

The Magazine of Professional Racquetball

KILL SHOT

Summer 1994

Display until August 15

Look Who's Talking!

An Interview with
Industry Super Insider
Mark Wentura

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Industry Highlights

There's no business like sports business

The Spalding pavilion at the National Sporting Goods Association Supershow was swarming with buyers following the string of hit products unveiled in the past three years since the sporting goods giant's renewed interest in performance level racquetball. New gloves and the new "Rival" racquet are among the hot new goodies available for the new season.

Something very big may be in the air for E Force. World class mover and shaker Joe Shane was repeatedly spotted meeting with top E Force brass at the National Sporting Goods Association Supershow in Atlanta. Shane is a successful entrepreneur from both sports and entertainment industries who has worked closely with Elvis Presley and the Bee Gees and whose current projects include merchandising for the Ironman Triathlon and the Iditarod. Shane also turned up at the Atlanta Falcons Sports Complex to see Egan Inoue compete in the VCI Challenge Cup Series event.

Hi Tec, famous for outstanding footwear for the squash market has turned its attention to racquetball and is now offering several models with racquetball players in mind. Early reviews are excellent.

Transition Racquet Sports will unveil the reportedly innovative "Ice" racquet for the coming season, as well as new glove models and the new "Gunpowder" string.

Head Sports will be cracking open one enormous piggy bank to get the mighty Cliff Swain on their team. In a surprise offer that landed the hottest player in the sport, Head has put together a package that includes a salary, bonuses, expenses, and a percentage of sales that insiders realistically estimate may pay as much as one half to one million dollars over the next three years. Swain has dominated the pro tour

and is considered by many to be completely out of reach for the other pros, losing only a handful of matches during the longest pro season in history.

The hot new name in the racquetball industry is Eliminator Racquet Sports. The Las Vegas-based company has already introduced gloves and sportswear and will present its inaugural line of racquets in the fall. The new company has already signed professional Bret Harnett to be the first highly visible player to use the new line of products.

Looks like the final reports are in. After an earlier announcement to the contrary, the Ektelon brand will be officially moved to Princeton New Jersey this summer under the roof of parent company Prince. While five key Ektelon executives were offered positions in New Jersey, each has declined. The word is that six time WPRA national champion Lynn Adams will remain in her current position as sales promotion manager, based in Chicago, and former national champ Dave Peck will assume the position of player promotions manager. First visible evidence of the tightening bond between Ektelon and Prince was Ektelon's beautiful bird's eye view positioning above the Prince pavilion at this year's National Sporting Goods Association Supershow in Atlanta. Ektelon's revolutionary new ARC2 Technology will be available for the beginning of the new season.

Jack Newman, chief instructor of America's Most Wanted Racquetball Camps has announced the release of an instructional video tape featuring some of the best basic tips from the ultra-popular camp series. Newman, former amateur national champion, junior national champion, intercollegiate champion, and now top touring pro teams with last year's profes-



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Continued on page 13

KILLSHOT

Summer 1994
Volume IV, Number 2

1 There's No Business Like Sports Business

4 Short Serves

6 Letters

9 Editorial
Like Saying Goodbye...

10 Medical
Common Sports Problems

14 America's Most Wanted
Racquetball
Weekend Tournament

17 IRT Tour
Tour Wars

24 Rankings
VCI Spreadsheet

29 WPRA Tour
Gould Owns the WPRA

32 IRT News

34 Home Court

36 Are You Really Prepared?

38 A String's Best Friend...

42 Look Who's Talking
Interview - Mark Wentura

46 National Champions

Mark Wentura talks. Racquetball's super insider speaks candidly about the game and the industry. **Page 42** *Look Who's Talking*



As the 1993-94 IRT season nears a close, Cliff Swain reigns supreme. Lots of colorful action. **Page 17** *Tour Wars*.

Woody Clouse claims the BI RAK IT title for this season. Coverage of the BI RAK IT Nationals, the National Masters, and the Intercollegiate tournaments appears. **Page 46** *National Champions*.



Cover: Mark Wentura

SPEED KILLS.



There are two ways to play racquetball. Fast and way too fast.
We recommend you play the latter way. Or die trying.

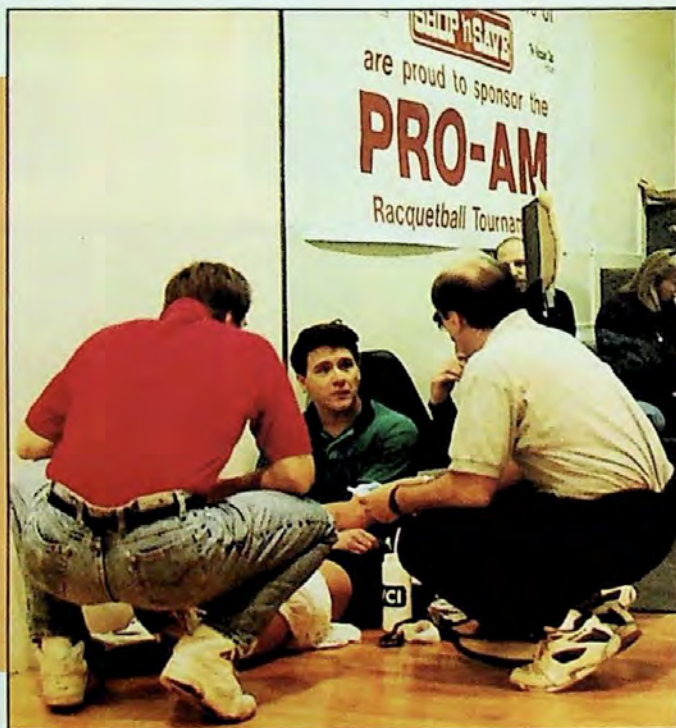
SHORT SERVES

A little racquetball show biz trivia.*

1. What brand of racquets do Sean Connery and James Siking use in their futuristic game of racquetball in *Outland*?
2. Who is Tom Hanks playing racquetball against in the Ron Howard movie *Splash*?
3. What TV sitcom female lead announces she is going to join the pro racquetball tour and then asks "Is there a pro racquetball tour?"

A Break in the Action?

Nope, but painful, nonetheless. Mike Ray and Hank Marcus tend to an injured Andy Roberts after play was halted in Pittsburgh's Shop N Save Pro Am. Roberts was forced to sit out the next tour event and a recent re-injury to the same knee may require surgery and keep the former champ off the courts for as long as eight to ten months. Ouch!



~~Killshot~~
Slapshot

Cliff Swain and Sherman Greenfeld took time out during a break in the action in Saskatoon, Canada to hit with a different kind of stick. Same game without walls, right? We don't know who won but both were reported to still be alive following the confrontation.



A Drive to Play

John May, Court Pro at the Bally's Holiday Health and Fitness in Knoxville, Tennessee glides around town with this identifying license. Wonder if he drives as fast as he serves?

Norm Blum's Passing Shots

Potpourri

You can tell a club is managed by a non-racquetballer when the maintenance department is instructed to use Endust to clean the floors. It's like playing on marbles...Can Miss Manners help a desperate racquetball player? He was talked into playing in a doubles league and it just isn't going well. "We get thumped weekly," the player tearfully cries out. "We play two matches a week and after four weeks I don't think we have a combined total of double figures." Let Norm play Miss Manners, "Let's face it, the concept of having fun while getting slaughtered is a myth. Don't do anything drastic like removing your wrist cord during the match. Even though that sounds like a good idea, it would be rude. Next time have tryouts before you sign up for doubles."... Don't be surprised if Mike Yellen is on the senior tour in 15 years. The senior golf tour, that is. The 34-year-old Yellen is now shooting in the low 80's after playing only a few times... No.1 ranked Michelle

Gould is not a favorite among her colleagues. She became too good too quickly. One of her friends says jealousy is the main culprit. "A lot of people feel she didn't pay her dues. She won her first tour event and almost immediately became a dominant player," her supporter says. "They think her dominance takes the surprise out of the tournament. Let's face it, if she enters everyone else is battling for second. She's not in the click. She's married and her husband comes to tournaments. A lot of players gag at that. Eventually they'll appreciate what a great talent she is."...One amateur match at a Florida tournament resembled a hockey game. Both players were talking to one another and making gestures after good and poor shots. The players bumped during the match and one player perceived the other as being the aggressor. He dropped his racquet and started punching. Needless to say the crowd, which was standing room only, didn't mollify the situation. Both players were ejected from the tournament and put on probation for a year..Glad to hear the recent positive rumors involving Cliff Swain. Swain is supposed to sign a huge contract with Head Racquet Sports. The rumor mill has heard the contract will be between



\$500,000 and more than a million dollars...Only a handful of Ektelon executives have been invited by Prince to transfer from San Diego to New Jersey... My five-year-old daughter Rachel despises those eyeguards that wrap around your eyes. Every time I turn my back they are up on her forehead.

L etters

Happy Campers

I just read through the Spring '94 issue and enjoyed every article, as I always do, and the occasional humor (like juxtaposing Tolstoy with Bugs Bunny). Your magazine has a real family feeling and gives the reader an intimate sense of the racquetball community. And what a community that is. I've watched my son grow up in it, from the time he made a serious commitment to the sport, at age twelve. What I see in the magazine, in the photos, is what I've seen in the clubs: vibrant, healthy people with a zest for life, and remarkable in an awesome sport. What I didn't realize so well, until you started publishing **KILLSHOT**, is what a delightful camaraderie exists, across state/provincial and national borders, and age, gender... My son is blessed to have work that takes him all over the continent, and keeps him fit, and in the company of so many good souls — a number of whom slept on our living room floor during the early years. They've come a long way.

Thanks for your magazine. I appreciate the editorials, and the how-to articles, and the thoughtful philosophies that find their way into real practical issues. I like the interviews, and the reports on international developments. As the pioneer magazine of a pioneer community of athletes, you're doing them proud.

K. Faith
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Really like your teaching articles! Yes—I am interested in what the pros are doing!

Keep up the good work. Your magazine is now better than ever!

R. McElroy
Golden, Colorado

Concerned Reader

What an excellent magazine. Keep up the great work. Am I wrong or is Cliff Swain not wearing the wrist tether or his eyeguards? Spring '94 page 4.

Cliff, don't get me wrong, I play for T.R.S. and I think you're the best by far right now. But I think it would be a good example to everyone if you would wear your wrist tether and eyeguards at all times while on the court. I see a lot of young people not wearing eyeguards these days. Keep dominating and go T.R.S.

P.S. Congratulations to Mr. Jack Newman on his win in Pittsburgh. Way to go Jack!
P. Freund
Richmond, Virginia

You are correct sir! That photo shows a rare break in intensity as Cliff "clowns" briefly for the crowd before his final with Andy Roberts. Since his return to the IRT, Cliff has showed himself to be one of the more responsible pros. Even though the pro players follow different rules and equipment standards than the AARA, there isn't a player on the tour that would take the chance of not wearing eyeguards during an actual match, or even entering the court if his opponent doesn't use the wrist tether. Notice that on the same page, Ronald isn't clowning, he has on both his eyeguards and wrist tether!

Inquiring Minds

I am trying to find a dealer in the Pasadena, California area for Lavit Dry Grip. It appeared on page 42 of the Winter 1994 issue of **KILLSHOT**.

Could you get a phone number or address where I might contact them?

You have a quality publication for the racquetball enthusiast and I have enjoyed every issue since its inception.

E. Chappell
San Marino, California

Network Marketing (205 Axton Ct., Roswell, Georgia 30076, (404) 751-9463) is the nationwide distributor for that product and will provide you with the

name of a local retailer or provide product to you directly by mail order.

First of all, I thoroughly enjoy your magazine and greatly anticipate it's arrival. If there is any equitable way of increasing the number of yearly issues, please look into it A.S.A.P.! Five annual issues just doesn't quench our "racquetball fix".

Secondly, charge more for a your subscriptions and send the issues in a plastic wrap. The current mailed product, in a word, is brutal. My issues are beat when they arrive, and a good portion of your glossy cover is marred with an unsightly postal sticker. To me it's worth the extra cost to have them properly packaged in plastic for mailing.

Finally, please provide the name and address of the person who could provide me with VHS video copies of some of the pro matches, if available.

P.S. Waiting for my spring issue to arrive. I look forward to hearing from you. Please provide a list of all issues published to date.

G. Mellum
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

The five-per-year format works best of the alternatives we have tried. There could always be an increase in frequency in the future as the market permits. As for the plastic cover, we mailed the first issues of **KILLSHOT** in plastic "poly-bags", but discontinued the practice out of a concern for the environment. Our conscience would not allow us to dump tens of thousands of pieces of plastic directly into landfills across our planet each year. We are exploring a more responsible type of protection that is cost-effective for us. Videos are not currently widely available, but keep watching in **KILLSHOT** since there may be tapes available next season. Check page 41 of this issue for a list of all back issues, and how to order the ones that are still in stock.

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(Editorial Comments)

Like Sayin' Goodbye to Your Best Friend

"Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright; The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light, And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout; But there is no joy in Mudville--..."

--Ernest Lawrence Thayer
Casey At The Bat

The image will endure in my memory forever. Tom Hanks and John Candy playing an obviously mismatched game of racquetball and John Candy getting smacked right between the eyes with the ball. He always made us laugh, as the wayward brother in *Splash*, as *Uncle Buck*, as the dad in just a little over his head in *Summer Rental* or *The Great Outdoors*. And we all loved him. We all saw just a little bit of ourselves in the way he blundered through the

everyday situations of life. We knew it was all going to eventually work out for him and we took some solace in that, realizing that things might just work out for us too.

I never had the pleasure of meeting John Candy but I did have a conversation about his love of racquetball with Marty Hogan one fall afternoon. And I suspect his approach to the game would have been much the same as the many lovable characters he portrayed.

In a sense he shaped the public's perception of racquetball and in a sense he had something to do with shaping my life. Whether they are close friends or total strangers when we lose those who shape our lives it is a sobering experience.

I think it's important for us all to remember just how short life is. Don't forget to play.

-- S.Q.



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Common Sports Problems

By Richard Honaker, M.D., P.A.

There are numerous injuries that the racquetball player will experience over his/her racquetball life. A general outline of the most common injuries and how to recognize and treat them will allow an early return to play following these injuries.

Contusions

These injuries are commonly known as bruises and result from injuries to the soft tissues of the body, resulting in breakage of the small capillaries with bleeding into the tissue. This bleeding results in the swelling which will often be immediate. The greatest danger is injury to underlying structures, such as blood vessels, nerves and bones. In racquetball, contusions are commonly the result of colliding with walls, players, balls, and racquets. The treatment should be the immediate application of an ice pack, applying pressure and elevating the injured site. All three measures reduce swelling, which causes the tissue damage. Flexibility exercises should be maintained as the muscle pumping action will reduce swelling fluid, pumping it back into the bloodstream. This will also maintain muscle and joint flexibility. Permanent damage is rare and return to activities can occur once pain has subsided for approximately one to three days.

Strains

Strains are the result of the stretching of muscles and tendons. (Tendons are the fibrous continuation of a muscle as it attaches to a bone.) Strains usually occur

with rapid onset from over-stretching or bending too quickly. The result is the stretching, *without tearing* of the fibers in the muscles and tendons. Some swelling may occur. The treatment for these injuries is ice massage, which can be accomplished by taking small Dixie cups filled with water, placing them in the freezer, and, once frozen, peeling the paper off of one end to use as a roll on ice pack. Ice massage should occur for approximately 30-60 minutes at a time in cycles of three to five times per day. Following the initial 24-36 hours of the use of ice, a 24-hour period of rest should occur, followed by the application of heat to speed healing.

Sprains

A sprain is the result of the stretching of a muscle and tendon to the point of tearing of some or all of the fibers of the tendon. This is basically a strain, taken one step further, and results in greater pain, swelling, and disability. The most common sprain that we experience is the ankle sprain. This can often develop into a chronic problem, but will heal well if treated quickly and properly, allowing a safe and early return to activity. There are three degrees of severity of an ankle sprain. The first degree injury is the most common and most minor where the ankle ligaments are stretched. There is no ankle instability and return to sport occurs within approximately two weeks. A second degree sprain occurs when the ligaments are partially torn and the ankle usually swells immediately with bruising noted. This may require

three to six weeks of rest before returning to physical activity. The third degree sprain is serious and may even require surgery and casting. This usually takes eight to twelve months for the ligaments to slowly heal.

The treatment of an ankle sprain depends a great deal on the amount of pain and swelling. During the first 48 hours, to reduce pain and swelling, ice massage should be applied as described previously for approximately 30-60 minutes, five times per day. A stationary ice pack is also acceptable. One should insulate the skin from the ice with a plastic wrap or a towel. An elastic bandage, wrapped from the toes upwards and from the outside of the foot towards the inside, will reduce swelling. Elevation above the heart will help also. An immobilization splint may be necessary and anti-inflammation medicines may reduce swelling and inflammation. During the first week, one can walk on an injured ankle if it is not uncomfortable. Otherwise crutches or a cane should be used. A brace or a cast may also be necessary, depending on the degree of the injury, with pain being the guide. Stiffness can occur and should be reduced by range of motion exercises. One can draw fifty large zeros in the air with the great toe four times per day to maintain range of motion. During the second week and longer, rehabilitation is undertaken with flexibility and strengthening exercises. To test your ankle for readiness to return to activity, use the following rule: when you can stand on the toes of the injured ankle for 20 seconds, and hop on

the toes ten times you can begin to run. Initially, walking fast or jogging in a straight line is followed by progression to running in large figures of eight. Finally one can use running zig-zags, with a return to sport when zig-zagging can be done without discomfort.

Fractures

Fractures, or broken bones, result in swelling and pain. Limitation of use is most important. X-rays should be taken and treatment usually consists of immobilizing the injured area and the joint on both sides of that injured bone. Small, uncomplicated fractures of the fingers and toes can be treated by "buddy taping" which involves putting cotton between the two digits and taping them together for support. Splints, braces, and casts may also be necessary. These should obviously be cared for by your physician. Fractured bones that result in a fracture line extending into a joint, where two bones move upon each other, are usually more serious with the possible progression to arthritis.

Arthritis

Arthritis is a chronic inflammation of a joint, usually from old trauma. This may result in bony irregularities with swelling following exercise, as well as during wet and cold weather. The treatment for arthritis is to avoid overuse of the joint, but equally important is to avoid underuse. Range of motion exercises should be undertaken. Following exercise, ice should be applied for approximately one hour, and if pain persists beyond 24-36 hours, heat may be applied to speed healing. Anti-inflammatory medications may be necessary.

Tendonitis

The tendons are the fibrous structures which attach muscles to bones. When tendonitis occurs, they become swollen and tender and this is usually the result of overuse with repetitive motion or extreme degrees of motion about a joint. The most common types of tendonitis will respond to rest until pain free for three days, and the application of ice during the initial inflammatory phases, (approximately three days). Use an ice pack three times per day for 30-60 minutes. Following this, heat may be used. In particularly resistant cases, which have been present for longer than several weeks, the best routine is the alternating applications of ice and heat at half-hour intervals. Daily cycles involving a two

hour period are best. Doctors often prescribe anti-inflammatory medications to help heal tendonitis. Aspirin taken in high doses is an excellent anti-inflammatory medication. Due to the stomach upset that occurs with high dosage, one should use Ecotrin or Ascriptin, three tablets, four times per day, for a week. This should be discontinued if there is any abdominal pain, ulcers, or history of allergy to Aspirin. Ibuprofen is also an anti-inflammatory drug when taken in high doses of three tablets four times per day. Take these with food to prevent stomach upset. Prior to using these high doses of Aspirin or Ibuprofen, you should definitely consult with your physician to be sure he/she feels it is safe for you. Persistent tendonitis can often be treated with special splints and braces as well as shots of cortisone into the tendon sheath surrounding the inflamed tendon. The most important treatment, however, is resting the injured site.

Bursitis

Bursas are filled sacks that cushion and prevent friction around joints and tendons. These are found in most joints of the body, but most commonly become inflamed and painful in the shoulder and hip areas as muscles surrounding the bursas move over them excessively. Contributing factors are overuse, weak muscles, strenuous training, prior injuries, and previous trauma. Treatment includes resting the injured joint, possibly including a sling, an ice pack 30-60 minutes twice a day, and fifteen minutes after any excessive use. This should be followed with heat approximately five days after the injury has cleared up. Anti-inflammatory medications and/or injections of cortisone may be necessary. When one returns to sports after this kind of injury, one must return slowly, using range of motion exercises to prevent stiffness and scar tissue from forming.

Low Back Pain

This may be caused from muscle strains or sprains but can be caused by a facet joint syndrome, degeneration of the disc or overloaded connective tissue (tendons, ligaments, cartilage). This can be debilitating and chronic, and should be treated with the following measures. For severe problems total bed rest is necessary, with the ideal position being flat on one's back with a pillow under the knees to prevent pull on the back. To reduce pain and muscle spasm initially, the use of ice and/or massage is important and later stiff-

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ness can be treated with heat. Moist heat is best. For persistent problems, anti-inflammatory drugs, muscle relaxers, and physical therapy may be important. In rare cases, braces, traction, and surgery are necessary. As back pain resolves, flexion exercises are the most important treatment, accomplished by bending forward in the pelvic tilt or knee raise manner. In some cases, bending backwards is also helpful. For the pelvic tilt, one lies flat on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The abdominal muscles are tightened and the pelvis is tilted so that the small of the back is flat on the floor. This should be held for ten seconds, relaxed and repeated approximately fifteen times, three times daily. The knee raise exercise is performed lying flat on the floor. A pelvic tilt is performed and the knees are raised slowly to the chest, one at a time. The knees are then hugged with the arms and then lowered one at a time without straightening the knee. This also should be repeated at the same frequency. Extension of the back is accomplished by lying on the stomach and then raising the upper body to lean on the

elbows. This position should be held for 30 seconds and gradually worked up to five minutes. As with any back injury, avoid heavy lifting, lift with the knees bent and the back straight and avoid any sitting or lying in one position for long periods. Sports activities should be gradually worked into only when you have been without symptoms for five to seven days. Danger sign with back pain include pains that radiate into the legs or numbness or weakness in one leg. An inability to control one's urine or bowels is also a sign of nerves being pinched. Persistent pain requires investigation and x-rays.

Lacerations

Lacerations occur frequently during collisions with partners, walls, and racquets. The initial treatment should be pressure to stop bleeding and cleansing with warm water. The three main determinates of whether stitches are necessary are the degree of bleeding, the potential for scarring, and the degree gaping of the wound. Following initial first aid and/or stitching, the wound should be cleaned twice daily

and an ointment such as Mycitracin, Polysporin, or Bacitracin should be applied. Wounds should be covered as long as they are draining. Watch for infection, signaled by the presence of redness, swelling, and pus. Tetanus booster shots should be updated every five years for dirty wounds and every ten years for clean wounds.

With any injury, the cardinal rule is to use common sense in treatment and return to sports. Most injuries will be obvious as to their degree and what should be done, however if there are any questions, consult your health care professional. The greatest danger with racquetball players is their avid desire to return to activity, which, if not restrained appropriately, can result in chronic problems. A general rule of thumb is that returning to sports when discomfort is still present will result in the prolongation of this discomfort. Return after most injuries should occur only after a several day period of complete resolution of all symptoms. To stay healthy, listen to your body and do what it says.

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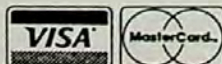
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Continued from page 1

sional world champion Andy Roberts for a colorful and exciting overview of such topics as shot selection, court positioning, serves and returns, stroke mechanics and drills. The video, titled "Play Like the Pros", was directed and produced by Jerry McKinnis, the director/producer of ESPN's annual coverage of the VCI Professional World Championships. Inquiries should be directed to 1-800-ROLL-OUT.

Ruben Gonzalez, top touring pro has introduced a full line of active wear. Collared shirts, T shirts, shorts, sweats, and headbands all feature Gonzalez' signature or a tiny representation of the master in full "diving get" form. Hot designs, durable fabrics, and vivid colors have made the Prestige Active Wear line a favorite as court wear and street wear. Descriptions

Amy Wishingrad, Penn's National Promotions Manager, IRT Commissioner Hank Marcus, Cliff Swain, and penn Racquet Sports President Gregg Weida introduce the Pro Penn ball at the Super Show in Atlanta.

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Penn racquet sports will finally make the new Pro Penn ball (designed for the men's professional International Racquetball Tour) available to the public for the coming season. After waiting through a year of use only by the pro tour, all players will now have access to the livelier, more durable green ball. The Pro Penn has gotten an enthusiastic "thumbs up" from the pros. Actually getting your hands on a can may still be tough since the anticipated demand for the ball is enormous.

Coming in the summer of 1994, First Coast Promotions presents new official **KILLSHOT** magazine logo products. To get the early scoop, call 1-800-762-4653.

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America's
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Racquetball

Preparing for a Weekend Tournament

By Jack Newman

To best prepare for a tournament, it is necessary to set up a specific, methodical approach to training that will allow you the most benefit from practice time, without over-training. The rule of thumb is to

spend about 80% of available time on drills, while devoting only about 20% of available time on matches.

Always remember, your warm-up is crucial to your game. The days leading up

to a tournament are no different from any other practice in that respect. Five to ten minutes on the Lifecycle or other similar equipment at a slow pace make a good start. Following this with ten to twenty minutes of stretching on the court should help you to start play at your best and also reduce the risk of injury. Always stretch again after a match or drills to keep you from being stiff the next day.

For a Friday Through Sunday Tournament:

Monday -- Solo Drills

Monday is the day to build confidence in your shots. Invest about forty five minutes practicing all types of shots (passes, pinches, and kills) from both sides of the court. Use basic drills, drop-&-hit, shuffle-&-hit, and ceiling ball drills. Next do about thirty minutes of serves. Work on drives, lobs, and Z's to both sides of the court.

Tuesday -- Solo Drills

On Tuesday, repeat Monday's drills.

To prepare for a Friday through Sunday tournament, an all-out practice match on Wednesday is a good way to focus on execution and performance.





Monday and Tuesday prior to a Friday tournament should be spent in solo drills designed to improve shot confidence and emphasize mental preparation.

with particular emphasis on mental preparation. As you work through your shots and serves, visualize game situations to sharpen your concentration and killer instinct. Picture winners, then guide your body through the drills that consistently produce them.

Wednesday -- Practice Match

After two days of perfecting your shots and serves, as well as developing good focus and mental toughness,

it is now time to bring your tools into a match. The Wednesday match should be played all-out, for about one to two hours to simulate a typical tournament match. The idea here is to focus on execution and performance, not on winning. Don't lose the competitive spirit entirely, but remember, this is a time to go all out to test your own performance. Test your entire range of shots and serves. Try serving all lobbs in one game, all drives in the next, etc. to get an accurate indication which serves are working.

Thursday -- Optional

Thursday may be better used as a day to rest before the event. If you do choose to practice, make it a day of only about thirty minutes of light drills on all your shots and serves.

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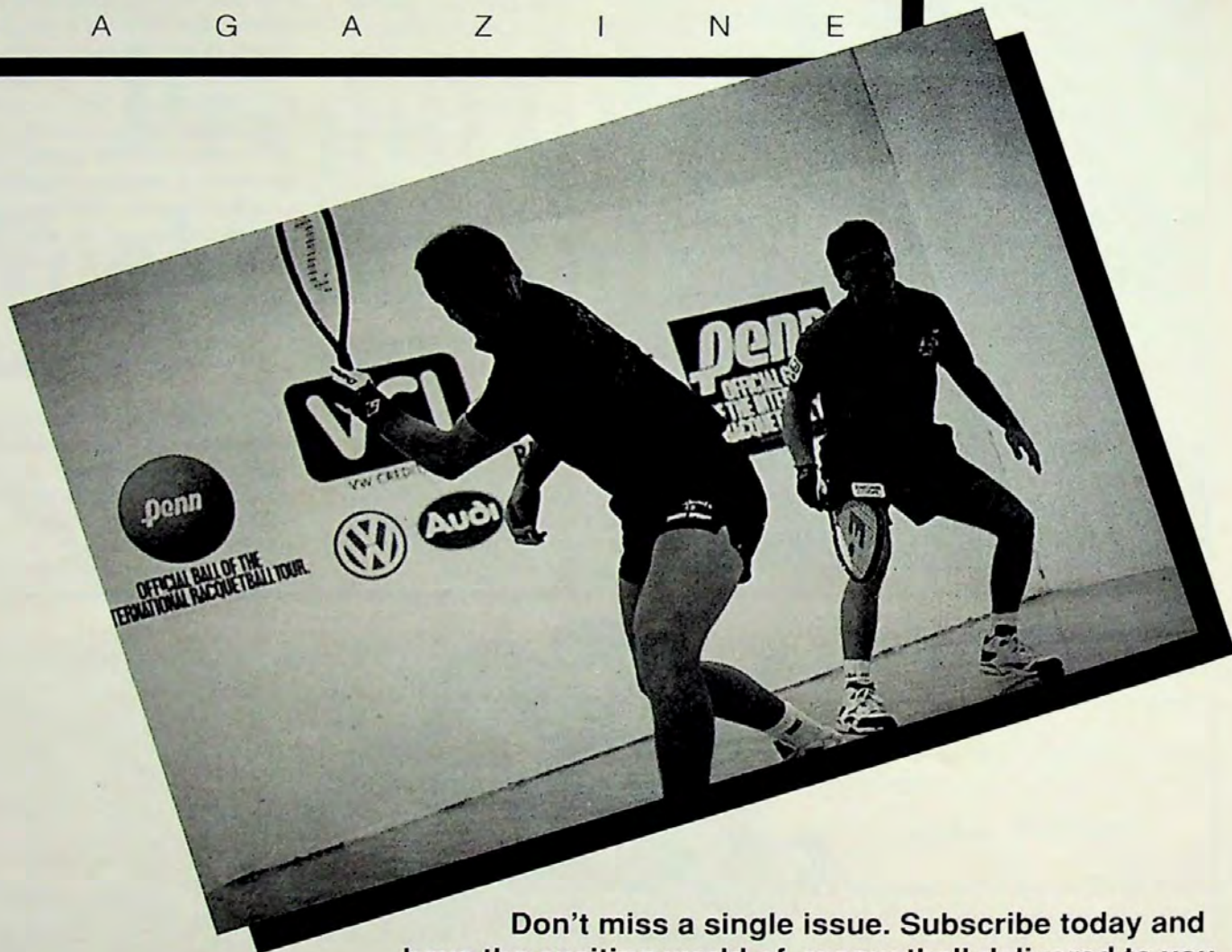
Location	Dates	Instructors	Location	Dates	Instructors
Canoga Park, California	June 11 - 12	Newman/Adams	McLean, Virginia	July 23 - 24	Newman/Gonzalez
Dalton, Georgia	June 11 - 12	Andy Roberts only	Woodside, New York	July 30 - 31	Newman/Gonzalez
Syracuse, New York	June 25 - 26	Newman/Gonzalez	Sarasota, Florida	August 6 - 7	Newman/Adams
Anchorage, Alaska	July 9 - 10	Newman/Adams	Westerville, Ohio	Aug. 20 - 21	Newman/Gonzalez
Bellingham, Washington	July 16 - 17	Newman/Roberts	Schaumburg, Illinois	Aug. 27 - 28	Newman/Adams

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TOUR WARS

Episode III in which Doyle and Newman challenge Swain's Galactic Empire

Memphis Hampton Inns Pro Classic

• The season's second Swain - Ellis final
• O'Neil, Rankin, Vogel shine • The return of Obremski • trends & comebacks • Roberts struck ill during home tournament • Kudos for Quinn Roberts and Marty Austin • Racquet Club of Memphis unsurpassed in luxury • power racquetball rules

Highlights

Florida's Brian Rankin grabbed a super-tiebreaker win over Southern California's Dave Johnson for a tremendous upset to open up the annual slugfest in the city that has long been racquetball's biggest stronghold east of the Mississippi. New Mexico's Louis Vogel came out blasting as well with a big win over long-time intercollegiate champ Tim Sweeney. Vogel went on to pick the pocket of a nearly untouchable Cliff Swain for one game in the following round that would be Swain's first game loss in this or the past two tournaments.

Texas' cunning Aaron Katz capitalized on the on-going Mike Ray slump. John Ellis, coming in at only a #14 ranking gained big ground in the respect category as he surprised number three seed Drew Kachuk for an upset in the breaker. Under the heading of winning streaks, Tim Doyle over Mike Ceresia, Dan Obremski over Ruben Gonzalez, and Jack Newman over Woody Clouse, each presented repeats of

seasonal trends. As trends go, the appearance of an obviously less-than-100% Andy Roberts in his home club for this tournament also repeated for another year. Todd O'Neil, himself a product of the champion Memphis State system, seized the opportunity brought on by Roberts battle with "the flu" for an upset in three in the blink of an eye.

Comebacks ruled the quarters as Swain shook off a first game loss and two point deficit in the second to out-score Newman 27-2 for the remainder of the match. Doyle awoke in the fourth to deny Katz the win that was once within three serves. Obremski, staging something of a comeback with a win in the quarters retired O'Neil authoritatively in four. In the only non-comeback match, Ellis blew past Mike Guidry for a nice little upset in the battle of the "youngest guns".

Ellis simply delivered the blasts more consistently than Obremski

to win in the semis. Swain covered, blasted, and faked past Doyle in the same round. All in all, the Saturday afternoon provided a look at four widely varying approaches to power racquetball. In the

		Cliff Swain	
		11-6, 11-7, 2-11, 11-5	
		John Ellis	
SEMIS			
Swain d. Doyle			
11-5, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8			
Ellis d. Obremski			
11-5, 11-5, 11-13, 11-8			
		QUARTERS	
		Swain d. Newman	
		5-11, 11-8, 11-0, 11-2	
		Doyle d. Katz	
		11-8, 2-11, 2-11, 11-9, 11-8	
		Ellis d. Guidry	
		11-0, 8-11, 11-6, 6-11, 11-5	
		Obremski d. O'Neil	
		11-3, 11-8, 8-11, 11-6	
SIXTEENS			
Swain d. Vogel			
11-11-4, 10-12, 11-6, 11-1			
Newman d. Clouse			
7-11, 11-5, 11-8, 11-9			
Katz d. Ray			
4-11, 11-8, 2-11, 11-4, 11-4			
Doyle d. Ceresia			
11-9, 11-4, 11-8			
Ellis d. Kachuk			
11-7, 12-10, 7-11, 11-9			
Guidry d. Rankin			
11-5, 11-2, 11-3			
Obremski d. Gonzalez			
11-8, 11-5, 8-11, 8-11, 11-4			
O'Neil d. Roberts			
11-1, 11-6, 11-5			
		Memphis	



Action from the Hampton Inn Pro Classic in Memphis. Top right: Tournament winner Cliff Swain gets set to serve in the final. Top right: John Ellis in his typical all-out style of play. Bottom: Aaron Katz and Tim Doyle squared off in the quarters with Doyle emerging victorious after a five game battle.

second Swain-Ellis final of the season, Swain refused to give up any ground, reasserting with yet another pro win that he is "the man".

Atlanta VCI Challenge Cup Series

• Rivals in the final • Doyle's serves slay a giant • Revenge for Kachtik • Muller & Monchik grab first pro wins • VCI & Allen Turem's Racquetball 96 raise big bucks for Georgia Council on Child Abuse • Gonzalez breaks a bad streak, Clouse doesn't • Football's Atlanta Falcon's home sports complex buzzes with pro racquetball •

Highlights

Atlanta's opening round saw the first tour victories for two of the top young amateur players just breaking into the tour: Eric Muller, and Sudsy Monchik. Muller, the amateur national doubles champion, eliminated O'Neil, fresh from the quarters in Memphis. Monchik, the flamboyant

SEMIS

Doyle d. Swain

11-11, 11-4, 11-0, 11-4

Roberts d. Kachtik

11-3, 8-11, 11-1, 4-11, 11-8

Tim Doyle

11-5, 10-12, 11-8, 11-8

Andy Roberts

QUARTERS

Swain d. Newman

11-6, 11-3, 11-1

Doyle d. Ray

11-7, 10-12, 13-11, 11-9

Kachtik d. Ellis

11-6, 3-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5

Roberts d. Gonzalez

10-12, 11-5, 11-5, 11-2

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Fowler

11-6, 11-6, 5-11, 11-6

Newman d. Clouse

6-11, 11-8, 6-11, 11-7, 11-1

Ray d. Muller

11-5, 11-9, 11-6

Doyle d. Inoue

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

Kachtik d. Vogel

11-7, 12-10, 11-7

Ellis d. Monchik

11-2, 11-7, 11-6

Gonzalez d. Obremski

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

Roberts d. Reiff

11-9, 11-5, 12-10

Atlanta



Doyle and Roberts in the final at Atlanta's Falcon Complex.

junior national champion, surprised number six seed Guidry. If the tour players have lacked pizzazz in the past, Monchik brings in more than enough to go around.

In the sixteens, Gonzalez broke the streak with his first win over Obremski in four straight match-ups with some spectacular shot making. Clouse was unable to match the feat with his fourth consecutive loss to Newman's frustrating array of unrecoverable pinches. Doyle vs. Egan Inoue, the clash of the power serve titans went to Doyle in four after rocking the building for over an hour.

The match of the quarters was the shoot-and-scramble marathon between Kachtik and Ellis. When the smoke cleared, Kachtik had picked up the win and revenge from their previous meeting in Memphis.

Doyle's explosion into a flurry of trademark missile serves caught Swain by surprise in game two in the semis. Coming back from a classic 11-4 Swain stampede in the first, Doyle would have needed a broom to sweep up more gets. Following a decisive win in the second, Doyle did the unthinkable by handing Swain the dough-

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nut in game three. Maintaining command in the fourth, Doyle neatly delivered Swain his first defeat in twenty - eight straight professional matches. With his career's best display of consistency, Doyle kept the heat on his old rival Roberts in the final for his first pro stop win since the '91 - '92 season.

Pittsburgh Shop N Save Pro Am

• *Most Wanted final* • Newman plays out of his mind • Revenge then a fall for Roberts • a quarter for Katz • Ellis posts second leg of a developing streak against Guidry • John Puushak and Suzy Klingensmith team up with the Racquet Club of Pittsburgh for another killer event •

Highlights

Pittsburgh opened with a surprise comeback by Monchik that left Clouse staggering. Working from a two game deficit, Monchik seized control for the upset. In the sixteens, Ellis crushed Guidry in his second upset of the Texan in as many events. In a brilliant control marathon, Aaron Katz retired a still-slumping Ray. Swain found some difficulty in the round at the hands of Baltimore's Dan Fowler.

Roberts had to dig deep for some "wallpaper" passes and perfect kills to dispose of Gonzalez in the quarters. Doyle

maintained top form to retire Ellis surprisingly easily. While Katz often manages the upset over Kachtik at home in Texas, Kachtik held fast to win the Best of Texas brawl. Newman's comeback for the upset from one game down to Swain brought the crowd to its feet.

Newman's perfectly placed pinches were Kachtik's undoing in the semis. While Kachtik served up his usual array of Z serves, low blasts and blistering overheads, Newman remained calm and efficient. With confidence and precision, Newman systematically dissected Kachtik's hustle and shoot onslaught.

Roberts approached Doyle in the other semi with a renewed respect after the final in Atlanta. Somewhere along the way, Doyle had added consistency, quickness and better shot and movement choices to his already strong arsenal. Roberts' mental toughness intact, revenge was at hand in a hard-fought five.

Newman opened the final without realiz-

Top left: Former High School champion Sudsy Monchik. Top right: An intense Mike Ray.

Jack Newman

12-10, 7-11, Forfeit
Andy Roberts

SEMIS

Newman d. Kachtik

11-9, 3-11, 11-6, 10-12, 11-7

Roberts d. Doyle

6-11, 12-10, 11-3, 10-12, 11-1

QUARTERS

Newman d. Swain

6-11, 11-5, 11-2, 11-9

Kachtik d. Katz

12-10, 13-11, 5-11, 11-1

Roberts d. Gonzalez

11-3, 11-7, 8-11, 8-11, 11-0

Doyle d. Ellis

11-3, 11-8, 11-8

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Fowler

11-4, 15-17, 11-3, 5-11, 11-5

Newman d. Monchik

11-9, 11-7, 11-13, 11-8

Katz d. Ray

13-11, 9-11, 12-10, 4-11, 11-5

Kachtik d. Inoue

Forfeit

Roberts d. Cole

11-7, 11-1, 11-1

Gonzalez d. McKinney

11-3, 11-4, 11-7

Ellis d. Guidry

11-2, 11-5, 11-4

Doyle d. Ceresia

8-11, 3-11, 11-6, 11-6, 11-9

Pittsburgh



Sensing the enthusiasm of the home crowd, Canada's best for umteen years Sherman Greenfeld rode the wave for a five game near miss against Swain.

Left and right: Roberts and Newman in the final at Pittsburgh before Roberts' injury. The games were split one each at the time of the forfeit.

ing that he had somehow taken his game to another level. After a near-miss in the second, Newman lead in the third when fate stepped in. His left knee suddenly buckling as he moved for a get, Roberts went down to stay down. The knee injury knocked him out of the match, the next event, and still seems to be trouble. Newman, who appeared to be playing well enough for the upset anyway, left with first place cash and his first pro stop win since 1991.

Saskatoon Cameco Classic

• Swain back in the saddle • Canadians make great showings in the second round • Guidry springs back to life • Swain, Gonzalez, Kachtik, Guidry pictured on Great Western beer label • Clouse with a near-miss • Tremendous first year event by the Cameco Corporation, Kelly Kerr, adl;sa;lsdf, and the Riverracquet Athletic Club to benefit Canadian Junior Racquetball •

Highlights

The sixteens brought about a nail-biter between Newman and Canada's Roger Harripersad that ended in a razor close two point Newman win in the breaker. Clouse posted a good victory in the same round over the up-and-coming Ellis.

The typical format for pro tournaments sees the qualifiers on Wednesday, the rounds of thirty-two and sixteen on

Thursday, the quarterfinals on Friday, the semifinals on Saturday, and the Final on Sunday. The occasional deviation from

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SEMIS

Swain d. Newman
11-4, 8-11, 11-5, 11-5
Guidry d. Gonzalez
9-11, 11-0, 10-12, 11-2, 11-8

Cliff Swain

11-7, 11-4, 11-4
Mike Guidry

QUARTERS

Swain d. Clouse
9-11, 9-11, 11-2, 11-3, 11-8
Newman d. Ray
11-2, 11-4, 11-5
Gonzalez d. Kachtik
9-11, 11-3, 11-3, 11-7
Guidry d. Doyle
10-12, 11-6, 11-4, 11-4

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Greenfield
11-5, 11-2, 6-11, 8-11, 11-5
Clouse d. Ellis
11-7, 5-11, 11-6, 9-11, 11-5
Ray d. Reiff
12-10, 5-11, 11-4, 11-4
Newman d. Harripersad
11-3, 8-11, 8-11, 11-3, 11-9
Kachtik d. Jelso
Injury Forfeit
Gonzalez d. Vogel
8-11, 11-1, 11-7, 11-8
Guidry d. Fowler
11-2, 12-10, 11-4
Doyle d. Rankin
11-3, 11-2, 11-9

Saskatoon



Top: A flying Guidry at the Cameco Classic in Saskatoon. Bottom: Kachtik hits the deck and the ball.

this scheduling often throws unexpected twists into the outcome of the matches. With the sixteens and the quarters played on Friday in Saskatoon, some interesting things developed.

Gonzalez, always performing best with less down time between matches retired #3 seed Kachtik in four games of hustle - and - scuffle. Judging by their recent performances, the Newman over Ray outcome was less of a surprise than the whirlwind duration of the match. Guidry rode the crest of the wave of upsets from the altered schedule to surf past Doyle in four. Stealing the first two games, Clouse found himself two serves from the upset of the tournament with a nine - six lead in the breaker against Swain. Managing a side out and a run of five unanswered points, Swain breathed a sigh of relief with the victory.

The Guidry - Gonzalez five game flying circus in the semis was an amazement to behold. With nearly twenty years difference in age, Gonzalez showed no lack of

explosiveness, and Guidry no lack of maturity. In the other semi, Swain avenged one of his few defeats of the season by eliminating Newman.

In a superb display that has become the norm for Swain, he jumped right back to top form and beyond to walk with his ninth tournament win out of fourteen this season.

Below: Swain and Guidry battle it out at the Downtown YMCA in Houston.



Deliverin' the Doughnuts



Doyle 11, Swain 0 Atlanta semis
Doyle 11, Gonzalez 0 Houston quarters
Guidry 11, Gonzalez 0 Saskatoon semis
Swain 11, Sweeney 0 Los Angeles 16s
Roberts 11, Gonzalez 0 Pittsburgh quarters

Still remembering his earlier defeat at the hands of Doyle in the semis in Atlanta, Swain entered the final against Doyle with quiet confidence and a cold-steel countenance of raw determination. With the combination of attitude and "Swainesque" play, Doyle managed only one game win in the third. After two tournaments out of the winning circle, Swain was once again, "the man".

Continued on page 26

Houston Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America Pro Am Racquetball Shoot Out

• Swain avenges earlier loss • Doyle reaches the final without a single game loss • Roberts sits one out with knee injury • Ellis hangs tough as late-round mainstay • Pam Smith and crew bring a new level of play to the Downtown Y • Attention and financial support for CCFA •

Highlights

Without Roberts in the draw, Newman, Doyle, Ellis and Chris Cole made up the list of champions returning to the home of the nationals at the Houston Downtown Y. The ultra fast cement walls seemed only vaguely familiar as the new Pro Penn balls used by the pros increased the tempo even further.

With the opening round falling nicely into predictable place, the sixteens followed suit with only the Katz - Gonzalez marathon stretching to five games. Katz smooth control game contrasted distinctly with Gonzalez' all-out physical style that in the end saw Gonzalez squeak into the quarters.

While Ellis has been busy all season forcing upsets, the master eluded him again in Houston as Swain boosted their season tally to six - zero. Both Guidry and Doyle advanced surprisingly easily past Newman and Gonzalez respectively in three each. With Kachtik' latest in a series of Ray demises, the question has now changed

from "Who's Mike Ray?" to "What happened to Mike Ray?"

With trouble from Guidry who had beaten Swain previously this season in Chicago, the number one seed was finally able to close things out decisively in the breaker. Doyle's treatment of Kachtik was quick but not painless as Doyle finished his trip to the final without a single game loss.



Swain in form in Houston

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VCI Spreadsheet

IRT

1. Cliff Swain (1)
Braintree, Massachusetts
2. Andy Roberts (2)
Memphis, Tennessee
3. Tim Doyle (4)
Huntington Beach, California
4. Mike Guidry (6)
Dallas, Texas
5. Drew Kachtik (3)
Dallas, Texas
6. Jack Newman (8)
Hoffman Estates, Illinois
7. Ruben Gonzalez (7)
Staten Island, New York
8. Mike Ray (5)
Hilton Head, South Carolina
9. John Ellis (16)
Stockton, California
10. Woody Clouse (10)
Jacksonville, Florida
11. Bret Hamett (9)
Las Vegas, Nevada
12. Dan Obremski (11)
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
13. Egan Inoue (13)
Honolulu, Hawaii
14. Aaron Katz (14)
Dallas, Texas
15. Dave Johnson (12)
Huntington Beach, California
16. Todd O'Neil
Dallas, Texas

WPRA

1. Michelle Gould (1)
Boise, Idaho
2. Marci Drexler (2)
San Diego, California
3. Robin Levine (3)
Sacramento, California
4. Cheryl Gudinas (4)
Lisle, Illinois
5. Lynne Coburn (5)
Baltimore, Maryland
6. Molly O'Brien (6T)
Souderton, Pennsylvania
7. Laura Fenton (6T)
Lincoln, Nebraska
8. Chris Evon (9)
San Diego, California
9. Ellen Crawford (8)
Minoa, New York
10. Roz Olson (11)
New Paltz, New York
11. Caryn McKinney
Atlanta, Georgia
12. Janet Myers (12T)
Charlotte, North Carolina
13. Marcy Lynch (12T)
North Wales, Pennsylvania
14. Lorraine Galloway (12T)
Jamaica Estates, New York
- 15T. Kim Machiran (10)
Ballwin, Missouri
- 15T. Dee Ferreira-Worth
Anaheim Hills, California

IRT rankings provided by World Racquet Sports Association

VCI Challenge Cup Series

1. Cliff Swain
2. Andy Roberts
3. Mike Ray
4. Tim Doyle
5. Drew Kachtik
- 6T. Mike Guidry
- 6T. Ruben Gonzalez
8. Dan Obremski

American Amateur Racquetball Association

- B
1. Grant Barker
 2. Mike Disora
 3. Gary Depicciotto
 4. T.J. Ferro
 5. Mark Szabo
-
1. Jill Rhodes
 2. Erika Juhl
 3. Jennifer Reiser
 4. Teresa Buck
 - 5T. Joanna Boyte
 - 5T. Carolyn Leech

Racquetball Canada

1. Sherman Greenfeld
 2. Simon Roy
 3. Mike Ceresia
 4. Haydn Jones
 5. Doug McQuarrie
-
1. Carol McFeiridge
 2. Sue McTaggart
 3. Josee Grandmaitre
 4. Vicki (Brown) Shanks
 5. Linda Ellerington

1994 WPRA Player Awards

Player of the Year

Marci Drexler

Steding Cup

Molly O'Brien

Most Improved

Cheryl Gudinas

Sportsmanship

Janet Meyers



VW CREDIT, INC.



SEMIS	
Swain d. Guidry 12-10, 11-5, 4-11, 4-11, 11-3	Cliff Swain 11-9, 11-3, 8-11, 11-7
Doyle d. Kachtik 11-5, 11-7, 11-1	Tim Doyle
QUARTERS	
Swain d. Ellis 11-9, 9-11, 11-6, 11-7	
Guidry d. Newman 11-7, 11-1, 11-4	
Kachtik d. Ray 11-5, 11-8, 11-9	
Doyle d. Gonzalez 11-0, 11-2, 11-7	
SIXTEENS	
Swain d. Liparelli 11-1, 10-12, 11-2, 11-3	
Ellis d. Clouse 11-7, 11-5, 11-5	
Guidry d. Fowler 11-7, 10-12, 11-9, 11-7	
Newman d. Vogel 11-4, 11-8, 12-10	
Kachtik d. Cole 11-6, 5-11, 11-3, 11-9	
Ray d. O'Neill 11-8, 11-2, 11-9	
Gonzalez d. Katz 11-8, 11-1, 4-11, 6-11, 11-8	
Doyle d. Muller 11-7, 11-1, 11-1	
Houston	

SEMIS	
Swain d. Guidry 10-12, 11-6, 9-11, 11-1, 11-2	Cliff Swain 12-10, 11-8, 11-5
Roberts d. Monchik 11-3, 10-12, 11-8, 11-5	Andy Roberts
QUARTERS	
Swain d. Ellis 11-8, 11-8, 4-11, 11-9	
Guidry d. Engle 11-6, 11-4, 11-9	
Roberts d. Newman 11-4, 11-7, 11-3	
Monchik d. Gonzalez 2-11, 11-5, 11-8, 11-8	
SIXTEENS	
Swain d. Sweeney 11-0, 11-7, 11-3	
Ellis d. Ray 11-6, 11-1, 11-7	
Guidry d. Lerner 11-9, 11-8, 11-3	
Engle d. Kachtik 11-1, 2-11, 12-10, 11-6	
Roberts d. Johnson 11-4, 11-5, 11-5	
Newman d. Harnett 12-10, 11-9, 11-4	
Gonzalez d. Karp 5-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-1	
Monchik d. Doyle 6-11, 6-11, 12-10, 11-2, 13-11	
Los Angeles	

continued from page 23

Los Angeles VCI Challenge Cup Series

• Swain building momentum again • Roberts - knee seems healthy • Monchik eliminates mentor • Engle sends Kachtik home early • Southern Cal. hitters grab upsets in early going • VCI, Jim Carson, and L.A. Fitness bring racquetball back to its traditional hottest spot •

Highlights

Tour veteran turned local hero Steve Lerner from Riverside retired Katz in the opening round to post the early upset that has become his trademark for Southern California events. Fellow Californian and protege' of Jim Carson, Adam Karp doled out a share of the same treatment to Clouse.

Maryland's Mike Engle, resting in the doldrums since a good showing in the season's earlier stop in Mexico, shocked Kachtik, the crowd and himself with a decisive four game win over the number four seed. Newman added another to his side of the Head to Head tally between him and Bret Harnett. Gonzalez struggled for a

game before out hustling and out hitting Karp. Monchik, the gazillion-time junior champion - turned pro brought mental

Cliff Swain with a diving get at the VCI event in Los Angeles.





toughness along with his usual flair. With gritted teeth and a clinched fist, the youngster struck hard and fast to bounce back from a Doyle serve for the match in the third.

With renewed confidence and an eye on the prize, Monchik squared off with Gonzalez, who had trained him since childhood. Armed with a backhand that can only be described as awesome, Monchik leaped the mental hurdle to send his teacher packing in four games. Guidry and Roberts were in the semis with ease while at the top of the draw, the Swain & Ellis

Top: Mike Guidry leans into a backhand in the semifinals in Los Angeles. Bottom: Andy Roberts and Sudsy Monchik in a four game battle in the semis.

show just got better and better.

In the final, Roberts still looked a bit tentative on his newly recovered knee, while Swain showed no mercy. Swain did his thing and that was that. With the season drawing to a close, Swain had stretched his first place lead right into the stratosphere!

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Cliff Swain



Andrew Kachlik

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Ben Gonzalez



Jack Newman



Mike Guidry



Tim Doyle



Andy Roberts



Mike Ray



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Gould Owns the WPRA

With consecutive wins in Chattanooga, Atlanta, and Baltimore, Michelle Gould proves she is unstoppable.

Michelle Gould continues her complete domination of the women's tour with the only serious threats to her number one ranking coming from Marci Drexler and Robin Levine.

The latest three events in the WPRA schedule, Chattanooga, Atlanta and the Nationals in Baltimore saw Gould once again running away from the pack with routine victories. The familiar names that

Grand Splat Tournament Chattanooga, Tennessee Gould Choo-Choo Through Town

This inaugural event for the WPRA in Chattanooga became another star in Michelle Gould's winning crown this season as she rolled through the competition without losing a game. Robin Levine was the only player to score more than four points against her.

Juniors standouts Vanessa Tulao and Kerri Stoffregen chose to break into WPRA competition with this event. Tulao lost to Kim Russell in the first round and Stoffregen played into an always tough Drexler after defeating Jen Yokota in early play.

Michelle Gould

11-2, 11-3, 11-6

Marci Drexler

QUARTERS

Gould d. Evon

11-3, 11-4, 11-5

Levine d. McKinney

11-10, 2-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-3

Gudinas d. O'Brien

11-7, 11-10, 11-9

Drexler d. Faulkenberry

11-2, 11-4, 8-11, 11-6

Chattanooga

SEMIS

Gould d. Levine

11-3, 11-8, 11-4

Drexler d. Gudinas

11-10, 11-6, 11-5

SIXTEENS

Gould d. Russell

11-2, 11-4, 11-0

Evon d. Myers

11-8, 11-6, 11-3

McKinney d. Coburn

1-2, 11-5, 11-2

Levine d. Ferreira-Worth

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

Gudinas d. Machiran

11-7, 11-7, 11-1

O'Brien d. Whitmire

11-2, 1-11, 7-11, 11-5, 11-9

Faulkenberry d. Galloway

11-10, 5-11, 11-7, 11-8

Drexler d. Stoffregen

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



Caryn McKinney made a strong showing in Atlanta, Chattanooga, and Baltimore. Robin Levine knocked her off in Chattanooga and in Baltimore.

SEMIS

Gould d. Coburn
11-0, 11-7, 11-5
Drexler d. Levine
not available

Michelle Gould

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

Marci Drexler

QUARTERS

Gould d. McKinney
11-5, 11-0, 11-10
Coburn d. Gudinas
11-2, 11-4, 11-5
Levine d. Whitmire
11-4, 11-1, 11-1
Drexler d. Fenton
11-4, 11-3, 11-7

SIXTEENS

Gould d. Myers
11-4, 11-2, 11-7
McKinney d. Russell
9-11, 11-5, 9-11, 11-3, 13-11
Coburn d. Olson
11-2, 11-3, 11-6
Gudinas d. Wiragh
11-5, 6-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-4
Levine d. Galloway
11-1, 11-2, 11-3
Whitmire d. O'Brien
6-11, 0-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-1
Fenton d. Evon
11-6, 11-4, 5-11, 11-4
Drexler d. Ferreira-Worth
11-7, 11-7, 11-2

Atlanta

played past Lorraine Galloway before losing to Drexler in four.

Gould captured the finals from Drexler 11-2, 11-3, 11-6.

The Pizza Hut Racquetball Challenge Atlanta, Georgia Gould Delivers

The tenth annual Pizza Hut Racquetball Challenge took place at SportsLife Club Cobb for the first time since 1985. The event has always been a highlight on the schedule, usually filling the draw with contenders. Gould continued to be virtually unstoppable as she took the tournament without losing a game until the finals against a determined Drexler.

Local favorites Caryn McKinney and Kim Russell clashed in the second round. When the dust settled Russell had been defeated in a rugged five-game match that see-sawed between the Atlantans and included a tie-breaker that lasted nearly an hour.

Molly O'Brien and Robin Whitmire also locked horns in the second round with a five-gamer that saw O'Brien in command two games to zero before Whitmire caught fire. Whitmire then stormed into the quarters with wins in the next three games.

Contenders Levine and Drexler met in the semis with the two southpaws squared off to threaten Gould. Levine's powerful, diving style wasn't enough to defeat Drexler's overhead reverse pinches and front court dinks. Levine has yet to defeat Drexler this season.

Drexler had enough momentum going into the final to take two games from Gould after being two games down. Gould managed to hang tough however and once again took Atlanta.

All-Sport WPRA National Championship Baltimore, Maryland Gould Tops Out

The Merritt Athletic Club in Baltimore hosted the All-Sport WPRA National Championship to cap the women's professional season. Gould again proved unbeatable, taking another tournament without losing a game. Coburn was the only competitor to come close, scoring nine in the middle game of her match but Gould wasn't seriously threatened as she dropped donuts on Coburn in the other two games.

McKinney made a strong showing, knocking Drexler out in three games early in the contest. It seemed as if McKinney might skate her way into the final after that until she butted heads with Levine. In one of the closest matches of the tournament Levine finally prevailed with close wins, 11-9, 11-9, 5-11, 11-10.

The tenth annual Pizza Hut Racquetball Challenge made it back home to the SportsLife Club Cobb for the first time since 1985. Atlanta's The Sporting Club was the scene of this match from the 1992 event.



Michelle Gould

11-2, 11-7, 11-5

Robin Levine

SEMIS

Gould d. Coburn

11-0, 11-9, 11-0

Levine d. McKinney

11-9, 11-9, 5-11, 11-10

QUARTERS

Gould d. Fenton

11-8, 11-3, 11-4

Coburn d. Gudinas

11-6, 10-11, 11-10, 11-10

Levine d. Hollander

11-1, 11-0, 11-1

McKinney d. Olson

11-6, 11-1, 11-3

SIXTEENS

Gould d. Whitmire

11-5, 11-4, 11-1

Fenton d. Crawford

11-8, 9-11, 11-4, 11-6

Coburn d. Myers

11-8, 11-6, 11-3

Gudinas d. Wiragh

11-3, 11-3, 11-10

Levine d. Lynch

11-8, 11-4, 11-0

Hollander d. O'Brien

11-7, 11-9, 11-10

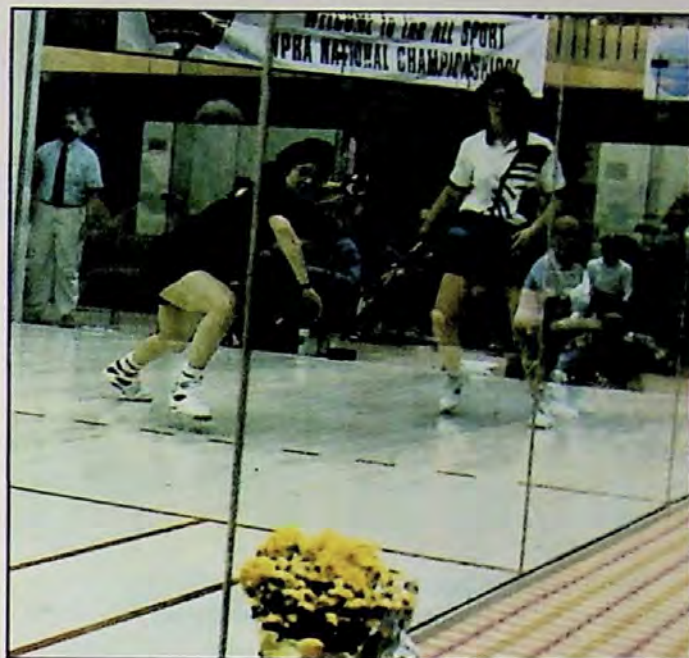
Olson d. Evon

11-10, 11-9, 11-3

McKinney d. Machiran

11-5, 11-4, 11-0

Baltimore



Michelle Gould and Robin Levine in finals action at the WPRA National Championship at the Merritt Athletic Club in Baltimore. Levine and Marci Drexler have been the only serious threats to Gould's ranking this season.

The other close contest pitted Coburn against rival Cheryl Gudinas. Coburn managed to stand tough as she defeated Gudinas 11-6, 10-11, 11-10, 11-10.

Gould captured her fifth WPRA National title by rolling over Levine in the final in three games. In the second game Levine threatened to turn the tide on Gould but Michelle's determination and intensity were enough to withstand Levine's brief challenge to take the final and the season.

In national doubles the exciting rugged style of lefties Drexler and Levine was sufficient to capture the title over the team of Gould and Laura Fenton. Fenton and Gould won the first game 11-7 but dropped the next three 11-4, 11-0, and 11-8.

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Where Does The IRT Go From Here?

By IRT Commissioner
Hank Marcus

Cliff Swain is not the only one who had an unbelievable season. Swain won most of the IRT events in the most successful season in the history of professional racquetball. With nineteen tour events, the VCI Challenge Cup Series, and ESPN, the number of people to thank for their support and work is numerous.

The question most asked is, "Where does the IRT go from here?" The answer is: continued expansion to new sites including Birmingham and Florida, and the return of past sites like Arlington, Virginia. IRT will feature a tour of 25 events for the 1994/95 season including the six event VCI Challenge Cup Series, and events in the US, Canada, Mexico, and South America. The IRT will be bringing the greatest show in racquetball to every corner of the country and continue expansion throughout the world.

IRT Satellite events

In addition to the full 25 event tour, the IRT has creat-

ed a satellite tour which will feature ten events sanctioned by the IRT. These events will feature lower prize money than full sanctioned stops with the appearance of one or two of the top ten pros. The IRT Satellite Tour will give local and regional players the chance to earn IRT ranking points, prize money, compete against the best players in the world, and get a feel for professional racquetball.

Pro Penn Ball

The other exciting addition to next season's tour is the Pro Penn ball will be used at all IRT events for all divisions! After a full season of the pros only playing with the ball, everyone entering an IRT event will compete with the new Pro Penn ball.

It is hard to improve on last season, but IRT looks forward to a bigger and better year as professional racquetball continues to explode across the globe.



Penn.

Penn Glove Bonus Pool

1. Cliff Swain
2. Tim Doyle
3. Mike Guidry
4. Dave Johnson
5. Woody Clouse
6. Louis Vogel

BI RAK IT

Standings

1. Woody Clouse
2. Mike Brady
3. John Ellis
4. Vince Kelley
5. Mike Ray
6. Aaron Katz
7. Drew Kachtik
8. Roger Harripersad



Head Anatom Bonus Pool

1. Cliff Swain
2. Mike Guidry
3. Mike Ray
4. John Ellis
5. Woody Clouse
6. Bret Harnett
7. Dan Fowler
8. Louis Vogel

TOLTEC

Toltec Sportswear Bonus Pool

1. Cliff Swain
2. Andy Roberts
3. Tim Doyle
4. Mike Guidry
5. Mike Ray
6. Woody Clouse

SPALDING

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3. Cliff Swain 155 mph
4. Mike Brady 149 mph
5. Mike Ray 133 mph



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news from the hood

Second Annual North Park Open

Now in its second year, Washington state's North Park Racquet and Athletic Club's North Park Open welcomed an eager crowd of Northwest area players. Tournament directors Gordon (Smokey) Miller and John Giampatri were the picture of efficiency while the hospitality provid-

ed by Mrs. Miller stands up with the very best.

Winners included: Shane Dodge, Jared Stoyko, Ben Johnson, Jim O'Keefe, Randy Smith, Jim Zarkos, Bob Stoyko, Patti Nishimura, Linda Lambert, Gary Retter, Kelly King, and Gary Hoover.



Las Vegas Draws 275 Players into the Desert

The annual Fairway Chevrolet Pro-Am in Las Vegas this year drew more than 275 players from 26 states, Canada and Mexico. Joining the title sponsor in hosting the event were Head Sox USA, J.C.H. Wire and Cable, Powerbar, Ripe Plum, Las Vegas Discount Golf and Tennis, Uptime, Eliminator Racquetball, Sports Cafe, Western Cab, Coors of Las Vegas, Made in the Shade Tinting, Las Vegas Athletic Clubs, Powerade, Sav-mor Car Rental, Saranac, M.C. Enterprises, the Sands Hotel and Casino, Klear Shot, and Python Grips.

Final matches included:

Mens Singles

Open: Tony Jelso d. Jeff Evans;
A: Adam Anderson d. Chris Crowther; B: Terry Groat d. Glenn Cannon; C: Daves Davies d. Bob Brooks; D: Sam Centofante d. Jon Heyman; 30+: Mike Margott d. J.H.; 35+: Rich Clark d. Doug Colson; 40+: Bill Berger d. Tom Weiger; 45+: Michael Wolfe d. Michael Stephens; 50+: Bill Lister d. Alexander Forbes.

Womens Singles

Open: Debbie Tisinger d. Dawn Evans; A: Chow Phan d. Diana Torres; B: Terry Anderson d. Sharon Harned; C: Jill Horan d. Carolina Richards; D: Vicki Hahn d. Theresa Zabala

Doubles

Open: Sell / Karp d. Evans / Muller; A: Carlone / Mitchell d. Solis / Crowther; B: Bailey / Leon d. Tisinger / Phan; C: Lee / Salazar d. Crew Bayliss; Mixed Advanced: Torres / Gonzales d. Evans / Martinez; Mixed Intermediate: Baker / Cheshik d. Flinn / Flinn.

\$20,000 Raised for Prenatal Care in Manchester, New Hampshire

When IKKA Racquet Sports in Manchester New Hampshire hosted the third annual Parkland Medical Center Open at the Executive Health and Sports Center; the \$20,000 + raised for prenatal care surpassed the most ambitious expectations. Steve Gordon, executive director of the medical center and Jill Munzert of the medical center staff welcomed over 250 entries to what has become one of the most exciting annual events in New England.

The men's open final saw New Hampshire's Fred Calabrese defeat Massachusetts' Eric Muller in an ultra close 11 - 10 tiebreaker. In the Women's



Above: Jill Brooks posts scores at the Parkland Medical Center Open in Manchester, New Hampshire. Left: Tournament director, Kelley Beane and doubles partner, Joanne Pomodoro

open draw, Massachusetts' Laura Fenton defeated New Hampshire's Joyce Pochilly also in the breaker. In the second 11 - 10-in-the-breaker final, the mixed doubles division featured Massachusetts' Dave Hernjak and Fenton over Rhode Island's Dave Barnes and Massachusetts' Roz Petronelli.

Other division winners included: Justin Wolfe, Cheryle Irving, Claude Fortin, Vivian Brown, Josh Messina, Kelly Deeb, Jose Flores, Kim Glansberg, Dan Lussier, Sue Forsberg, and Claude Paul.

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Are You Really Prepared?

By Fran Davis

Asst. U.S. National Racquetball Team Coach

You've spent two or three months preparing for this major tournament that means everything to you. You have worked with your coach/teacher weekly; you've practiced religiously three or four times a week; you've read mental toughness books and listened to tapes; you've hired a personal trainer to get yourself into tip-top shape. It is now "T" time (tournament time)... the long awaited event. You are totally psyched and feel 100% prepared...you are ready.

Are you really ready? I have seen so many players get caught in this same scenario where they think they have done everything to be prepared for the tournament but they have overlooked a few key areas. There are a few things you need to be aware of, look for, and most importantly, prepare for prior to the event and during the event.

Courts

1. Are the walls panel (slower) or cement (faster)?
2. Are the floors wood (softer and easier on knees and back) or strong-wall (harder and tougher on knees and back)?
3. Are the floors sanded down (good traction and grip) or urethane (good traction

and grip unless they are dusty or worn out)?

4. Are the walls glass (harder to see and adjust to if not used to it) or solid white (more comfortable and easier to see)?
5. Are the courts air-conditioned and what is the temperature? (very cold courts— slower ball; very warm courts— faster ball)
6. How is the lighting on the courts? (darker — tougher to follow ball; brighter — easier to follow ball)
7. How is the lighting outside the courts if there is glass? (dark carpeting and dim lights make it harder to see; lighter carpeting and bright lights make it easier to see)
8. Do the courts have the appropriate painted lines like the dotted 5' safety line or the service boxes?

Food

1. What is the hospitality like? Do they have foods you could eat (vegetarian vs.. meat, fruit vs donuts, pasta vs hot dogs, etc.)?
2. Does the club have a snack bar or restaurant?
3. Are the supermarkets/food stores near the club?

Referees

1. Are they certified?
2. Do they know the rules? Do you know the rules?
3. Do winners ref or do losers ref?

Club

1. How many courts does the club have? (enough for practice or warm up)
2. What cardiovascular machines does the club have for warm up?
3. What do the locker rooms have:
 - a. locker keys vs. bring your own lock
 - b. towel service vs. bring your own towel
 - c. steam/sauna/whirlpool if needed for warm up or injury or after playing
 - d. hair dryers and other amenities or bring your own

Transportation

1. Do you need to drive or fly?
2. Is the airport near the club?
3. Is there transportation from the airport to the club or hotel?

4. Is there a time change?
5. Do you have an early morning match for which you need to arrive the night before?

Times

1. What day do you play?
2. What time do you play — a.m. or p.m.?
3. Is the tournament running on time, ahead, or behind?
4. Are you there at least one hour ahead of your scheduled time in case they are running early?

Balls

What ball is the tournament using, Penn, Ektelon, Pro Kennex, or Wilson?

Family/Friends

1. Are your family and friends coming to cheer you on? Do you get nervous or

- psyched up when they come?
2. Do your opponents have family and friends cheering them on?

Opponents

1. Are they lefty or righty?
2. Are they power players or control players?
3. Are they tall (better reach) or short (easier to pass)?
4. Are they healthy, injured, or recovering from an injury?

Now that I have devised this checklist for you, my question is, "Are you really prepared? Have you taken all of these areas into account when preparing for your tournament?"

Did you check out the food situation prior to getting there and plan accordingly? Did you bring extra fruit, muffins, water, bread, etc; or, were you caught with foods you don't like or no food at all because they served while you were playing and

then ran out?

Did you get to the club and discover that there is no lock or towel service? Now you have to scramble and run to the store (and you have no idea where it's located) but you play in thirty minutes, Oh, no!

Did the referees make a bad call and because you weren't totally up on the new rule changes you couldn't question them?

These are just a few of the many things that could possibly come up prior to or at a tournament. A tournament is tough enough and is physically and mentally demanding, as you know, so go through this checklist and head off many of these situations before they become a problem. Believe me, I learned all of these through experience as a player and now as coach of the US National Racquetball Team. Try to prepare ahead of time so when you get to the event all you have to do is focus on one thing — playing.

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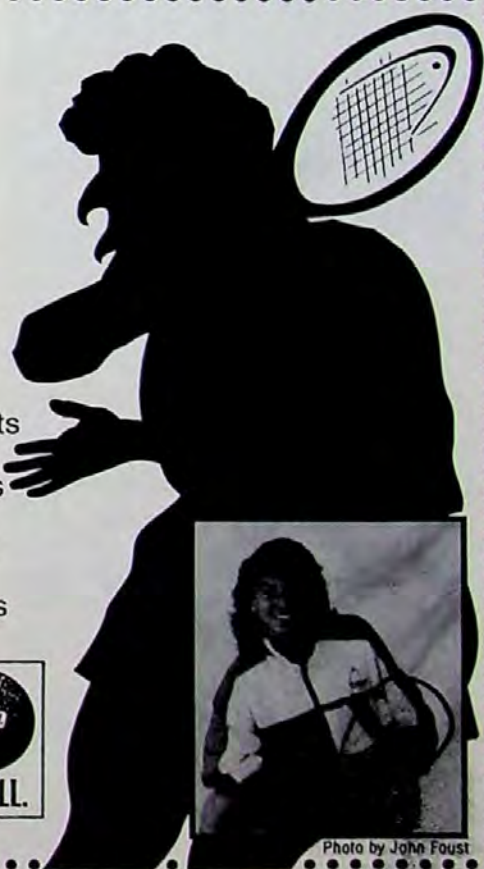


Photo by John Foust

Racquet Replacement Parts

A String's Best Friend is His Grommet

By Lynne Balthazor

Webster's dictionary defines a grommet as "an eyelet of firm material to strengthen or protect an opening." While this is probably very interesting to Omar the tent maker and Sally the sail maker, what does it have to do with playing racquetball? Simply put, grommets are the tiny plastic linings through which the string passes through your racquet frame. Depending on the type of racquet with which you play, grommets may be very important to the life and performance of your strings, as well as the amount of vibration and shock you feel.

The lowest priced racquets are constructed of aluminum. The aluminum is extruded into a tube that is shaped into a racquet. Then holes are drilled through the tube for the strings. It should be obvious that if you bend a thin strand of nylon or synthetic gut string around a raw edge of aluminum at some 60 or more locations on each racquet, that the string hasn't a prayer of surviving. Each time the ball impacts the strings it causes friction against the sharp edges. This will eventually cut through the string. Therefore, good grommets are very important in aluminum racquets.

Racquetball manufacturers create grommet strips for each racquet which have a grommet for each string hole molded into place. In most cases, the grommet strip for the head of the racquet is combined with a bumper guard to also protect the outside edge of the racquet. This bumper guard is normally grooved so that the strings lie within the protection of the bumper guard and are not abraded when the racquet brushes the wall or floor.

Another type of racquet is the injection molded composition racquet. These frames are normally made from a combina-

tion of chopped fiberglass and graphite fibers blended together with nylon resin. This compound is injection molded to form a racquet. These frames are solid - that is, not a hollow tube. The holes can be molded in when the racquet is formed or drilled and countersunk after molding. With this type of racquet there is often no need for grommets. Sometimes these racquets do have a bumper guard to protect the strings and the head of the racquet.

The most expensive racquets have hand laid composite frames constructed of graphite and/or fiberglass fibers impregnated with resin, cut into specified angles, dimensions and locations then compression molded. This method allows the creation of very light, strong racquets. However, with all racquets of this type, the process begins with continuous layers of material.

After the material is molded into shape, holes have to be drilled for the strings. This means that these racquets all can have sharp edges inside the holes that are a menace to your strings.

Manufacturers recommend that you replace the bumper and grommets on your racquet regularly. (Replacement is usually recommended with each restringing for high performance frames.) The cushioning and protection that they provide to the strings should increase string life more than enough to make up for the cost of the bumper/grommet. (This normally ranges from four to eight dollars depending on the racquet type, availability, etc.) Every time you have your racquet restrung, you should determine if the bumper/grommet needs replacing. If the barrels of the grommet have been cut away as in photo 1, the



Photo 1. Grommet barrels sliced and cut away.

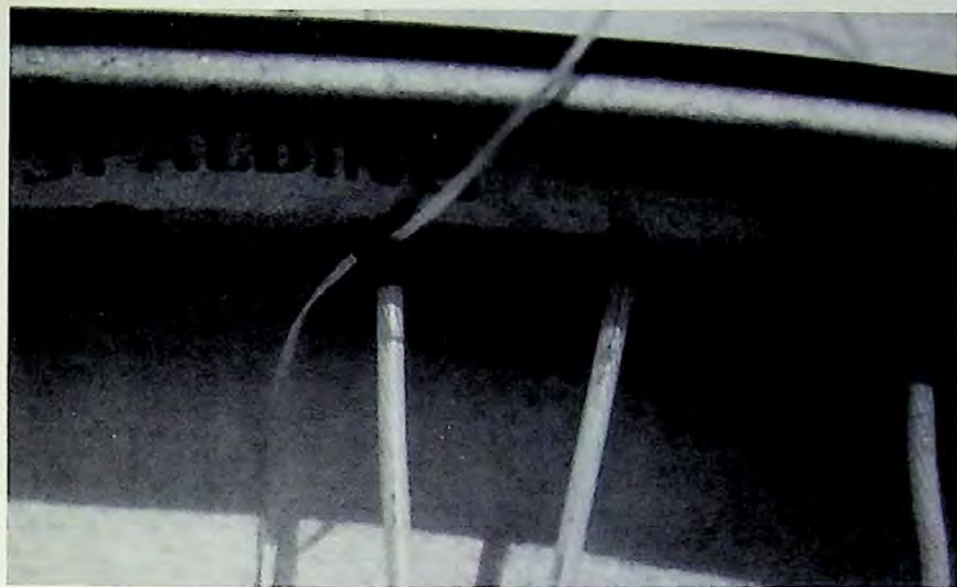


Photo 2. Using a thread to detect a sliced grommet.

grommet must be replaced. Occasionally, this type of cut into the barrel of the grommet occurs, but does not cut the barrel totally away. This exposes the string inside the grommet to the sharp edge of the frame. If the string breaks right near the frame and it looks cut, not frayed or worn, look for a sliced through grommet. You might try pulling a thread or piece of dental floss against the suspect grommet, if it slides into the edge of the barrel it will expose the cut (See photo 2).

Grommet holes that have elongated (see photo 3) or cracked from the impact of the strings (see photo 4) also should be replaced. If you find that you are regularly

damaging the grommet in this manner, it often means that you are not hitting in the sweet spot. Contacting the ball very near the frame is hard on grommets. If excessive wear of this type is occurring at the head of the racquet, it means you are "tip hitting". This is very common if you lift your head before you complete your stroke. Maybe you're checking to see if the front wall is still there or where your opponent is going or where you would like to be next. To improve your string and grommet durability (and maybe your game), keep your eyes on the ball and concentrate on finishing each shot confidently. Don't worry about the next shot until you have hit this one as well as you can by

completing the motion.

The outside of the bumper/grommet is also subject to wear from contact with the walls and floor. Photo 5 shows a bumper that no longer offers much protection and should be replaced. Normally the string lies in a channel created by the bumper guard. When the bumper is so worn that the string is exposed to contact, it should be replaced. You may also wish to replace the bumper for cosmetic reasons. A new bumper will make a somewhat battered racquet look better. As discussed above, many injection molded racquets that do not require grommets do have a replaceable bumper to improve the durability and appearance of the frame.

Most grommets are made of nylon or a nylon based compound. Getting the composition of the grommet right is one of the most frustrating parts of designing a racquet. If the grommet is too soft, the barrels will quickly cut away (See photo 1). If the grommet material is too hard it will very quickly crack (See photo 4). Grommets have given manufacturers great



Photo 3. Grommet barrel elongated.

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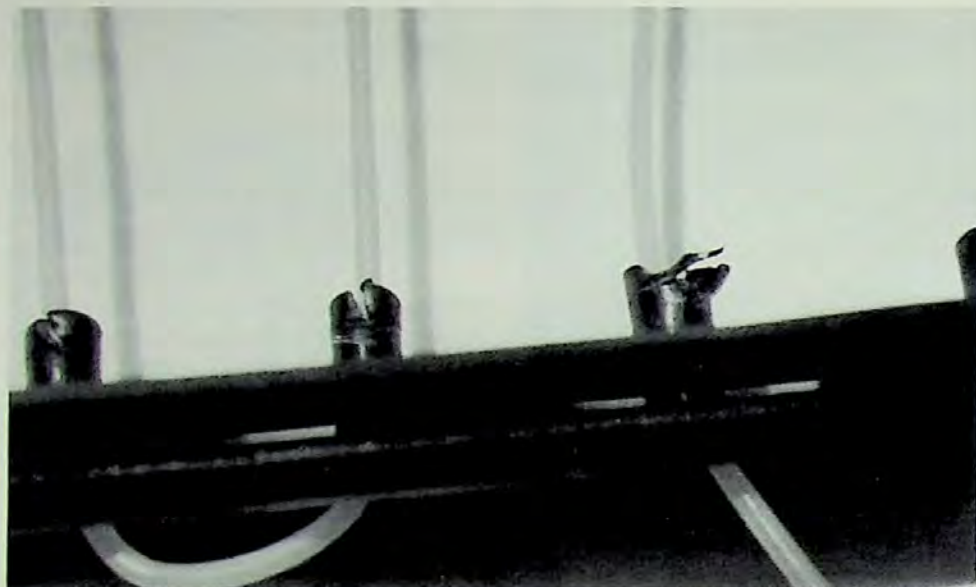


Photo 4. Grommets split and cracked.



Photo 5. Bumper so worn that string is being abraded.

the grommet strip over the top. The individual grommet may not fit well under the bumper and may cause the bumper to bulge and be subject to wear. In any case, stringing a racquet with tubing or individual grommets takes much longer than normal. If more than one or two holes are damaged, you should expect to pay a surcharge for the extra time and materials. There are cases, as with out of production frames, when the grommets are no longer available and tubing or individual grommets may be your only option.

Manufacturers often like to reuse the name of a popular frame. This causes havoc with stringers trying to stock bumper/grommet sets. For example, Ektelon produced the Toron, the Toron RTS, and Toron RTS 90. The bumper/grommets for these racquets were all different. When a stringer ordered the Toron grommet, he received the current model. When a customer asked, "Do you have the Toron grommet?" the stringer would say, "Sure", but the Toron he had might not be the Toron you needed.

Occasionally just the opposite is true when a manufacturer produces multiple frames that use the same bumper/grommet. Examples include the Ektelon Aris« and its replacement the Nemesis« and the Wilson Hammer« 2.7 and 4.0 that have different part numbers for the identical part. Richcraft in 1992 and US Tech in 1993 each offered models within their lines that used identical grommets but in different colors. The Richcraft Epic had a purple grommet that would also fit the Pirate, which normally had a black grommet, allowing a little creativity during restringing. Richcraft's orange Pulsar grommet would fit the normally blue Express or the normally purple Vision. US Tech's sparkling clear Dan Obremski bumper will fit the normally black Quadratech and Quadrapower or vice versa.

If your stringer tells you that a new grommet is required, listen to him. He is probably not just trying to get a little bit more of your money, he is trying to make your new string last longer. If you notice that your grommet is worn out, or you are having string durability problems, ask that the grommet be replaced. For questions regarding the bumper/grommet for your racquet, you can call the manufacturer, ask a USRSA certified stringer in your area, or write me care of **KILLSHOT** Magazine.

difficulties. In one recent case the manufacturer had to redesign an aluminum racquet to make the string holes larger to accommodate a thicker grommet barrel to obtain acceptable durability. And several racquets have developed undeserved reputations as string breakers due to flaws in grommet design.

If only one or two grommet holes have been damaged, the stringer can put a sleeve over the string inside the damaged

hole. This is called tubing. However, the tube is softer than the grommet, and will probably not last as long as the grommet did if subject to the same abuse. And if installed improperly, it can slip out of place and create a rattle similar to loose barrels (See picture 1). There are also individual grommets that can be used to replace damaged grommets. The stringer cuts away the damaged grommet, places the individual grommet in the hole, then lays the rest of

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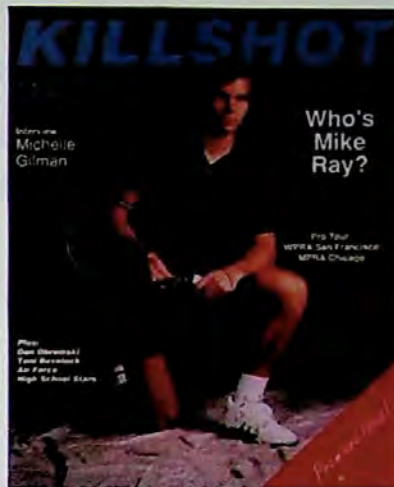
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Look Who's Talking!



Few players ever see the inner workings of the racquetball industry. To earn a reputation as one of the biggest movers and shakers in the sport, Mark Wentura has not only had to learn the most intricate details, but has been responsible for many of the innovations and traditions that have become standards to most of us. High-powered, imaginative, and tireless, Wentura has brought about many of the best things in the sport, and a few that weren't. From a rare vantage point, he has witnessed the real story behind product development, the organizations, the court clubs, and the most visible players. While quite realistic, Wentura's outlook is reassuringly positive and full of optimism for the game. Now for the first time in fourteen years, look who's talking.

By Marvin Quertermous
Managing Editor

Q: Mark, can you give us a sort of history of your trek through the racquetball industry?

MW: I started in racquetball in 1980 as a sales manager for Head. During the five years I was there, I moved up to the corporate level and became involved with development and marketing. In those days, tennis was moving into larger and larger frames. Ektelon had begun work on the Maxim and Contra, the new oversize racquetball frames. I saw that racquets were about to become larger, but felt that the oversize frames were too extreme for the time. We worked to develop the midsize concept for Head that turned into some extremely popular racquets.

Q: You developed quite a reputation for your aggressiveness in marketing with Head.

MW: That was the beginning of "guerrilla marketing". We took bold steps to promote the racquets. D.P. [Diversified Products who at that time owned Leach Racquetball] held the exclusive contract as the official racquet of the AARA. In order to get any exposure, we had to be very aggressive. Once I went to Houston for the AARA nationals, and took the HEAD Technical Support van to the host Downtown Y at about 4:00 in the morning just to get the most prominent parking space right in front of the club's front doors. I made Luke St. Onge's [AARA executive director] life miserable. We couldn't advertise inside, so we did the next best thing. It was war between the companies to keep their products in front of players.

Q: After Head?

MW: Next I moved over to marketing for Ektelon.

Q: What was going on then at Ektelon.

MW: In those days, Ektelon was owned by Browning. The Macro series was available to the public. I guess the thinking was that Ektelon would rather have me on their side than against them. Norm Peck [former Ektelon CEO] was very strategic. I learned a lot from Norm in terms of strategy and plotting. He analyzed everything and formed clever, detailed plans. His reactions to everything were always calm and calculated. We brought more of the midsize frames into line. The new technologies with graphite composites brought about better and better racquets, and brought the prices up accordingly. I also worked extensively with gloves and eyewear. That was

also during the time that almost all frames were made in the U.S. It was then that I set up the exclusive arrangement for Ektelon as the official racquet of the AARA.

Q: And your next move?

MW: After I had been there two years, I decided it was time to walk while the company was for sale. I went to work with Pro Kennex. At the time, racquetball manufacturers were very, very competitive. Pro Kennex was extremely aggressive in the market. It was the only company with a range of products from low end that sold at department and discount stores to the high end that sold in pro shops. It was confusing for the public since the company used both the Pro Kennex and Marty Hogan Racquetball logos.

Q: What was the company like then?

MW: That was the time when more and more racquet production was moving to Taiwan. Materials were still constantly improving, and there were more and more clear distinctions between high end and low end racquets. Kunnan, the producer of the Pro Kennex frames in the orient was one of the world's leading composite materials producers. The advancements were amazing. Kunnan is sort of the Lee Iaccoca of Taiwan. As marketing manager, it was up to me to promote the brand, and develop strategies for marketing the emerging products. I was also involved in the introduction of protective eyewear at Pro Kennex, including the tinted lenses.

Q: Whenever I talk with John Weaver at Pro Kennex, he always just says he wants the "Wentura Deal", that whatever you have negotiated, he wants the same deal.

MW: (smiling) John's great. He and Kevin Gilbert, were like brothers to me. Charlie Drake, Scott Rogers, David Armstrong, everybody was very close at Pro Kennex. We were a very aggressive team. They were all very bright and had lots of energy. We were very close-knit and made big things happen in the market.

Q: Next move?

MW: After a couple of years with Pro Kennex, I got a call from Spalding, inviting me on board as marketing/sales director to re-launch the company into court sports. The focus was on tennis. Spalding had lost interest in promoting racquetball. But within a short time, the company became active again in racquetball with the Assault and very successful.

Q: The Assault was your baby?

MW: It was my baby. The design came from a guy named Rich James, who had worked mostly in tennis. With Rich, you could give him an idea, and he made it great. We wanted a frame that was stiff enough to hit hard, but didn't have the drawbacks of all the others. Durability and vibration were the two main problems with stiff racquets. The Assault is very durable, with special dampeners in the grommets and the handle to take out the vibration. That and the original huge size got everybody's attention. All in all the company got a lot of attention, put in place a lot of successful grass-roots programs and came back strong in the market. When I left, Spalding had leaped into a solid number three spot in the performance market for racquetball.

Q: After Spalding?

MW: I was contacted by James Marlin, president of Polymer Products, and vice president for Gencorp, Penn's parent company, to head up a more aggressive marketing and sales push for Penn. Penn had tried production of shoes, and racquets, with big problems. Also, the company was losing sight of the priorities of their dealers, and consumers. When I came on board, the idea was to return to a focus on what had made them so successful - building high quality ball products. We did some exciting things. We sort of ventured into the next dimension with the introduction of the faster, more durable Pro Penn ball.

Q: The new green ball?

MW: Yes, but it's really more than that. The color makes it identifiable but it's composition and manufacture are completely different from the original blue Penn.

Q: OK, you've just about seen it all, why is it that in the business of racquetball, every couple of years there are big shake-ups, staff turnovers, and it seems that many of the manufacturers make abrupt changes in philosophies?

MW: Many of the companies either start to see growth and want to increase it or see a drop in sales and want to reverse the trend, in either case by bringing in "fresh thinking". Unfortunately, sometimes that means people from outside racquetball or sporting goods that don't yet entirely understand all of the underlying needs of players. You cannot apply traditional man-



Q: Who were the best players you've seen in the game?

MW: All things considered, I think the three best players have been Steve Strandemo (the most strategic), Marty Hogan (because he's Marty Hogan), and Ruben Gonzalez (because he's great year after year after year). If I had to come up with a fourth, it would be Mike Ray for his ability combined with the positive things he's done for the sport.

Q: What do you think of the IRT [the men's professional International Racquetball Tour]?

MW: The tour has been on such a roller coaster for three decades. Today the tour is on its most solid ground ever. There's a solid schedule, plenty of interest, and real sponsorship with VCI. It doesn't have the glamour or mass spectator interest from the days of the old Catalina tour [the closed racquetball tour of the late 1970's], but things are still very positive and much more stable.

Q: And the WPRA [the Women's Professional Racquetball Association]?

MW: The WPRA is a very stable organization. They still have problems with visibility and maybe some lack of ambition, but the events are class acts and the business is well-organized. The best thing for the WPRA and possibly for racquetball would be a mixed tour. Some of the biggest events in tennis involve both the men's professional and women's professional groups.

Q: And the AARA?

MW: The AARA has done a nice job

maintaining visibility. It's been a tough job and they are to be commended for holding together when things weren't easy. The amateur group was somewhat guilty of riding the coattails of the sport's height of popularity. Only at the start of the decline of participation in the early eighties did the group get busy working for and with sponsors. In all fairness, the group has not always received the best support of its sponsors. It was disappointing in both directions. The sponsors thought that if they put in dollars, they would get a polished result. The organization thought that when the sponsors promised support, they would be more involved in making things happen. One of the problems the associations faced was their interaction with people in promotional positions at the companies that didn't really understand merchandising marketing and promotion. That changed when I came to Penn. Amy Wishingrad, the promotions director at Penn is a true professional in merchandising and marketing. She is a great example of someone that does more than just give away product. Now, the organization is beginning to produce more for the sponsors, and the sponsors are pushing significantly to support the efforts of the group. The push for international participation and for Olympic status is good, but not nearly as important as tying in more with regional groups. I think the AARA does see the tremendous importance of growth at the recreational and juniors levels. There should be better harmony between the regionals and the national body. There is better synergy in other sports. The USPTA and the USTA are more involved with regional offices. The squash association has tremendous cohesiveness.

Q: What single thing has benefited racquetball the most?

MW: It sounds funny, but the single biggest benefit to the sport is the fact that clubs still have courts. While club owners found that during certain periods they could make more money converting courts to aerobics or Nautilus, the fact that they kept some of their courts open for racquetball is one of the biggest positives. Court club owners are some of the overlooked heroes of the game. It would have been easy to close even more courts and more clubs entirely when participation declined from the boom. The clubs with vision kept their courts open, and now are starting to be rewarded as the sport is slowly becoming

ufacturing, servicing, and marketing techniques to sporting goods and expect to satisfy players. Good marketing people sometimes come in and try to use traditional formulas to make big changes too soon, before they have a chance to learn to crunch the numbers the right way for sporting goods. First of all, in racquet sports, the numbers just aren't there as in other products - less than twenty million players in tennis, less than seven million in racquetball, and less than a million in squash. You have to take a much more personal approach, provide player programs, support events and organizations, and always focus on performance. A product's performance is too important to athletes to treat it like other goods. You have to pay a lot of attention to the players. I can say that I was at every major event in the 1980's

ing more solid and players are coming back to the courts.

Q: What has hurt the sport most?

MW: Exclusives. I know, I'm throwing stones here but unfortunately it's the truth. I did it, and now it seems like Frankenstein's monster going back on his creator. I could have kicked myself for the exclusive endorsements that I set up since I had to again compete against them later with another company. In the end, I think that it hampered growth of the sport as well as venter participation.

Q: What is the best kept secret in racquetball?

MW: Graphite - it's not all the same. There is no such thing as a 100% graphite racquetball racquet. There always have to be resins and compounds to bond the fibers. Because of this there are different kinds and grades of graphite. There is a big difference in the way racquets made of different grades of graphite play.

Q: How should a player know what to look for?

MW: The stiffer the frame, the harder it should hit, but the less durable it will be. The greater the graphite content or the content of exotic materials, the higher the price, and the stiffer but less durable the frame. Higher fiberglass content can decrease stiffness, but greatly increase durability. The beginner should have little concern for exotic technology. The focus for the beginner should be a durable frame with consistent play at a reasonable price. The intermediate player should begin to look at the play characteristics of the frame, as well as warranty, availability of replacement parts, etc. Players at this level should consult a stringer about various frames. Advanced players should base decisions on weight, balance, and more subtle characteristics. Most new racquets should be avoided until they have been on the market for some time to prove themselves and get out all the bugs. Avoid buying racquets based on sales. Always, always play-test before purchasing to make sure it fits you. Don't buy a racquet just because it's popular.

Q: You mentioned stringers, are they really that important?

MW: Absolutely. A good, certified stringer can do magic with a racquet. He

can just about make an inexpensive frame perform like the top of the line. He will usually know the quirks of the different racquets, re-stringing options, durability, flaws, etc. Certified stringers are probably the most important allies to have in racquetball. They deserve a great deal of credit.

Q: What are the next advancements in racquetball?

MW: Constantly improving racquet materials, advances in racquet shock absorption, the appearance of more of the automated-type courts where you put in money to go in and play.

Q: And for you?

MW: It's been a great ride. I've had opportunities to meet a lot of great people, do a lot for the sport, and see a lot of changes. I think

right now I'm more interested in taking a break from racquet sports for awhile, I'm involved in some other projects.

Q: Will you still keep track of the industry?

MW: Old habits are hard to break.



Clouse, Sweeney, Stoffregen and a Host of Masters Claim National Titles

National

Woody Clouse Claims **BI RAK IT** Crown

By now, if you haven't been exposed to BI RAK IT, the version of racquetball played with a racquet in each hand, you're probably living in a cave. Played at every IRT pro stop, the benefits of bilateral training and development through BI RAK IT have brought about a growing and devoted following. Top two-fisted combatants include the controllers like Mike Ray and

Aaron Katz, the blasters like Egan Inoue, John Ellis, and Vince Kelley, and the hustlers like Drew Kachtik, and Sudsy Monchik. Since the power element is down-played in favor of precision and court positioning, many of the most strategic female players such as Mary Lyons compete successfully with the men in the upper levels of the game.

Woody Clouse has been the top gun since its introduction to the racquetball world some years ago in Jacksonville Florida by Dr. Everett McCormick, father of the game. In fact, Clouse has won every national championship to date with the exception of the 1992 upset by former

handball champion Ruben Gonzalez.

As qualifiers for the BI RAK IT national championships in Atlanta, the BI RAK IT matches held nationwide in conjunction with 1993 - 1994 International Racquetball Tour produced a new threat in Californian Mike Brady. Brady, one of the younger players on the pro tour, attacked BI RAK IT with a vengeance. Clever, powerful, ambidextrous and very fast, Brady possesses the same virtues that have kept Clouse in the top spot.

In the end, Clouse's vast experience in the two-handed game made the difference and brought him yet another national championship.



Left: National Champion Woody Clouse serves. Above: Clouse and Mike Brady in the final of the National BI RAK IT Championship.

Champions

1994 National Masters

The 1994 National Masters Tournament welcomed 175 of the nation's most dedicated and most regular players. The thirteen divisions ranged from 45+ all the way to 75+.

Mike Coulter and staff at M.C. Enterprises and the Las Vegas Sporting House were joined by Penn, the Riviera Hotel Casino, Las Vegas Discount Golf & Tennis, Ripe Plum, and Fairway Chevrolet in putting together one of the best loved national level events of the year.

The special format for the national masters involves four days of round robin matches in each division, designed to narrow the field for each final on Saturday.

Men's 45+ 1. Gary Peterson, Minnesota 2. Skip Deal, California 3. Gil Schmitt, Arizona 4. Jack Crowther, California	Men's 50+ 1. Denis Lose, California 2. Mike Aubrey, Arizona 3. Lynn Corbridge, Utah 4. Glenn Allen, Virginia	Men's 55+ 1. Charlie Garfinkel, New York 2. Jim Wilking, Utah 3. Joe Jackman, Pennsylvania 4. Terry Priester, California
Men's 60+ 1. Paul Banales, Arizona 2. Harvey Clar, California 3. Don Alt, Florida 4. Jay Streim, California	Men's 65+ 1. Joe Lambert, Texas 2. Bob Fraser, California 3. Walter Shur, New York 4. Hugh Grover, Arkansas	
Men's 70+ 1. Tony Duarte, California 2. Lake Westphal, Arizona 3. Les Skelton, California 4. Pete Farina, Arizona	Men's 75+ 1. Earl Acuff, North Carolina 2. Jerome Singer, California 3. Charles Russell, California 4. Wyman Woodyard, Nebraska	
Women's 45+ 1. Merjean Kelly, California 2. Carol Palombino, California 3. Dawn Kerrigan, California	Women's 50+ 1. Nidia Funes, California	Women's 55+ 1. Kathy Mueller, Minnesota 2. Susan Embry, California 3. Danielle Smith, Alaska
Women's 60+ 1. Jo Kenyon, Florida	Women's 65+ 1. Phyllis Melvey, North Dakota	Women's 70+ 1. Mary Low Acutff, North Carolina 2. Eleanor Quackenbush, Oregon

Tim Sweeney, Kerri Stoffregen Win Intercollegiate Titles

Fifty six schools turned out for the 1994 AARA Intercollegiate Racquetball Championships, held in Phoenix for the second straight year.

The most anticipated match of the tournament was the powerhouse struggle in the men's #1 final between Southwest Missouri State's three-time collegiate champion Tim Sweeney and Memphis State's Scott Reiff. Both players have found recent success on the International Racquetball Tour, and both were fired up

for this match and its resulting spot on the US National Team.

At the start, the match appeared to be a repeat of Sweeney's demolishing of Memphis State's Joel Bonnet a year ago in the finals on the same court. Sweeney jumped to an early 5-0 lead with some blistering drive serves into the corners. Reiff was undaunted and hung on to turn the tide to reach an 8-7 lead. Sweeney turned it up a notch to win the match 15-8, 15-2 and claim his fourth consecutive title.

The women's #1 division provided the closest matches of the tournament. In the first semi-final, #1 seed Tanya Spangler defeated Rachel Gellmen 11-10 in the tie-breaker. The next match saw #2 seed Kerri Stoffregen of Memphis State defeat Stanford's Elkova Icenogle 11-10 in the tie-breaker. Stoffregen defeated Spangler 15-9, 15-5 in the final to join Sweeney on the US National Team.

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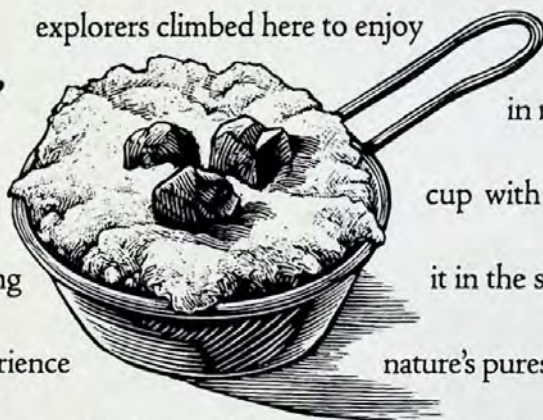


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