike Yellen had accomplished his aspiration, capturing five consecutive national titles.

Although no one will know for sure, Yellen's intensity in the finals did not seem to be the same as against Harnett. "Had the announcement relieved the pressure of a long season of his quest, and also the necessity for a final tournament victory?

The Finals

Egan Inoue, was about to cap one of the most spectacular seasons of any racquetball player of any time. Not only had Egan begun the season as a qualifier, but he had never even won any kind of national tournament. Early in the year, he was chosen to be an alternate on the U.S. Amateur Team, and even though he lost this in the quarter finals of last year's amateur tournament, the selection proved prophetic as Egan went on to win the World Amateur Championship, and the Tournament of the Americas in Ecuador.

Egan's three-game victory over Yellen resulted in Inoue moving from a non-ranked position to number five on the men's professional tour. Without question, Egan's first ever tour victory will not be his last. A triathlete, Egan's conditioning regiment and overpowering game style should continue to assure him of a high ranking. ○

New Directions

(continued from page 27)

club and the players. To say it bluntly — it was exciting, it was a happening, you can be proud of our sport, players, and the club management and facility.

If the 1987 U.S. National Juniors are any indication of the future of racquetball, you can bank on it for a long, long time. ○

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Results of the National Junior Championships

Boys Final Results

Boys 8 Singles

- 1 Jonathan Boyett, CA
- 2 Hal Spangenberg, CA
- 3 Tyler Siggins, CA
- 4 Robbie Thompson, AL

Boys 10 Singles

- 1 Wesley Miller, TN
- 2 Shane Brown, CA
- 3 Shane Wood, MA
- 4 Frank Dean, AL

Boys 10 Doubles

- 1 Jonathan Boyett/
Shane Brown, CA
- 2 Jody Friedman/Cliff
Pardue, FL
- 3 Frank Dean, AL/Erik
Ekman, MA
- 4 David Hamilton/Ryan
Vanderson, OH

Boys 12 Singles

- 1 Sudsy Monchik, NY
- 2 Craig Czyz, FL
- 3 Jason Mannino, NY
- 4 Andy Thompson, WI

Boys 12 Doubles

- 1 Sudsy Monchik/Jason
Mannino, NY
- 2 Craig Czyz/Andy
Reiff, FL
- 3 Andrew Thompson,
WI/Ryan Davis, IN
- 4 Scott Zimmerman, MI/
Joel Koppel, TX

Boys 14 Singles

- 1 John Ellis, CA
- 2 Craig O'Connell, CO
- 3 Andy Bagnal, CA
- 4 Jim Ellenberger, WI

Boys 14 Doubles

- 1 John Ellis, CA/Eric
Muller, KS
- 2 Ariel Labra/Ivan Labra,
CA
- 3 Andy Bagnall/Chris
McDonald, CA
- 4 Chris Conway/Allen
Engle, FL

Boys 16 Singles

- 1 Joey Paraiso, CA
- 2 Robbie Walden, FL
- 3 Charlie Garrido, TX
- 4 Nolan Gantz, NY

Boys 16 Doubles

- 1 Bart Turner/Tony Zile,
OH
- 2 Ross Greenberg/
Robbie Walden, FL
- 3 Brian Rankin/Jason
Waggoner, FL
- 4 Mike Guidry/Charlie

Garrido, TX

Boys 18 Singles

- 1 David Simonette, MD
- 2 Tim Doyle, NY
- 3 Jim Floyd, MI
- 4 Brad Monroe, WI

Boys 18 Doubles

- 1 Mark Isley, MO/Eric
Schoen, OH
- 2 James Floyd/Nick
Rallis, MI
- 3 Tim Doyle, NY/Dave
Ganim, OH
- 4 Eric Ramm/Chip
Thomas, CA

Mixed Doubles

- 1 Kenny Gilley/Renee
Lockey, TX
- 2 Ken Marks/Jen
Yokota, MO
- 3 Shelly Ashton/Brad
Olson, WI
- 4 Jenny Spangenberg/
Jeff Kenyon, CA

Girls Final Results

Girls 8

- 1 Dawn Marie Gates, IL
- 2 Beth Knitter, WI
- 3 Lyndsi Patton, FL
- 4 Julie Quinlan, FL

Girls 10 Singles

- 1 Dawn Marie Gates, IL
- 2 Debra Kerr, FL
- 3 Shannon Feaster, DC
- 4 Amy Meyer, CO

Girls 10 Doubles

- 1 Debra Kerr, FL/
Shannon Feaster, DC
- 2 Daisy Medina, OH/
Amy Meyer, CO

Girls 12 Singles

- 1 Elkova Icenogle, CA
- 2 Britt Engle, FL
- 3 Aimee Roehler, PA
- 4 Hayden May, CA

Girls 12 Doubles

- 1 Hayden May, CA/Britt
Engle, FL
- 2 Aimee Roehler, PA/
Andrea Beugen, MN
- 3 Kristi Knitter/Jodi
Williams, WI
- 4 Lisa Dougherty/
Melissa MacGregor,
FL

Girls 14 Singles

- 1 Jenni Lee, PA
- 2 Talya Dodson, CA
- 3 Amy Simonetta, FL
- 4 Hannah Spector, FL

Girls 14 Doubles

- 1 Amy Simonetta/
Hannah Spector, FL
- 2 Erika Willhite, OH/Talya
Dodson, CA

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- 3 Elkova Icenogle/Tami
Lacy, CA

- 4 Alicia Kinney, AK/
Jenny Meyer, CO

Girls 16 Singles

- 1 Tami Dodson, CA
- 2 Sara Ali, NY
- 3 Dana Sibell, MN
- 4 Erika Willhite, OH

Girls 16 Doubles

- 1 Cindy Doyle/Sara Ali,
NY
- 2 Kim Pinola/Stephanie
Pinola, PA

- 3 Aimee Melville, MN/
Cara Pellowski, WI

- 4 Sue Cox/Dee
Robertson, FL

Girls 18 Singles

- 1 Michelle Gilman, OR
- 2 Cindy Doyle, NY
- 3 Robin Levine, CA
- 4 Kelly Pulis, CA

Girls 18 Doubles

- 1 Robin Levine/Kelly
Pulis, CA
- 2 Elaine Mardas, OH/
Janet Burke, MA
- 3 Michelle Gilman, OR/
Leigh Anne Coutu, DE
- 4 Lynn Kadlec/Dana
Sibell, MN

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WPRA Tournament

(continued from page 13)

like I had some brains." Her self-berating did the trick as she came back to win 11-9. Drexler was never in the match after that, and Kuhfeld found herself the upset winner over the most physically gifted player on the tour.

Her semifinal match with McKinney looked as though she planned to send Caryn to the showers earlier than anticipated as well. In a tough first game, Kuhfeld emerged the winner, 11-8. She took a quick and early lead that game, 7-2, then got stuck. McKinney, ever the fighter, crept back but never quite closed the gap. "I couldn't find my rhythm and my feet were heavy," explained McKinney. "But I wasn't taking this match lightly, especially with the way she beat Marci."

Game two and three were vintage McKinney, as she moved Kaye around the court with a variety of serves and shots. McKinney won easily, 11-5, 11-4.

McKinney was winning the fourth game 5-1, and felt confident the game was going to be hers. But Kuhfeld, with her icy calm, started connecting on her drive serves down the right wall. McKinney could not get around on the ball and gave her set-ups galore and did not score another point. Kuhfeld won 11-5.

At this point, the fans were commenting on how cool Kuhfeld was in all situations. Her classic good looks and blond hair added to the aura. McKinney, who also displays a calm confidence on the court, looked emotional compared to Kuhfeld.

"I've been through the routine of tempers and anxiety in the past. It's just not worth it," explained Kuhfeld. "I play in the here-and-now and it works much better."

Kuhfeld may have maintained her cool, but it was McKinney who showed that she is one of the most consistent players on the tour. She bore down and was a picture of total focus and discipline as she went on to win the tiebreaker, 11-4. Kuhfeld, though, served notice to the other players that she was here to stay.

On the other side of the draw, Molly O'Brien had to deal with a revitalized Vicki Panzeri in

the quarter finals. Panzeri, who has struggled this season, looked closer to form than she has in a long time. O'Brien, a smart control player, moved Panzeri around in the first two games, winning 11-7, 11-1. But as anyone who has ever played Panzeri knows, she has a way of getting back on her feet in the most desperate of times. Panzeri played a more aggressive style and won 11-10.

"Looking back, I know I let up in the third game. I thought I had it in the bag," said O'Brien.

Panzeri went on to take game four 11-6, and created yet another tiebreaker in this championship tournament.

She then took a 4-0 lead, and O'Brien looked confused. "I was so mad at myself for letting things get out of hand, I wasn't sure I wanted to win. Then I decided I'm here anyway, I want to win," said O'Brien.

O'Brien started hitting harder, shooting more, and acting as if she wanted to win. The new strategy paid off as she won the match 11-4.

The semifinal between Adams and O'Brien was short and quick. O'Brien couldn't generate any offense, and was constantly chasing down balls. The scores were 11-6, 11-5, 11-0, but O'Brien was pleased with her season, and what she learned from the semi's. "I felt I had a chance against Lynn. She'd been struggling this year and I thought there might be an open door. She played excellent though. She ate my serves up." O'Brien continued. "I've noticed with both her and Caryn that their serves are varied and strong. I'll come back next season a lot stronger in the service box."

In other noteworthy matches, Linda Porter defeated Fran Davis in the round of 32, in three straight games. Bonnie Stoll pushed Marci Drexler to a tiebreaker in the round of 16. The winner of the Women's Open event was Gail Woods over Cathy Nichols.

The Riverbend Athletic Club in Fort Worth was an excellent host for the WPRA Nationals. They have hosted the tournament five years in a row, and their support of the WPRA is very much appreciated.

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New WPRA Board

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Vice President — Lynn Adams

Board — Vicki Panzeri, Andrea Katz, Toni Bevelock

(Results on page 29)

Canadian Report

(continued from page 34)

Yes. Who won?

If you want to know, maybe it shows the strength of the column's link that chances are you're hoping for the young athlete from your own country. I know, much as I enjoyed the sportsmanship and effort given by Jim Floyd, that I wanted Simon Roy to score that 11th point.

Let me tell you something. Floyd won. And I'll tell you something else. The kid's from Michigan. He plays tough ball. ○

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Newsbriefs

RMA Update

The RMA announced in early June that Head Racquet Sports became part of its membership roster. Debrah Nohstadt, Head's Player Promotions Coordinator for both racquetball and squash will serve on the RMA Board of Directors.

The RMA also announced that Jim Hiser of Davison, Michigan, will be retained as Commissioner for the 1987-1988 Men's Professional Racquetball Tour. The RMA Tour was launched in 1985, and continues to be a dominant force on the racquetball scene, with a minimum of eight stops, plus one Grand Nationals event on the agenda for the 1987-1988 season. Jim Hiser is also vice-president of the American Amateur Racquetball Association, and organizer of the Michigan Super Seven series of racquetball tournaments. ○

tions of time and energy. Gerry's remarks sum it up, "Hey, I played in these same tournaments once. It was nice to have a chance to put something back into the program." ○

Ektelon and AARA Prepare Positive Offensive

Two leaders in the sport of racquetball have joined forces in a sponsorship agreement which will promote the growth of racquetball nationally. "Ektelon will now be the AARA's official sponsor," announced Luke St. Onge, executive director of the AARA, the sport's national governing body. "We feel that this relationship is the single most important step forward for the sport since its inception in 1968."

As a result of Ektelon's sponsorship, the AARA 1988 national doubles, singles, juniors and intercollegiate championships will bear the title of the Ektelon/U.S. National Championships. All regional qualifying events for the national championships will also carry Ektelon in the title, for example, the Ektelon/Adult Regional Championships and Ektelon/Junior Regional Championships. Ektelon will sponsor the Pan American Championships in 1987, as well.

Ektelon's sponsorship will encompass an array of other AARA activities. Their resources will support the junior, adult, high school and intercollegiate programs, along with the teaching certification program and the disabled/wheelchair program.

Ektelon will also be the official racquet in local and other AARA-sponsored tournaments and events and in addition, will join the AARA as official sponsor for the U.S. National Racquetball Team as it strives towards Olympic recognition at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain.

"This sponsorship program," said Mark Wentura, Ektelon's senior product manager, "is the most extensive AARA/manufacture agreement ever created. Both organizations are working aggressively towards making our alliance a strong union with great forward motion."

"We are proud to affiliate ourselves with this world-recognized organization which believes, like we do, in the future and lasting value of racquetball," said Wentura. "And together we hope to leave an enduring legacy to the sport." ○

Northern California Junior Tour

Gerry Price and Scott Oliver, Ektelon professionals, provided Northern California junior racquetball players with four instructional clinics during the 1987 junior season. The junior tour had tournaments in Pleasanton, San Jose, Modesto, and Stockton. At each of the tournaments, Scott and Gerry gave a free two-hour clinic on Friday night, with competitive play beginning Saturday. After the clinics, the kids played fun matches before breaking for snacks and socializing.

Tour director, Dave Ellis, said that the idea this year was to pack more into the weekend for the kids. Too often, in the past, local junior players have had first round matches against players who have been competing at regional or national levels. The result, predictably, often made for quick exits with hurt feelings. So the clinics were added, along with B divisions for each age group, as well as draws with round-robin preliminaries. Ellis said that the format was well received. "The only complaint was that there was too much play." Most of the players had at least four singles matches at each tournament.

It was a fantastic season, Ellis said, "Ektelon helped us out a lot with balls, draw sheets, and tourney souvenirs." Host clubs also said the kids were great.

And of course, Scott and Gerry led the way with their generous dona-



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Rankings

The sources for these national rankings are as follows: Men's - Official RMA Pro Racquetball Tour rankings; Women's - Official WPRA Tour; Amateur - Official national rankings.

RMA Pro Racquetball Official Rankings June 15, 1987

1	M. Yellen	442
2	B. Harnett	395
3	M. Hogan	360
4	E. Andrews	306
5	E. Inoue	269
6	C. Swain	255
7	R. Gonzalez	252
8	S. Lerner	227
9	G. Peck	195
10	G. Price	178
11	D. Obremski	151
12	J. Hilecher	144
13	M. Ray	143
14	R. Harripersad	135
15	A. Gross	126
16	A. Katz	125
17	D. Peck	124
18	D. Johnson	115
19	J. Newman	93
20	D. Gross	86
21	D. Green	76
22	L. Gilliam	75
23	C. Nichols	73
24	J. Casio	71
25	B. Sell	70

WPRA Official Rankings May 10, 1987

1	L. Adams	192.00
2	C. McKinney	151.66
3	M. Drexler	144.16
4	M. O'Brien	66.66
5	T. Gilreath	62.00
6	V. Panzeri	58.00
7	K. Kuhfeld	57.00
8	F. Davis	48.00
9	M. Lynch	45.00
10	Jackie Paraiso	44.00
11	C. Evon	41.66
12	L. Alvarado	40.00
13	D. Fischl	33.00
14	Joy Paraiso	31.00
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19	J. Harding	21.00
20T	M. Dee	20.00
20T	A. Katz	20.00
20T	J. Marriott	20.00
20T	B. Stoll	20.00
24	R. Whitmire	16.66
25	D. Fletcher	16.00

AARA National Rankings Men's Open April 20, 1987

1	Andy Roberts, TN
2	Doug Ganim, OH
3	Tim Hansen, FL
4	Kelvin Vantrease, IL
5	Joe Cline, NJ
6	Don Kelly, CO
7	Dennis Aceto, MA
8	Mike Lowe, CA
9	Tom Montalbano, NY
10	Dave Negrete, IL
11	Jamie Sumner, UT
12	Charlie Nichols, FL
13	Aaron Katz, TX
14	Sean Moskwa, IL
15	Mark Morrison, FL
16	Ruben Gonzalez, NY
17	Dan Obremski, PA
18	Vinnie Ganley, FL
19	Steve Moody, CA
20	Fred Calabrese, FL

Men's Wheelchair

1	Chip Parmelly, CA
2	Jim Leatherman, MD
3	Jim Golden, TX
4	John Foust, CO
5	Gary Baker, TX
6	Rick Benavides, TX

AARA National Rankings Women's Open April 20, 1987

1	Trina Rasmussen, CA
2	Mona Mook, CA
3	Cindy Baxter, PA
4	Mary Dee, NH
5	Chris Evon, IL
6	Elaine Mardas, OH
7	Crystal Fried, CA
8	Cindy Doyle, NY
9	Terry Latham, TX
10	Kim Despain, UT
11	Linda Diamond, FL
12	Lori Basch, FL
13	Sandy Robson, IL
14	Lisa Hjelm, CA
15	Nan Higgins, NH
16	Mary Lyons, FL
17	Janet Kelleher, NH
18	Kaye Kuhfeld, IN
19	Michelle Labonne, IN
20	Fran Davis, NJ

Women's Handicapped

1	Kathy Hagerty, AL
2	Charlotte Morris, AL
3	Bobbie Jo Almond, AL
4	Kay Cody, AL
5	Mary Lasli Dean, AL
6	Brenda Pike, AL

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Schedule of Events

1987 AARA SCHEDULE

August 7-9

Tampa Bay
Tampa Bay Court House
7815 North Dale Mabry
Tampa, FL 33614
Dani Dellenini

August 8-10

Tahoe Blue Classic
South Tahoe Fitness Ctr.
2565 So. Lake Tahoe Blvd.
So. Lake Tahoe, CA 95702
Ron Perceville
(916) 544-6222

August 14-16

Chevron Summer Blowout
Tracy Racquet Club
101 So. Tracy Blvd.
Tracy, CA 95376
Chuck Ellis
(209) 836-2504

August 14-16

Doubles Warm-Up
Lakeland YMCA
3620 Cleveland Heights
Lakeland, FL 33803
Grace Page
(813) 644-3528

August 21-23

Florida State Doubles
Championship
Sarasota Bath &

Racquet Club
2170 Robinhood
Sarasota, FL 33577
Judi Schmidt
(813) 921-6675

August 21-23

Masters & Golden Masters
Invitational
National Doubles
Edison Racquetball &
Health Club
511 Old Post Road & US 1
Edison, NJ 08812
Pete Talbot
(201) 287-4444

September 17-20

Adult Region 15 Doubles
Pac West
5227 South Puget Sound
Tacoma, WA 98409
Sid Williams
(206) 473-2266

September 17-19

Pan American Games
Point AC
2233 N. Academy Place
Colo. Springs, CO 80903

September 24-26

National Women's
Invitational
Tampa Bay Courthouse
7815 N. Dale Mabry
Tampa, FL 33614

Jon Chelena
(813) 932-5321

September 24-26

Tampa Bay Open
Tampa Bay Courthouse
7815 N. Dale Mabry
Tampa, FL 33614
Jon Chelena
(813) 932-5321

September 24-26

North American 40+
Tournament
Albuquerque, NM

October 2-4

Holiday Open
Pac West
5227 South Puget Sound
Tacoma, WA 98409
Sid Williams
(206) 473-2266

October 22-24

National Doubles
Arizona Athletic Club
1425 14th Street
Tempe, AZ 85281

October 23-25

Cool Cucumber
Lakeland YMCA
3620 Cleveland Heights
Lakeland, FL 33803
Grace Page
(813) 644-3528

October 30-November 1

9th Annual
White Rose Classic
The Athletic Club-Sawmill
3880 Carol Road
York, PA 17402
Doe Devivo
(717) 755-0991

November 6-8

Florida State Outdoor 4
Wall Tournament
Auburndale Rec Center
202 W. Park Street
Auburndale, FL 33828
Keith Jackson
(813) 967-7265

November 13-15

Sarasota YMCA
Tournament
Sarasota YMCA
1075 S. Eucud NE
Sarasota, FL 33577

For AARA information
contact: Luke St. Onge
(303) 635-5396

For RMA information
contact: Jim Hiser
(313) 653-9602

For WPRA information
contact: Caryn McKinney
(404) 636-7575

What's The Call

(continued from page 11)

another 10-second period is not awarded.

In your last example, John, the server obviously held up his serve out of consideration or anger for the receiver. Nonetheless, once checked, the receiver is not entitled to hold up play (except to call timeout). It's a point for the server.

It is important to the players for the referee to exercise good judgment. As the referee, count to yourself so you can recognize and address the infractions before they have to be called to your attention by the abused player. Unsheath the hammer when necessary; just don't hit your thumb while using it.

Rules questions should be directed to Mike Arnott, 8444 Seabridge Way, Indianapolis, IN 46240.

Portable Court

(continued from page 15)

groups to the malls. And local health clubs will hold tournaments in each of the court sports. The finals will be held on the portable court."

Also, the mall tour will test just how easy it will be to transport, erect and dismantle the court.

Garcia, a tournament-playing racquetball player, expects that a by-product of the portable court will be an increased interest in all the court sports. "That means more facilities, more players and

more excitement. That's good for everybody," he says.

He can see the day when a racquetball club puts a portable court in its parking lot and provides seating for 2,500 people for a tournament. He can see a traveling pro tournament played inside the portable court as the television cameras follow the action. And he can see the blue ball becoming even more popular nationwide as potential players from Phoenix to Philadelphia watch mall exhibitions.

Watch for Garcia and his portable court playing at a mall near you.

For more information, call or write Joe Garcia, Court Sport Productions, 2515 Via Esparto, Carlsbad, CA 92008, phone: (619) 729-3859. ○

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Left: Standard models available in crystal (shown) and tortoise.

Below: Caryn McKinney, #2 on the WPRA pro tour, uses Action Eyes exclusively.



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