RACQUETBALL HANDBALL NEWS

July, 1976 Vol. 1 No. 6 40¢

BRUMFIELD WINS NRC National

Brumfield and Marty Hogan (r) in final match play.

Charlie Brumfield, after hitting the match point and winning the 1976 NRC National Championship.
Photos by Clay Scott

Hogan's Power Almost Conquers; Brumfield's Control Proves Superior

BY MIKE PACKARD
Assistant Editor

"The best power player in the game vs the best control player in the game" was how defending champion Charlie Brumfield described the final game of the NRC National Championship tournament. And what a game it was.

Brumfield took the first game 21-8, Hogan ripped him up in the second with an incredible 21-1, and Brumfield regained control in the exciting tie-breaker, to win it 11-8 and keep his title of NRC National Champion and gain the $4,000 prize money.

The odds were about even as who could have won. Four-time national champ Brumfield, 27, having more experience but 18 year old Hogan having beaten him twice out of the three times the two have played against each other this season.

Before the game, Charlie Drake, who is the general manager of Leach Industries which helped co-sponsor the NRC event with Seamco and which sponsored eight out of the top 12 seeds in the men's pro division, said, "Brumfield and Hogan are in peak shape. Charlie's a textbook player. Marty's faster and spontaneous; you cannot anticipate him. But when Brumfield starts losing he starts going for things nobody would go for—and he gets them. He'll forget the book."

And that's exactly what happened. In the tie-breaker game, with the score 4-3, in his favor Brumfield went for three unbelievable gets, diving and falling with a thud on the floor, getting up with lightning speed and running to the other side of the court and diving and falling and returning the ball successfully to the front wall—three times in a row. Hogan then hit the ball out of the court over the back wall and Brumfield got the serve.

In the first game, at 0-0, Brumfield served and referee Chuck Leve called it no good and Brumfield disputed the call in no uncertain terms and was awarded a technical foul by Leve. This made the score minus 1-0, Brumfield serving. He quickly recovered the point on a good kill shot.

Then between 2-2 to 11-3, Brumfield got hit with the ball from behind three times, once on the back of his left leg and twice in the rump. He was hit hard each time by Hogan's ball, but it did not break his concentration even slightly. He did not even wince and acted like he did not feel a thing.

At 3-11, Hogan's temper exploded when Brumfield chucked him under the chin with his racquet. Hogan screamed to referee Leve, "If he touches me one more time, Chuck, just one more time..." He was so mad he couldn't think of a way to end his sentence.

In game two, Hogan was hot. He hit so many flat rollouts and cracks that it was 15-0 before Brumfield could score his only point of the game. At 17-1, Brumfield just relaxed. Saving himself for the tie-breaker, he didn't even try for Hogan's speed ball. He just wanted to get the game over with.

Brumfield played much more aggressively in the tie-breaker and taunted Hogan by saying things like, "Why don't you hit the ball, Marty?" and "Can't you move kid?" Although at one point when Hogan rolled one out after an extended ceiling ralley, Brumfield said, "Nice shot, kid."

The match was exciting and, for those watching, a valuable lesson in pro gamemanship and psychological maneuvering.

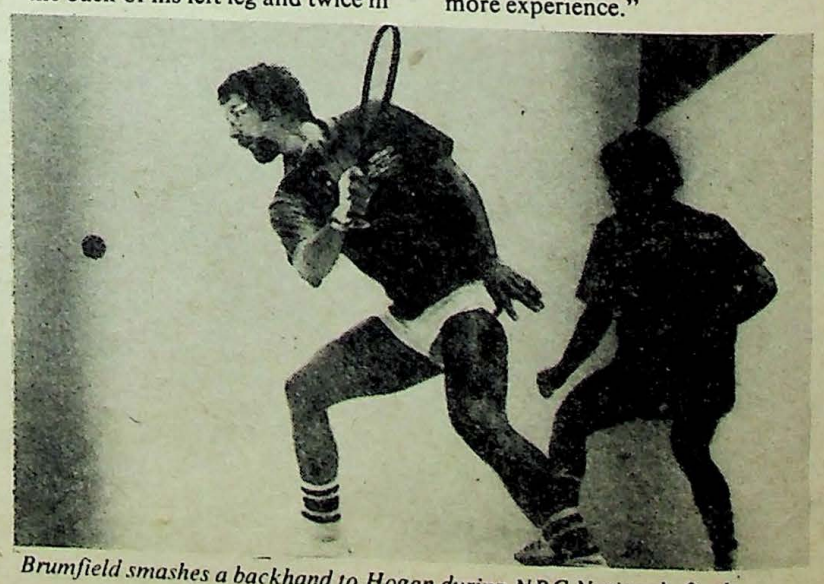
The crowd cheered enthusiastically when it was over and as NRC President Bob Kendler presented the $4,000 check to Brumfiled he said, "I hate to see you get this money. It's time you spread the wealth around." Brumfield has won nearly twice as much NRC prize money as any other pro racquetball player this season.

Then Kendler turned to Hogan and said, "It was obvious that Brumfield was trying to psyche you every chance he could."

Hogan replied, "He played well and he had the drive and he beat me."

Brumfield's game plan? "Win anyway I could," he said. He explained that he stopped trying in the second game so he would have energy for the tie-breaker and because it would cause Hogan to lose his adrenaline. "It would have served no purpose to run around Marty," he said.

Asked if he thought the younger players were catching up to him, Brumfield said calmly, "It's not skill—every one of the top players is as good as any other. I win because I'm smarter and have more experience."



Brumfield smashes a backhand to Hogan during NRC Nationals finals.
Photo by Clay Scott

RACQUETBALL HANDBALL NEWS

World's Best Meet In 'Racquetball Week'

BY DAVE DIEHL
Assistant Editor

With personal wishes for success to each competitior from San Dieto Mayor, Pete Wilson, the 1976 Leach/Seamco National Racquetball Championships opened on June 13, at the Atlas Health Club in Mission Valley. The tournament continued through the finals on June 19 as Mayor Wilson proclaimed the week of June 20-26 as "Racquetball Week" in San Diego.

Thus the stage was set for this super spectacular of racquetball as the best players in the nation met to decide who was the best of the best. But true to predictions, Charlie Brumfield and Peggy Steding left no doubt who was the best as each one retained their national rankings.

FINAL SHOWDOWN

The final showdown in the Men's Pro Singles involved Brumfield, the current national champ from San Diego, and self-proclaimed "best racquetball player in the world." His foe was young Marty Hogan, an 18-year old mixture of speed, cockiness, determination and fire from St. Louis.

Brumfield, the number one seeded player in the tourney, entered the finals with a 21-16, 21-10 win over ninth seeded Craig McCoy from Riverside, Ca., in the quarterfinals and a big 21-6, 21-10 victory over fifth seed Steve Keeley, of San Diego in the semifinals.

Second seed Hogan faced Brumfield for the fourth time this year by winning a tough tie breaker in the quarterfinals against another St. Louis stand out, Jerry Hilecher, 13-21, 21-14 and 11-5. Then Hogan routed 11th seed Mike Zeitman from Memphis in the semi finals, 21-7, and 21-8.

PSYCH BATTLE

The championship match started off as a psychological battle as the experienced lawyer, Brumfield said of the student Hogan, "I hate the little brat...as far as playing him goes." Hogan retaliated with, "If he (Brumfield) can't beat you on the court, he'll beat you in the head!"

As the first game progressed, each player exchanged words and then Hogan exploded when Brumfield chucked him under the chin with his racquet. Hogan faced referee Chuck Leve with so much steam pouring off of him that it fogged up the glass wall, and sputtered, "If he ever touches me one more time..."

Brumfield responded by Holding his racquet out horizonitally toward Hogan and then placing his other hand vertically to the racquet to form a cross. After the match, he explained, "When Marty gets mad, he looks like the girl in the 'Exorcist'!"

The angry outburst caused Hogan to lose his control, however, and Brumfield cruised to a 21-8 win as Hogan left the court and went to the locker room to regain his composure.

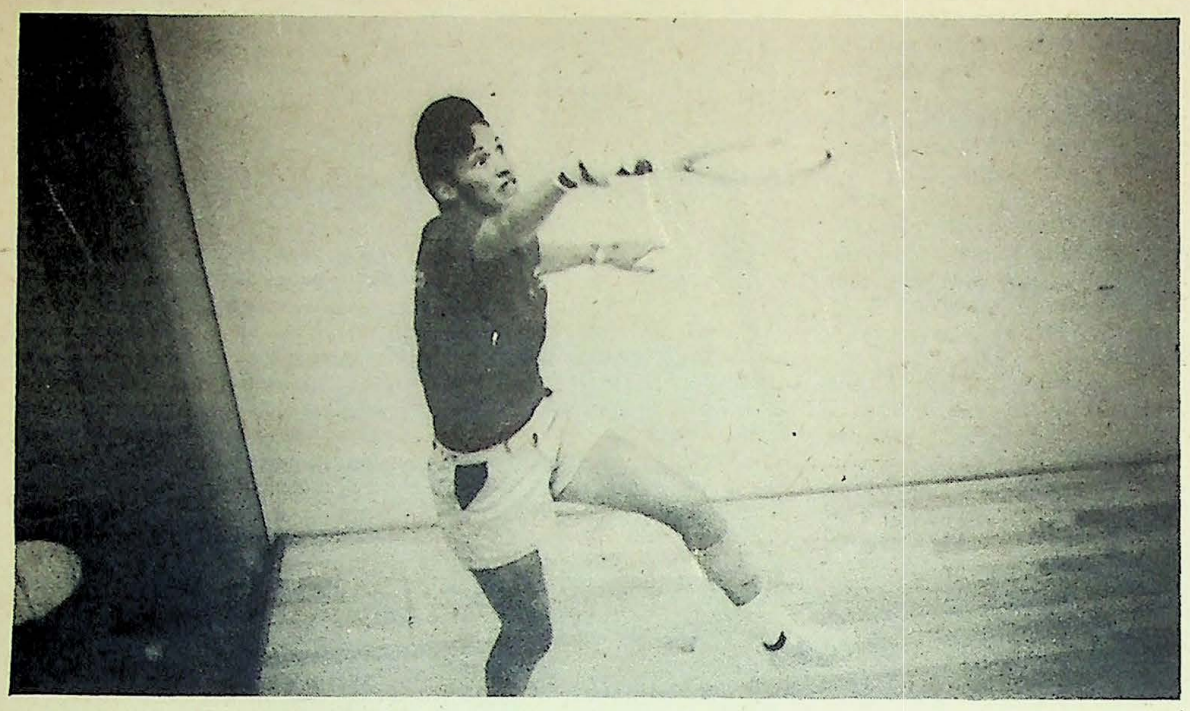
The procedure evidently worked as Brumfield waited impatiently for Hogan to return to the court for the second game. It developed into a rout as Hogan

See WORLD'S BEST page 4

(top) Top-side viewers paid $10 to see the finals matches at the NRC Nationals.
(bottom) About 200 people paid $100 per reserved seat for the week of the NRC Nationals. ***Photos by Dave Diehl***

STEDING WINS

Championship



Peggy Steding, hitting her 'super' overhead kill shot during finals in NRC Nationals. *Photo by Dave Diehl*

Steve Keeley, during game with Brumfield who is hidden behind him. (See story, below right)

Marty Hogan (r) after winning over IRA Champ Jerry Hilecher.

Photos by Clay Scott

Defending Champ Fights Pain; Wins With 'Super' Overheads

BY MIKE PACKARD
Assistant Editor

Hopping on one leg, running little and never diving, 40-year old Texas housewife Peggy Steding, enduring constant pain in her left leg from a pinched nerve in her spine, out-played 20-year old Shannon Wright, also from Texas, to hold her title as NRC Women's National Racquetball Champion.

Defending NRC champ Steding described her pain as "pure constant" running from her hip down through her left leg. Wright, having just beaten Steding in the IRA Championships in Tennessee, succumbed to superior playing, 21-19, 18-21, 11-5.

Steding said, "I could have taken a pain-killer, but I don't like to take those because then I can't tell when I'm hurt."

The day before, Steding beat Janell Marriott, 21-10, 6-21, 11-5, to make the finals. She hopped on one leg throughout that match also.

Before the games, Steding said she rated the competition "good" and about her leg, she was "not worried."

Her win over Marriott, she said, happened "with a little help from upstairs." The only reason she played she said, was because of her loss in the IRA Tournament.

What won the tie-breaker for Steding was her "super" overhead kill shots. Close to seven times for a point each time, she smashed the ball while it was over her head and sent it to the bottom of the front wall. Once, when Steding tried her overhead kill and missed, Wright threw up her hands and exclaimed, "What do you know, she missed one."

NRC President Bob Kendler presented the checks, $1200 for 1st place to Steding and $600 for 2nd Place to Wright. This was less than half of what the men received.

Wright blamed her loss on Steding's numerous overhead kills saying, "I couldn't do anything about them."

Steding said, "I was very lucky. I've never hit my overhead like I did in this tournament. Yes, the pain was there, but I didn't feel it as much while I concentrated on the game."

During the match, Wright called several time-outs while Steding didn't call any at all and never took a rest between games. She explained, "If I would have sat down I would never have gotten back up."

Of her age and her future, Steding says, "I don't know what I'm going to do when I get so old I can't play. I love playing. I told them I'm going to get me a cane and go out on the court and trip 'em."

IRA Champ Falls Under Hogan's Kills

BY MIKE PACKARD
Assistant Editor

Thursday night at the Nationals when 18-year old Marty Hogan beat the 1976 IRA Champ Jerry Hilecher, the corwd was so enthusiastic that the referee had to ask for silence several times during the match.

Hogan pushed by Hilecher, 13-21, 21-14, 11-5, while the folks in the $100 seats drank a lot of beer and yelled, "Smoke 'em Jerry," and "All the way, Marty. Bear down, Marty."

Several of referee Chuck Leve's calls were booed by the rowdy crowd. Hogan and Hilecher were disputing what seemed like every other call. At one point, Hogan became so angered by a certain call that he threw the ball at Leve, the ball bouncing off the glass back wall. Another time, Hogan got down on his knees in front of Leve and, with his hands clasped in a prayer position, pleaded with Leve to change the call.

Leve, an experienced referee, would not change any of his calls, except when he asked for a second opinion and it differed.

Steve Keeley, commenting on Leve's refereeing, said, "Leve's the best. Although at times you may not think so."

Leve commented on the night's action, "Hilecher and Hogan represent two different manufacturers and two competeing home towns. Most of the people at the game were definitely for one side or the other. That's why it was a wild crowd."

And about Hogan, Leve said, "I didn't see him throw the ball at me. If I had, I would have called a technical foul on him."

Hogan said about himself, "I think I'm the quickest player out there. And if I think so, that's all that counts. I've got a couple of things in store for Brumfield that he hasn't seen before. I'd like to put a few grey hairs in that head of his."

Brumfield, whom Hogan lost to in the finals, said about Hogan, "When Marty's confident he is virtually unbeatable. He has the ability to shoot from every position on the court. When Hogan drives the ball, it's goodbye."

See IRA CHAMP, page 4

Keeley's Backhand Good But Weak Returns Cause Match Loss To Champ

Charlie Brumfield, defending national champion, had barely any trouble overcoming fifth-seeded Steve Keeley, 21-6, 21-10, in the 1976 NRC Nationals.

Top-seeded Brumfield, showed himself to be in total control of the match.

Comments were that Keeley was not "intense enough or aggressive enough." Keeley's backhand scored most of his points for him. His loss was settled with a skip ball after a ceiling ralley.

After the game, Brumfield commented, "Keeley is a slow-control player. I got him to generate weak returns. I kept him moving so he couldn't get fully into the game."

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Hilecher New IRA Champ

Results from the 8th Annual IRA Championships in Chattanooga, Tennessee hled May 27th to 30th: Jerry Hilecher took the Men's Pro Division, winning over Steve Strandemo in the finals, 21-11, 21-11.

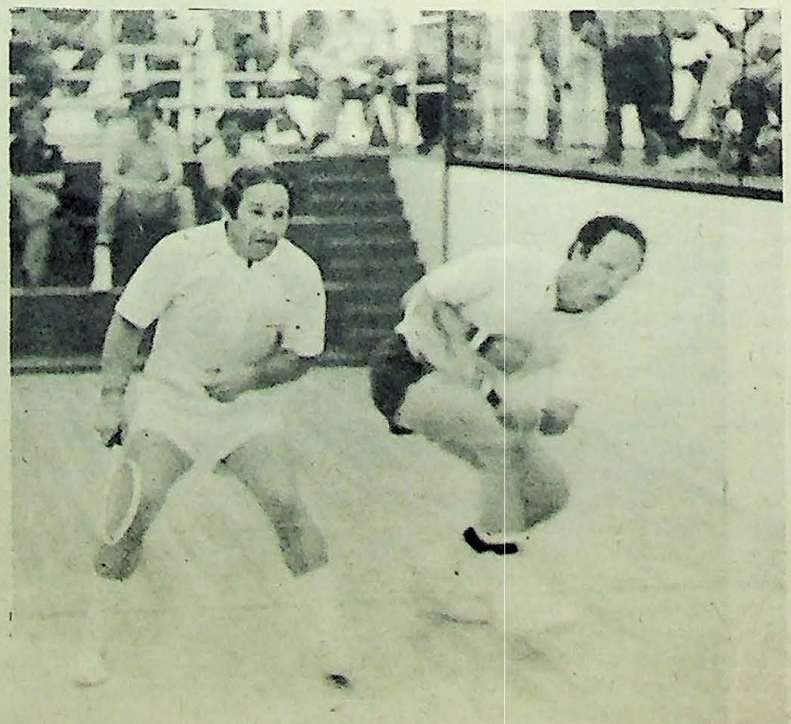
Dr. Bud Muehleisen defeated Myron Roderick in the finals of the Senior's Open, 21-13,21-20.

The women's title went to Shannon Wright who defeated Peggy Steding in the finals.

The Men's Open saw Joe Wirkus defeat Mike Lucin, 21-8, 21-15.

The Master's Singles was won by Bob McNamara.

And Bob Adam, Jr. won the Junior's Division.



Dr. Bud Muehleisen hits forehand against Roderick in IRA Tourney finals.

WORLD'S BEST MEET

from page 2

smashed winner after winner that Brumfield couldn't reach.

"I couldn't get all those balls," Brumfield confessed, "Even if I dove for them I could only get maybe two or three." Brumfield conceded the second game to Hogan by the lopsided score of 21-1.

BRUMFIELD WINS

The third game was a superb display of racquetball skill as Brumfield hustled and dove all over the court to win the match, the championship and the $4,000 prize money with a convincing 11-8 victory.

As a dejected Hogan left the court with his head bowed, Brumfield pointed his racquet at the ball on the floor and shouted, "I command you! I command you!"

In a post-game interview, Hogan admitted, "He just played great, he has a lot of perfection. I was just trying to put the shots there for him to go after."

Brumfield said he paced his play to match the adrenalin flow of his young opponent. "Marty is one of the few players who walks on the court believing he can beat me!"

It was a shoot out between two Texans in the Women's Pro Singles as top seeded Peggy Steding from Odessa, revenged an earlier tournament loss to second seed Shannon Wright of Dallas, and captured her 14th national trophy, while collecting $1,200 in prize money.

FIGHTS PAIN

Steding courageously fought an agonizing pinched nerve in her back that gave her a noticable limp as she lasted through an eleven point tie breaker to win 21-19, 18-21, and 11-5. Her rollouts to the forehand corner were devastating as she scored on about 86 per cent of her attempts.

Steding reached the finals with a hard earned 21-15, 21-19 win over fourth seed Janell Marriott from Salt Lake City, and Wright upended sixth seed Jean Sauser from Northbrook, Ill., 21-15, and 21-6 in the semifinals. In other tournament action 18-year old Ben Koltun of St. Louis with stood three tie breakers in a row to capture the Men's Open Singles crown. Koltun defeated Mike Romano of Fitchburg, Mass., in the quarterfinals 21-17, 17-21, and 11-6, and then notched a comeback win in the semifinals over Dave Charlson of San Diego, 13-21, 21-18 and 11-8.

"I couldn't get all those balls,"

Brumfield confessed.

Koltun they went three games again in the finals before downing Rudi Losche from St. Louis 21-16, 20-21 and 11-4.

Joe Wirkus, Milwaukee, captured third place when Charlson forfeited the match because Wirkus had to catch a plane and he was scheduled for a doubles match at the same game time. Wirkus won two straight 11-10 tie breakers before losing to Losch in the semifinals 21-20,21-12.

In Women's Open Singles, Sarah Green from Memphis notched first place with a 21-17, 21-13 win over Carol Frenck of Newport News, Va. Chris Salazar of Odessa, Tex., won third place with a convincing 21-7, 21-6 win over Donna Noguchi of Huntington Beach.

DR. BUD LOSES

Local favorite Dr. Bud Muehleisen was defeated in the quarterfinals of the Men's Senior Singles, as Joe Gibbs from St. Louis edged out Jim Austin for first place 16-21, 21-20 and 11-9. Dr. Chuck Hanna of San Diego ripped Luther Bernstein of Dallas for third, 21-14 and 21-15.

Bob McNamara, Minneapolis, won the Masters Singles 21-10, 21-19 over Sam Koanui, Honolulu. William Tanner, Memphis, took the consolation match 21-16, 21-14 over Dewey Strickland, Houston.

Stan Berney, San Diego, won the Golden Masters Singles by outlasting Art Payne, Columbus, 5-21, 21-17 and 11-5. Sam Rizzo, Chicago, was third by forfeit from Cal Murphy, San Diego.

Masters Doubles was won by the team of Loveday-Brown 8-21, 21-13 and 11-2 over Koanui-Skelton. Armstrong-Gibson df. Castle-Dabney 21-13, 21-18 for third.

Murphy-Berney df. Scott-Brown 21-2, 21-6 to capture the Golden Masters Doubles.

Senior Doubles action saw Austin-Hanna power past McNamara-Colombo 21-13, 21-10. Wayne-Bernstein df. Tilden-Street 21-6, 21-20 for third place.

In Women's Doubles, Harding-McCarthy df. Green-Siau 21-19, 21-20. Bain-Ludwig df. Weed-Berneathy 21-20, 13-21 and 11-9 for a hotly contested third place.

An outstanding finish in the tie breaker enabled Charlson-Saunders to stun Mehleisen-Jones for the Men's Open Doubles Championship 17-21,21-4, and 11-7. Dunn-Dunn df. Lusk-Pool for third, 21-17 and 21-13.

Keeley looks tired during game with Brumfield.

Photo by Dave Diehl

IRA CHAMP

from page 3

It was said that Hogan's last kill shot, sealing his victory over Hilecher, was hit for his grandmother who was seated in the audience.

Hilecher had just finished off Steve Serot, 20-21, 21,18, 11-8, the day before. Serot kept slipping and falling on the court during the tie-breaker game and it cost him many points.

Hilecher's serve is a killer, says Serot. "I was jammed. I was handcuffed. I felt I was beating him in the ralley, but his serve got me. And I trained the hardest I've ever trained this season."

Said Davey Bledsoe, the 6th seed, "Serot fell into his diving routine. When you get him to start diving — you've got him."

Of his own loss to Mike Zeitman, 21-19, 21-10, Bledsoe said, "I played a horrible game. It was not lack of training, I had lots of extra pressures on me. I just moved out here this month and I'm still getting settled in. I deserved to lose. It was one of my off days. It happens to all of us."

Bud Muehleisen, crouching behind Dave Charlson while their partners, Saunders and Jones, look on in Men's Open Doubles.

Photo by Dave Diehl

1976 NRC NATIONALS

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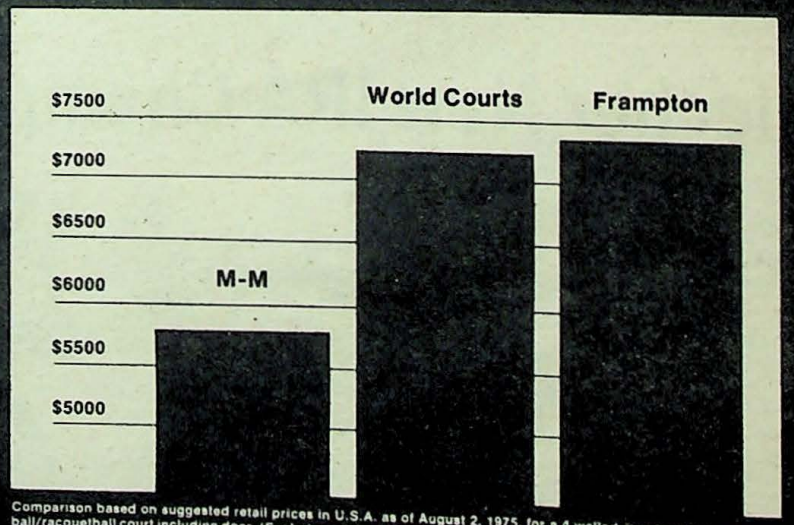

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Ben Koltun runs for the ball in finals of Open Singles against Rudi Losche.

Hogan hits backhand vs Brumfield, and talks to cable TV reporter about the game.

Photos by Clay Scott

18-YEAR-OLDS WINNING

Tourney Shows Youth At Top

BY DAVE DIEHL
Assistant Editor

It is no secret that racquetball is attracting a larger and larger following, but if one looks at the top players in the sport, you can readily see a definite accent on youth.

In the recent National Racquetball Club Championships at the Atlas Health Club in San Diego, nine of the 12 seeded players in the Men's Pro Singles were in their twenties or under, five were 21 or under and three were teenagers. This set the average age of the top Men players in the nation at 25.

The final championship match was an 18-year-old versus a 27-year-old. It was a super display of racquetball finese and psychological ploys between young Marty Hogan from St. Louis and the National Pro Champ, Charlie Brumfield, of San Diego. Brumfield retained his crown by snuffing out the firey Hogan 21-8, 7-21, and 11-8.

WOMEN'S PRO

In the Women's Pro Singles, six of the eight seeded players were in their twenties and the final championship match pitted 20-year-old Shannon Wright from Dallas, Texas against the perennial Champ, 40-year-old Peggy Steding, from Odessa Texas. This sets the average age of the top Women players in the nation at 27.

Steding fought a determined Wright and a painful pinched nerve to win 21-19, 18-21 and 11-5 for her 14th national trophy.

The amateur division is also dominated by youth as evidenced by the winner, 18-year-old Ben Koltun from St. Louis.

Koltun, like his St. Louis friend, Hogan, proved to be a thorn in the sides of the favored players. Koltun defeated the ranking amateur player, Jay Jones from Los Angeles, in an early challenge round 21-14, 21-17.

Koltun then went on to capture the Open Singles Championship by slipping by another local favorite, Dave Charlson in the semifinals, 13-21, 21-18 and 11-8 and then defeating Rudi Losche, also from the St. Louis area, in the finals 21-16, 20-21, and 11-4.

Koltun started playing racquetball when he was 14 years old and often practiced with his close friend, Marty Hogan. Koltun and Hogan both attended Ladue High School in St. Louis and went to the same junior college, Meramac.

Koltun won the Junior Nationals in Orlando, Florida, last December by defeating Bob Adams Jr. in the finals and recently won the Mid-Western Regionals in Chicago.

FIRST TOUR

This is his first year on the tournament tour and the Atlas Tourney was only his third pro tourney. This was his second big win and the first time he has won money. Koltun collected $250 for the Open Singles victory.

Koltun describes himself as a "shooter" and thrives under pressure..."I'm a serve and shoot type of player," he described, "I think I play best when the pressure is on."

The pressure was definitely "on" Koltun since he is relatively unknown on the tourney circuit, but he made his presence felt. In early pro action, Koltun faced the Champ, Charlie Brumfield and made a good showing, although Brumfield won in two sets, 21-18 and 21-8.

The first game saw Koltun lead 4-0 and 13-6 before Brumfield overpowered him. The second game was all-Brumfield.

"I had a terrific letdown after losing that first game," Koltun said after the match. "I was really psyched up for the match and I loved playing against the pro's."

Koltun makes it a habit to "psych" himself for every match and "takes each player in stride."

What does the future hold for young Ben Kolton? "I'll be doing alot of practice and will train real hard over the summer. I'll work out in some summer tourney's and get ready for the Pro Tournament Tour next season. My goal is to win the Pro Championship next year."

Charlie Brumfield proved his own ability by staving off a young 18-year-old this year. Koltun believes he'll have to contned with two teenagers next year. In fact, Koltun has looked into his crystal ball and already sees the final two players battling it out for the NRC Pro Championship.

The players? None other than two friends and former schoolmates, Ben Koltun vs Marty Hogan. Watch out Charlie!

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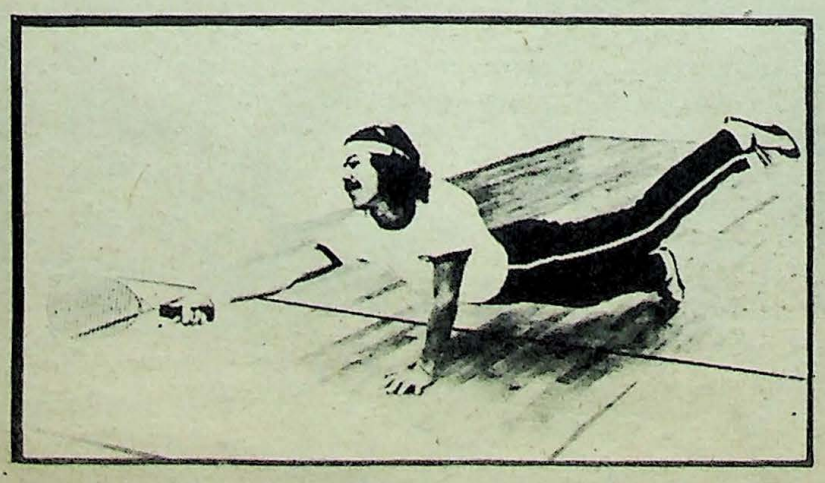

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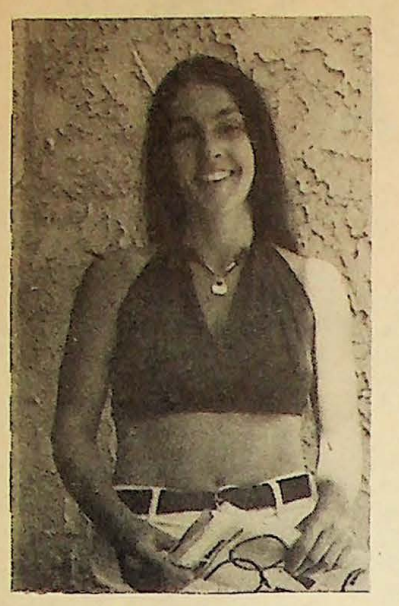

JEAN SAUSER

BY MIKE PACKARD
Assistant Editor

Jean Sauser is the local racquetball pro at Sky Harbor Court Club in Chicago. The pretty 25-year old, seeded 6th in the 1976 NRC Nationals, defeated 3rd seeded Jan Campbell to reach the semi-finals only to be crushed by the hard-hitting Shannon Wright, seeded 2nd.

Now Jean is back to holding free clinics on Mondays at Sky Harbor. "It's really helped my game alot," she says.

Jean first got into racquetball when she was 18 years old and working in a YMCA. She started playing racquetball with the men. "It looked like fun," she explains.

Then she went to La Cross in Wisconsin for art and P.E. playing racquetball all the while. When she graduated in 1973 with a degree in art she decided to work and play racquetball and she's been playing tournaments for the last three years.

When she's not on the road Jean divides her time between playing and teaching racquetball. "It's a lot better than being a rackquetball bum," she says. (A racquetball bum is someone who plays all day long and never does anything else.) "I did that for five months."

Jean says racquetball is a game of wisdom and she calls it "ageless." "Everyone can play, from age 5 to 105," she says enthusiastically.

Refering to the 1974 NRC Nationals, when 33-year old Bill Schmidtke took the title away from 27-year old defending champion Charlie Brumfield, Jean says, "It was nice to see an older guy beat Brumfield. The upsets are what makes racquetball exciting."

The future of racquetball as a popular sport is assured, Jean says, as soon as more people begin seeing the sport as it really is. "At first, people don't respect racquetball. They don't see the intricacies. Once someone plays a pro, however, the intricacies become apparent. Racquetball is just as intricate as tennis."

The game is rapidly pursuing tennis in popularity, and Jean is witnessing its growth in her own town. "The number of players quadrupled in Chicago last year," she notes.

Jean, who is one of the top eight women racquetball players in the country says she is going tomake a career of it. Later, she would like to own her own racquetball court club.

Although her recent loss in the semi finals of the Nationals was disappointing, Jean showed her persistent optimism and eagerness to work towards the title when she commented after the defeat, "Well, back to the drawing boards."

THE WRIGHTS
Getting Involved— In Racquetball

BY MIKE PACKARD
Assistant Editor

They first met on a racquetball court in college and now they're married to each other and playing the pro tournaments all over the U.S.

She is the 1976 IRA women's champion and played to the finals of the 1976 NRC Nationals where she was stopped and defeated by defending NRC champ Peggy Steding, who was the top seed. She was seeded #2.

He made it to the quarter finals of the men's open singles in the NRC event.

Together, they're an inter-cooperating team effort; she is his coach and he is her coach.

They're Pete and Shannon Wright of Dallas, Texas.

Pete has been playing racquetball for eight years; Shannon, four years. He started playing when he was 19 years old, while he was in the Air Force. After his discharge he went to Texas Christian University where he met Shannon, now 20, on the courts. They started playing racquetball together and it turned into a romance and marriage.

"Pete'e been playing longer than I have and he's an excellent coach," says Shannon.

The husband and wife coaching team has its advantages, she says. "We're able to pick up things in each other's games much more readily than a part-time coach."

Although Pete did not play in the men's pro section this year, Shannon says he will be ready for it next fall.

When they're not on the road, Pete, who has a BS in Education teaches racquetball at TCU, part-time, and Shannon teaches racquetball at three different court clubs in Dallas.

During the semi-finals play of the NRC Nationals, Shannon had

PETE and SHANNON WRIGHT

some difficulty in her game with Jean Sauser. "I got too involved with the audience in the first game," said Shannon. "I usually look back at my husband during the game, but I wasn't concentrating enough to lose notice of the audience."

As a result, Sauser got 11 points on her in the first game. Then Shannon rallied after a briefing from Pete, and clobbered Sauser 21-2 to win the match and go on to the finals.

"It helps to have a coach on the outside," Shannon said.

Pete said, "Shannon took her lightly at first. She wasn't concentrating enough. I thought Jean would make more errors than she did. Jean's gotten better since the last time I saw her."

After the game Shannon commented on Sauser. "She was slow. She's a little heavy and she doesn't have pin-point shots."

Then Shannon changed her tone and said, "One thing good about Sauser is that she never gives up."

After the game, Shannon said she and Pete were going to see the San Diego Zoo, and that she wasn't going to make the mistake of getting too much rest in preparation for the fianls.

Any more than eight or nine hours of sleep makes her "real sluggish,"she said. "I make it a point to get eight hours at the most."

She said she was hungry after playing and explained that she has no strict diet to go by when playing tournaments. For breakfast, she had "a couple of eggs and some toast."

On the racquetball boom, they disagree. Pete says, "I don't think racquetball will get as big as tennis." Shannon counters, "I think it will get bigger than tennis. She explained that because racquetball is played on indoor courts, this means that, unlike tennis, you can play in any weather.

Although she is a national titleholder, Shannon is not happy with the state of women's racquetball. The caliber is not up to the men's, but "we're working on it," she says enthusiastically.

"I hope the money goes up next year. Right now in women's professional racquetball it's not possible to make a living. So I teach it and run leagues."

The women's top money winner in the NRC, Peggy Steding, has earned about $2850 in NRC tournaments for 1975-76. This includes the $1200 for winning the June Nationals. Shannon received $600 for second place in the Nationals. The men received $4,000 and $2,000 for first and second place.

Pete and Shannon are optimistic about the future, saying, "We'll be back next year."

Court Clubs Meeting Reports Available

Full report of the June 25-27 Sixth National Court Clubs Association Seminar-Meeting held at the Chicago Marriott Hotel is now available. It contains complete reports of presentations covering all aspects of Court Club operations, planning, feasibility, and construction. Cost of report and one year's membership in NCCA for $10, NCCA, 4101 Dempster St., Skokie, Il 60076.

letters

Misses Womens Stories

Dear Sirs.

I would like a years subscription to Racquetball - Handball News. I would also like to know why you don't have any write ups on women racquetball players. I'm sure there must be some outstanding players somewhere in the U.S.

Thank you,
Bev Harvey
MEDDAC MHCS
Ft. Leanard Wood, Mo.

Editor's note: The lack of women's stories is due to the lack of writers on women's racquetball. Our personal coverage of the NRC Nationals produced a number of women's stories for this issue. We will continue to cover the women, but we would like to have a woman writer. Know any? Thanks for the subscription.

San Diego Tight-lipped

IRA's New Address

Dear Clay:

First, I would like to thank you for giving me some leads to get me started on my research of what's been happening in San Diego in racquetball.

I'll have to tell you it wasn't easy getting information. People seem to think I was trying to get their deep dark secrets or something. Steve Strandemo and Bob Gorham did talk to me though, and they were a big help. If you see Steve please tell him thanks for me.

I've enclosed a copy of the article along with a list of all the clubs I could find in San Diego just in case you're interested. There are other facilities that I did not list because they are strictly "private" clubs.

The International Racquetball Assoc. and the U.S. Racquetball Assoc. both sent me information and requested a copy of your next issue. In case you don't have the IRA's new address it is: P.O. Box 12490, Memphis, TN 38112.

Again, thanks for your help. I had fun putting it together and I hope you can use it.

Sincerely
Vicki Wery

Editor's note: If we can be of help in the future, let me know.

Keeley shows expression as he returns one to the front wall in Nationals.

Photos by Dave Diehl

Koltun hits backhand, seemingly with his eyes closed and turned away from front wall in Nationals.

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up-coming tournaments

The 2nd Annual South Bay Member-Guest Racquetball Tournament will be held July 9-11 and July 16-18 at the Siner Racquetball Center, Chula Vista, California. Call 714/425-0140.

Santana Courts Aloha Tournament will be held July 9,10,11 at Santana Courts Racquetball Club, Santa Ana, California. This tournament is for amateurs only. Call 714/540-0611.

The 1976 Canadian Open Racquetball Championships for the Carling O'Keefe Cup will be held July 21, 22, 23, 24, at the Court Club in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. You must be a current CRA or IRA member. Entry deadline: July 9. Call 403/436-4163 (Canada).

The 1st Annual Mid-Summer Hot Shot Racquetball Tournament will be held July 22 throught July 25 at the Court House, San Diego. Singles winners will be awarded gift certificates of $50 minimum. Mixed open and open doubles winners will receive $75 gift certificates per team. New aluminum racquets will be given to the first three finishers in all remianing events. Entry deadline is July 15. Telephone 714/297-5203.

The second annual AMF Voit Summer Open Racquetball Tournament will take place July 1 - 4 at The Court House SportsClub in Schaumburg, Illinois.

Competition will involve three separate events: men's open, women's open and men's seniors (35 and over).

Six of the sport's top players have already signed on to compete in the AMF Voit tournament. Close to 150 International Racquetball Association and National Racquetball Club players, nation-wide, are expected to enter before registration closes.

Ben Koltun, the 1976 NRC junior champion from St. Louis, will vie for top prizes against othcr top-rated racquetballers including Ken Wong, also of St. Louis, Ron Rubenstein of Chicago and Mike Zeitman from Memphis.

Others slated to attend are state champions Jeff Bowman of Illinois and Wisconsin's Joe Wirkus.

Located just east of Chicago, The Court House in Schaumburg was the site of last year's inaugural AMF Voit Summer Open. There, Rich Wagner of Paterson, New Jersey, took the men's open, and Sue Carow, Glenview, Illinois, won the women's event. The men' senior crown went to Jerry Davis of Shaker Heights, Ohio.

They are expected to return this year to defend their titles.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Tie-Breaker Too Short?

The now-official 11-point tie-breaker game was used at the NRC Nationals. Some players liked it and some were very much against the shorter third game. What could be so controversial about this new tournament procedure? What's so good about it?

The tie-breaker was instituted by the NRC and according to National Racquetball, the NRC's official publication, it has eight points in its favor.

1) It keeps matches on schedule.
2) It gives everyday players a better chance to finish a match within time.
3) Excitement and pressure of matches are heightened.
4) It shortens refereeing hours.
5) It gives underdog players a better shot at an upset.
6) Players are less apt to concede, knowing the third game is short.
7) Players will be more fresh for the next round.
8) Fans will be able to calculate the time of the match they want to watch.

NRC National Director Chuck Leve says the tie-breaker has been a "huge success everywhere we've tried it." Yet some players are complaining. Here's a sample:

Dr. Bud Muehleisen, former national champion: "The 11-point tie-breaker is very poor. Nobody I know likes it. You gear yourself to a certain number — the final point. Eleven points is not enough. In the league we play 15-point games. This has proved to be very successful. It helps the tournament and it's the same time period. The IRA does not use the 11-point tie-breaker. They recommend the 15-point games."

Davey Bledsoe, seeded 6th in NRC Nationals: "Its good for the game, but it's hurt me. When I get old it will help me. It brings back the Schmidtke's (age 34) and the Rubensteins (age 36.)"

Janell Marriott, seeded 4th in NRC Nationals: "It's too short."

OK, now you know what some of the pros are saying against the 11-point tie-breaker. What do you think?

Fill out the questionnaire below and send it to us as soon as you can. The results of this survey will be published in R/H NEWS as soon as enough entries have been returned to find out what our readers think.

RACQUETBALL/HANDBALL NEWS OFFICIAL SURVEY

Do you like the 11-point tie-breaker as a third game?

Would you rather see the 15-point games used in tournaments?

Do you know any other alternatives to break ties?

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Get Your Racquet To Play YOUR Way

Improve Your Play By Tuning Your Strings

BY JIM & NANCY WHEELESS

Anyone involved in any type of athletics know just how important equipment can be. We racquetballers are no exception. There's your "Wilson" carrying bag, with such official contents as headbands, wristbands, shorts, shirts, gloves, socks, extra balls, and need we mention...racquets!

Choosing your racquet is vital to your game, we all agree. It has to fit your grip easily, be the proper weight to allow a smooth, easy swing, and most of all "feel" right to you. But once you've decided on a racquet, what do you do if it still doesn't play YOUR way? You inow your position in relation to the ball is good, you feel you generally contact the ball in the center of your racquet, and your wrist is cocked and working, but you still lack something. Look a bit further into your racquet and you'll meet the little "Devils" whose temperament can truly refine your play—strings!

The two most important factors in your strings are the tension at which you string, and the type and characteristics of the string you choose. Allow us to elaborate:

If you've played with your racquet as it came to you from the factory, no matter what kind you have, it's probably been strung at a tension of between 25 and 35 pounds. This means that as the string was threaded through each hole in the racquet, it was "pulled" taunt by the machine at the specified poundage.

When every string is pulled, you will get more tension than you want at the points where up-and-down and across strings meet. So scientifically speaking, when you walk into a sporting good store and ask for a 25 pound re-string, four days later you'llwalk out with a 43 pound string job.

Tension between intersection with 50 pounds where strings cross, 35 pounds between crossing points, and 43 pounds overall average tension.

Part of your problem in deciding what kind of pounds your game requires, is going to be the type of string you want to use.

The most widely used type on the restringing market right now is a monofilament nylon with 12 to 16 individual rayon spirals commonly known as "blue twist." Some of its characteristics are longevity, a moderate stretch factor, and fair playability.

HOLD IT! 30 SECOND TIME OUT!!

Definition of "playability" - The combination of a few factors which allow the ball a varying amount of time on the strings.

Meanwhile, back at the ballgame - Another kind of string you'll run into fairly often is what we usually refer to as "black heat-weld." It's a monofilament nylon, having 22 braided spendals. This string boasts a very long life, almost no stretch factor, and gives you a lot of power.

Last, but not least by any means, is a special friend of ours who is becoming very popular. He can't brag about his durability at low tensions, but we can sure brag about his stretch and playability. It is also a monofilament nylon with 22 spendals, but is neutral in color.

What we would like to do ri[illegible] now, is discuss some racquet string combinations, give you some idea what they are, and how they might affect or aid your game. We'll deal with two basic types of racquets-aluminum and the plastic or fiberglass. Understand, of course, that we can only deal in broad-term generalities, but keep in mind that with a few specifics your racquet can be "customized."

We'll take an aluminum racquet, which has less "give" than the fiberglass, but a longer life and try some black heat-weld nylon string. At 30 pounds the power is superb, you lose a lot of control, makes it great for a back court game. Dropping to 20 pounds, you'll retain a pretty fair amount of power and get back a little more control. At 10 pounds (keeping in mind the "no-give" factor on this string) it becomes almost wasted for any type of game.

Still with aluminum, we'll fix it up with blue twist. Thirty pounds is very good on power and fair control. At 20, you're runn[illegible] neck and neck, and at 10 you c[illegible] plact it where you want, but you'll have to hit harder.

The neutral string in aluminum at 30 pounds will add that touch of power you may need, but considering the stretch in this string, we don't find a great loss of control. Twenty pounds to a hard hitter will be super controllable and at 10 pounds you'll feel like you're catching and throwing the ball with a net.

As far as we can tell, these strings will act just about the same in the fiberglass racquet if you'll make an adjustment in your mind to add a little more flex in the frame, and so adjust your string tension up or down for your game.

We would also like to mind you that when you get your racquet restrung, it is wise to keep in mind the fact that after you play with it a couple of times the string will loosen anywhere from two to four pounds.

So we suggest that when you go to get your racquet done, ask a few quations, try to find out if [illegible] stringer knows a lot ab[illegible] racquetball. Sporting goods stores do a larger volume of tennis racquets, which are strung between 50 and 70 pounds, and generally use a weight stringer that tends to be a little bit off as far as true poundage under lower tensions.

Experiment with your string until you find what's right for you. If you're unsure, or have some questions, we'd be glad to hear from you anytime.

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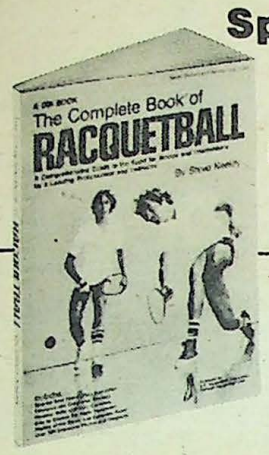

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A number of top racquetball professionals in the United States have come together to form a coproration known as National Racquetball Clinic, Incorporated. National Racquetball Clinic, Inc. is prepared to offer a variety of instructional programs to your club or institution. Each program has been designed to be sensitive to the fact that clubs are different and membership needs vary.

Davey Bledsoe will coordinate the clinic and all negotiations. Programs should be worked through the headquarters of National Racquetball Clinic, Inc. At the present time, such pros as Charlie Brumfield, Steve Serot, Steve Keeley, Marty Hogan, Davey Bledsoe, Rich Wagner and many other racquetball personalities are available.

National Racquetball Clinic, Inc. is sure you are familiar with the many instructional articles written by Keeley and Brumfield, and can assure you any program which you select will be of the highest quality and dedicated to improving racquetball so the average player can get more enjoyment out of this new activity.

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For more information contact Davey Bledsoe 5567 Kearny Villa Road, San Diego, Ca. 92123 (714) 279-1004.

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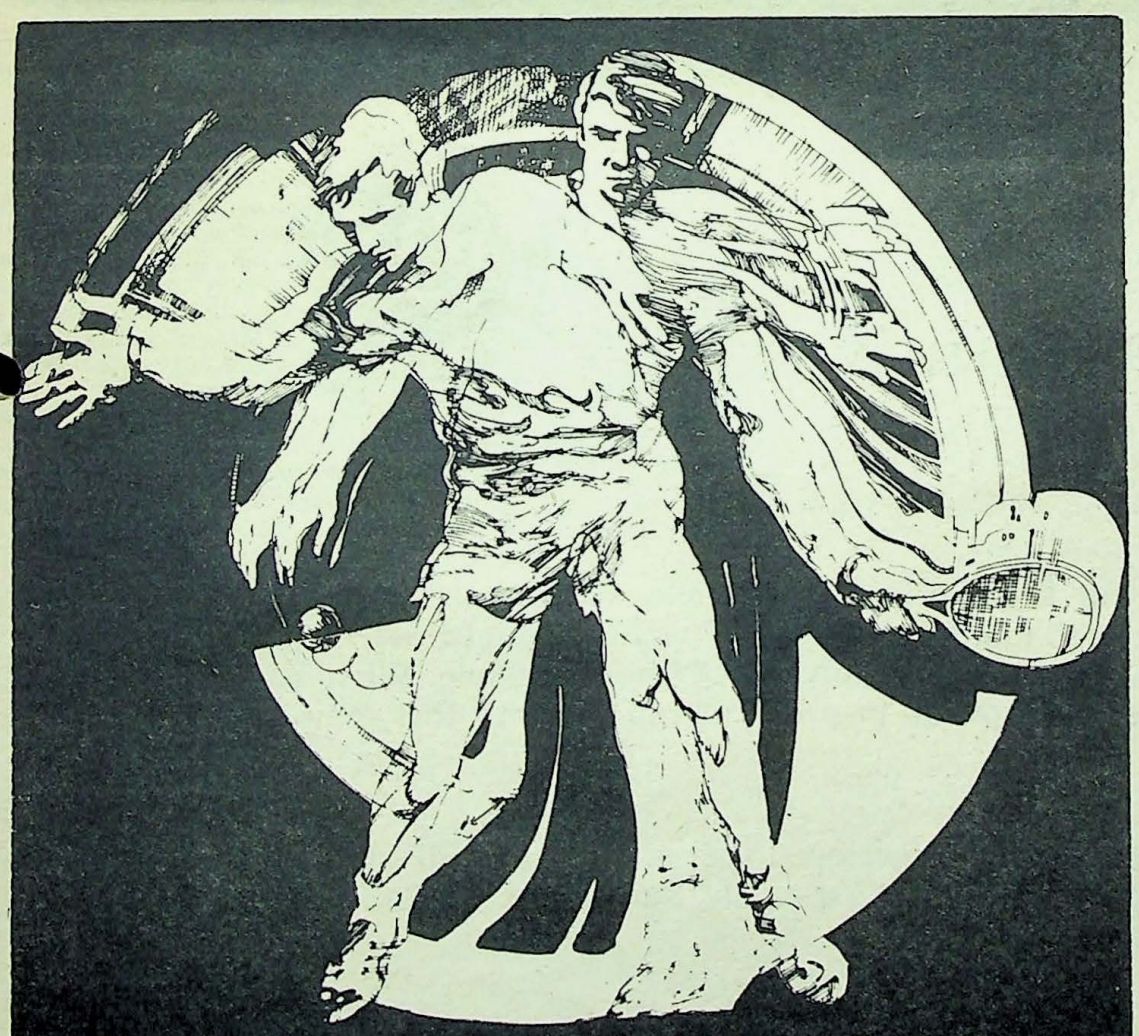

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Coach Wallace Takes National 3-Wall Title; Wins Over Bledsoe

The 3rd Annual National 3-Wall Racquetball Championships were held July 2,3,4 at Orange Coast College, near Los Angeles. Orange Coast College Coach Barry Wallace defeated St. Louis pro-rated player Davey Bledsoe, 21-17, 21-10, in the Open Singles finals. The team of Jim Carson and Rich Kossler overcame defending champs Barry Wallace and Bob Wetzel, 12-21, 21-16, 21-12 to take the Open Doubles. In the Women's Singles, Martha Byrd took the championship away from defending champ Bette Weed, 21-6, 21-5. Dr. Bud Muehleisen lost in the Senior Singles finals to Bob Wetzel, 21-10, 21-16.

tournament results

The 6th Annual Mid-Summer **Racquetball Tournament** was held July 2-5 at the Mel Gorham Sports Center, San Diego.

RESULTS (Finals)

Open Singles - Mondrey def. Thomas 21-15, 13-21, 21-14; **B Singles** - Fleishman def. Bolan 10-21, 21-7, 21-12; **B Doubles** - Scheinbaum-Bloom def. Schmidke - Takahashi 21-13, 21-11; **C Doubles** - Rosval-Lieben def. Weaver-Loveday 21-11, 21-20; **Women's Open** - Mitchell def. Roark 21-9, 21-19. **Women's C** - Morris def. Villa; **Novice Singles** - Gokey def. Aviliez 21-19, 21-11; **Women's Novice** - Montaobano def. Kelly 21-3, 21-1; **Senior Singles** - Scheinbaum def. Kidd 21-11, 21-9; **Masters** - Weckerly won; **Golden Masters** - Holland def. Scott 21-5, 21-1 21-12; **Junior Singles** - Pfau def. Freed 18-21, 21-7, 21-8; **Mixed Doubles** - Guernoe - Dewolfe def. Gorham - Baoman.

Racquetball Popular With Police Officers

The Rose Canyon Racquet Club hosted the **2nd Annual Police Pre-Olympic Racquetball Tournament.** The event had some 72 entrants from throughout California, and was in preparation for the California Police Olympics, reputed to be the 3rd largest athletic event in the world, to be held in August in San Jose, California.

Photographers send us your action photo with a caption or story and we will try and run everything we get if space allows.

Winning Racquetball

by

Dr. Bud Muehleisen

The Lob Shot

The ideal lob shot is one that carries over an opponent's head and, after one bounce, dies at the back wall. The purpose of a lob shot is as follows: (1) To cause your opponent to dig out the ball at the back wall, which often sets up the next shot; (2) To keep your opponent behind you, leaving you in a game-control position; (3) To regain or maintain center court position; (4) To tire your opponent by making him move backwards; (5) To expend minimum energy which the lob requires.

Few players have evaluated the effectiveness of the lob, or allowed much practice time to perfecting the shot. The properly executed lob must incorporate a sense of touch, which comes only through diligent practice and patience. The lob is best controlled by meeting the ball at the height of its bounce. Continually reminding yourself to "reach" for the ball as it approaches will aid you in contacting it out in front or off your front foot. Very little backswing is necessary, especially on the backhand, to execute this shot properly. A smooth, even stroke with a follow through directed at the spot on the front wall you wish to hit will best accomplish your objective. Remember, the one thing to avoid with the lob is to keep it from bouncing too hard off the back wall, which would then allow your opponent a setup.

A question may arise over the advisability of using the lob shot versus the ceiling shot. One primary factor that must be considered is the speed of the court and ball. Normally, if either is "slow" the lob shot is much more effective, since the ceiling shot will hardly carry past mid-court. Conversely, if either is "fast" the ceiling shot is very effective since it easily carries to the back wall. On the same court, the lob is very difficult to control.

The lob can also be used effectively from a full volley to maintain or hold center court position. This is a very fine maneuver in both singles and doubles.

Let's say that you are in center court position and as the ball approaches on the fly it is at chest level, or higher. You realize that the approaching ball may barely come off the back wall and may be in a poor position for you to attempt to hit a 'kill' or passing shot.

At this point, it would be wise to merely volley the ball softly over your opponent's head, which would allow you to maintain center court position and more or less continue to maintain control of the rally.

Perfecting control of the soft lob takes practice, but it is time well spent in practice on the court.

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Opening August 1, 1976 is the **Spring Valley Racquetball Club** with eight regulation courts, child care, men's & women's sauna & therapy pools, pro shop, lounge and observation at 589 Sweetwater Road, Spring Valley, California.

If you are building a new court in the next 12 months, send Racquetball News the listing for this column; with number of courts, location, expected opening date.

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Dan Bialk

Racquetball By Objectives

Several publications recently have centered on the topic of developing racquetball skills. Some of the key words are practice, work, rehearse, think, evaluate, modify and above all patience. Perhaps a summary in developing these skills can be made as follows: Identify the specific skill/subskill you want to develop, work on one specific skill at a time, systematically practice that skill, and finally, provide yourself systematic feedback on your progress.

Sounds simple, right? For some, yes. But for most players, no! How do you set a plan for yourself, at least one that works? The following suggestion can help you. It's workable, and has produced highly satisfactory results in the past. I call it Racquetball by Objectives.

RBO is taken from what many professional businessmen know as Management by Objectives. The same principles apply to RBO's as they do to MBO's. Well what are MBO's anyway?

Throughout the past several years, MBO has been the method of managing in most major corporations. MBO is a method of directing the efforts of the total corporation, a method of coordinating activities, a method of working with people. The central idea behind MBO is, "Make the Right Things Happen!"

Rather than let circumstance, fate, the competition or the environment run our affairs, objectives are used to determine what should be accomplished, and we work to make it happen. The MBO process requires a meeting of the minds, such that the objectives that are finally agreed upon result in a mutual commitment of the organization.

Now let's talk about Racquetball by Objectives. RBO's can help your game in the same manner that MBO's help major corporations. You can direct your own efforts in developing your racquetball skills, you can co-ordinate your plans and you can work it by yourself or with a partner that you play with regularly. In short, rather than progressing by circumstance, fate or the environment, you can determine what should be accomplished with your game, and then work to make it happen systematically gaining the feedback that you desire.

How do you do it? There is a key skill in working with RBO's, and that skill is writing good objectives. That's right, writing. Get yourself a pencil and paper, and at the very top, write the heading very nicely centered, "Goals and Objectives Plan." Then divide the paper into three vertical columns and label them from left to right "Major Goals," "Achievement Measures" and "Target Date." In the very lefthand column labeled "Major Goals," divide the remainder of the page horizontally in four columns and label them "Regular/Routine", "Problem Solving," "Innovative," and "Personal."

A "Regular/Routine" goal can be something like increasing your rating on the local club's division ladder. "Problem Solving" can be attempting to hit your backhand correctly. "Innovative" can be working on developing more wrist action on your kill shots to produce an unusual spin. And "Personal" can be losing a certain amount of weight.

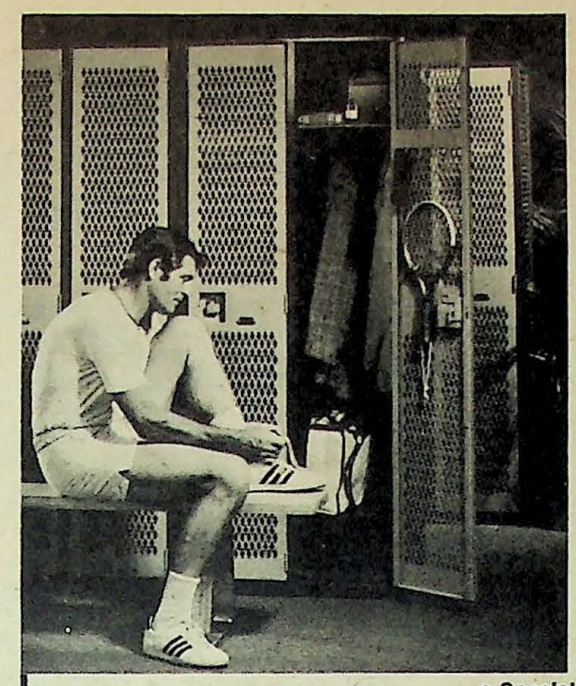
An objective is a statement that clearly describes an end result that should be obtained. It should be written simply and clearly in the form, "What is to be done by when." Start with the word "To" followed by an action verb, and describe a single key result, for example, "To develop a good ceiling shot by practicing it three times each week by October 1st." A well-written RBO will include your major goal (ceiling shot), achievement measure (practicing the shot three times each week) and target date (by October 1st). A ninety-day period usually is a good timeframe for working on objectives and altering or changing them completely after that period.

Specify the end result, *not* the means to be used. An objective, by definition, is a target to be accomplished. It is *not* the method to be used to attain the target. An objective should specify the *what* and *when*, not the *why* and *how*. The *why* question should be answered before the actual objective is put in writing, for example, you're going to work on your ceiling shot because it's a weak part of your game. The *how* question should usually be left open. For example, if you're going to practice three times each week for ninety-days, will you practice alone, with a partner, on weekends, etc.?

Write the objective so that it is challenging, but attainable. Since an objective can and should serve as a motivational tool, it should state a target that is within your reach, yet not too easy to accomplish. Playing racquetball is fun, and developing racquetball skills should be fun so that you can enjoy the game more and have even more fun! It's not going to do a pure novice much good to try to develop a backhand ceiling shot that hugs the opponent's backhand wall, if at this particular point in his game he can't even return a serve off the side wall. Set an objective that's attainable for you.

If you need help in preparing your objecjectives, write me in care of "Racquetball/Handball News," 1605 Avenida Ladera, El Cajon, California, 92020. It would be a pleasure for me to help you increase your fun level at a truly exciting game.

$25 For the best article of the month. Send any type of story concerning Racquetball or Handball to Racquetball News. Bud Muehleisen & Dan Bialk will select the best one for the $25 prize. All entries become the property of Racquetball News and may be used in future issues.



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