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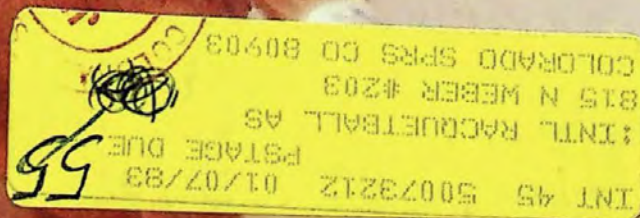


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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

January/February Vol. 6, No. 1

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1983 SHOE GUIDE

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Instruction

Racquetball Illustrated's Greatest Hits A review of the best instruction articles over the past five years.

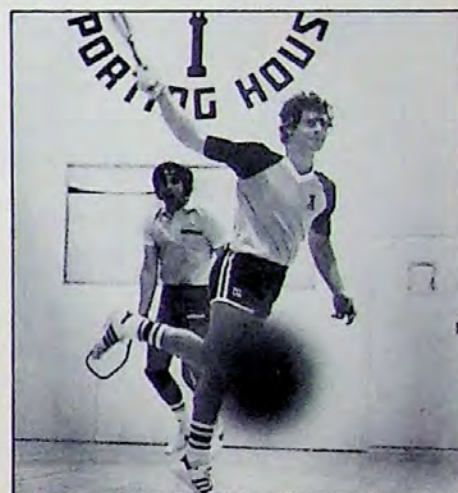
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A New Foot in the Door

This month, *Racquetball Illustrated* is proud to present—among other things—one of the most complete athletic footwear guides to grace our pages. Plus, we have assembled a collection of what we feel are the finest instruction articles printed since the magazine's birth five years ago.

Our Fourth Annual Shoe Review features the latest in racquetball, running and all-purpose footwear. These days, we find that dedicated racquetball players are also dedicated runners, volleyball and tennis players—and even aerobic dancers as well. Therefore, rather than single out racquetball shoe styles, we have sought out best bets in additional athletic shoe attire. They've got you fitted on page 17!

Marty Hogan's backhand and Steve Keeley's spin are the "best of the best" this month. We have a selection of the most frequently-requested instructional articles, authored by the pros who know how to make your game stronger. Make it a point to pick up their tips on page 32.

A flurry of finesse—that's what happens in racquetball doubles when you duplicate the intensity and precision play of a singles' match on the same court. In Seattle, the results are in of the Miller Lite/Seamco 1982 National AARA Doubles Championships. Steve Trent and Stan Wright pulled out the men's open championship in a thriller over John Mack and Dan Massari—but that's another story altogether on page 28.

While in the Seattle area, we were impressed with the enthusiasm this doubles tournament had generated. Not only did doubles partners compete from all over the United States—from all age divisions—but they also supplied their own expenses. Did prize money entice participants to the Northwest? No. Prize money wasn't offered. Trophies? Wrong again. Winners were awarded Olympic-style medals, but these players were lured to Seattle for a taste of victory as a racquetball team. Said one spectator, "These doubles matches are even more entertaining to watch than the pros." (Who said doubles is just a social game?)

Traveling over to the South, the flourishing Louisiana Racquetball Association (LRA) has come a long way since its meager beginnings with the United States Racquetball Association. That's why Mardi Gras seems to come twice a year in Louisiana—once in February for the traditional state celebration and once again later in the year for a not-so-traditional LRA celebration. For a behind-the-scenes look at this racquetball extravaganza, see page 48.

As the new editor of *Racquetball Illustrated*, we would like to hear some input from readers. We are already planning to devote more coverage to the pro tour, more profiles on the pros, and more emphasis on conditioning and nutrition.

Let us know what you think!

—Editor

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SIDE OUT

"Unknown" Yellen

Much publicity is given to the top players in racquetball such as Marty Hogan and Dave Peck. But there is one player who hasn't been given the recognition he deserves—Mike Yellen.

Although Yellen is one of the top players, little is known about him or his background. I'm sure many of the readers would be interested, as I am, in learning more about Yellen. Please publish a feature article on this young talented player since it is long overdue.

Rene Brown
Boston, Mass.

Editor's note: Racquetball Illustrated has run several stories on Mike Yellen, the last of which was his cover interview February, 1982.

World's Fair

Fantastic article on Racquetball At The World's Fair (Summer 1982).

Maybe that really is a gold racquetball on the Knoxville skyline. My friends and I like to think so, anyway, even if everybody else calls it the Sunsphere.

Jody Jackson
Knoxville, Tenn.

Nice Issue

I just read your November-December issue and I would like to tell you that I thought it contained some interesting articles.

I most enjoyed the instruction stories on Surprise Shots by Charlie Garfinkel and Game Plans by Charlie Brumfield. I also found the How To Avoid Back Problems story interesting, considering I had back problems myself earlier this year.

Candy Loftin
Newport Beach, Calif.

Best Shots

Your magazine is excellent but I would like to see a short article by some of the pros on their favorite shot.

My favorite shot is one I hit when the ball comes off the front wall high and deep into the back court. I swing at the ball as though I'm going to hit it on a fly, but deliberately miss it. If my opponent is right behind me and he is asleep, the ball will hit him and result in a point for me.

Al Freedman
Voorhees, N.J.

Editor's note: Some people would call you a hot dog but realistically, that shot wouldn't work too often in the pros, who as a group are a lot more sophisticated in their play. We will consider your suggestion for a future article, although we have run articles in which pros tell us of their toughest shot to return.

Simon and Simon

Well, it's about time. For years I have been reading your magazine and the glorification of celebrities.

Now, for the first time, you have told it like it is. The *Simon and Simon* cast found out that racquetball is really not that easy of a game to learn.

I have always wondered why the racquetball industry tries to fool some people in saying they can learn to be super players in no time. It does take time to get good. A lot of time.

By the way, I would like to vote for Jeannie Wilson as the Female Player of the Year.

Andrew White
Austin, Tex.

"I Miss You"

Sorry to see that *Racquetball Illustrated* has gone to publishing every other month instead of monthly.

You have a fine magazine and I had looked forward to reading it as often as possible.

Will you be returning to a monthly schedule?

Barbara Brandt
Garden City, N.Y.

Editor's note: We hope to return someday to a monthly publication but for now we will remain bi-monthly.

Vote for Hogan

I think you made a mistake in picking Dave Peck as the 1982 Male Player of the Year.

Although Peck had a higher point total throughout the year, Hogan won more money, beat Peck more often and won the Nationals, the most important tourney of the year.

If you go into a racquetball club, people recognize Marty Hogan's name. Peck is still a relative nobody. He is a fine player but Hogan is still the king.

The game would be nothing without Hogan.

Ned Litam
Omaha, Nebr.

Most Improved

Interesting interview with Bret Harnett, and good choice as your Most Improved Player of the Year.

A few years ago I thought racquetball was going to the kids when I read that the Marty Hogans and the Mike Yellens were running off with all the money. But Harnett is even younger than they.

I guess in a couple of years we will be looking to see Harnett take over as the Male Player of the Year.

Fred Schoening
Chicago, Ill.

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Steve Garvey Racquetball Classic

Marty Hogan rebounded from an uncharacteristically poor performance in the first game to win the next three games and defeat Bret Harnett in the finals of the \$21,000 Steve Garvey Racquetball Classic at Mid-Valley Athletic Club in Reseda, Calif.

Hogan defeated Harnett, 3-11, 11-9, 11-10, 11-7, to gain the \$10,000 first prize. Harnett settled for \$5,000. The other four invited players (Dave Peck, Mike Yellen, Don Thomas and Rich Wagner) split the remaining \$6,000.

The racquetball tournament, sponsored by Michelob Light, was part of the eighth annual Steve Garvey Sports Classic for the benefit of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

To reach the finals, Hogan defeated Yellen in five games and Harnett upset Peck in five games.

In an exhibition match prior to the Hogan-Harnett battle, Heather McKay defeated Marci Greer, 15-10, in the tiebreaker. McKay collected \$1,500 and Greer settled for \$1,000.

Celebrities also took part in the event. On hand for some racquetball competition were Jerry Reuss and Steve Sax of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Benny Ricardo of the New Orleans Saints, and such actors as Jim Sikking of *Hill Street Blues*, LeVar Burton, best known as the co-star of *Roots*, and Greg Evigan, formerly of *B.J. and The Bear*.

The tournament fell on the weekend that Garvey and the Dodgers announced they couldn't reach an agreement on a new contract, thus ending Garvey's 12-year major league career in a Dodger uniform.

Garvey had first made the announcement of the \$21,000 pro event at the Racquetball Illustrated Player of the Year party last February.



Steve Garvey and Marty Hogan in exhibition

Photos by Max Trinidad and Ed Ikuta



Greg Evigan (*B.J. and The Bear*)



LeVar Burton (*Roots*)

PLAYERS



Benny Ricardo
(New Orleans Saints)



Bret Harnett lost in the finals of the pro tourney to Hogan.



Jim Sikking (*Hill Street Blues*)



Actor Ron Masak



Jerry Reuss (Los Angeles Dodgers)



Steve Sax (Los Angeles Dodgers)

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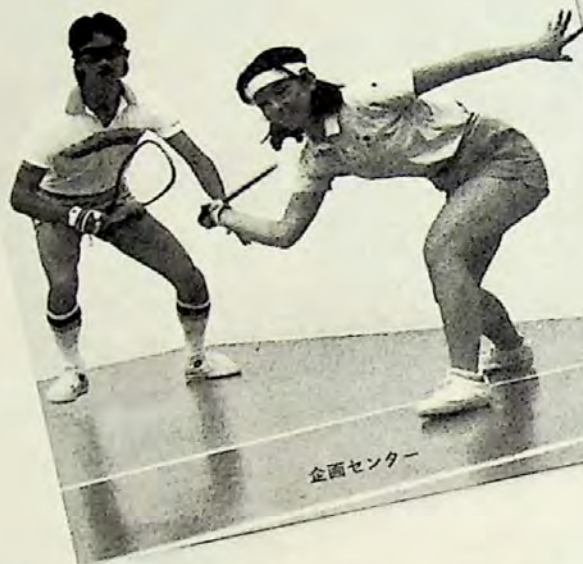
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Japan Update

RACQUETBALL
ラケットボール
HOW TO PLAY AND WIN
初心者から中級者まで

上山憲一 / 著



企画センター

Remember when we told you a couple of years ago about the first three racquetball courts that opened in Japan. Well, by the end of this year, you can expect to see over 100 courts in use.

And don't be surprised to see a full scale pro stop in Japan either this year or next. That's because a 500-seat three-walled glass stadium court is being built in Yokohama.

Several club owners and architects, led by Japan racquetball consultant Ken Ueyama, took a tour of clubs last summer in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Las Vegas to learn the American way of doing things.

Ueyama is one of the leaders of racquetball promotion in Japan. In fact, he has recently come out with a book titled *Racquetball: How To Play And Win* and has opened a school to develop teaching pros which he has called (are you ready for this?) The San Diego School of Pro Racquetball.

It was Ueyama who helped bring Dave Peck and Marty Hogan to Japan in early 1982 for an exhibition tour. It was this tour that set the stage for an exhibition tour last fall by pros Lynn Adams and Jennifer Harding.

The Japan Racquetball Federation is still in existence these days but, like everything else, it now has competition from another

national governing body.

There are other forms of competition. American racquet companies are competing for sales of racquets in Japan. Clubs are trying to outdo each other (one club was sued by an American club for "stealing" its name) and there is even competition when it comes to books. As soon as Ueyama's book was released, World Games competitor Michikane Ken Ishiguro came out with a racquetball instruction book of his own.

Welcome to the world of racquetball!

Ektelon Championships

Play in the 1983 Ektelon Racquetball Championships begins this month in eight cities.

This year the tournament regional sites are Boston, New York, Miami, Chicago, Denver, Houston, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Regional competition will continue through April with the National Finals set for May 12-15 in Anaheim, Calif.

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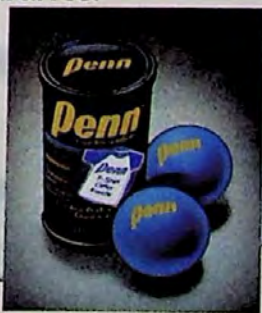
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SHORT SHOTS

Longest Match

Pat Frankoski and Bob Guerrero played racquetball for 40 straight hours to break the existing "same players" marathon record which was reportedly 25 hours.

The record, which will be submitted to the *New Guinness Book of World Records*, took place at Supreme Court in Reno, Nev., and helped raise \$7,000 for the Nevada chapter of the Olympic Blind Ski Racers.

The two players were allowed a two minute break between each game and a five minute break every hour.

In a related marathon, Doug Van Nispen, 30, of Duluth, Minn. played for 50 straight hours against several opponents to raise \$1,000 for the benefit of muscular dystrophy.

Doug won 42 of his 50 matches and did not lose until his 22nd hour of play. In 1977 Doug had part of his right ankle removed as a result of an industrial accident.

The 50-hour marathon—not a world record—was held at the Duluth Court House.

Smacquetball

The latest "other game" invention to hit the racquetball court is Smacquetball.

The game is a combination of racquetball and handball and features hand racquets, one for each hand. The hand racquets are about 9 inches long



and 7 inches wide and were perfected by Steecon Enterprises of Huntington Beach, Calif. They are made of high impact fiberglass reinforced nylon.

In Smacquetball, the racquetball backhand is obviously discarded in favor of the handball "other hand" shot. A special two-toned (blue and orange) "large and squishie" ball has been designed by AMF Voit for use in the game. The pair of racquets will run about \$50 and the ball is expected to retail at \$2.25.

The rules are somewhat the same as racquetball except that three-wall serves are legal and one game is 31 points (can

score on serve or return and must win by two points). Tiebreakers are to 16.

The game is the invention of King Lambert, President of Racquets West Co. of Santa Ana, Calif. Lambert is a former nationally ranked tennis and squash player.

Wanted! Somebody To Play

Glen Loucks of Campbell River, British Columbia has an interesting problem. He can't find anybody to play against.

Loucks had learned his racquetball in Edmonton, Canada, which besides being known for hockey star Wayne Gretzky, is considered a hotbed for Canadian racquetball players. In Edmonton he was a "B" player. In Campbell River he is an "A."

After moving to Campbell River on Vancouver Island, Loucks hasn't been able to get the competition he wants. In fact, on some days he is the only person in his club to step on the court the entire day.

The closest club to Loucks' home is a good 30 minutes away and he didn't want to keep making that long drive for nothing. So Loucks had an idea that he hoped would generate interest in the game while at the same time give him some competition.

He put up a sign that stated, "Anybody who can beat me in a game will take home a free case of beer." That seemed to do the trick. He started to get players to challenge him.

"So far I haven't had to give any beer away," says Loucks.

Don't Be Surprised If...

Don't be surprised if star racquetball pro Marty Hogan leaves DP Leach Industries this year.

Hogan's contract is up with DP Leach in June, and already he has had offers from other companies.

At first it was thought Hogan would sign a contract with his good friend and business partner Charlie Drake, and that Drake would put out a line of Marty Hogan signature racquets but according to Hogan, Drake has a three-year "non compete" clause in his contract prohibiting him from going into competition with DP Leach.

Drake will end his relationship with DP Leach in February after several years at the helm.

Diversified Products has closed down its San Diego plant and moved operations to its home base in Alabama.

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James B. Sicking

By Rhonda Wilson

After 24 years in show business, James B. Sicking of the critically acclaimed television series *Hill Street Blues* maintains a modest perspective about his goals as a professional actor. "I just want to do a scene as well as I can do it," says Sicking, whose gradual acting success (from stage to soaps to television and feature films) came despite relative anonymity.

Sicking refers to his record of 20-years plus in show business as simply "dumb luck." "I've always liked acting," he says. "It is a very difficult, competitive and a highly risky profession. It takes a combination of survivalship and the correct judgment to stay in the business. It's also a combination of being lucky and making your own luck."

His "dumb luck" attitude also extends to his racquetball game. Even though he is a serious racquetball competitor, he has no ambition to compete in regular amateur tournaments. On the other hand, he is always one of the first to sign up for the less-skilled but more fun tournaments. "I think racquetball is easier to play than tennis," he says. "You can still get a sensational workout in an hour—rain or shine. It's a wonderful strenuous workout. I travel often and California has an enormous amount of racquetball facilities where I can still keep in fit while away from home."

An ardent handball player for years, Sicking made the transition to racquetball at the suggestion of a friend about six years ago. He's been hooked ever since. "Singles in handball really gets to be a tough game," he admits. "Racquetball is easier to play than handball because you are able to cover the court easier and in racquetball a racquet extends your arm a foot longer. In handball you have to develop your left hand. You can't hit a backhand shot in handball. You have to hit it left-handed. If you are going to become really good in handball, you have to become ambidextrous."

Sicking and *Hill Street Blues* co-stars Ed Marinaro and Bruce Weitz along with executive producer Steve Bochco and *Racquetball Illustrated* editor Ben Kalb placed third in the Sports Connection (Santa Monica, Calif.) Tournament for the benefit of cancer research in the summer of 1981. Sicking has also played in the Steve Garvey Racquetball Classic for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society as well as other tournaments, and even 10K runs.

"I'm not without sensitivity to the difficulties in the world," he says. "I'm truly a sucker. I'm running a 10K for the Los Angeles zoo and they don't even have a disease they're fighting

against out there.

"All of these activities which are healthy and good for you are also activities that help to support charities," he says. "Rather than just being a dodo celebrity who stands around and signs autographs, you can get involved."

Lt. Howard Hunter, the character Sicking portrays on *Hill Street Blues*, probably would agree. Hunter himself is a man who just won't stand around. Assigned to the Emergency

"Rather than being a dodo celebrity who stands around, you can get involved."



James B. Sicking, as he portrays the pompous Lt. Howard Hunter in *Hill Street Blues*.

Action Team (EATers), Lt. Hunter is a somewhat frustrated cop. His highly tactical military expertise is rarely used by the police department, but that doesn't stop him from sticking in his hard-line opinions to try and get involved.

"Howard has a relatively simple answer to a lot of complex problems," says Sicking. "I find him challenging because you cannot take him for granted. You must pay attention to him because it is not a set role. You just can't put on the auto pilot. If you play him a little bit too high he becomes a little too maniacal and heavy. You have to play him real and you have to play him committed."

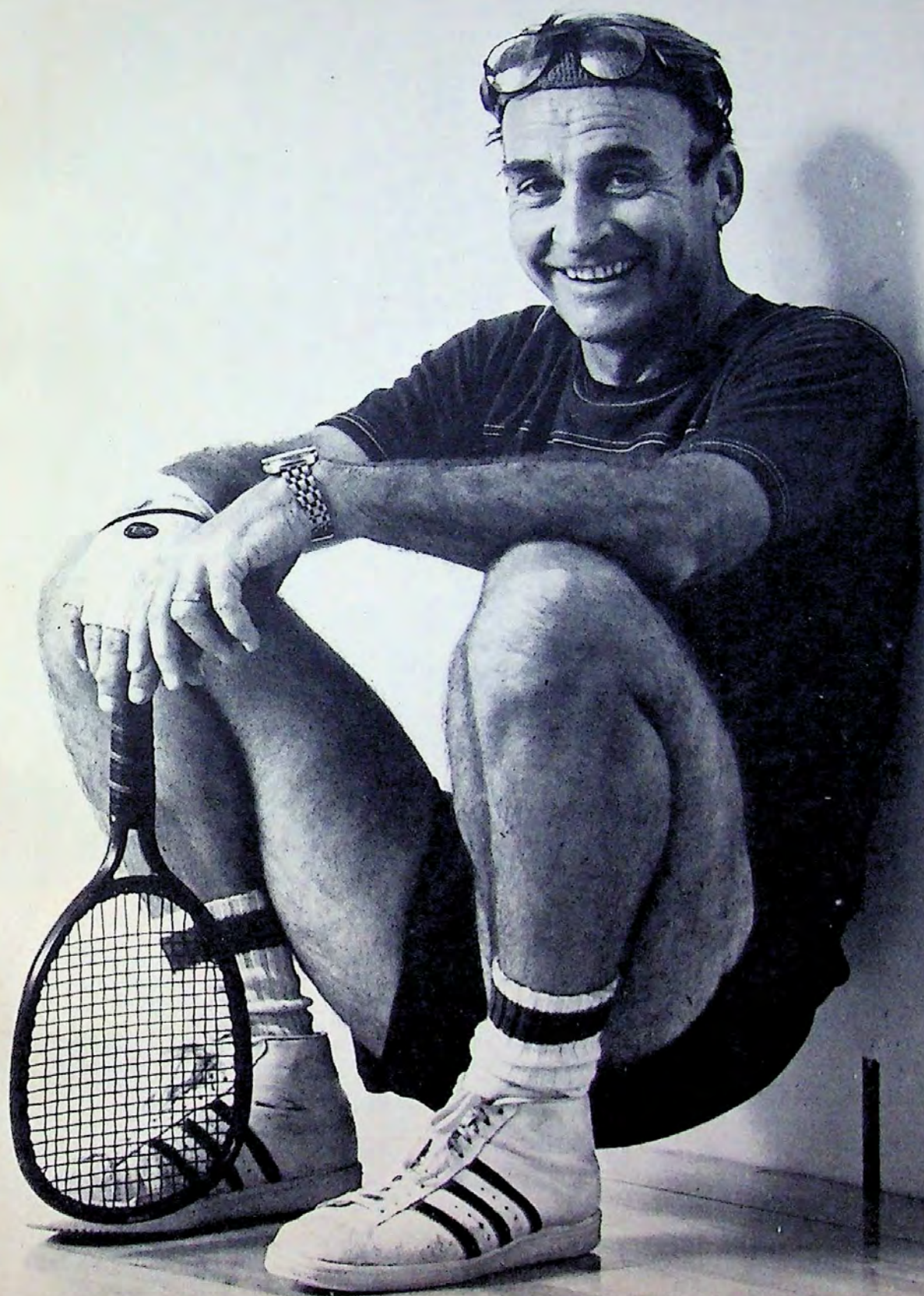
Now in its third season, *Hill Street Blues* won more Emmys than any other series the past two years. This is surprising, considering *Hill Street Blues* was the lowest rated episodic television show ever to get a second season on network television. Out of 99 shows, *Hill Street Blues* was ranked 89th in viewing popularity in the Nielsen ratings its first season. Fred Silverman, then president of NBC, renewed the show despite its poor ratings, because of critical acclaim.

"Fred Silverman was committed to the show," says Sicking. "He thought that there was an audience for the show and he wanted to go on for another season because he was sure he could find it. And he was right."

Needless to say, one year and 14 Emmys later (eight in 1981 and six in 1982), the show has found its audience. "I think we came at a time when television wasn't as good as it should be," says Sicking. "It stands out even more. I believe that the critics and the people who celebrate excellence are trying to send a message to television that you can do better and should do better."

"It is difficult to maintain quality on a show, especially under the schedule that we are on," he says. "Each year we do two or three shows better than the year before. So there's a continual rise within the show and continual commitment. If this show can come back in the second year and receive 21 nominations and six Emmys then that means it is maintaining quality."

Directing or producing could be the next step in Sicking's career. But he is carefully charting that career course before he makes any major decisions. "There are many creative jobs in the business," he says. "I don't think acting is the ultimate job. I think the longer you work in the business, the more demanding it is that the work be good and that you do it with people who are challenging and fun to do it with. If I couldn't find another television show

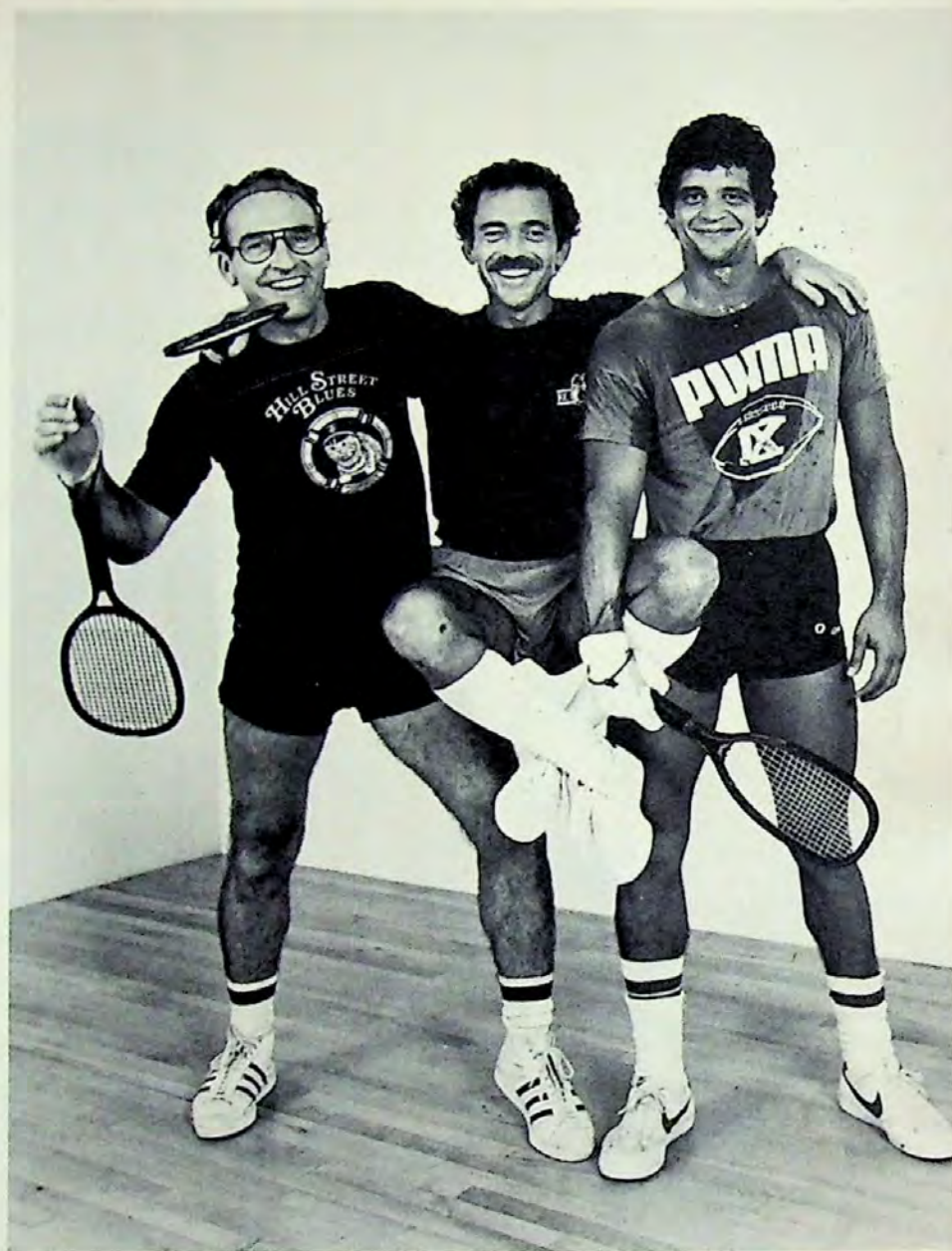


CELEBRITY GALLERY

"I enjoy being a father and husband more than anything else."



Sikking (left) and fellow *Hill Street Blues* cop Ed Marinaro give a lift to Bruce Weitz, who also is a co-star in the show.



or feature film to do after *Hill Street Blues*, I would probably go back and do stage work."

Stage is not unfamiliar to Sikking. He has appeared on stage in *Damn Yankees*, *Waltz of the Toreadors* and Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite*. Sikking has also made television appearances on *The Rockford Files*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Charlie's Angels*, *The Incredible Hulk* and *M*A*S*H*. About six years ago, he co-starred on the NBC series *Turnabout*. And soap opera fans may remember him for his work as a troubled doctor on *General Hospital*.

Motion picture credits include *Ordinary People*, *The Electric Horseman*, *The Competition* and a racquetball opponent for Sean Connery in *Outland*. Sikking's next film release is a motion picture, *Star Chamber*.

He portrays Dr. Harold Lewin. Co-starring Michael Douglas and Hal Holbrook, the movie is about a group of judges who are fed up with the judicial system and take the law into their own hands.

Currently residing in West Los Angeles with his wife of 20 years, Florine, and their two children, Sikking would like to think of himself as a "laid back, middle-aged (48 years old), semi-adult. I'm basically a loving, wonderful person," he says. "I enjoy being a father I think more than anything else. I enjoy being a husband as well."

In addition to racquetball, Sikking spends his exercise time skiing and jogging. He also is quite a wine collector, owning close to 1,000 bottles. Stony Hill Chardonnays and Jordan Cabernet Sauvignons are two favor-

ites. "I collect them to drink," he says. "I don't resell them. It's just a way of saving money. It bothers me a great deal to pay \$20 to \$40 for wine. I prefer to buy the wine when it's \$6 to \$10, hold it for eight or ten years and then drink it."

It would seem apparent that patience is the essence of Sikking's professional career and his private life as well. Patience to wait for one bottle of wine to age for almost a decade. Patience to stay in show business for more than two decades. And patience as a racquetball competitor to learn more and more about the game in an effort to achieve a physically fit lifestyle.

"I am a very fortunate person," he says. "My family and I are healthy and happy and I do the work that I want to do."

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Fourth Annual



Welcome to *Racquetball Illustrated's* Shoe Guide, our fourth consecutive year with a consumer's view on the best bets in athletic footgear.

This year we have decided to do something a little different. In addition to racquetball shoes, we are reviewing running/jogging shoes and all-purpose shoes. The racquetball industry today actually encompasses more than just racquetball. Most athletic clubs feature exercise classes, jogging tracks, aerobics, etc.

In addition to our Shoe Review, we offer a story by North Carolina doctor Harvey Tilles. This article should answer your questions in relation to foot injuries and what to look for when buying shoes.

As with most things, prices went up in shoes the past year. Our last two shoe guides reported an average price of about \$32. This year the average price for shoes is about \$37.

Most shoes come in styles for men and women, and in a variety of sizes. They are available in pro shops, department stores, sporting goods stores and, of course, shoe stores.

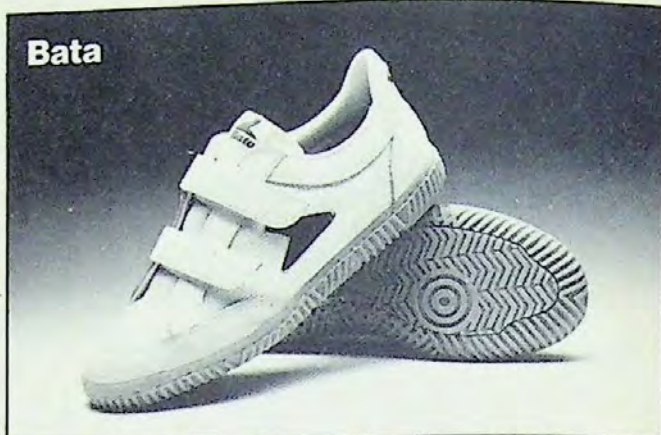
1983 Shoe Review/Racquetball

Adidas



The Indoor Court features nylon velour reinforced uppers. Rubber sole and perforated toe box. New inset arch zones improve traction on court. **\$29.95**

Bata



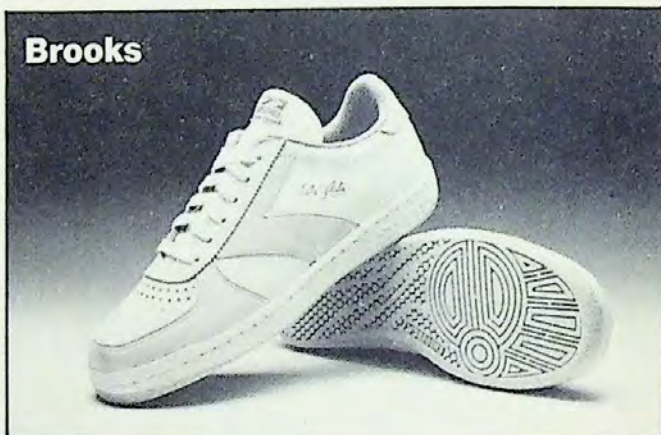
The Elite features a nylon mesh upper and split leather vamp to impede toe abrasion. The leather two-strap "velcro" closure offers quick fit adjustment during play. Pre-molded removable footbed insole. Radial shell rubber molded outsole. **\$32.99**

Bata



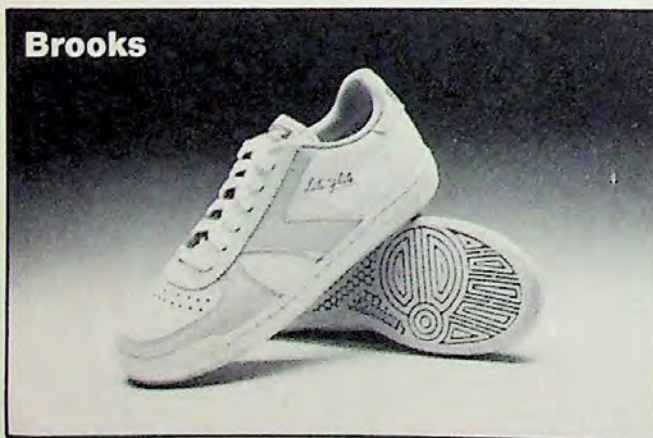
The Spiker has a nylon mesh upper trimmed in white leather. A molded "size determined" arch cushion provides additional support. Precision designed outsole allows lateral and medial movement. **\$26.99.**

Brooks



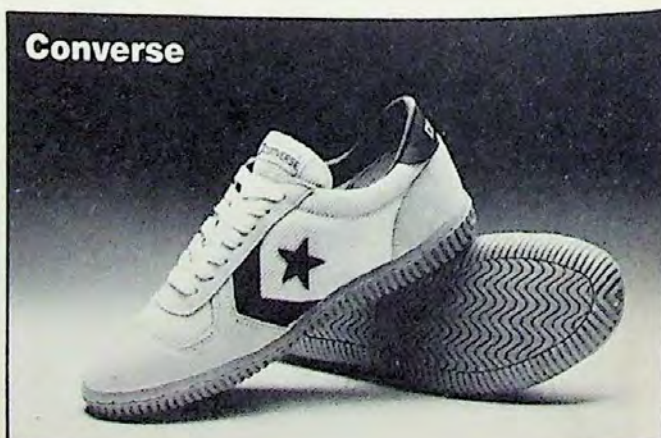
The Lite Flite (men's) is made with a full grain leather and synthetic upper. Terry cloth on polyurethane sock lining. Contour molded with EVA midsole. **\$39.95.**

Brooks



The Lady Lite Flite. **\$39.95.**

Converse



The Checkpoint is made with flexible mesh/foam/tricot upper. Reinforced contoured suede toe and heel piece. Rubber shell outsole has radial edges. The insole is cushioned with duck-covered sponge foam. **\$29.95.**

Envoys USA



The racquetball shoe features a channel-stitched molded outsole. Latex sock and cushion arch. Full grain split level upper. **\$27.**

Foot-Joy



The racquetball shoe features white nylon mesh and oyster suede leather. Polyurethane "air-flo" shock resistant removable innersole. Cushion tongue and gum rubber outsole. **\$37.**

Pony



The Indoor Radial II (men's) has a lightweight cushioned nylon "U" throat upper. Nylon mesh vamp. Fully padded topline and extended achilles tendon guard. Lightweight, molded compound shell sole. **\$29.95.**

Pony



The Lady Indoor Radial II. **\$27.95.**

Tred 2



The Z (men's) features natural suede leather/nylon mesh upper. Natural gum rubber sole. Suede reinforced heel and toe. **\$28.95.**

Tred 2



Lady's Z. **\$27.95**

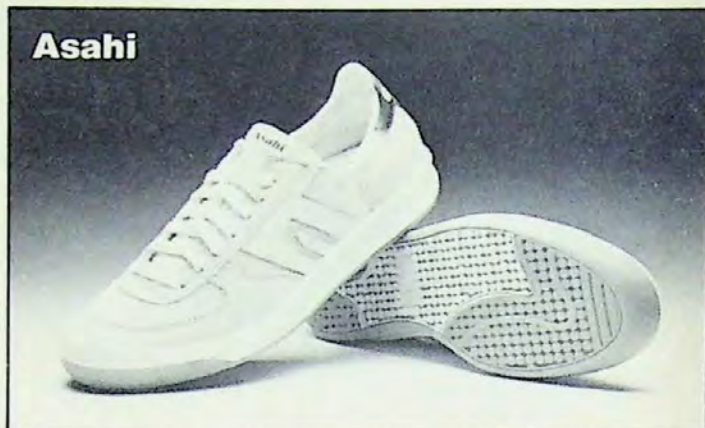
1983 Shoe Review/All-purpose

Adidas



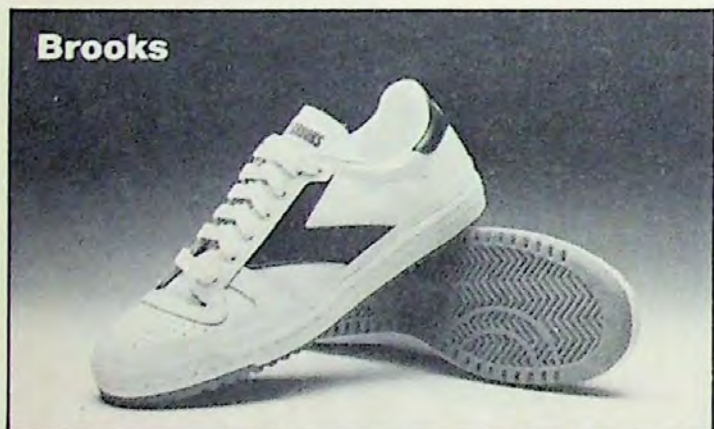
The Summit features nylon velour uppers. Rubber sole and EVA midsole wedge. **\$23.95.**

Asahi



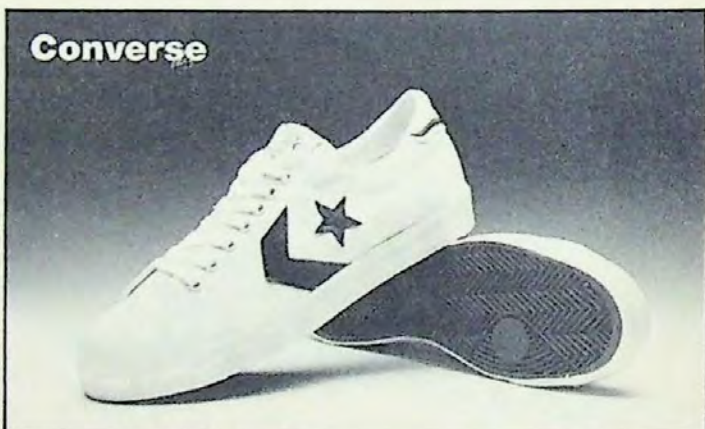
The PM I is made with a polyurethane midsole to increase shock absorption. Mesh upper with leather reinforcement. Removable padded insole. A dual-density synthetic/rubber sole. Synthetic heel and toe. **\$53.95.**

Brooks



The Supra Court-Lo features leather upper. Terry cloth and foam sock lining for shock and perspiration absorbency. Radial side wall outsole for better gripping. EVA wedge and perforated toe box. **\$39.95.**

Converse



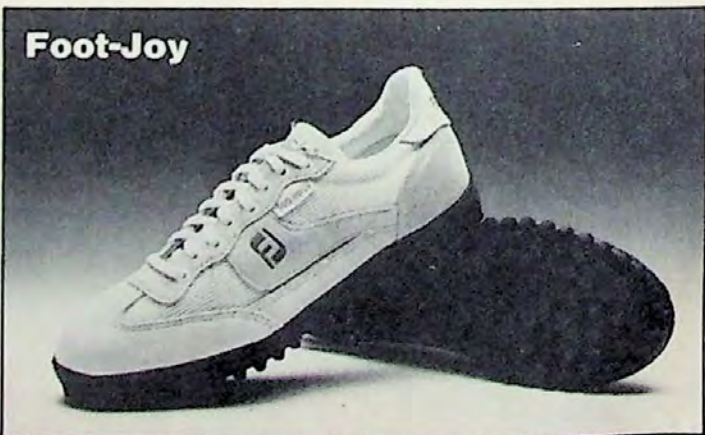
The Paragon features a canvas upper with a double reinforced rubber toe guard. Padded heel collar and tongue. Outsole is made with a deep herringbone tread pattern for increased traction. **\$23.95.**

Envoys USA



The Turf is made with a cleated-channel stitch and multi-studded rubber outsole. Medial extended heel counter. Compounded midsole wedge for shock absorption. **\$30.**

Foot-Joy



The Field is made of white nylon mesh and oyster suede leather. Polyurethane "air-flo" shock resistant removable innersole with form fit support. Cushion tongue. Turf lug long wearing outersole. **\$29.**

Le Coq Sportif



The Team Shoe (women's) features a double density polyurethane sole with nylon upper. **\$36.** Also available in men's, **\$39.**

New Balance



The Jamboree is specifically designed as an aerobic dance shoe. Counter cradles heel to provide rear foot stability and prevent heel slippage. Sock lining foam protects against heat build up. EVA midsole. **\$32.95.**

New Balance



Promoted as a hard court surface shoe, the CT features a vinyl leather and urethane foam collar to support the ankle and achilles tendon. Gum rubber outersole. Dense polyethylene insert reduces fatigue during long play. Memory foam shapes to the foot. **\$54.95.**

Nike



The Challenge Court features an extended ankle collar to minimize motion within the shoe. Nylon mesh upper. Bi-level hobnail outsole provides additional traction on court surfaces. Integral arch sockliner. **\$39.95.**

Pony



The Concorde is designed specifically for basketball and tennis. Leather upper with perforated vamp. Stitched rubber bottom for increased traction on all court surfaces. **\$25.95.**

Puma



The Puma Court-Lo is made with a heavy duty canvas upper. Dual purpose sole for basketball or tennis. Terry-lined insole. Rubber sole and reinforced toe. **\$25.**

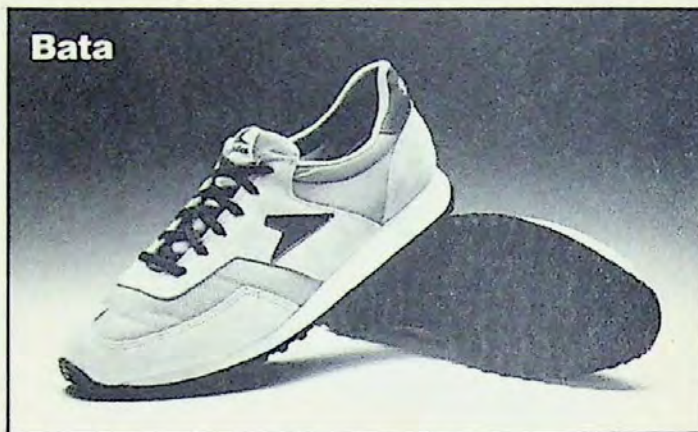
1983 Shoe Review/Jogging

Adidas



The Atlanta features nylon uppers. Lightweight velour reinforcements at heel, toe and eyelet stay. Lightweight foam inlay sole with terry lining instantly forms to the shape of the foot **\$49.95.**

Bata



The Jupiter features a combination of nylon mesh vamp and oxford weave nylon quarters "U" throat construction with saddle/quarter overlay "Rubberlon" (a blend of EVA and rubber) midsole **\$33.99.**

Brooks



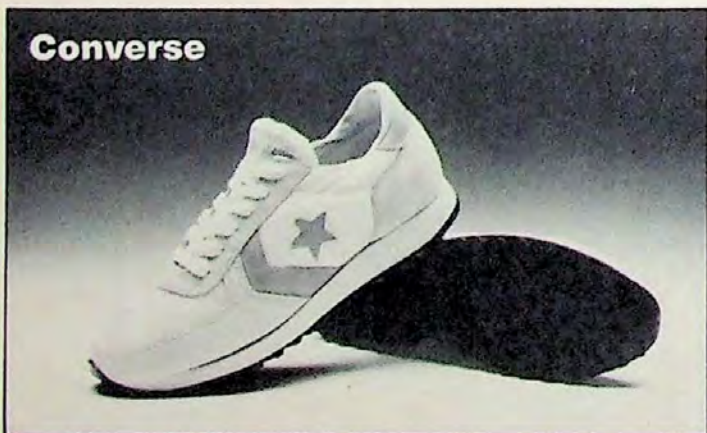
The Chariot is made with a nylon triple mesh/foam/tricot. Customized tongue is extra wide at the top for wrap and positioning. Extended pigskin saddle at mid-foot. Perled nylon taffeta insole lining. Three-M reflective material on heel and tongue for night running **\$59.95.**

Converse



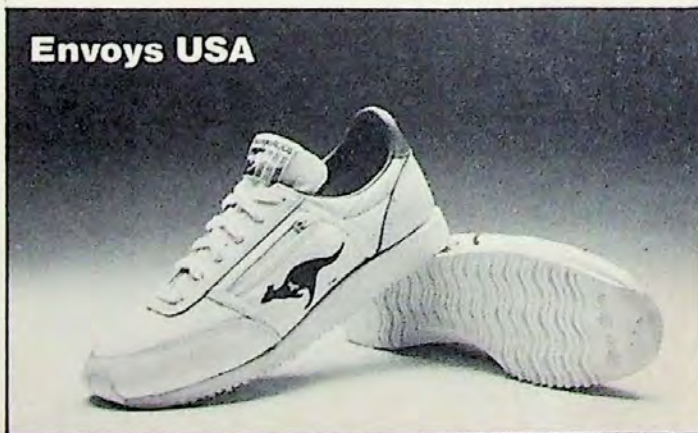
The World Class (men's) is made with a lightweight nylon reinforced upper and suede heel and forefoot. Molded heel counter and rubber outsole **\$29.95.**

Converse



The World Class (women's). **\$29.95.**

Envoys USA



The Comet is made with a shock absorbing and lightweight sole. Rubber outsole with high impact heel base. Removable and supporting cup insole. A notched heel to protect achilles tendon **\$39.**

New Balance



The 990 is recommended for the serious runner. Slip-lasted for maximum forefoot flexibility. Pigskin upper. Patented double-extended polyurethane counter. Carbon rubber heel and 3M reflective back tab for higher visibility at night. **\$100.**

Puma



The Saas I (men's) features a nylon upper with suede reinforcement. Removable nylon covered footbed. New unitized heel system with integrated heel counter. **\$42.50.**

Puma



The Saas I (women's). **\$42.50.**

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The Anatomy of a Foot

Here, in one article, is everything you need to know about foot injuries and how to buy proper shoes.

By Dr. Harvey G. Tilles

Editor's note: The author is a sports podiatrist in High Point, North Carolina and is the team podiatrist for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Over 40 percent of all injuries in racquetball are to the foot, ankle or knee. It would seem that this is a boon to the sports podiatrist or orthopedic surgeon. But many of the pains which active players sustain can be self treated quickly, easily and, most importantly, safely. By following the guidelines set forth in this article you will be able to evaluate your injury and determine whether or not a trip to the doctor is necessary. Just remember, however, that these guidelines *must* be followed completely to remain safe and sure. Don't cheat. When the guidelines say "Go to the doctor," then it is time to go.

GLOSSARY. It is beyond the scope of this article and your interest (probably) to attempt to educate you in the technicalities of the structure and mechanics of your lower extremities. But there are some terms which you must understand:

Rear foot—the area of the heel.

Mid-foot—from the heel to the ball of the foot.

Forefoot—from the ball of the foot to the end of the toes.

Pronation—rolling the foot inward or, more technically, downward displacement of the arch.

Acute—the stage up to 72 hours after the onset of your injury or symptoms.

Subacute—the stage after 72 hours.

Chronic—long-term symptoms of injury.

FLEXIBILITY. It seems that everyone writes articles for sports magazines on warm-ups and flexibility exercises. Is it just that it is an easy subject on which to expound? Far from it. Stretching and other warmup activities are of critical importance in the prevention of injuries and the continued enjoyment of your sport. The greater the intensity of your game and the longer the time you play the more important preliminary stretching and warmup becomes.

R*I*C*E. This is the keystone around which the rest of this article will revolve. It

gives the method of self-treatment which you will use while determining whether or not your injury is one which will require professional care. R*I*C*E stands for:

R—Rest

I—Ice: 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for at least the first 48 hours.

C—Compression: Wrapping with an elastic bandage starting from the toes, wrapping the foot and above ankle.

E—Elevation: Raising the foot above the level of the heart.

As you noticed, there is no mention of heat or moist heat in the R*I*C*E formula. That is because in the "acute" stage (first 48 to 72 hours) you *do not* want to apply heat. Just use R*I*C*E.

In the "subacute" stage of injury (72 hours to one week), moist heat in the form of a moist towel over which a heating pad is placed, is used in conjunction with ice. The formula is 20 minutes of ice followed by 40 minutes of moist heat alternating through two or three cycles.

In the "chronic" stage you should use moist heat only for at least 40 minutes a day.

After injury you may return to play when you have regained a full range of motion with little or no pain. If you still have some minimal pain, use ice for 20 minutes immediately after playing even before taking that well-deserved shower. Then use moist heat as soon as possible thereafter, even if it is several hours later. If you do not play on a given day after injury, still use moist heat. So much for the general guidelines. With these, you should be able to take care of your own minor injuries much better. Now to get down to more specific forms of injury.

FOREFOOT PROBLEMS. Due to the violent stopping and starting, twisting and turning, and constant weight-on-the toes stance which characterize the lateral sport of racquetball, it has been my experience that short of ankle trauma, the majority of injuries which racquetball players incur are to the forefoot. Most of these injuries are of the chronic type.

There are two forefoot injuries, however, which need immediate medical attention: *Fracture and/or Inflammation of the Sesamoid*. Perhaps the most disabling and serious forefoot disability is the fracture of the sesamoid bone. This small bone is the ball under your big toe. It is very similar to your kneecap, and is located in a tendon. The sesamoid is fractured by a sudden and forceful pushing off or jumping on your toes. If you do not receive relief within 72 hours after this injury and applying R*I*C*E, then you should see a sports podiatrist. After x-raying both of your feet he may be able to ascertain a fracture. A plaster of paris casting should be done immediately if an early diagnosis is made. If you wait too long, however, strappings, injections and castings are a waste of time and surgical excision will be the only form of permanent relief. This is why I said not to wait longer than 72 hours. In the ten-or-so cases of sesamoid fracture which I saw last year where the patient waited over three weeks before seeking professional help, surgery was necessary in all cases.

STRESS FRACTURE. A stress fracture is an easy injury to suspect but a difficult one to diagnose. "I don't know what happened. I didn't fall or twist it. But it hurts!" Redness and tenderness on the top of the foot may indicate a stress fracture. Unfortunately, an x-ray diagnosis may take two to three weeks after onset of the symptoms to establish that an injury is, in fact, a stress fracture. However, it is imperative that the racquetball player see a sports podiatrist if R*I*C*E has been applied and symptoms of this type linger on for a week.

NEUROMA. This is an enlargement of a nerve in the ball of the foot. It is characterized by pain in the ball of the foot and tingling and burning in the toes. There will be no swelling, and it would usually not be seen on an X-ray. Rest will not have any effect on a neuroma, and ice is the specific immediate treatment. For lasting relief, however, either mechanical or surgical treatment will be necessary.

CAPSULITIS. This is a subacute and chronic problem. It is characterized by pain at the joint of the second or third toe. Once again, these injuries are caused by the pressures of racquetball playing on the ball of the foot. The immediate treatment of capsulitis is to apply ice after playing, and then moist heat. You can continue to play with capsulitis if you follow these rules, but the pain will not usually go away if you do. If, however, you utilize R*I*C*E and the pain does not go away in 72 hours, get over to your sports podiatrist to make sure that what you have is not actually a stress fracture. As I said before, capsulitis is chronic in some people. If you are one of these, here is a trick which may help you out. Make a roll of gauze about one-half inch in diameter and tape it in the crease under the second, third and fourth toes of the affected foot. This will act as a protective buffer for this tender area and should help prevent re-injury.

TENDONITIS. This condition may be found in any part of the foot or ankle, and may be either acute, subacute, or chronic. Tendonitis can be characterized by early morning stiffness (not to be confused with arthritis), or stiffness and tightness in and around your joints after you have rested. Sometimes this tightness and pain disappear as you warm-up or begin to play, but with acute tendonitis you hurt all of the time. The treatment for tendonitis is R*I*C*E and from 12 to 14 aspirin a day to relieve pain and inflammation. In acute tendonitis rest is absolutely necessary. This condition responds well under a doctor's care to ultrasound and stronger anti-inflammatory medication. This condition may or may not stop your physical activity depending upon its severity and location.

MIDFOOT PROBLEMS. The usual mid-foot problem is an inflammation of the tissues on the bottom of the foot (plantar). There is a band of ligaments running from the heel to the ball of the foot which may become inflamed as the foot over-pronates during the rigors of play. This condition is gradual but can quickly become a chronic problem. R*I*C*E and aspirin should be started immediately. A commercially available arch support may be placed in the shoe to control the pronation. If the pain increases in intensity, professional assistance should be sought. This condition is called "plantar fasciitis."

REARFOOT PROBLEMS. Since the

ligaments which caused the pain in the midfoot problems (plantar fascia) are connected to the heel of the foot, over-pronation can lead to rearfoot problems also.

PERIOSTITIS. The pain in this problem is caused by an inflammation (-itis) in the covering of the bone. As this condition gets more severe, a heel spur may develop. Again, R*I*C*E, moist heat and aspirin are the proper treatment. The commercially available arch support and a doughnut cutout for the point of tenderness may alleviate the pain. Caution: Even though the other foot may not be hurting, you must put arch supports and/or doughnuts in your other shoe or you will create an imbalance which will lead to other problems.

TENDOACHILLES TENDONITIS. Pain in the back of the heel may be an inflammation of the achilles tendon. It may be caused by improper stretching and warmup, improper shoes and/or over-pronation. R*I*C*E, moist heat and aspirin should be instituted as soon as the pain begins. A quarter-inch heel lift should be placed in both shoes to ease the pressure on the tendon. This condition is quite disabling, and treatment should be immediate. Due to the possible severity of the pain and disability, professional treatment may be necessary.

SKIN PROBLEMS. The most common skin problem that the sports podiatrist sees are blisters. To prevent blisters the racquetball player can either wear two pairs of socks or get Spenco Insoles from an athletic shoe supplier. If a blister should develop anyway, a small puncture hole toward the back of the blister should be made with a sterile needle. This will release any fluids which may have accumulated. The cap of the blister should be left alone, and a sterile dressing should be placed over the area.

BLOOD BLISTERS UNDER NAILS.

These are usually caused by wearing shoes that are too short, or a toe box in the shoe that is too narrow. A proper fitting shoe is a must.



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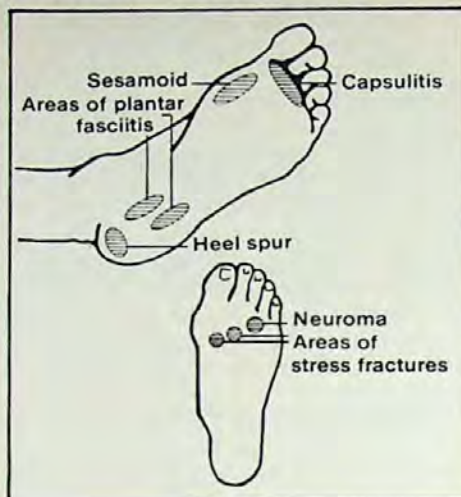
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Anatomy of a Foot



Treatment of blood blisters under the nails consist of bursting the blister with a sterile needle and covering with a sterile dressing. If this becomes a chronic problem, small adhesive tape dressings around the nail usually suffice as a preventative.

INGROWN TOENAILS. One of the more disabling toe injuries is an ingrown toenail. It is caused by a portion of the nail cutting into the soft tissue surrounding it. If there is no infection, carefully lift the edge of the nail (so that it may grow out properly). If there is infection, hot soaks should be used. If all attempts along these conservative methods fail, your sports podiatrist should be consulted for permanent relief of the problem. Do not cut into the corners of the nail yourself! This may aggravate rather than alleviate the problem.

ANKLE INJURIES. Next to forefoot problems, ankle injuries are the most prevalent acute injuries of the lower extremities. These may occur either by twisting the ankle during play or by stepping on your opponent's foot or the ball, or by running into the wall. If an ankle injury happens during play, the area should be packed in ice immediately. Do not use heat. The R*I*C*E treatment should be used. If after 72 hours a complete range of motion and activity cannot be undertaken, professional help must be sought. The chronically sprained or strained ankle should be reinforced by strapping before playing. An adhesive strapping by a professional is the most advantageous, but this is not usually practical for the recreational racquetballer. A proprietary-type of ankle brace or elastic bandage is second best, and should suffice. These will not prevent reinjury, but will allow the athlete to feel his ankle turning and allow him to right his foot before reinjury. A hightop shoe will also give the player this sensitivity.

SHOES. Probably the most important article of clothing to be worn by the racquetball player are his shoes. The court shoe is the only shoe that should be worn while playing racquetball. The running shoe is for running and walking. It is designed for lineal sports (forward motion only), and is specifi-

cally utilized to minimize trauma in the rear foot through cushioning. It does not supply the support necessary for the lateral motion which racquetball entails. The running shoe simply is too unstable and will cause, rather than prevent, many injuries when used for racquetball.

There are many shoes from many manufacturers on the market, and there are specific things which you should look for when buying a court shoe.

Obviously, the shoe should fit. Fit should be from the ball of the foot to the heel and from the ball of the foot to the end of the toe as well as the width. The racquetball player should be sure that there is enough toe room in the width, toe box and length for comfort. When trying the shoe on, you should attempt to forcibly jam your toe into the end of the shoe to ascertain if the shoe is long enough. Also, when buying your shoes use what you would use on your feet when playing. If you usually wear two pairs of socks, do so. If you use orthotics, make sure that your new shoes will fit with the orthotics in them.

The shoe must be flexible and must bend at the ball of the foot. Take the toe and the heel and bend the shoe. If it bends anywhere else but at the ball, don't buy it. Look at the heel. The heel should be as wide as possible and should be higher than your normal street shoe. I doubt very seriously whether you are going to find this sort of shoe, but you can modify the closest one that you can find to make it a better racquetball shoe.

Certain shoe modifications may be necessary either for a specific problem or to make a shoe more functional. A quarter-inch heel-raise from the back of the heel tapered to just behind the ball of the foot will make the shoe more functional. This heel-raise will help prevent tendoachilles problems, calf problems, and create a more functional environment for the foot in racquetball by getting you "on your toes." This heel lift will have to be made by your shoemaker, and should be firm.

ORTHOTICS (shoe inserts). Many problems can be avoided with a biomechanical device called an orthotic. These devices are professionally dispensed by sports podiatrists who are trained in diagnosing the mechanical problems of athletes. Orthotics are made using a plantar casting of the foot and are custom-built. They are extremely effective for most mechanical problems, but must be specifically dispensed for your foot and your problem.

CONCLUSION. As with almost everything else, there are exceptions to what I have just said. So use my recommendations and R*I*C*E as guidelines. But if you have any doubt about your injury or the cure for it, see your sports podiatrist. He should have the final say about your injury, and by paying attention to his or her guidance, you will be able to recover and begin enjoying your sport again at the soonest possible time.

R



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Do You Take This Partner...?

Like a strong marriage, the success of a good doubles team is a result of compatibility.

By Rhonda Wilson

You can take the two best racquetball players in the world and put them together in a doubles tournament and chances are excellent they will both be going home before the finals. On the other hand, you can take two mediocre players and put them together on a court and things will just mesh. Start counting the titles.

So what does it take to make a successful doubles team blend well on the court? Why can't two singles superstars combine their individual success and do the same thing? Most doubles teams agree that trust in a partner's shot selection is necessary as well as the sense to know what the other person's moves will be. They call it compatibility.

It's like a relationship or a marriage of sorts. "The secret is to find a partner you can get comfortable with," says Mark Malowitz, who with partner Jeff Kwartler, have won several national doubles titles.

But the real key—the one thing that answers the question about why two singles stars can't do the same in doubles—is ego. "It helps if

neither one of the team is on an ego trip; a glory hog on the court," says Malowitz. "If Jeff is playing real well, I don't care if he gets 21 points in a row, as long as we win."

But even if one of the players is scoring all the points, the other player isn't just standing around watching the action. He's there, ready to help when needed. If nothing else, he is giving moral support to his partner, encouraging him to continue his assault. "There have been times when I've stood behind my partner and, as I'm watching him, I'm hitting every shot with him," says 28-year-old Dan Massari, 1981 Ektelon-Perrier doubles champion with John Mack, 23. Mack and Massari, both from Los Angeles, have played together four years.

Massari, a former minor league baseball player in the Cleveland Indians organization, and Mack are a strong team, partially because one is a righty (Mack) and the other a lefty. Although not a prerequisite to garnering championships, righty-lefty teams can be stronger because the opposition has a hard time avoiding forehands. But regardless of

what hands the players hold the racquets in, the key is to know where the other guy is at all times.

"There are times on the left wall when I know John is going to be hitting a certain way," says Massari. "So I start making my move. I do this kind of back up step up the side wall and let his shot go underneath my feet. I know exactly what he is going to do the whole time."

Mack, too, has learned Massari's moves. "I'll be watching him shoot and know exactly when he is going to take an overhead. I instinctively take a few steps toward the center and sure enough, the ball zips right past my ear."

Once the two players learn each other's moves, the element of uncertainty is eliminated. "There's hardly any guesswork between Stan (Wright) and myself," says 25-year-old Steve Trent, 1982 Miller Lite/Seamco AARA National Doubles Champion and former national doubles champion with Wright, 31. "We have a very good relationship on the

court. I know what his shots are going to be and he knows what my shots are going to be. There is always communication on court. There's very hardly ever a time when we are second guessing who is going to get the ball."

What makes Wright and Trent's success so

amazing is that they rarely practice together. Distance is the problem because Wright lives in San Francisco and Trent resides with his wife (racquetball pro Karin Wallon-Trent) in San Diego. However, both feel they know each other's game well enough that hours of tandem practice is no longer important for tournament play. "Many times we won't play together for maybe three months and we will still go in and win these tournaments," says Wright. "It's because we gel so well and we can read each other so well."

Kwartler and Malowitz live in Houston. But even though they live in the same city, they only need a minimal amount of time to plot strategy against opponents, even during a

match. "Since we know each other so well (they have been a team for eight years), we don't need to call a time out to talk things over," says 22-year-old Kwartler. "We figure if we call a time out, we are giving our opponents time to figure alternate strategy plans against us."

"We usually end up playing the same teams, anyway," says Malowitz. "If you play a team long enough, there is no need to talk about strategy. Unless, maybe, you are playing a team that is exceptionally hot, then you might have to call a time out and re-evaluate. But we've played together long enough that we don't have to do that often."

When you've played together as long as

Doubles Pointers

Ceiling Balls. The ceiling ball should be your last desperation shot. The best thing to do is attack. Hit your opponents before they hit you.

Zone offense. There are three basic power zones in doubles racquetball: Down the left side, down the right side and down the middle. Find out which is the opponents' weakest zone, and hit to it.

Court Communication. Communication is the most important thing. You shouldn't be upset with your partner at any time.

"I" Formation. Don't play an "I" formation. Usually in the "I" formation, one of the players has a weak spot and they are trying to cover it up.

Patience. Don't think that you have to kill every ball. You should consider moving the ball around the court. A kill shot is not the only shot. Go with percentages.

Picking a partner. Find a partner who you can stick with. Find a partner who you are going to play with consistently and who you feel comfortable with. You don't have to be best friends to play doubles. But on the court you should blend well. Try to find a lefty righty combination. There are few backhands that are going to compare to someone's forehand.

Game Plans. Don't change your style of game to someone else's. If you try to react to someone else's style, that means you don't have enough confidence in your own.

Warm-up drills. Make sure you practice the shots that you are going to be hitting in a tournament. If it's a righty-righty combination, the guy on the left should be hitting ceiling shots and shooting off the back wall from the ceiling because that's basically what he's going to be seeing most of the time. Make sure you are not pushed into saying that you are ready to begin the match. A lot of referees want to get the matches going. If you don't warm-up properly, you are going to end up losing the first few points.

Practice drills. Stand at the short line and just blast the ball at each other to try and quicken reflexes.

Natural spin. You should always go the direction the ball is coming. If the ball is coming into you, you want to go with it. There is a natural spin on the ball and you don't want to hit against it.



Mark Malowitz and Jeff Kwartler



John Mack and Dan Massari



Steve Trent and Stan Wright

Trent-Wright Win AARA Nationals

Second seeded Steve Trent and Stan Wright fought back from a 16-2 deficit in the first game against last minute tournament entries Dan Massari and John Mack and went on to win, 21-17, 21-13, in the finals of the 1982 AARA National Doubles Championships at the Federal Way (Wash.) Athletic Club.

The tournament was sponsored by Miller Lite and Seamco.

"We never lost our cool when we were down," said Trent. "We constantly changed our game strategy when our shots weren't working. Instead of being aggressive, we waited for them to lose the match."

To reach the finals, Trent and Wright of California beat Jack Newman and Brian Sheldon of Tennessee, 21-12, 21-20, and Californians Mack and Massari topped Oregonians Tony Krause and Hank Marcus, 21-13, 21-16.

Mack and Massari pulled the upset of the tourney by defeating top-seeded Mark Malowitz and Jeff Kwartler, 21-19, 21-6, in the quarters. "We were looking ahead to Trent and Wright and we weren't taking the match seriously enough," says Malowitz. "They put us on the defensive right away. We couldn't stick with our normal game plan."

In the women's open, Tammy Hajjar and Beth Latini defeated home-state favorites Kim Tiedeman and Lee Jew, 21-9, 11-21, 11-6.

In the men's 25+ division, Tony Krause and Fielding Snow defeated Gary Mazaroff and Dan Massari 21-13, 21-13. Bill Dunn and Bill Thurman beat Pat Page and Ron Strom, 21-16, 21-7, to win the men's 30+ division. In the men's 35+ division, Bill Dunn and Bill Thurman defeated Mark Wayne and Jerry Davis, 21-10, 21-11. Jim Austin and Bill Schmidtke defeated Bud Muehleisen and Myron Roderick 21-16, 21-11 in the men's 40+ division. But in the men's 45+ division Muehleisen and Roderick were victorious over Sid Williams and John Silverman, 21-1, 21-10. In the men's 55+ division, Bert Morrow and Les Skelton defeated Scotty Deeds and David Hughes, 21-8, 21-17. Morrow and Skelton also captured the men's 60 division over Ike Gumer and Irv Zeitman, 21-5, 21-12. In men's B, Steve Hull and Mike Griffith defeated Jim Ford and Jim Collman, 21-8, 21-19. In mixed doubles action, Don Obremski and Tammy Hajjar defeated Beth Latini and Hugh Klein, 21-8, 21-14. And in the women's 30+ division, Wanda Collins and Lee Jew defeated Jeanie Farrel and Marilyn Ross 13-21, 21-14, 11-3.

Doubles

Kwartler and Malowitz, you also may develop superstitions. When in familiar cities, Kwartler and Malowitz usually dine out at a restaurant that has given them good luck in the past. After Kwartler and Malowitz won a tournament in Las Vegas, the hotel they were staying at, the Dunes, offered to pick up the tab for any restaurant in the city. Kwartler and Malowitz took the hotel up on its offer and presented the Dunes with a tab—from Jack-In-The-Box. "Jack-In-The-Box sponsored a doubles tournament we won in Arizona about two-and-a-half years ago," says Malowitz. "We never ate so good."

To attain the ideal level of play in doubles, teams must be able to compensate for each other's weaknesses. Each partner probably has some weakness and, if so, the other player better be strong in that area. What one may lack in foot speed on court, the other must make up for in consistency, and what the other lacks in shot making, his partner will compensate for in center court coverage. "In the beginning I was considered a little better player," says Wright. "But as time has gone along, Steve has gained a little ground. Many times he will outperform me on the court." He smiles and adds, "I lay back more and let him have a little of the limelight now."

Conceding the limelight to someone of equal skill is sometimes not a joking matter. No matter how hard doubles teams try to avoid it, prides will occasionally be hurt. "I think one of the things that really hurt us in the past was that we went through personal changes," says Massari. "We stopped pulling for one another at one point. I don't know why it happened but I got this feeling we were competing against each other instead of pulling for one another. John and I have supreme egos about being such good singles players that I think that was something that we had to contend with as a doubles team. Most other teams don't have to mentally contend with that."

It was competition against each other, that proved their downfall and then their resurgence. After Massari had beaten Mack four times in a row in local singles tournaments, Mack finally proved victorious. That singles victory may have been the most important win for his doubles career.

Anticipation is probably the most important part of single's play, but positioning is the key in doubles. Fully aware of Kwartler's lack of speed on court, Malowitz knows where to position himself. "We both play in a Z formation," says Kwartler. "I play in a whole circle and go wherever I need to be. Every time I go to swing, I know Mark is coming to back me up. So in case the ball is coming at me too fast, I'm just going to let it go because I know he'll be back there."

Other teams have things down more scientific. They even know the exact ratio of shots that will be retrieved in the back court by their partner. Trent and Wright say the hitting ratio is 70 to 30 in favor of Trent. "Steve is much faster than I am," says Wright. "He can run the



Tammy Hajjar and Beth Latini won the AARA women's doubles title (top). Bottom: Dan Massari scores point on this backhand but it was Wright and Trent who took the title in men's finals.

balls down going toward the back wall and retrieve them much better than I can. We rely heavily on our hand speed and quickness up front but once the ball gets behind us I rely heavily on Steve to make up the ground with his foot speed."

There are times, however, when an individual's strength may get the best of him. Mack is a flamboyant shot maker, and his partner Massari believes John should stick with regular shots. "I jump on John hard because he is so good on the right side that sometimes he gets too cute with his shots," says Massari. "He'll either try to hit a reverse backhand pinch to the right corner from shoulder high or go to the front court, hit an incredible pinch shot and the next play they will force him to the back rear corner and he'll hit the same exact shot for a winner. Then he'll go back to the front court and hit a backhand the same way. It's just incredible but half of the time he's making it. It's the half that he doesn't make that I get upset about."

Most teams encourage each other even when play is going bad. Mack and Massari sometimes do it differently. They think a scant amount of aggression toward each other is required. "I don't like to direct anger at another team," says Massari. "But sometimes if you can direct it at one another, you might motivate each other. You might initiate some kind of a fire somewhere in the person. A lot of times I'll needle John a little to get something out of him. He'll hit a great shot and I'll say, 'It's about time. That's the partner I used to know.' I'll say something like that just to remind him what he should be doing."

But most teams think that outbursts at each other defeats their playing rhythm. "I'm never going to cut Jeff down for a shot he made and he's never going to cut me down," says Malowitz. "That's the number one way to wreck a doubles team. You start fighting and not only are you mad at your opponent, you are mad at your partner and you are mad at yourself."

"When players get real tense and fight, that's when they usually miss their shots," says Kwartler. "As long as you are out there trying, that's the best that anybody can do. Whether he makes a shot or not, you know that he's out there to win just like you are."

Although good singles players in their own right, none of the six players quoted in this article are on the pro tour. Massari was ranked around 20th before the men's tour went invitational but the rest never have made big names for themselves in singles. With that in mind, all of them seem to hope that a pro doubles tour is set up, or at least added to the current singles tour.

"The crowds love doubles. It is faster. There is more shooting and the rallies are longer," says Kwartler.

"I'll never go away from doubles," says Massari. "I may take a short vacation from it but I'll never stop playing it. I know how it feels to win as a doubles team, and believe me, it's great."

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The Power Backhand

By Marty Hogan

The long-run benefits are numerous. Players always attack the backhand first. If you respond with some unexpected backhand kills, they will start hitting your forehand—a shot you know is even more devastating. Very few players can recognize when an opponent has a better backhand than forehand. They revolve their entire game plan around attacking the backhand. Their mind is locked: attack

"A full pendulum swing is necessary to generate maximum power with minimum effort."

the backhand: the forehand is too good.

But the backhand is really not that hard to master. To conquer it requires mostly a psychological victory. We learn to bat forehand, throw forehand and the masses tell us that the backhand is hard. So when we get around to thinking about the backhand we have already developed a deep-seated fear of it. But in reality the backhand should be easier to hit than the forehand. The mechanics of the backhand are in your favor because at the point of contact your whole body weight is behind the ball rather than in front of the ball as it is in the forehand. Fear comes from the uncertainty of the untried and a lack of backhand muscle development. Hours of proper practice will remove the stigma that a weak backhand is normal and therefore, acceptable. It may be normal, but it is definitely not acceptable.

Technique

It is very difficult to effectively describe the mechanics of any stroke let alone my backhand. A proper education should combine observation and experimentation framed by some basic principles. I will outline my laws of motion below. But you should watch the top players execute their backhands and try to develop a mental image of the essential features of the stroke. Chances are they don't hit the ball quite the same way I do, but at least you will get some approximation of the proper stroke.

There are five main features of my backhand: 1. a universal grip—same as the fore-

hand; 2. a full pendulum swing; 3. a very low posture; 4. a powerful leg thrust into the contact zone, and 5. an explosive wrist snap.

I use basically one grip for the forehand and the backhand. Tennis players call it a continental grip, midway between a conventional forehand grip and a conventional backhand grip. In reality, top players who follow the one grip school of thought make small adjustments. I am no exception. But the main point is that I make my major adjustments by changing the wrist snap. The adjustment aims for a flat contact with the ball, directed toward the bottom board. This requires good timing, well-developed racquet sense, and a strong wrist. These qualities can only be developed by long hours of practice until the wrist snap becomes an integral part of every shot and you literally feel the ball.

At first glance, this goal may seem too lofty for the casual player. But that's only because the voices of the past tell you that it's impossible, or that it's unorthodox. But if you can learn to hit the forehand and the backhand with just one grip, you will be rewarded with moments of brilliance, and a greater range of shots. Never again will you be jammed while changing grips.

A full pendulum swing is necessary to generate maximum power with minimum effort. Many players do not get the full benefit of the pendulum swing because they imitate a bat swing in which the racquet trajectory resembles a roundhouse swing. The proper racquet trajectory is more like a golf swing but with the stroke moving in the plane perpendicular to the floor and in the direction of the intended shot. The stroke is an up and down motion, not a circular one. Of course, the swing must level off at the bottom to prevent excessive skipping.

To start the pendulum swing, your weight must be transferred onto the back foot in a closed stance. Then as the ball approaches, draw the arm and racquet back along the perpendicular plane of the forward swing and point the forearm straight up to the sky. Many racquetball teachers preach that you should bring the racquet back early and hold the ready position. Unfortunately, if you follow this rule with the full pendulum swing, you will be extremely cramped. You'll lose the rocking effect needed to get a maximum wind up. The only important preparation is to constantly shuffle the feet into proper position with your weight ready to spring off the rear foot. The backswing motion should be timed so that you get maximum extension without holding



When I played my first national tournament in 1969, I noticed one thing about most of the players, even some of the top ranked ones: their backhands were far inferior to their forehands and often were used only in a do-or-die situation. Even today, some of the top pros have weak backhands.

I decided then and there that I would be a player with a balanced offense—a threat from either side. Thus, I practiced the backhand much more than the forehand. The results? A backhand which I think is more accurate and powerful than my forehand. And others have told me it is the most awesome shot in racquetball next to my power drive serve.

In order to have a balanced attack and prevent your opposition from picking apart your backhand you should spend a considerable amount of effort to make your backhand as big a threat as your forehand.

yourself in an awkward set position.

At the apex of the backswing, the wrist should be curled but relaxed, ready to explode toward the ball. At this point, all the muscles from the waist up which will contribute to the power component of the stroke should be at maximum extension like a taut rubber band ready to snap. This means lifting the racquet (which is now behind the left ear) further up towards the sky. You should feel like someone yanked you from the ceiling. The shoulders rotate away from the oncoming ball with the right shoulder dropping. The hips shift further toward the back foot. This position should be reached in one smooth motion and held only for a split second.

Preparation for the wrist curl is much like a karate punch. The wrist is relaxed, almost floppy, when it is brought back to its maximum extension at the apex of the backswing. This reduces wrist fatigue, and lets you easily adjust to unpredictable shots. But as the racquet begins its journey toward the contact point, the wrist muscles reach their maximum extension in a fully cocked position.

During this setup phase of the stroke, you should already have a low posture in which the legs are bent, almost a squat. Your upper body should be bent at the waist. It is extremely important to be low to the ground when hitting a kill shot. If you have never tried this, you may find that you will need to do some exercises to strengthen the leg muscles, a requirement for this semi-crouched position.

As I begin the downward swing of the racquet, I squeeze the grip, pull down with the racquet, push off with my rear leg, and accelerate toward the contact zone. My shoulders and hips begin to uncoil. The contact zone is in front of my starting position but just anterior to my right knee. As I step into the ball, I form a closed stance. In order to keep the ball from sailing on contact, the right shoulder must level out just like the racquet trajectory. In a setup, most of my power is generated from my legs, not my arms or upper body.

In the final phase of the stroke, the swing levels out just before impact and the wrist snaps with a level follow through. The ball should explode off the racquet strings. If the stroke is not level at the contact point, the ball will either skip or sail.

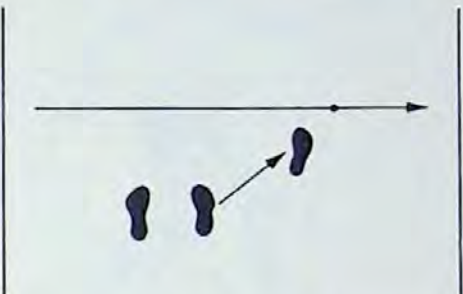
The powerful thrust and step will tax the muscles in your right thigh. To avoid this, transfer the weight in the direction of the shot and follow through naturally. Snap the wrist so that the ball is almost flat. This gives maximum power and minimizes the chances for error when fatigue sets in. With underspin or topspin, the ball will float or skip when you get tired. The wrist snap is to be made right before impact. Snap too early and you will lose valuable energy. Snap too late and you will not generate maximum power.

Timing, of course, is the key to hitting with maximum power while expending a minimum amount of effort. It can't be taught on a point

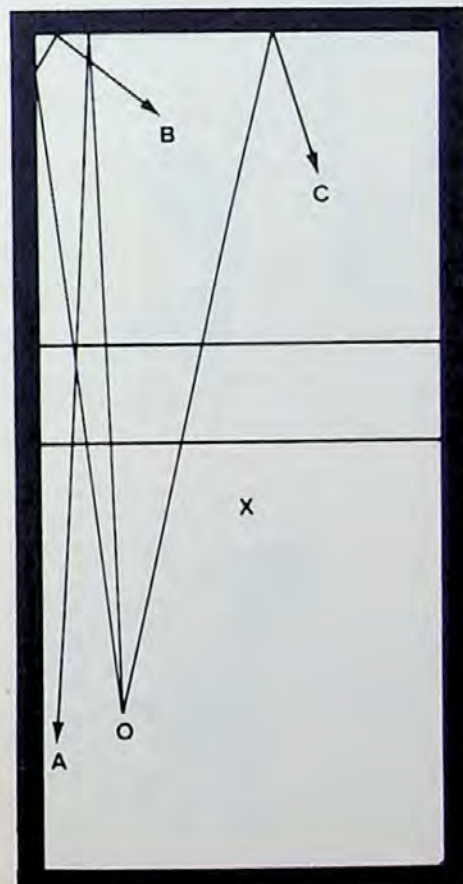
by point basis. Rather it must be learned by the "feel technique" in which you spend time on the court feeling the racquet make contact with the ball, feeling the flow of the backhand swing. In all cases, strive for a relaxed swing in which the arm moves freely without hitches or hesitation. Experiment with different techniques to increase your racquet awareness.

Strategy

Although the backhand down-the-line shot is more difficult than its forehand counterpart,



Hogan suggests a diagonal step into the ball to get the maximum amount of power into the shot.



Aside from the kill, the backhand arsenal includes a down-the-wall pass (A), a pinch (B), and a cross-court kill (C).

the best strategy is still to hit about 75 percent of the backhands straight down the line. Mix in about 25 percent backhand pinches or cross-court kills. Three shots down the line and one complementary shot is a good frame of reference. The reason behind this strategy is that as the backhand explodes down the left wall, your opponent will have to contend with the side wall. In addition, it takes much less time for the ball to travel to the front wall when hitting down the line than cross-court.

At worst, if the ball does not catch the side wall, any kill attempt that stays up will carry your opponent to back court on his backhand side. The three shots down the wall should prime your opponent for the second of the one-two punch. A reliable straight-in kill shot will be feared and will make your opponent tend to lean to the backhand side. This sets him up for other shots, the best of which is the pinch.

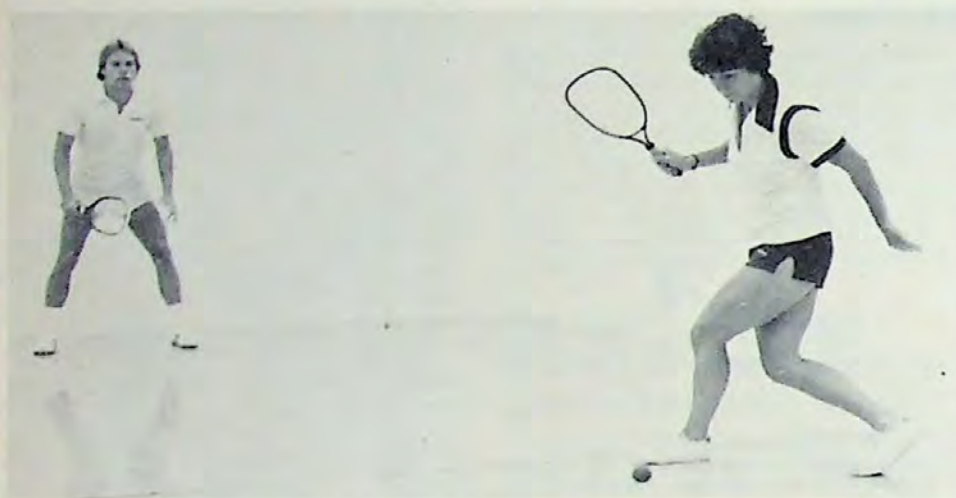
I also follow the same strategy on the backhand return of service. Other pros respond to a drive serve left with a ceiling or pass shot. I choose to shoot into the left corner. Since the backhand is my strength, I go on the offensive whenever I can. I have timed the drive serves of some pros to the point where my backhand kill off their serve is automatic. That's why a lot of players are now lobbing my backhand because they know it's suicide to hit any other serve.

Unfortunately, the technique and strategy that I have outlined so far is not all there is to the Hogan backhand. The real difference which sets my backhand apart from all the other backhands is that I can take any shot with my feet in any position and still power the ball into the left corner. This comes from avoiding the early set-and-hold technique advocated by most racquetball teachers. I use a compact but fully extended backswing, and I practice fluid weight transfer and body flow into the contact zone. In short, my backhand is extremely versatile because I have avoided some of the very checkpoints demanded by other racquetball teachers. Instead, I stress timing and stroke creativity. In a match, the ball is hardly ever in a position where you can take the ideal stroke. Why then force yourself into waiting for these few opportunities? Why not create your own opportunities by learning to adjust to the situation at hand?

Get out of the straightjacket forced on you by the old school. Start hitting backhands with a free swing to develop the backhand muscles. Then learn to adjust to changing situations by hitting backhands with lots of wrist snap. Finally, work on fully extending the backswing. At first, the results may be frustrating. But at some point, you will discover that so long as you stay relaxed, flow into the contact area, and snap the wrist, the backhand will no longer be just a pop gun in your arsenal but a cannon which will explode you to the next higher level of play.

Serving: Using Deceit to Overcome Conceit

By Jennifer Harding and Jean Sauser



Anyone who wants to win a match against a more powerful hitter will have to find ways to make up for that shortcoming in power, and there is no better place to start than in the service zone.

If you find yourself on the wrong end of a power advantage, you can be sure that your opponent is conscious of that fact too. Confident of his greater strength, he will try to kill half his shots and drive the other half down your throat.

Overcome this conceit of power with deceit. Out think him. Service is your golden opportunity. It is the one time during any rally when you have undisputed control over the action.

You have an opportunity to "ace" your opponent or, at least, elicit such a weak return that you can go for a point winner on your next shot.

The secret to winning serves is to reduce the amount of time your opponent has to react to the ball and get set for his shot. His ability to return is in direct proportion to the amount of time he has available after first figuring out where the ball is headed.

Power hitters minimize this reaction time by simply blasting the ball faster than the eye can move.

Those of us of lesser strength have to concentrate more on deception to keep an opponent guessing about the ball's destination right up to the last possible moment.

That is not to say that you shouldn't put as much speed on your serves as possible, though. Don't be content to just lob the ball into play on the assumption that you don't have the power to "ace" your opponent.

You can, in fact, take advantage of your service edge and get the ball by your opponent by serving deceptively and putting a medium pace on the ball.

Your first deceptive technique—one which can and should be mastered by players at every level—is camouflage.

Often times, a player will telegraph his

Jean Sauser demonstrates a typical approach to serving, maintaining body movements for different serves while only changing the angle of the racquet face. The middle photo shows how she can confuse her opponent, who doesn't know whether the serve will be a forehand drive or a Z to the backhand. By contacting the ball a little later (bottom) Jean can plan either a drive to the backhand or a Z to the forehand.

serves by always hitting the same serve from the same spot in the box or changing the way he approaches the ball for different serves. An alert opponent will pick up on, for example, the way you angle your shoulders toward the front-wall-side-wall seam during your Z-serves or the fact that you always serve your drives from the middle of the box. If that happens, forget about scoring on your serves.

There are only four basic serves in racquetball: The drive, lob, garbage and Z-serve. You should be able to serve each of them from all positions in the server's box and approach all of them in exactly the same way.

As for approach, many players simply stand near the short line with feet together and step into the ball, hitting it off their lead foot as they serve. Others rock back and then forward as they take that step, gaining greater momentum for a power stroke. Still others practically run up to the ball as they hit it.

From the standpoint of deception, there is one approach which we have found helpful. Stand with the heel of your front foot touching the toe of your back foot. Take your first step toward the front wall with your back foot and then drive into the ball with your front foot.

This gives you power off the back foot and enables you to turn your shoulders toward the front-wall-side-wall seam during your serve, rather than before it. It's important to have your shoulders lined up correctly for a good Z, but it would give the serve away if done before the serve is begun.

Whether you choose this approach or one of the others is not really important, though. What is important is that you find one that you are comfortable with and that you always execute in exactly the same way.

While you want to approach all your serves in exactly the same way, you don't want to always dish up the same serve or stand in the same spot. If you become predictable, the battle is half lost because your opponent will soon be able to anticipate your every move.

Keep him mentally off-balance by mixing up your serves and by hitting them from different spots in the box. You should follow a service strategy that involves deception and plays to your opponent's weaknesses.

This, of course, is not easy. It requires concentration and racquet control and that means plenty of practice between matches. Likewise, your service strategy will change from opponent to opponent and you'll have to figure each out for yourself. After all, that's what the thinking game is all about. There are some general guidelines, though, which you can follow.

Most people have a preferred spot from which to serve. For many, it's the middle of the server's box because that enables them to immediately capture the center court position. Sometimes, righthanders serve from slightly to the right of middle, hoping for a



An alternate approach to serving, which makes it easier to disguise a serve, is to take an initial step behind your lead foot before stepping into the ball.

wider angle which gives the ball more chance of cracking out from the floor seam. Likewise, of course, move to the other side of middle.

It's okay to serve from your favorite spot for most of your serves, but not all of them. Move around enough to present your opponent with a variety of attacks and just one more variable to clutter up his mind.

Start off the first game of the match with your best serve to be on the safe side. You will probably want to start off in your favorite service spot as well, but throw in an occasional change of position and/or serve. You should be looking for the serve or spot to which your opponent is most susceptible and which is "on" for you this game.

As your confidence and accuracy build, start "working" your opponent. For instance, the drive serve to his backhand—a power hitter's number one weapon—is a good first serve to start off any rally.

Begin with, say, three consecutive drives to his backhand, keeping them as hard and low as possible. Try to get him to lean to that side and then zing one to his forehand without changing anything about your serve except the angle of the racquet face. Make sure that forehand shot is right on because any serve to an opponent's forehand is flirting with a kill return.

You may want to try the same series again by change position on the fourth serve, or change position and zing the same hard drive to his backhand. You may want to intersperse a change-of-pace ball such as the lob, garbage or Z-serve.

An opponent who has been blistered by drives often overreacts on these slower balls and, in his attempt to blast them, misses. You may even find that your opponent is particularly susceptible to these soft serves. Many players who can handle the hard, fast stuff all day long get twisted up when faced with a high lob to their backhand corner or the crazy path a Z-serve follows.

For this type of player, you may want to reverse your whole strategy and intersperse your soft serves with drives instead of the other way around.

As you can see, the possibilities of change in pace, position and service combinations are endless. Always be aware of what your opponent is doing in a match, that is, his habits.

Likewise, be conscious of your own habits, your own strengths and especially your weaknesses. Take advantage of your service edge and follow your game plan.

Above all, concentrate on what you are doing. If you can't overpower an opponent, you better be able to out think him.

The Fine Art of Back Wall Play

By Jack Reznik

The art of playing the ball as it rebounds off the back wall is one of the most important skills that should be mastered for successful racquetball play. Although theoretically, the back wall shot is one of the easiest to hit since the racquet and ball are moving in the same direction, it is, however, one of the most difficult techniques to learn. Once mastered, back wall play becomes the delight of the advanced player. Those who fail to master it generally never rise above the level of mediocrity.

Back wall shots are not really shots *per se* but actually the method of playing and hitting the ball after it rebounds from the rear wall. Usually, the ball is played in the air after striking the back wall. It may however be played on the bounce upon rebounding only if it did not contact the floor prior to hitting the rear wall. In either case the ball may traverse the court from the front wall straight to the rear wall and rebound directly off the rear wall. On occasion it may travel around one of the corners before rebounding off the rear or side wall.

During the course of a game, many returns will be played off the rear wall. These returns can be made using all the basic racquetball shots or their variations. The shots can be executed from the forehand and backhand sides with either a sidearm, underhand or overhand motion. The arm motion most frequently utilized and recommended is the sidearm stroke.

For some players, especially beginners,

the effective execution of back wall play poses great difficulty. Generally, these players lack the timing and instinct so vital for anticipating where the ball will rebound in order for them to move into the correct position for executing a good return. Novices also lack the patience and the skill

"Without good footwork, you will not be able to achieve correct ball alignment."

needed to let the ball drop to the lowest possible point before hitting it.

Beginners are primarily concerned with hitting the ball. These players more or less "poke" and hope they hit the ball and that it reaches the front wall some way, somehow. If and when the ball is hit, it is considered a triumph.

As beginners progress to the next level, they begin to acquire more confidence in their skills. They no longer attempt to hit the ball as soon as they can but wait a fraction of a second long to let the ball drop to approximately waist height before striking it. These players still need to practice and improve their timing and skills until they can move to

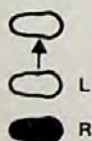
the correct position for hitting the ball with ease and wait for the ball to drop to knee level or lower before contacting it. Once they reach this advanced stage, playing the back wall will be a joy. Advanced players love to see the ball hit hard and high so it rebounds off the rear wall for they know their next shot will be a set-up.

Footwork

A major key that must be learned to master back wall play is the proper use of the feet. Without good footwork, you will not be able to achieve correct position and ball alignment. You will also find yourself chasing after the ball and running around the court like a chicken with its head cut off.

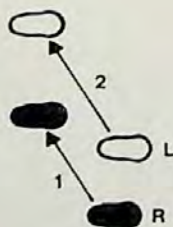
Have you ever watched a racquetball game between a beginner and an advanced player? If so, you probably noticed the advanced player appeared to move very little compared to the beginner. One of the major reasons besides skill is proper footwork. The importance of correct footwork cannot be over-emphasized. It is the nemesis of many racquetball players.

There are two primary methods used to play the ball after it rebounds off the back wall. They are the Stop-and-Hit techniques. A third method, the Pivot-and-Turn is a variation used in conjunction with these two techniques for playing balls that travel around the rear corners of the court or contact the side wall before rebounding off the rear wall. Regardless of which method is used, always



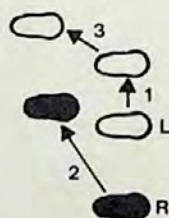
STOP-AND-HIT METHOD FOOTWORK.

Move to the ball, stop, plant your right foot (forehand side for a right-handed player) and step forward to play the ball. The backhand options are the same, but just executed from the opposite side.



WALK-AND-HIT TWO-STEP METHOD

Move to the ball, stop, shift your weight to the left or lead foot, take a step forward behind your body with the right foot and then step toward the ball with your left. Simultaneously with the last step, swing your racquet with a normal forehand stroke. The backhand options are the same, but just executed from the other side.



WALK-AND-HIT THREE-STEP METHOD

Move to the ball, stop, take a short adjustment with the left or lead foot. This is followed by a second step forward behind your body with the right foot and then a final third step forward toward the ball with the left. As you take the third step, swing your racquet with a normal forehand stroke. The backhand options are the same, but just executed from the other side.

INSTRUCTION

keep your eye on the ball. Never turn your back to it.

The Stop-and-Hit Method:

This technique of back wall play is fairly self-explanatory. As the name implies, in the Stop-and-Hit Method of play, you simply move to the ball, stop, plant your foot and then step forward with the other foot and play the ball.

To execute this technique, you should use the following steps:

1. Always watch the ball.
2. Turn in the same direction as the ball travels and face the rear wall after it goes by.
3. Trail the ball to a position near the rear wall.
4. Stop and plant your foot as the ball hits the back wall.
5. Simultaneously with planting your foot, position your racquet behind you about waist high and cock your wrist similar to the back swing in a normal stroke.

There is relatively very little room for error. However, through practice and experience you can learn how the ball bounces in relation to the back wall. This will eventually enable you to anticipate the flight of the ball correctly.

The Walk-and-Hit Method:

The main difference between this technique of returning the ball and the "Stop-and-Hit" approach is the number of steps taken before contacting the ball as compared to only one in the "Stop-and-Hit" style.

The primary advantages of this method are twofold:

1. More linear momentum can be attained before hitting the ball, thus adding additional power to the shot; and
2. more important, it allows you more time to safely move into a good position to hit the ball because you can change your position in relation to the flight of the ball by lengthening or shortening your stride and adjusting the number of steps you take.

To execute this method of back wall play, you should use the following procedures:

1. Perform the first five steps in the same manner as those present for the "Stop-and-Hit" approach.

2. Then as the ball starts its forward flight from the back wall, take a very small adjustment step forward with the lead foot, the one nearest the front wall.

3. After the body weight is shifted to the lead foot, take a second step forward with the rear foot. Make sure this step forward is made behind your body not in front. This prevents tangling your feet and allows better body balance for making a good swing. How far you step forward will be determined by the flight of the ball. (This is a key point for successfully contacting the ball at the correct position.)

4. As the rear foot is planted, the body weight is transferred to it.

5. Simultaneously with the footwork, the racquet should be positioned behind the body, waist high, with the wrist cocked. This is similar to the back swing in a normal stroke.

6. Following planting the foot, step forward with the lead foot toward the ball and swing.

7. The swing continues forward through impact in the direction the ball is hit and then slightly around and away from the body.

8. The height at which the ball is contacted will be determined by the type of shot selected.

Step 2 may be eliminated if the ball is deep in the court near the rear wall. If this is the case, transfer the weight to the lead foot and step forward with the rear foot behind your body following the same procedures 3 through 8. Also if you feel more comfortable without taking the initial adjustment step with the lead foot, then by all means use the two-step approach instead of the three-step. Both are acceptable.

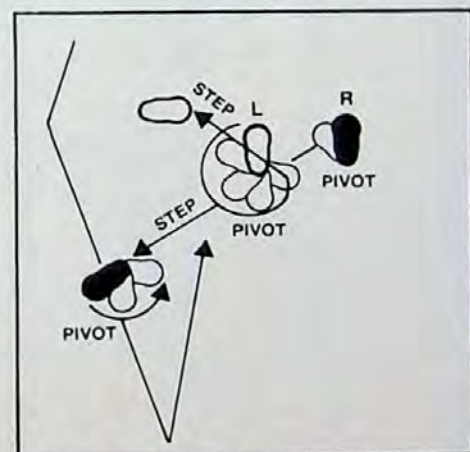
Once again, it is important to point out that this method is more advantageous and is recommended over the "Step-and-Hit" technique because you can adjust your court position very easily in relation to the ball. This allows you more time to let the ball drop to the correct position before hitting it.

The Pivot-and-Turn Method:

This approach to back wall play is a method utilized for playing balls that contact a side wall before hitting the rear wall. It also provides an alternative way of playing balls that travel around the corners of the court.

To execute this technique, utilize the following steps:

1. Watch the angle and flight of the ball as



PIVOT-AND-TURN FOOTWORK

Pivot to follow the moving ball around the corner. Then step with your right foot to move into position to contact the ball. Plant this foot and step toward the ball and as much to the front wall as possible with your left or lead foot. Simultaneously with this first step, swing your racquet with a normal forehand stroke. The backhand options are the same, just executed from the opposite side.

it approaches the rear wall.

2. At the same time, pivot in the same direction the ball is traveling.

Hint: a. When the ball is hit low to your backhand side and you anticipate it will travel around the corner, pivot on the foot on the side nearest the ball.

b. If the ball is hit hard or contacts the side wall high and rebounds in such a way that it strikes the back wall approximately in the middle of the court or on your forehand side, then pivot on the foot farthest away from the ball.

In both cases described above, you will save yourself time and steps in getting to the ball.

3. During the pivot move your racquet to a position about waist high behind your body with your wrist cocked.

4. Continue to pivot and follow the path of the ball.

5. Then step accordingly, incorporating either of the two back wall techniques previously discussed.

It is important to learn and understand all the various techniques associated with back wall play. One method may be preferred over another under certain game conditions.

Back Wall Tips

- Always watch the ball.
- Turn or pivot in the same direction the ball is traveling.
- Begin the backswing simultaneously with the turn or pivot.

- Transfer your body weight first to the rear foot and then to the lead foot when the "Stop-and-Hit" Method is used.

- Use the "Walk-and-Hit" Method when you need to adjust your body position to hit the ball.

6. As the ball rebounds from the back wall, first forward and then toward the floor, step to meet it with a normal stride and stroke, timing your step and swing to make contact in the correct position.

7. Use all the basic fundamentals for proper stroke execution to hit the ball.

- a. The lead foot moves forward with the ball to maintain body balance as the weight is transferred.

- b. Begin with the forward swing simultaneously with the forward step.

- c. The swing continues forward and then in the direction the ball is hit as long as possible before moving slightly around and away from the body.

- d. At the moment of impact, snap your wrist vigorously to add more power to the shot.

- e. The proper height at which you contact the ball will be determined by the shot selected.

The "correct position" for ball contact depends upon two factors—the stroke executed and the shot hit. If a forehand stroke is used, the ball is hit near the heel of the

The Fine Art of Back Wall Play

forward foot, while in a backhand stroke, it is contacted by the big toe of the lead foot. When hitting kill shots, the ball should be contacted as low as possible, preferably knee height or lower. For a drive or pass shot, the ball is generally hit between knee- and waist-height.

The most important or crucial factor in using this method successfully, is foot placement. Obviously, players awaiting the ball may assume a position either too close or too far away from the back wall. Accurately estimating and positioning yourself at the precise spot to await the rebound of the ball is an art that must be practiced and learned.

One of the most common errors of misjudgment associated with this method is setting up and positioning yourself too far from the back wall as a result of not moving deep enough on the court. As this forces you to reach backward, it throws you off balance in order to make the return, causing you to contact the ball too far behind your lead foot. The end result is often a bad or weak return.

If you position yourself too deeply in the court or overrun the ball, it may rebound past you. Then you may find yourself trying to catch up to the ball by lunging forward to execute the shot. Once again, an off-balance shot is performed with the same poor results, namely, an ineffective or poor return.

In other words, to use this technique successfully, you should be in perfect position before contacting the ball.

● When utilizing the "Walk-and-Hit" Method (using three steps), first transfer your weight to the rear foot, then to the lead foot, back to the rear foot and finally to the lead foot as you hit the ball.

● Snap the wrist upon contacting the ball.

● Strike the ball as low as possible, preferably knee-level or lower.

● Maintain a long, low follow-through in the direction the ball is hit.

● Utilize the basic fundamentals of stroking when performing the shots.

Shot Selection

It was previously stated that all racquetball shots and their variations could be utilized to make back wall returns from either the forehand or backhand sides. Of all the shots available, the two primary ones used are the kill shots and the pass shots.

Back Wall Kill Shots:

The kill shot is a formidable back wall return. Sound strategy and common sense dictate that you attempt a back wall kill shot return only when your opponent is out of position or deep in the court unless you are in a desperate situation. Because of the distance the ball must travel from deep in the back court to the front wall, your margin of error is greater. If you shoot kill shot returns,

vary their direction. Keep your opponent guessing. You can hit a variety of them from the same court position.

Back Wall Pass Shots:

These shots are much safer to hit than the kill and should be used interchangeably to confuse and keep your opponent off balance. A good pass shot, besides placing your opponent on the defensive, can also score points. Vary your pass shots using the cross court, angle (or two-wall) and down-the-wall (or alley) strategies. Like the kill shots, a variety of pass shots can be hit from the same court position. A word of caution: Do not hit the ball too hard or too high because you will give your opponent enough time to retrieve the ball as it caroms off the rear wall, possibly for a set-up. Then you will be placed on the defensive instead of hitting a winning or neutralizing shot.

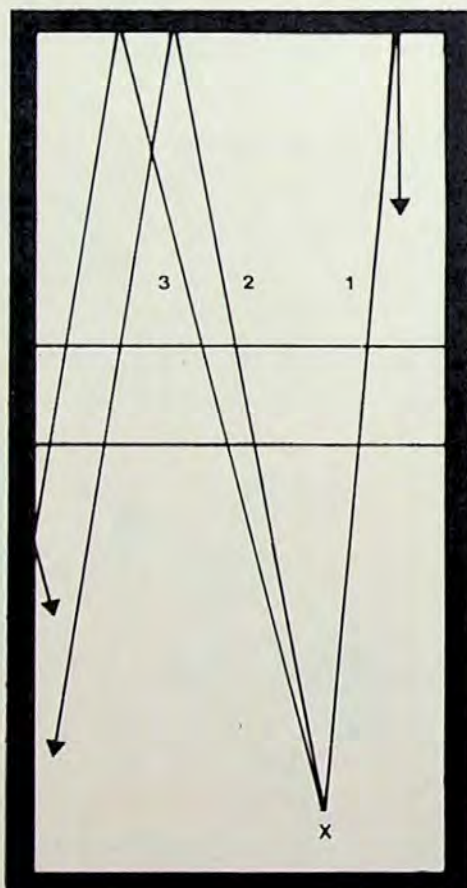
Back Wall Drills

To gain proficiency in back wall play, you

should diligently practice the various techniques. Repeating the skill over and over again is one of the ways of improving performance. Solitary practice is one of the best ways to iron out problems and improve mechanical skills. Eventually the skill will become second nature to you. Only then will you be able to rely on it in a game situation. Following are several drills you can use to improve your timing and footwork in hitting the ball after it rebounds from the back wall.

Toss and Catch: This is the first step for developing the timing and footwork so necessary for successful play. To perform this drill, all you need is a ball and a wall.

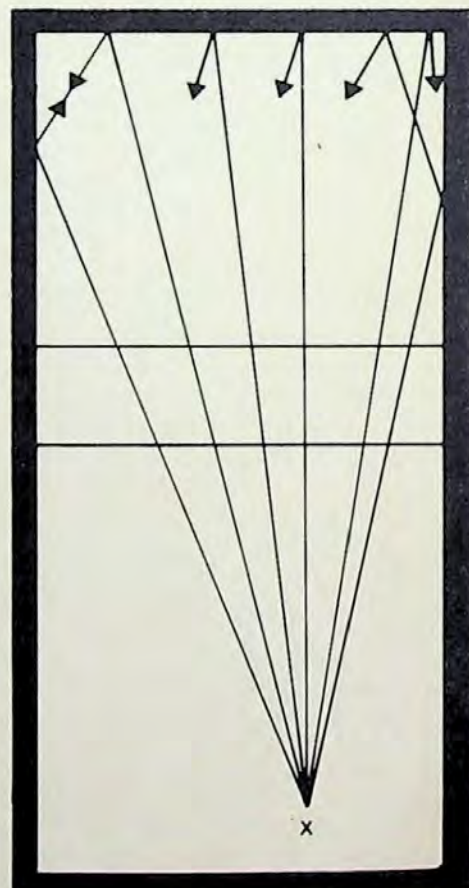
Begin the drill by assuming a position in the center of the court about three to five feet from the back wall. Toss the ball with the non-racquet hand using the underhand motion directly toward the rear wall. After the ball rebounds from the wall, let it bounce on the floor and pass near your body without any



PASS SHOTS.

Forehand pass shots for right-handed players. The backhand options are the same, just executed from the opposite side of the court.

1. Down-the-line or Alley Pass
2. Crosscourt or "V" Pass
3. Angle or Two-Wall Pass



KILL SHOTS

Forehand kill shots for right-handed players. The backhand options are the same, just executed from the opposite side of the court.

INSTRUCTION

interference. At the same time the ball is tossed, move your racquet arm to a position behind you similar to executing a forehand stroke.

As the ball bounces on the floor and passes you, synchronizes your forward move with it, using either the "Stop-and-Hit" or "Walk-and-Hit" methods of back wall play. Adjust your steps and time your forward swing with the ball as it descends after the bounce so you can catch it with your racquet arm at knee level or lower. Perform this drill over and over until you can catch the ball at this level each time.

The main purpose is to teach you how to judge the speed of the ball and coordinate your swing with your footwork so you can contact the ball with all your power at a designated point. Continue this drill until you feel comfortable and you can accurately anticipate the descent of the ball, catching it at the desired height.

When performing this drill, do not toss the ball so hard that it flies past you too fast and you do not have a chance to move with it. Make sure the ball toss will allow you time to move with it and obtain desired results. Also do not grab at it behind you or even as it nears your body. Try to swing your arm as if

you were hitting strokes and catch it below your knees at the place where you would contact the ball with the racquet.

Toss and Hit: Assuming you know how to judge the ball, you are now ready to hit it. To execute this drill, follow the same procedure as stated for the toss and catch, except

"The main purpose is to teach you how to coordinate your swing with your footwork."

instead of catching the ball hit it with your racquet. If you have practiced correctly, you should contact the ball near your lead foot about knee-high or lower. Practice this drill using both the "Stop-and-Hit" and "Walk-and-Hit" methods of back wall play.

Front Wall-Back Wall Set-Up: This is the next step in your back wall skill development. It is more difficult yet more realistic, simulat-

ing the actual way you will play the majority of shots during a racquetball game.

To execute this drill, assume a position about five feet behind the short line. Using either an underhand or overhand stroke, hit the ball to the front wall hard enough so the ball will bounce once on the floor and rebound off the rear wall. As the ball strikes the back wall, move into position to execute the return using one of the various methods of back wall play. This is more difficult than the first two drills because there is more body movement and you must hit the ball before it bounces on the floor. The object of this drill is continued practice on footwork and timing so you can contact the ball in the same position similar to the first two drills.

Partner Back Wall Set-Up: This drill is exactly the same as the "Front Wall-Back Wall Set-Up" except instead of setting yourself up, your partner assists with this function. After putting the ball in play, your partner can then watch to see if you are moving to and hitting the ball correctly.

When performing this drill, stand to one side and deep in the court while setting-up and observing your partner. This position is relatively safe and will keep you from getting hit with the ball.



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The Critical Area for Scoring

By Steve Strandemo

If you want to play a good, consistent, winning game of racquetball, it is most important to know how to play in the middle of the court.

It is the nature of the game. No matter how accomplished a player, there are going to be mistakes when hitting the ball. Like a .300 hitter in baseball, maybe only three of ten shots will be winners. The rest will be a little off, and most of them, because of the geometry of the court, are going to come back into the center of the court, back of the service line, into an area roughly 20 to 27 feet from the front wall.

The sooner you learn how to get into position to hit these balls, and, of course, how to hit them, the sooner you will begin to dominate the game. It is, after all, 70 percent of the game. The middle-court area is where the best are separated from the second-best. This is where the match is won or lost, usually. Whoever controls the middle is in better position to win the center-court rallies and control the tempo of the game.

And yet so many average players are unsure of themselves in center court. They seem unaware of the concept of the game, that 70 percent of the shots are likely to come back to the middle. Therefore they can't understand the strategy that is so crucial to playing the middle well. They don't know whether to cut the ball off, or let everything go by.

We'll try to show, in this article and photos, how to play center court, how to get into position, and how to tighten up the swing without sacrificing power, so you can hit reaction shots with authority. But of course we can do no more than show and suggest. Here experience is the best teacher. You have to go ahead and play the midcourt affirmatively in actual play before you truly get the hang of it.

The first thing to remove from your mind is that most missed shots end up in the forecourt or backcourt. It just doesn't work that way, no matter what the level of play. The great majority of missed shots focus into center court, in an area 20 to 27 feet from the front wall, and 14-15 feet wide.

Once you get the feel of this area, and how to hit effectively from it, you have begun to play good percentage racquetball. And the message you send your opponent is this: "You can have your occasional winners, friend, I'm going to play on your mistakes. So go ahead and shoot it, because I don't think you're gonna make it. The pressure's on you."

This is a far more intelligent approach than charging back and forth and trying to dig out

1



2



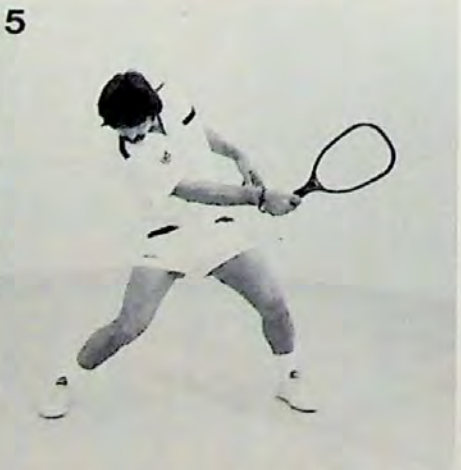
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4



5



6



In a reaction shot situation, the swing is tightened up with most of the power coming from the torso. The backswing is shorter, not extending above shoulder level. The right foot, located slightly back, is the brace against which the shot pushes. The elbow is in close, the racquet comes down and forward and the hips and torso are pulled forward. Your racquet should meet the ball even with the right foot and the follow through is short but strong as the racquet is pulled across the body. Your weight remains on the right foot for balance and power.

kills. Why wear yourself out chasing the 30 percent of the shots that are hard to get, when you can wait for the 70 percent of the shots that are going to come to you in the middle of the court?

As you move into position, think about your opponent's skill. If he is a good player, you want to take a position about 22-24 feet from the front wall. But as proficiency decreases, you can move farther back, toward the 27-

The middle-court area is where the best are separated from the second best. This is where the match is won or lost.

foot mark, since the weaker players tend to hit higher on the front wall, which makes for a deeper bounce.

You want to be in an open stance, weight evenly distributed, not leaning forward on your toes, or rocking back on your heels. Your best shots from this area are of the reaction variety, cutting off the ball and firing it back smartly. To do that, your feet need to anchor you firmly, because your swing is going to be shorter, and most of the torque in the shot will be generated by the body. Get into position, and anchor yourself.

The cut-off rule is simple: Anything at waist level or lower, should be cut off. Anything higher, take it off the back wall. But it takes practice to develop the quick judgment and reflexes to make it work, because after all the ball is coming off the front wall at 80 miles an hour or more.

Of course once you decide to hit it, you're not going to have time to take the classic stride forward, and a big backswing, and hit it with everything you've got. As the photos show, you should be anchored, right foot back slightly. Your weight shifts to the right foot somewhat, since you are "bracing" on it.



The proper stance when playing the center court forehand is generally open to the front wall, knees bent, right foot slightly back, weight evenly distributed. The feet anchor the body as it generates the power behind

The backswing is abbreviated. You pull your whole right side through the swing, which is what develops the power, and in the follow through you pull the racquet across your body.

The sensation—the anchored, compact swing—is like that of hitting a volley in tennis. Ideally, you can drop the right foot back slightly, but there will be times you have to hit the shot from a wide-open stance. In either case, try to make contact with the ball just even with the right foot, which is the fulcrum of the swing. Don't lean forward into the shot, or you'll fall off-balance. It is, literally, an exercise in shooting from the hip.

There are three good shots you can try from this position. As shown in the photo, you can go for a pinch into the righthand corner, using the right wall; you can shoot the straight kill that comes down the right alley and, if it



the shot. The shot is a quick-reaction swing with no time for foot movement or big backswings. Sometimes, in fact, the shot will be made from a fully open stance—generally the same stance as a tennis volley.

stays up, goes into the deep back righthand corner; or you can try the cross court kill. Don't hit the ball diagonally into the lefthand corner. If you hit it perfectly, it would be all right, but it's a low-percentage shot and if you miss, it comes back into the middle, a plum for your opponent.

You don't want to go to the ceiling, either, in this case, since it will go into the backcourt, which is probably where your opponent hit from in the first place. Why hit it right back to him? Bring him up, put the pressure on him, make him move, either front to back or side to side.

It's easy to manipulate an opponent like that, if you have solid position in the middle of the court. If you play consistently well there, he'll come off the court feeling like a target in a shooting gallery. And that's exactly where you want him.



The blacked-in area is the center court forehand side, where a high percentage of shots will return, and where a good player needs to be to return shots. The area is 7-8 feet wide and 20-27 feet from the front wall. If the ball comes into this area waist high or below, cut it off. Anything higher, take it off the backwall.



The best shots to hit from the center court area are shown by the dotted lines—a pinch shot into the right corner, a kill down the line or a cross court kill.



The shot to avoid is one that goes into the left corner. It is a low-percentage shot that will usually come right back into the center court, giving your opponent a plum.

Spin

By Steve Keeley



With due deference, advanced players are a dime a dozen. These are the talented athletes who may be your club pro, or who may win a local or regional tournament. In fact, they can probably even beat you. They have great strokes, hit all the right shots, know when to hit those shots (shot selection) and can do it all when it comes down to the wire at 10-10 in the tiebreaker. But put one of these local-yokel hot-shots in against one of the nation's top 12 players and they'll get humbled in a hurry. The reason? Spin. The pro players, whether knowingly or unknowingly, put the right amount of spin on the right shots, whether that shot be a serve, kill, pass or ceiling ball.

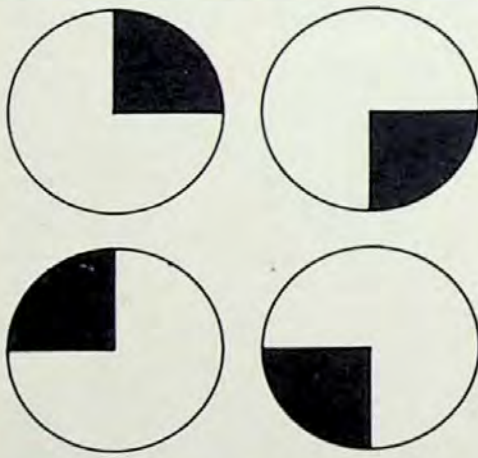
Proper spin gives you a distinct edge. You might not think that the ball twirling this way or that on a shot could be any big deal. You're right. On just one serve or on just one kill shot it isn't any big deal, but consider that if you have the right spin on each and every serve and shot, then all those little twirly advantages add up to a big winning margin. My personal spin guru (whether he realizes it or not) is a New Yorker named Vic Niederhoffer, a former national squash champion, a former racquetball pro and the only player I've come across in my decade of racquetball who is a bona fide spin freak. Oh, there are guys like Charlie Brumfield who can explain spins, but Brumfield has trouble hitting them every time. And there are guys such as Marty Hogan who can hit the right spins most of the time, but he can't explain it. Niederhoffer hits the right spin every time, then he can tell you how he does it. Niederhoffer never told me how he did it, but he has given me enough hints and I have observed

him enough times to be able to deduce a few things on my own. I can do no less for you in this article. I'll provide the hints, you provide the practice.

Judging from the feedback of students in my clinics, I doubt you have even given much thought to ball spin. So, the goal this month is to prod you into thinking and into experimenting with spin. There is an old story which says that if you give a person a fish, he'll eat for a day. But if you teach a person to fish, he'll eat for the rest of his life. Prepare to learn how to fish.

Four Quarters

Did you know that the racquetball is divided into four quarters? (There may be even more divisions, depending upon your imagination, but let's keep it simple for the moment.) The quarters are: 1) top-right, 2) bottom-right, 3) top-left and 4) bottom-left. Which quarter of the ball do you hit on your forehand kill? Your backhand down-the-line



To learn the spin of a shot, Steve Keeley divides the ball into quarter sections. A player should experiment by hitting the ball on all quarters.

pass? Ceiling ball? If your response is that either you don't know or that you hit the same part of the ball on all serves and shots, then you are losing an edge every time the ball comes off your racquet strings. You are making spin an affair of luck rather than a controlled factor. Why not learn to control the spin factor and get that edge, as many of the pros do. When Hogan hits a forehand kill, spin causes the ball to slide along the floor rather than to pop it up. When Mike Yellen hits a backhand down-the-line pass, spin causes the ball to go for a "wallpaper shot" which slides along the left side wall all the

way into deep court. When I hit a garbage serve into the left rear corner, spin causes my serve to bounce high (vertically) rather than deep (horizontally), plus it bounces toward the middle of the court rather than into the left side wall.

These are just a few examples of edges gained from the premeditated use of ball english. Controlling spin on your shots is often a matter of hitting one of the quarters of the ball. The next logical question is which quarter to hit on which shot. Experiment. First, pick a shot, any shot. Let's say you've decided to test spins on your backhand ceiling ball. Position yourself in the left rear corner of the court. Drop and hit a ceiling shot with your normal stroke, only contact the top-right quarter of the ball with your racquet face. Repeat this a half-dozen times or until you get a feel for the way the ball comes off the strings (power, solidity of hit) and—more importantly—until you get an idea of what the ball does after it hits the ceiling, hits the front



Keeley suggests setting up your own one-person practice section in the back left corner of the court and practice ceiling shots (see photo) by hitting the ball on all quarters.

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wall and then which way it bounces when it hits the floor. You usually want backhand down-the-line ceiling balls to hit the floor and hop toward the middle of the court. When the spin does indeed cause the ball to bounce toward the middle of the court, the result is a nice wallpaper shot which runs along the left side wall en route to the back wall. This shot can only be returned with another backhand ceiling ball. To the contrary, if your ceiling ball hops off the floor toward the side wall, it will then likely pop off that side wall for a three-quarter court set-up.

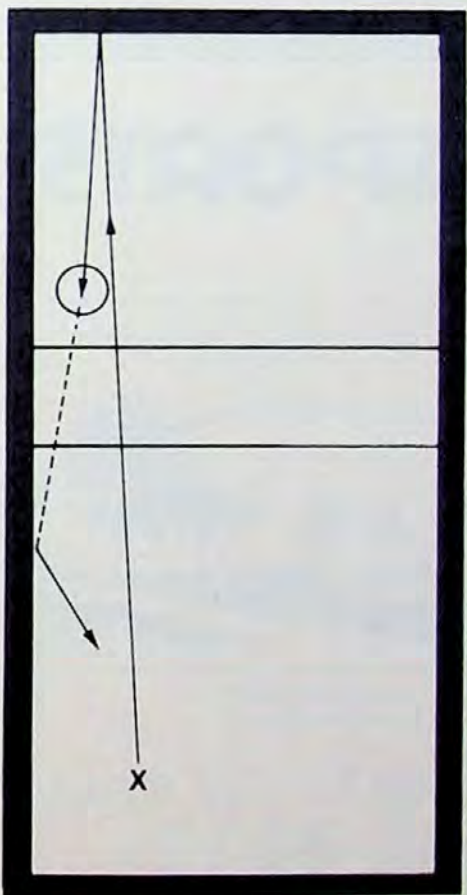
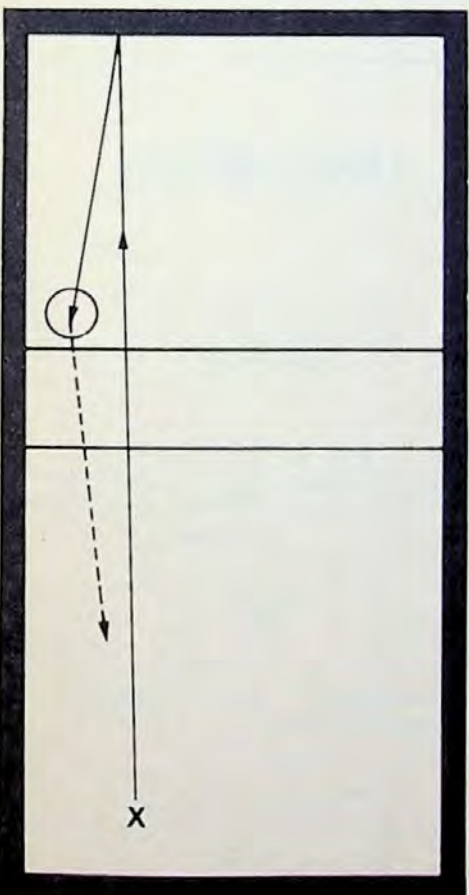
Now that you've knocked six or so ceiling shots hitting the top-right quarter of the ball, hit another half-dozen on the bottom-right quarter. Again, note the way the ball comes off the racquet strings, the way it reflects off the ceiling and front wall, and which way it bounces on the floor. Done? Now do the same, except hit the top-left quarter of the ball, then the bottom-left quarter.

Now you should know which quarter of the ball to hit for backhand wallpaper ceiling shots. If not, hit some more. Note that the quarter of the ball that works best for you may not be the proper quarter for another player. In other words, though the type of shot is constant, the ball quarter varies depending

on the player's grip, his stroke, his stance, his depth of contact, racquet head speed, the type of ball and a few other minor factors. Sound complicated? It is, but it's worth it to persevere and get that added edge on your ceiling game.

The backhand down-the-line ceiling ball is just one example of a shot in which spin figures in. Try the same experimental procedure with a forehand ceiling ball down the left line. Start by standing in the same left rear corner of the court and test-hit the four ball quarters as you did before. Finished? Now go on to other parts of the court for different shots—kills, passes, serves, etc. The possibilities are endless. Remember, you are teaching yourself to fish and it may take a while to learn.

Realize that it is arbitrary to divide the ball into the four quarters mentioned above. There are at least two other ways which you can divide the ball up into hitting areas. One method is the "four halves approach." You no doubt have heard someone say, "Boy, he hits his drive serve with a lot of bottom spin," or "She puts a little side spin on her pinch kills." With this approach, the ball is divided as follows: 1) top half, 2) bottom half, 3) inside half and 4) outside half. It makes a big



When putting spin on the ball, you would usually want your ceiling shots to hit the floor fairly close to the side wall and hop to the center. A poor ceiling shot is one which hits the side wall and comes up short, allowing the opponent to set up for an easy kill.

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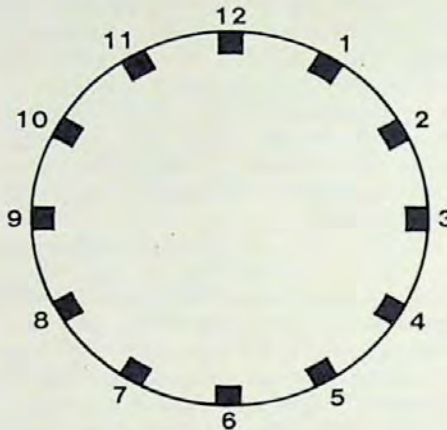
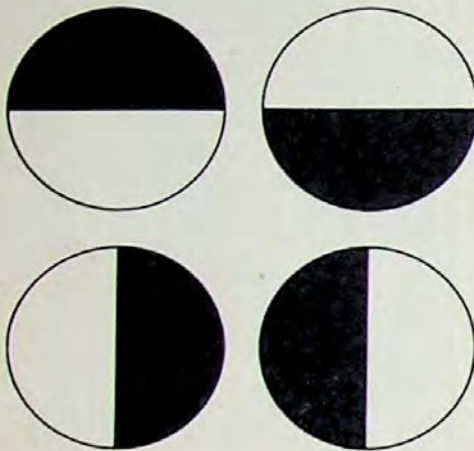
difference if you use "outspin" (hitting the outside half of the ball, usually) as opposed to "inspin" (hitting the inside half of the ball, usually) on a serve or a pass. What is the difference, and which is better? Fish for

yourself. Hit some serves and passes contacting the outside half of the ball, then the inside half. Compare the power and the way the ball bounces off the front wall and floor. Don't forget the "topspin" (hitting the top half)

and the "bottom spin" (hitting the bottom half) in your trials.

Besides the four quarters and the four halves approaches to ball spin, I sometimes conceptualize a more detailed technique to better visualize the contact surfaces of the ball. This is the "clock approach" where there are 12 divisions. The 12 hitting surfaces of the ball correspond to the numbers on the face of the clock. Try using this method to produce different spins. For example, what happens when you hit a cross-court forehand drive, striking the ball at two o'clock? At seven o'clock? At eleven o'clock? Experiment with the clock method for other shots and serves too. It's just a matter of picking the right time to hit the correct spin.

I hope you realize that the three approaches to ball spin which I've outlined above are just different perspectives of the same idea. I include all three because some people relate better to one than another. For example, some people better grasp hitting a particular quarter of the ball rather than trying to produce, say, inspin. Other players tell me that it's easier for them to envision a clock face on the ball and then hit a number. Try out each technique and use whatever works for you.



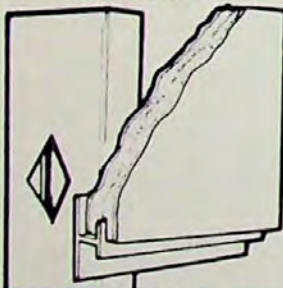
Ball spin varies with each person's grip, stroke, stance, etc. Other methods of figuring out proper spin are the "four halves" approach and the "clock" approach.



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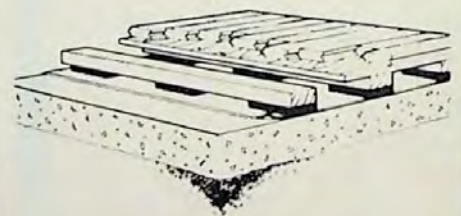
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Percentage Shot Selection

By Jay Jones

Only three things can happen when you attempt to kill the ball: (1) You can hit the kill perfectly. (2) Your attempted kill goes in higher than expected. (3) You can skip the ball. In racquetball these are what I call the "Big Three." Know and understand them well.

I would venture to say that if you were lying at the rear of the court 40 feet from the front wall with a rifle, you could not put eight out of ten bullets in a close pattern one-quarter inch from the floor. Yet we attempt to do it with a racquet and ball. How often does anyone hit the perfect kill? I feel a good "A" player will hit the perfect kill one-third of the time. It is important that you honestly evaluate your game at your level of play.

When you attempt kills and the ball strikes the front wall higher than you anticipated, it probably means that I will be making the next shot from an easy 15-20 feet. This increases the likelihood that my shot will be a perfect kill. If your shot selection is poor, you automatically raise my percentages. A thought that goes through my head at this moment is the control player saying to the shooter, "Hurry up and lose, I'm almost to 21." I feel that a good "A" player will hit his attempted kill too high one-third of the time.

You should never skip the ball. It's what I call the ultimate sin. It is the same thing as spotting points. You are giving away points without making me hit the ball. Try taking a pad and pencil and keep count of the skip balls between two players who you feel are on your level of play. Then compare the number of skip balls to the final score.

There is a proper time to shoot. That's when you have the capability of killing the ball eight out of ten times. Percentage, percentage, percentage.

From 38 feet deep in the court, when your racquet meets the ball, for every one-fourth inch error you make at that point, the ball will be off target by three feet when it reaches the front wall. In other words, if your racquet turns in your hand just a quarter inch, the ball will be off target by three feet by the time it hits the front wall. So the deeper you are in the court when you hit the ball, the lower your percentages of hitting a perfect kill. This is another reason why shot selection and shot placement are so important.

Taking "the ultimate sin" into consideration, I feel that a good "A" player will skip the ball one-third of the time.

Notice how I keep referring to a good "A" player. If you are not a top "A" player, then your percentages must be less. Give your game an honest evaluation.

Service return is probably the most critical

time in the game. You have to figure that I am going to give you the toughest serve I can and then step back into the best possible position . . . center court. You, on the other hand, are in the absolute worst position.

There is a proper time to shoot. That's when you have the capability of killing the ball eight out of ten times.

Moving toward your weak backhand, 40 feet from the target, and in a corner, yet you still think you can hit "the perfect kill" eight out of ten times. Dumb, dumb, dumb. Now, let's talk about the Big Three.

- 1) Skip ball 1/3 of the time
- 2) "High kill" 1/3 of the time
- 3) Perfect kill 1/3 of the time

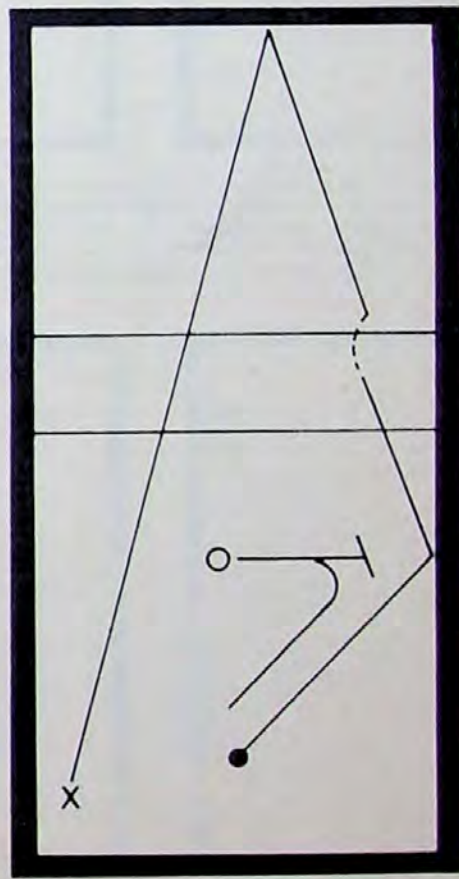
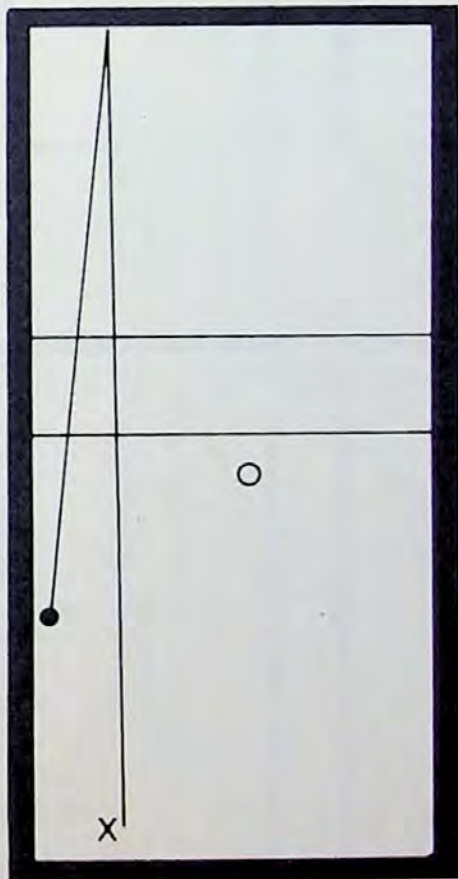
There's not much to say about the skip except "Point." If you're going to hit the floor

13 times from this position, why didn't you come on the court and spot me 13 points so we can get on with the game? I'm not going to get much of a workout standing here in center court not having to hit the ball. I might as well go to sleep.

The "slightly high kill" gives me a relatively easy 15-20 foot shot. It doesn't even have to be that good of a re-kill for me. After all, look at your court position. Another easy point for me.

Well, you finally hit the "perfect kill." Side out! NO POINTS! I got two before you got your perfect kill. Now I'll just play smart and get the serve back and get two more points . . . etc., etc., etc. At the end of the game my calculator tells me that I have approximately two-thirds more points than you.

It is my opinion that eight out of ten service returns should be to the ceiling. "Wrong," you say. Let me remind you of that absolute perfect position I'm in, and that terrible position you're in. One ceiling ball reverses that situation.



Jones recommends that an alternate to the ceiling shot is a down-the-line shot past the opponent's backhand or an angle-pass to the forehand side.

Percentage Shot Selection

Now you're hoping I'll attempt a perfect kill now that two-thirds of the "big three" are in your favor. If I don't, you should stay on the ceiling until I make a mistake and set you up. Then, once again you must select the proper shot depending on where I set you up. You should feel comfortable with the ceiling game. After all, you can perfect this shot on the court by yourself, as you can with most other shots.

So what about the other two times when it looks like you could hit that perfect kill? Answer: You pass. A couple of those waist-

high pass shots could drop down for kills. Then again you may win the serve with a clean pass. There is a lot more room for error with a pass shot. If you do make an error, then I still have to make my return from the back corner on a dead run? That's much better than you giving me a skip or an easy set-up.

The passing shot should be hit two-thirds of the time down the backhand side. The ball should strike the front wall waist high or so, depending on how hard the ball is hit and on how lively the ball is. If the ball is going back

and coming off the back wall, you are obviously hitting the ball too hard for the liveliness of it. Stay off the side wall with this pass.

The angle-pass to the forehand side should be hit one-third of the time. The ball should strike the front wall ten inches to the right of center and chest high. Coming off the front wall it should bounce at the service lines and strike the side wall waist high directly to the right of me in center court. I only have time for one lunge and should not be able to reach the ball. I will have to turn and chase it. Even if you hit this pass too hard and/or too high, I'm going to end up in the backhand corner on a dead run using my backhand . . . and 40 feet from my target.

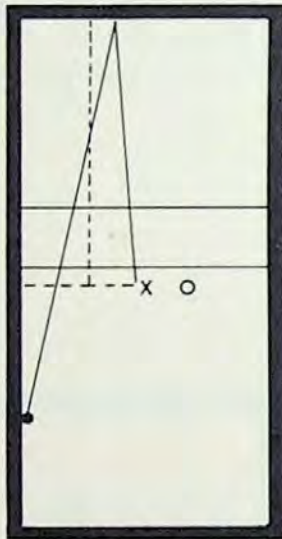
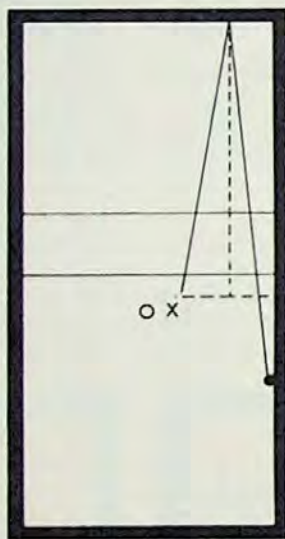
Now, let's talk more about that "Perfect Kill." I know you thought we'd never get to it. I have another theory. I'm full of them. In order to make your passing game work, you must have a kill game. And in order to make your kill game work, you must have a passing game. Reason: If you attempt to kill everything, I'm going to play close to the front wall and pick up a lot of your not-so-perfect kills, therefore intimidating your kill game. You'll probably do one of two things. Try to shoot lower and end up skipping more balls. Stop shooting altogether. If you do either of these, you'll probably lose. On the other hand, if I take center court too close to the service lines you have me set up for easy passes. After you've passed me a couple of times, I'll begin to play you deeper waiting for the pass. At that point you should initiate your kill game. Remember, you cannot pass a person who is playing deep in the court. Another good rule: If I'm in front of you, get me out. That means pass or ceiling. The pass is more offensive and you may score due to my inability to get to the ball. The ceiling ball is more defensive as I am sure to at least get to it. A good pass is more difficult to hit than a good ceiling ball.

You should make your own imaginary kill zone depending on your ability. Start with five feet behind the service line. Attempt your kill shot whenever set up from this point forward to the front wall. This I will refer to as the primary kill zone. As your percentage of kills becomes eight out of ten, move your imaginary line back another five feet. If you're set up in the secondary, you might want to remember my rule: "If he's in front of you, get him out."

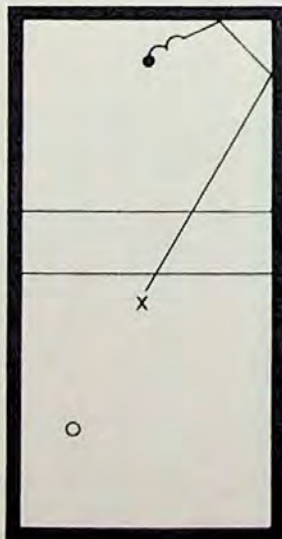
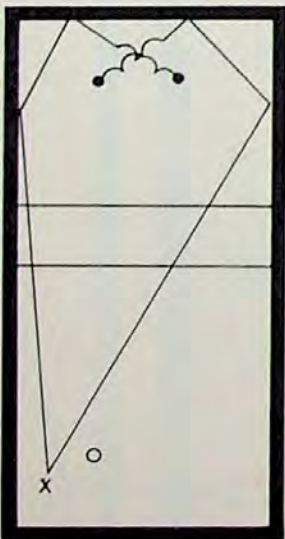
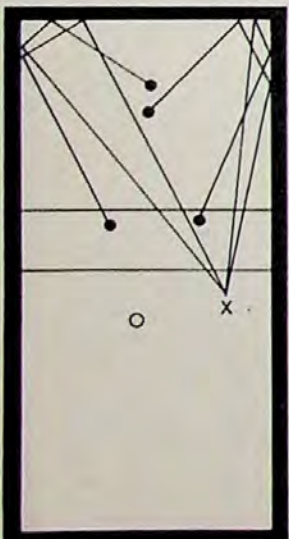
If you have a couple of choices. First, you can visualize half the distance from the ball to the right wall, then draw an imaginary line to the front wall and kill your ball just to the left of that spot.

Reason: "The Big Three."

If you hit the perfect kill, you have nothing to worry about. If the kill is "higher than expected," it could be a pass. Two of the big three are in your favor. I would suggest when you have this set-up, that you shoot down the line two-thirds of the time. It's only natural for



You should make your own imaginary kill zone depending on your ability. From the front wall to about five feet behind the service line is the primary kill zone. As you get more proficient, your kill zone goes deeper. Your placement area for a set-up can be made by visualizing half the distance from the ball to the side wall, and then drawing an imaginary line to the front wall. In other words, the spot is not directly in front of you but at a slight angle.



Pinch shots are not recommended if both players are in the center court. Note how they come back right to center court. You can pinch if both players are deep or you are in center court and your opponent is deep.

INSTRUCTION

me to anticipate that you will hit the ball to the open area. This placement should be your primary choice. The second choice: A secondary shot from this position would be to the other side. The rules are exactly the same for this spot on the backhand side.

If you are set up in the center of the court there are a few tricks you may want to remember. From the center with me directly behind you, the best spot to kill would be straight ahead. I won't be able to see where the ball went, and the best I can hope for is a hinder if you hit higher than expected and it comes back to you. By the way it is not a visual hinder because I chose to line up behind you in center court. But, if the ball is still up and I could have gotten to it, it would be a hinder.

If I take position to your left on this set-up, you should use your forehand, therefore using what I call a "butt-block." (The word does not mean it's a hinder.) Once again measure the distance from the ball to the right wall and take half of it. Kill just left of the center. Reason: "The Big Three." If you kill it, fine. But if it comes out higher than expected, it's a pass . . . two-thirds greater chance of winning the rally.

If I commit to your right side, you would

want to use your backhand. Measure, take half, shoot. It won't take long before things like this become automatic. I sometimes refer to this as "killing the passing angle." Any kill spot is good as long as it's a good pass when the ball comes off the wall higher than

In order to make your passing game work, you must have a kill game. And in order to make your kill game work, you must have a passing game.

anticipated. A very important point to remember here is that the side walls are your enemy. If you have misjudged your kill shot and it comes off higher than expected, it usually comes off the side wall back to where I am able to get my racquet on it. Don't overcompensate by trying to hit the ball away from me.

I know you're confused as to why I don't recommend shooting the corners like you always do. Reason? "The Big Three." You'll

have to assume that the first day on the racquetball court I learned to go to the center like everyone else. If you shoot the corners and skip it one-third of the time, and one-third of the time the ball goes in higher than anticipated, it will give me an easy set-up and always in front court. The next time you're on a court alone, try hitting the ball into the corners just a little on the high side. Use any combination you wish, front wall then side wall, side wall then front wall, then cross-court side wall to front, then cross-court front wall-side. Take special notice that the ball *always* feeds to within one step of center court, where I am. I really feel there are only two times when you should shoot the corners. When I am very deep in the court and when you know confidently you can kill the ball eight out of ten times.

There are going to be times that you just cannot resist that 38-foot backhand or that overhead kill. If you must do it once in a while, I suggest you train yourself to always be aware of who has the serve. At least if you have the serve when this irresistible urge hits you, all you will have lost is the serve, no points. So, what I am saying is, if you must hit a couple of low-percentage shots, make sure it is *only* when you have the serve. **R**



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By Ben Kalb

Racquetball The Louisiana Way



Other states should pay attention to the way the Louisiana Racquetball Association has things organized, including a wild weekend in Baton Rouge known as the "Mardi Gras of Racquetball."

While the finals of the Louisiana State Singles Championships were going on at the Wallbanger Court Club in Baton Rouge, Ron Jeter was working his way through the crowd selling shirts, mugs, towels, visors, hats, shorts, socks, key chains and belt buckles with the Louisiana Racquetball Association logo on them. Jeter is not some high school kid the club found to work the tournament at minimum wage. He happens to be the LRA's head honcho—the state director.

Jeter was hawking souvenirs instead of watching the matches in an effort to raise money for the LRA, part of which will go for his salary, and the rest of which will go into an ever-expanding bank account.

If you get the idea that the Louisiana Racquetball Association has its act together, you are right. In fact, it is probably one of the few state racquetball organizations that can make such a claim.

Of the 40 or so clubs in Louisiana, over half are members of the LRA, and most of the rest of the non-members are fitness oriented clubs which don't pay much attention to racquetball tournaments.

In 1980, the LRA had \$329 in its bank account. Last year it raised over \$55,000 and spent about \$43,000. The projections for 1983 are even greater. In fact, because it is doing so well, the board of directors voted to give Jeter a part-time salary as LRA director, reportedly the only state in the country to have a paid position.

The rise of the Louisiana Racquetball Association came in 1980 after it went the route of most of the rest of the country and broke off from the United States Racquetball Association. "We were up front about it right from the beginning," recalls Jeter. "We didn't think the USRA was doing anything for us. I wrote them a letter with a list of problems we had. I said, 'If you can cure these, we'll stay in.' We never

heard back from them, so we dropped out."

If there is a lesson to be learned from that, it is that the totally independent LRA is flourishing and the USRA is more or less defunct. "We listen to our players and our club owners and we democratically change things when it becomes necessary," says Jeter.

Jeter used to play handball in the "dungeons" of Louisiana State University. That was in the mid 1960s when he was a defensive starter on the school's ranked football teams. Following graduation he remained in Baton Rouge and became manager of several apartment buildings. That is the position he still holds and he says he uses the same basic philosophy in running the LRA.

"When I hear about a tenant wanting to leave one of my complexes and find out he or she wants to move a block or two away, I go over and find out what's wrong and I try to solve the problem. It's the same with the LRA. You talk to people and you find out what's

While top-ranked women's pro Lynn Adams tells humorous stories to 450 people at Louisiana Racquetball Association banquet, pro Jennifer Harding and *Racquetball Illustrated* editor Ben Kalb wait for their turn at the podium. Opposite: Banquet entertainment was provided by a pair of Blues Brothers look-alikes.

Racquetball The Louisiana Way



Lynn Adams gives clinic at Wallbanger Court Club in Baton Rouge as part of State Tournament weekend.

wrong, and you correct the problems."

There are two types of individual memberships in the LRA. For \$8 you get an associate membership, which allows you to participate in LRA sanctioned events and to be a part of the ranking system. For \$25 you get a preferred membership, which gets you a quarterly newsletter, all tournament applications sent to your home, and a \$5 discount on each sanctioned tournament. Clubs also pay to join the LRA—an associate membership is \$100; a preferred is \$100 per court. Most of the LRA money comes from these memberships as well as the \$2-5 per player per event fee it takes at each tournament and, of course, sales from LRA souvenirs.

But what makes the LRA different from the rest of the country? Other state associations have nice bank accounts and big tournaments. Three things: Atmosphere, the ranking system and organization.

The atmosphere at LRA sanctioned events is one of cohesiveness. Sure, there are arguments and not everybody is satisfied with every decision that is made, but the players support the LRA and look forward to playing in the tournaments.

The ranking is done by computer and sandbagging is virtually eliminated. "A player can't drop down," says Jeter. "If you come in as a B, you can't drop down to C in the next tournament. But if a player thinks he should not be a B, then he can petition for reinstatement

as a C, and we'll go back and check the computer, which has a record of all his matches."

As far as organization is concerned, the LRA is, well, organized. The LRA has a workable system and a direction for the future. Most other state associations don't have their act together mainly because most clubs are in it for themselves and don't care about the sport of racquetball itself. Club owners may realize in theory that if the sport gets wounded, so will their clubs but in practice, most club owners do little to encourage participation in the sport.

"We try to get the owners and players together on this thing," says Jeter. "We do as much as we can for the players like getting them special rates at hotels or rooms at homes of players and we want the owner to feel he's getting his money's worth when he hosts a tournament."

The LRA had so many clubs wanting to host a "major" tournament that they were forced to put them up for bid. The major tournaments are the State Singles, State Doubles, State Seniors and State Junior tournaments, and clubs make presentations to serve as host. "When we say 'bid' we don't mean they put up a dollar figure. The clubs make a presentation as to how they will host an event—accommodations, food, transportation, etc.," says Jeter, who hopes to eventually institute a seven-month LRA tournament circuit.

The biggest tournament of the year is the State Singles Championships. This year it drew 331 entries. "A lot of prestige comes with winning this," says Jeter.

The State Singles Championships is always planned for the fall but even it must take a back seat to football—Louisiana's biggest sports interest. "We always plan our tournament when LSU is not playing at home," says John Pellerin, who handles the publicity duties for the LRA. "Going to LSU football games is a social thing in Baton Rouge. If we planned the tournament on the same weekend as a home game, we probably wouldn't get anybody at the tournament."

One interesting thing about the State Championships is that no one out of Louisiana is allowed to play. A player must have played in at least one LRA tournament in the past year and have been a resident of the state for 90 days prior to the Championships. This prevents hot shot players from coming in on a week's notice to claim "state" titles.

But this year's tournament was not without its controversy, anyway. Gail Woods is the top open women's player in Louisiana. She also plays once in a while on the WPR pro tour. The State Championships did not have a women's open division, so Woods asked to be allowed to play in the women's A.

Because she was an obvious open level player, this was denied, so she petitioned to play in the men's A division. But because of the



Ron Jeter (above), LRA state director, in front of arena on LSU campus. Below: Jennifer Harding stands by the Mississippi River in front of Baton Rouge skyline.

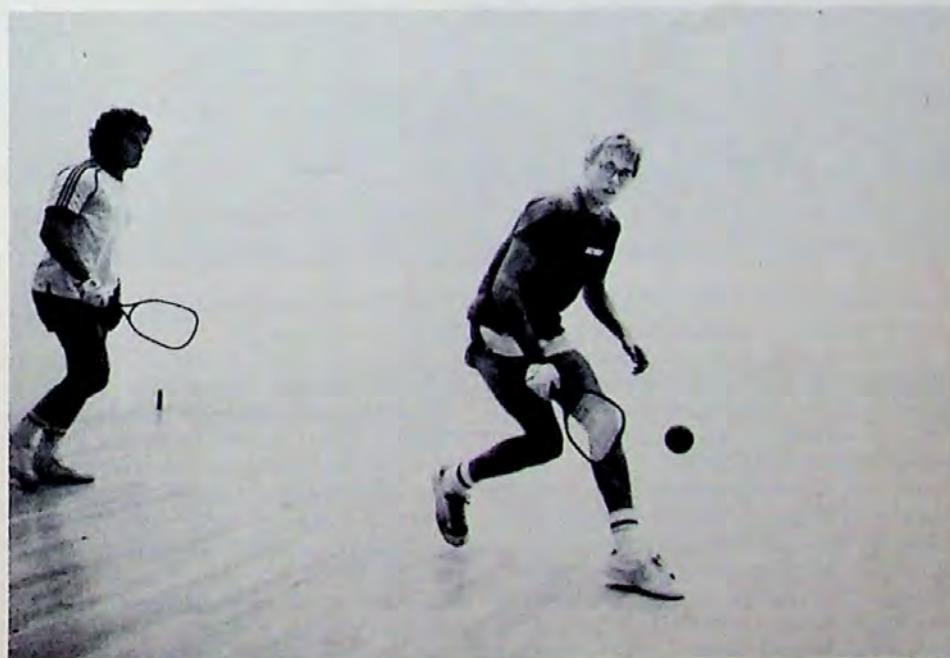
drew 450 people to the Baton Rouge Sheraton. The LRA even flew in pros Lynn Adams and Jennifer Harding to give clinics at the local clubs and a short speech at the banquet.

The atmosphere at the banquet is one of fun. In addition to dancing, outrageous Blues Brothers skits, drinking, throwing a cake in the face of a player celebrating his birthday and so forth, the LRA gives out awards to players, club owners and others connected with the game. Besides the player of the year awards, "awards" are given out for such things as the worst referee, most friendships won and lost in

a year, most clumsiest player and so on.

To illustrate just what kind of a banquet it was, the "best supporting player of racquetball" award was given to a guy named Duke Best, who only a few months earlier had partially severed his friendship with Jeter after the two had gotten into a heated argument in a match. It was Jeter who presented Best with the award.

Said one player after the banquet, "You can develop some real intense rivalries on the court, yet when it's all over, you can develop some real close friendships. That's what Louisiana racquetball is all about." **R**



Top: Romaine Lee misses final shot, giving Tammy Landry women's state title. Below: Lance Lacour sets up for kill off back wall on his way to a state title win over Andy Hodges.

rule not permitting players to drop down in divisions, she was not allowed to play men's A. She was forced to play in the men's open, which for legal purposes was renamed the "Open" division with no gender attached. Woods won her first round match but lost in the second round. Next year, she will not have to play in the men's division because a women's open division will be added.

In this year's tournament, teenager Lance Lacour, who won the event in 1980, defeated Andy Hodges, who won the event in 1978, 21-20, 21-8. Lacour upset top-seeded Mike Almerico (last year's state singles champ) and Hodges beat Bill Land in the semis. In the women's A finals, top-seeded Tammy Landry beat the surprise of the women's division unseeded Romaine Lee, 21-9, 21-19, in the finals.

The State Championships is actually a "Mardi Gras for Racquetball." People play hard and party hard and develop a lot of camaraderie. The highlight of the weekend event is the annual banquet, which this year

Arthroscopic Microsurgery

Injured racquetball players can now return to the court in a matter of days.

By Lynda Huey



Dr. Daniel Silver (center) performs arthroscopic surgery on patient who has had knee injury.

Photos by Max Trinidad

Ask several orthopedic surgeons what the most common racquetball injury is and they'll most likely all point straight to the knee. All that stopping and starting and twisting and turning leads to torn cartilage and internally bruised knee caps, they say.

And if you ask several racquetball players who were forced to undergo knee surgery prior to the mid-1970's, you'll no doubt get the same stories: excruciating pain for a week, six weeks in a full-length leg cast, crutches, a zipper-like scar for life and then a long rehabilitation process for the atrophied muscles once the cast was removed. But that was then. Today, your knee can heal in a matter of days with a new method of knee surgery that is relatively easy and much less disabling.

Instead of incisions and knives, there are only punctures and probes.

Dr. Daniel Silver of Westwood, Calif., first coined the term "arthroscopic microsurgery," and has become one of perhaps 100 doctors around the country who have become proficient in the technique. Because no incision is made in the skin, there are no muscles cut and less trauma is done to the entire joint. Healing, then, is much swifter with an "arthroscopy."

Racquetball Illustrated was invited inside the operating room with Dr. Silver to observe the process. First, a tourniquet was placed above the patient's knee to prevent blood flow to the area. The actual operation began with a puncture to each side of the knee joint,

about one-eighth of an inch in diameter. A stick-like probe was inserted into the joint through that opening and the arthroscope inserted through that probe. A powerful light source flooded the area and the view from inside the joint was picked up by a one-ounce camera on the end of the scope. That picture was magnified about 100 times and projected onto a 13 inch color TV screen located next to the operating table. The entire surgery would take place with Dr. Silver referring only to the TV monitor.

Silver maneuvered the scope inside the knee joint, aiming the viewer first at the front portion to check if there might be any abnormal growths or pleats in the lining of the wall of the joint. When none were found, he

turned his microscopic eye to the rear of the patella (knee cap) and explored for any possible bruises or abnormalities. With the scope in one hand and one of a dozen microscopic tools in the other (inserted into the joint through the second puncture on the other side of the knee), he poked around to test the internal structures. "Sometimes a crack or tear can be felt even when it can't be seen," said Silver, who then poked at the lateral meniscus (cartilage).

"The front of the meniscus looks loose and chewed on with scuff marks as if it would get in the way of normal movement," said Silver. "I'm going to trim this out."

Silver's assistant bent and straightened the knee while Silver observed the tracking of the knee from inside the joint.

"There's no way to make it more stable or repair it," he said, referring to the cartilage. "We're working on a way to do repairs, but that's in the future. For now, all we can do is take it out."

For the next half hour Silver pulled out a multitude of tools: knives, hooks, clamps and

"We're working on a way to repair cartilage but that's in the future."

vacuums. Some are motorized, controlled with a foot pedal under the operating table.

"Before arthroscopies, you couldn't see the back half of the joint," said Silver. "A scope can go anywhere, even places the human eye can't. You're looking at everything the tool touches."

With the clear view of the knee's internal structures, it is no longer necessary to take out an entire meniscus. Only the damaged part is removed; the outer rim where the cartilage is attached is usually left in an effort to provide a basic stability to the joint. In time, the rough cut edge of the cartilage smoothes and tapers.

This particular operation required the removal of nearly the entire lateral meniscus. Only that outer rim could be left. In addition, an oversized fat pad also on the lateral side of the knee was trimmed so as to clear out the joint for freer unrestricted movement. A tool resembling Pac Man ate away and sucked out the debris of the fat pad. A more serious cutting implement, nicknamed "Jaws" by the physician's assistant, was utilized to cut out the loose cartilage. Once it was freed, the entire meniscus measuring four centimeters by one-and-a-half centimeters was pulled out through the tiny puncture hole.

"It's just like delivering a baby," quipped Silver. "The skin stretches to allow for the removal."

Since a tourniquet can remain on a leg only two hours without damaging the limb, an eye



After inserting the arthroscope into patient's knee, Dr. Silver sees where he is probing on television camera.

was kept to the clock. Over an hour had already been used, but Silver wanted to finish cleaning and vacuuming out the joint. He took one last look around the joint capsule to see if there might be anything else mechanically pinching or blocking the free movement of the joint and then he vacuumed out several small foreign substances and smoothed out a jagged edge of a bone. Next, he washed out the area with a saline solution followed by an antibiotic. Finally, a long-lasting anaesthetic was injected into the knee before one suture closed up each of the puncture holes.

After the operation, the leg was wrapped

and compressed to stop the swelling. The patient would stay in the hospital only a few more hours, or until he could eat.

"He'll have a night or two of burning discomfort and then be back to his normal sports routine in a week or two," said Silver. "He'll probably be walking around tonight."

Although this patient had chosen a general anaesthetic, some prefer a local so they can remain awake to watch the entire procedure on the TV monitor. Some folks request a video cassette of their operation for home viewing.

"After any surgery, the therapy and rehabilitation is the key to the success of the pro-



After the instruments go in, the cartilage comes out.

How to Tell if You're Injured

There are several critical symptoms that should warn a racquetball player to immediately see a doctor, according to Dr. Kenneth Forsythe and Dr. Daniel Silver of the Alta Fitness Institute in West Los Angeles.

—Pain in the knee. If it is severe enough that you can't walk it off in a few minutes, if it is bad enough to force you to stop playing, and if swelling is associated with an incident like this, something internal has probably happened to the knee.

—Sensation of giving way, buckling. Something is out of position in the knee. A reflex inhibition response is occurring within the surrounding muscles. It's an internally protective mechanism. The joint will collapse rather than take a faulty step that could cause injury.

—Locking. A guarding mechanism within the knee. Like the collapse mechanism, locking protects the joint from making a wrong move that could cause more damage.

—Using a brace. Don't diagnose and treat yourself for knee problems.

The length of rehabilitation faced by a patient is dependent upon the kind of shape that person was in prior to the surgery. If the leg has good tone and the injury was an acute one (one that happened suddenly and surgery was performed shortly thereafter), the patient can come back quickly. However, if the problem has been a long time in coming and the muscles have had time to become weaker and the cartilage time to get softer, then the longer it will take to recover, says Dr. Forsythe.

cedure," said Silver. "The old method of cutting really laid you up for a long time. With this new method, if you're not using the muscle within three to four days, the muscle gets weak because it's not protected. We encourage our post-operative patients to bend their knee and walk on it right away. We use a much more aggressive approach to post-op knees than in the past. By the second day they're doing straight leg raises and getting treatments on the muscle stimulator machine. I'm also aggressive about tapping out fluid. Two days after the operation patients come to my office and about half of them need me to take some fluid out. The stitches come out in seven days and by then most of them have 60-70 percent of their normal strength in the leg."

Silver is seen by many to be an innovator, refiner and even master of arthroscopic microsurgery, but he says that Dr. Richard O'Connor was the true pioneer of the procedure. O'Connor learned the technique in Japan in the early 1960s when the tools were extremely primitive by today's standards. Upon returning to the States, O'Connor spent ten years developing and refining the instruments. In 1977, after learning the technique from an associate of O'Connor's, Dr. Silver began to introduce electronics to the arthroscope by hooking the miniature TV camera to the eyepiece of the scope. This development allowed the surgeon to operate from the greatly magnified image on the TV screen rather than hunched over the eyepiece of the arthroscope as was previously necessary.

Although arthroscopic microsurgery is a relatively new procedure, it can already be used in about 80 percent of all operable knee, ankle and elbow conditions. But Silver thinks there will still be many advancements made in the near future.

"At present all we can do is cut out and take out. But we're working on a substance that will allow us to go in and do repairs," added Silver.

A biological cement of sorts.

Silver himself has had two knee operations. His left knee was cut on with old methods and he remembers being on crutches for much too long. His right knee, however, was scoped by his teacher Dr. Bob Metcalfe of Salt Lake City, and Silver remembers few problems. Although Silver has given up racquetball because of his knees, he understands the desires of many who want to play the game even with problem knees. He claims that his procedure can buy a player time on the court. Even in a 60-year-old set of knees, he can clean out the joint and offer a few more good playing years to the patient.

"As more and more people become active," said Silver, "we're seeing more and more sports-related problems. Some folks wouldn't have noticed their problems unless they had become active. It's like driving a car at 10 mph with abnormal alignment. You don't notice it much. But you sure notice once you're up to 60 mph."

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WPRA



Photo by Michael Peake

Heather McKay credits improvement on her ceiling game with helping her beat Lynn Adams in finals of WPRA Toronto event.

Lynn Adams may reign as newly crowned queen of women's professional racquetball, but in Canada Heather McKay still is top banana.

McKay defeated Adams in WPRA events in Toronto and Vancouver, Canada, and in so doing, gave notice to Adams that she is still a force to be reckoned with.

McKay beat Adams, 3-1, 3-0, at the Adelaide Club in her home town of Toronto. "I was working on my ceiling shot all summer and that helped," said McKay. "Lynn was not putting away all her shots. I think she was a bit off."

To reach the finals, McKay beat fellow squash convert Barbara Maltby in the semis,

0-3, 3-0, 15-9, and Adams overpowered Laura Martino, 3-0, 3-1.

The biggest surprise of the tourney was rookie Molly O'Brien, who had to win three qualifying matches just to get into the main draw and then upset Fran Davis to reach the quarterfinals.

In the Vancouver event, McKay defeated Adams, 21-14, 12-21, 11-9. McKay beat Shannon Wright and Adams topped Terri Gilreath in the semis.

In the WPRA satellite events, Maltby beat Bonnie Stoll, 3-2, 3-0, in Wheeling, W. Va., and Jennifer Harding defeated Gail Woods in Las Cruces, N.M.

Future WPRA events: Feb. 10-13, Wyoming Racquet Club, Casper, Wyo.; Feb. 17-20, Riverbend Athletic Club, Ft. Worth, Tex.; Feb. 25-27, Tucson Athletic Club, Tucson, Ariz.; March 4-6, Racquetball Plus, Muskegon Heights, Mich.; March 11-13, Holiday Racquet Club, Bangor, Maine; March 24-27, Pacific West Club, Seattle, Wash.; April 1-3, Schoeber's Spa, San Francisco; April 7-10, Glass Court, Lombard, Ill.

Adams Wins Again In Louisiana

By Guy Rials

Obsession, Webster defines it as "a persistent, disturbing preoccupation with an often unreasonable idea or feeling."

Lynn Adams knows the word well because she definitely had an obsession with winning the Sunkist Classic at Red Lerille's Health and Racquet Club in Lafayette, La. Her desire to win was persistent; disturbing only to her opponents; and unreasonable to the point where she could barely move in the last few points of her championship match with Heather McKay.

That championship match found Adams tightening her grip on the Women's Professional Racquetball Association's (WPRA) number one spot with a come from behind 3-2, 3-2 victory over second ranked McKay. It was the second straight year that Adams won the Lafayette event.

Adams pocketed \$4,320 out of the total \$18,000 purse, while McKay took home \$1,900.

Following a 3-1, 3-0 win over sixth seeded Laura Martino in the semi-finals, Adams spoke of her "obsession" about maintaining her niche at the top of the WPRA ladder.

"I will probably go back to the hotel and relax tonight," Adams said, "But tomorrow I will be pumped up. I will be obsessed with winning. I do not want to lose this tournament."

Despite this surge of adrenalin, Adams found herself losing the opening two games of the first set, 11-7, 13-11 before rallying for consecutive 11-7 wins in games three and

four. In the fifth game, Adams put away two forehand pinch shots to win 12-10 and take the 55-minute first set, 3-2.

Adams continued her hot play in the opening two games of the second set, shooting from back court and passing McKay on both the forehand and backhand sides. Tied at nine all in the decisive fifth game of the second set, Adams pulled off a forehand pass and a backhand kill to close out the match 11-9.

"I was a little tentative," said McKay following her defeat. "I thought I had a good shot at winning."

Throughout the championship match, Adams relied on a new strategy devised by herself and her coach Jim Carson. That strategy required Adams to play ceiling balls to McKay's forehand.

There were two primary reasons for the new style of play. One was an injury to Adams' left quadracep muscle that limited her bending ability. Throughout the tournament, Adams played with, as she called them,



Photo by Jay Fagot

Lynn Adams displays some of the intensity she had in her "obsession" to beat Heather McKay in Louisiana.

"elastic leg-warmers" on both upper thighs. Compensating for the pain in left leg, Adams also strained her right leg.

McKay was not surprised with the new attack and pointed out reason number two for Adams' strategy. "She played to my backhand in the Vancouver tournament and I beat her. I was expecting her to play to my forehand this time," said McKay.

Adams almost didn't make it past the first round, dropping the opening set to Oklahoma's Joyce Jackson, 0-3 before rallying, 3-0 and 15-8 in the tiebreaker. "I usually didn't have to worry until the quarters or the semis," said Adams after that match. "Now I'm getting pushed in the opening round."

Seventh seeded Terri Gilreath was Adams' quarterfinal opponent and took the first two, 11-8, 11-7 before the champion went to a

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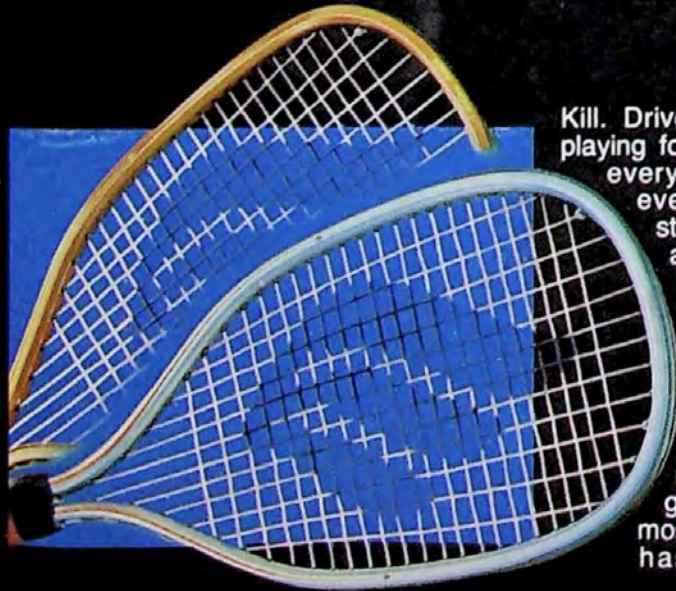
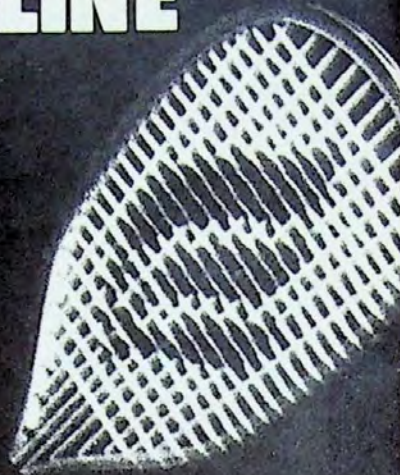
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TOURNAMENTS

slower game, and prevailed, 3-2, 3-0. "She waited for me to make the mistakes," said Gilreath, "and I obliged."

Gilreath and Adams are close friends and working partners. They also share Carson as coach. "It's tough on him," said Adams. "We have an agreement that when Terri and I play one another he won't talk to either of us before or during the match."

Presumably when Adams and Carson return home to Costa Mesa, the two do speak. Carson doubles as Adams' husband.

Adams' semifinal opponent, Martino, almost didn't make it past the first round either—mainly because she almost didn't get a seat on the plane from Houston, Tex. "I had a real sense of déjà vu," related Martino. "Last year in this tournament, I was iced in and got here an hour before my first round match, lost and flew out the same day. This time I got the last seat on the plane. I played on the same court as last year."

Martino's performance moved her to number four in the WPRA ranking behind Adams, McKay, and Shannon Wright and earned her \$1,300.

McKay defeated Wright 3-2, 0-3, 15-11 in the hotly contested other semifinal that saw McKay ask for the removal of a linesman. "I have never asked for anything like that before," McKay said. "Shannon didn't mind. I felt we both were getting bad calls."

McKay defeated Jennifer Harding 3-0, 3-1, in her quarterfinal match and won her first round match over Janell Marriott, 3-1, 3-0.

DP Leach/Catalina (Conn.)

Mike Yellen, who went from obscurity to fame to obscurity once again, is now back in the rankings picture after defeating Marty Hogan, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-9, in the finals of the DP Leach/Catalina Classic at the Downton Racquet Club in New Haven, Conn.

It was the first tour victory for Yellen in over a year. At one time he was ranked number two behind Hogan and had lost to Hogan two straight years (1979, 1980) in the National finals but last season he dropped to sixth.

"I realized that the last couple of years I haven't been doing too well but I'm fighting like hell to get back on top," said Yellen after beating Hogan.

"I know he's had some tough times but Yellen is still the most consistent player on the tour," said Hogan.

To reach the finals, Hogan beat Ed Andrews, 11-6, 2-11, 11-10, 8-11, 11-9, and Yellen beat Ruben Gonzalez of New York, a qualifier, 11-4, 11-4, 8-11, 11-10.

"Andrews and Gonzalez were the surprises of the tourney," said a spokesperson for the tour. "They are definitely forces to be reckoned with in the future."

In the quarters, Hogan beat Gregg Peck in four games, Andrews topped Don Thomas in four, Gonzalez beat Steve Strandemo in three

and Yellen beat Bret Harnett, 11-10 in the fifth. Dave Peck did not play due to the flu.

CBC Classic

Marty Hogan and Lynn Adams took top honors in the annual CBC Classic in Winnipeg, Canada.

Hogan defeated his old nemesis Dave Peck, 13-15, 15-5, 11-9, and Adams topped her old nemesis Heather McKay, 15-19, 15-14.

To reach the finals, Hogan defeated Bret Harnett, 15-11, 15-10 and Peck beat Mike Yellen, 15-12, 15-9. Adams beat Shannon Wright, 11-2, in a tiebreaker and McKay stopped Heather Stupp, 15-6, 15-6. It was Stupp who upset McKay last year.

The tournament was taped for television and will be shown on ESPN this year.

DP Leach/Catalina (Minn.)

It's still a Marty Hogan-Dave Peck show in men's professional racquetball these days.

Peck defeated Hogan, 11-9, 11-10, 7-11, 3-11, 11-4, to win the \$5,500 first prize in the DP Leach/Catalina Classic tournament at the Burnsville (Minnesota) Racquet Club.

Hogan had earlier beaten Peck in five games in the Westminster, Calif., stop, the first of the 1982-83 tour.

To reach the finals, Peck defeated Mike Yellen, 11-6, 10-11, 11-10, 11-3, and Hogan topped home town favorite Steve Strandemo, 11-10, 2-11, 11-9, 11-8.

Strandemo, who is the oldest player on the tour and who some consider past his racquetball prime, surprised the fans by upsetting Bret Harnett in five games in the first round, and then beating Doug Cohen in the quarters before losing to Hogan.

There was also one casualty in the tournament. Fourth seeded Jerry Hilecher broke a bone in his ankle in his quarterfinal match against Yellen, and is expected to be sidelined for a couple of months.

Hilecher refused to forfeit, not aware of how serious the injury was, and ended up losing, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 5-11, 11-5.

Hogan won his quarterfinal bout over Don Thomas in five games and Peck beat Craig McCoy in three straight.

Etc.

•Janell Marriott defeated Dot Fischl and Ruben Gonzalez topped Jim Cascio in the open finals of the AARA Kangaroo Kick Off at Kangaroo Courts in Bricktown, N.J.

•Fielding Snow defeated Steve Dunn and Debbie Geiger beat Wanda Collins in the open finals of the Seafair Gold Cup at the First Serve Athletic Club in Edmonds, Wash.

•Steve Ducich beat Rick Green, 11-9, 11-6, 9-11, 9-11, 11-2, in the men's finals of the sixth annual Cascade Open at Courtsports I in Eugene, Ore.

•Jeff Bales beat Tim Hanson in the men's

open and Diane Bullard defeated Elena Mildenerger in the women's open finals of the Strohs Classic at Imperial Courts in Melbourne, Fla. The tourney drew 802 entries.

•Dean Pferschy beat Scott Jensen, 15-11, 15-13, and Maria Hyne beat Donna Whitmore, 15-9, 15-10, in the A finals of the Shoot Your Best Shot tournament at Supreme Courts in Reno, Nev.

•Arnold Hill teamed with Allen Weckerly to win the Seniors and Masters doubles tournament for players over 40 at Tecolote Tennis and Racquet Club in San Diego, Calif. The event was sponsored by the American Heart Association.

•Steve Lerner defeated Gerry Price, 15-9, 15-13, in the men's open finals of the Tournament of Champions at Del Amo All Pro Athletic Club in Torrance, Calif. Lerner topped Guy Texeira and Price beat Corey Brysman in the semis. In the doubles finals, Lerner and Price beat Texeira and Brysman, 15-13, 13-15, 15-9. B winners were Joel Davidson and Cindy Furst.

•John Woodard beat Chad Kinzelberg, 21-14, 21-16, and Mae Chin defeated Christine Aguilera, 21-13, 16-21, 11-6, in the open finals of the Columbus Day Classic at the Santa Maria (Calif.) Racquetball Club. Other winners included Vince Iannolo, Ron Eshel, Tom Eisner and Laura Lambert.

•John Mack beat Mike Gustaveson, 15-7, 15-14, in the men's open finals of the Straw Hat Pizza Shootout at the Irvine (Calif.) Clubhouse. Jim Carson and Bill Chadwick won the open doubles. Rick Cardwell and Diane Rippy were B division champs.

•Gary Roberson defeated Bobby Ison in the finals of the Tidewater Summer Championships at the Ace of Clubs in Chesapeake, Va. Tom Olinski and Sue Howard were B winners.

•Bobby Ison topped Glenn Allen, 15-13, 15-8, in the men's finals of the Williamsburg (Va.) Hilton Killshot Classic. Ron Isaacs beat Connie Naminsky, 15-12, 15-10, in a combined men's/women's B division.

•Allan Lee won the \$390 first prize by beating Gus Koumarelas in the finals of the Columbus Day Shootout at the 21st Point Club in Albany, N.Y.. Anne Baril took top prize of \$65 in the women's open by beating Jessica Rubin. Neil and Roger Fudim won the open doubles. Rubin and Garr Thompson won the mixed doubles. Brian McDermott and Laurie Kitchen won the B titles.

•Doug Gribble beat Mark Johnson and Gail O'Dell topped Coreen Peterson in the open finals of the Capital Classic at the Juneau (Alaska) Racquet Club.

•Dave Peck defeated Mike Yellen 11-4, 10-11, 11-6, 11-5, in an exhibition match as part of the 1982 Northern California Championships at Schoebers of Pleasanton club. Gerry Price defeated Scott Oliver and Mona Mook defeated Mary Pessagno in the open division finals.





Racquetball Shirt

EQ Enterprises of North Miami Beach, Fla. has come out with a classy looking T-shirt made of 50 percent cotton and 50 percent polyester.

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Socks Locker

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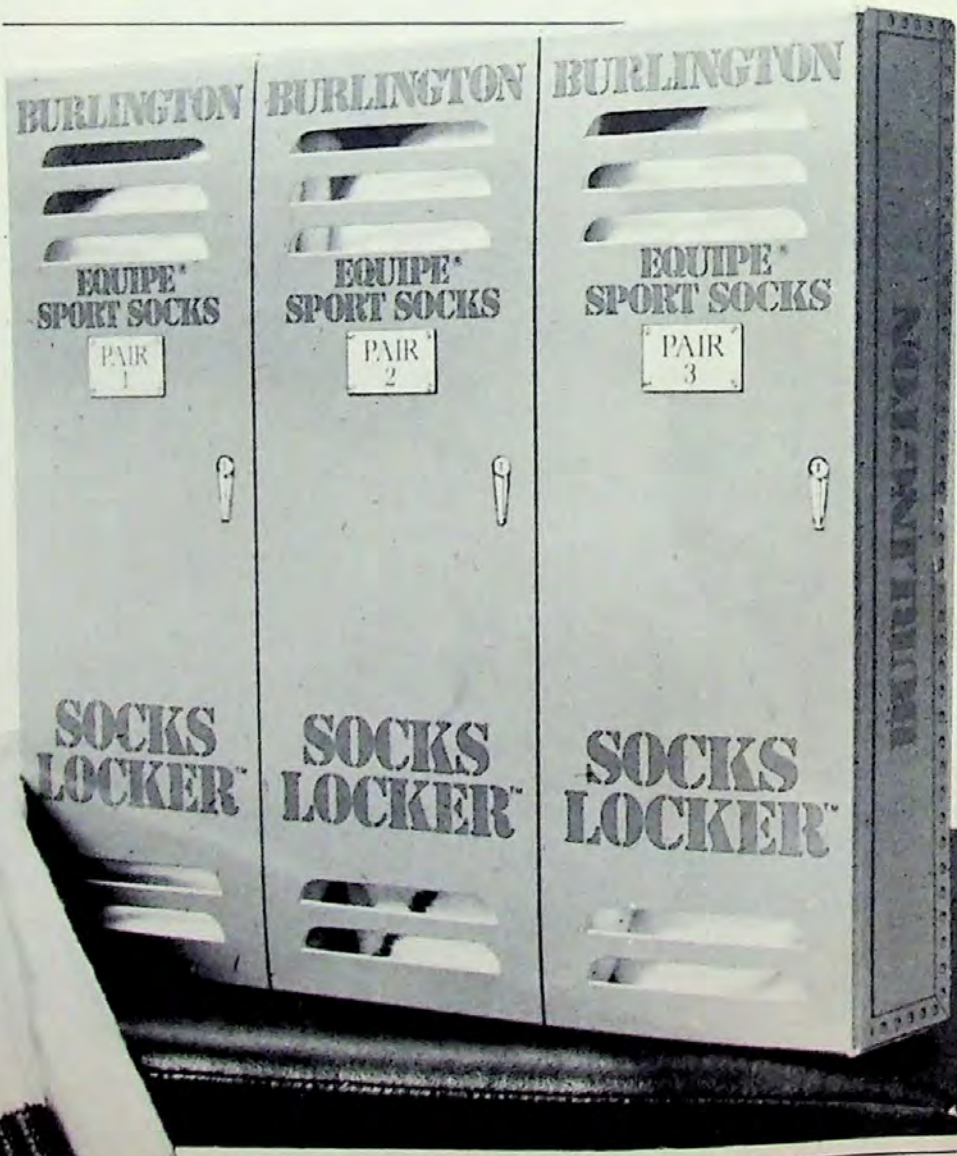
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Grey Hounds

ABC Sports socks made by Adams-Mills Hosiery (High Point, N.C.) is getting away from the normal white color and into "sweatsuit grey."

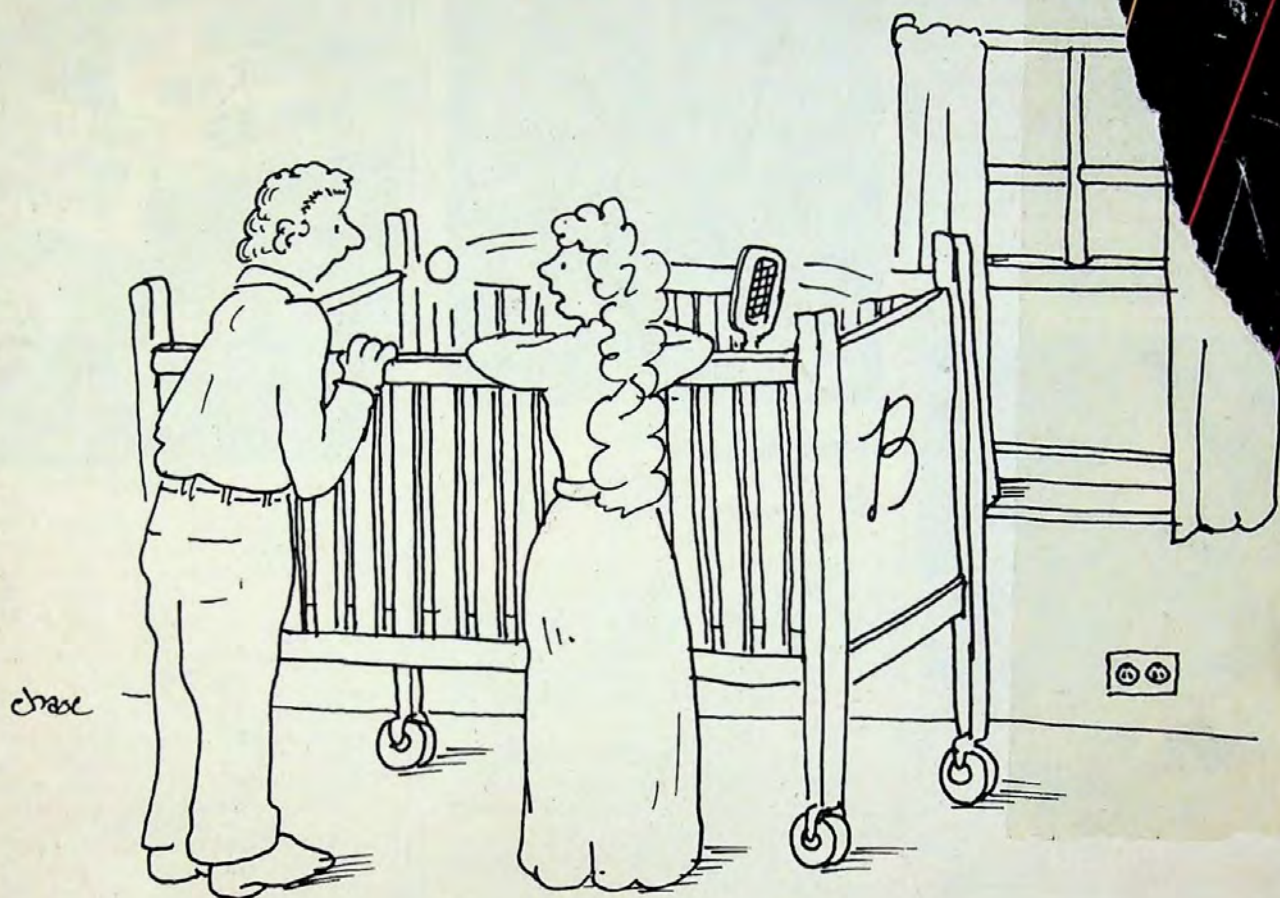
Called Grey Hounds, the socks are made of 90 percent cotton. The men's tube or crew socks sell for **\$3.50** a pair. The women's cuff ankle (see photo) sell for **\$2.75** a pair.

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