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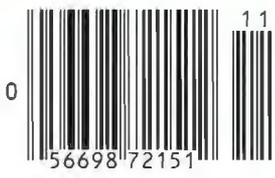
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**HOLIDAY GIFT
IDEAS - PAGE 23**

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On the Cover: Our model, Jennifer Duffy, was photographed by Jim Sauser. A special thanks to Gershon Bassman and Peggy Roche for use of the Signiture Fitness Center in Northbrook, IL. Heavy Hands by American Athletic Company, tank top and shorts by Ektelon, glove by Champion, Boron Graphite racquet by D.P. Industries, and shoes by Foot-Joy.

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FIRST SERVE

By Chuck Leve



New Racquets Mean Strength Is 'In'

I knew it would come to this. I knew that someday, somehow, for some reason I would have to finally succumb to the pressures of our time and begin lifting weights.

It's kinda funny. No, not that I would lift weights (or work out on variable resistance machines—I plan to do both) but the reasons that have forced me to take up this endeavor that I have been avoiding consciously for at least 25 of my 37 years.

When I was a kid, the nightmares of muscle-laden bullies kicking sand in my face and making off with my girlfriend were not enough to make me toil and sweat in the stench of the weight room. Then again, you never saw my girlfriend.

When I was going to be a baseball player, even the lure of big bonuses and salaries wasn't enough to get me to increase my strength by joining the defensive linemen in the college "power room." After all, those guys could lift three of me holding all I could lift. I rode out my career as a singles hitter.

Then when I got into racquetball and Marty Hogan convinced everybody that to hit harder was to hit better, I still disdained the machines and the free weights (I still don't know why they call 'em "free," especially at today's prices). Even Hogan said he never used 'em (did anybody ever check his closet?), so why should I?

I always figured that if my shoes fit, my eyeguards were secure and my racquet—yes, my trusty, comfy, terrible, swift sword—if my composite weapon was to my liking, then I was ready for anybody. Especially if I picked my opponents carefully.

They always said it was the timing, not the strength. They always said it was the stroke, not the biceps. They always said it was footwork and point of contact and all those other niceties. Nobody ever said that you had to be the strongest to be the winningest.

Now, the inevitable. Now, *the* change that will beget all other changes. Yes, the oversized racquets are *really* here. Introduced a year and a-half ago by Ektelon and re-introduced in a modified version this year by Head, our reports from the season's first pro stop are that the oversized (or mid-sized) racquets are winning!

Players who've never before even seen the mountain are fast climbing it along with players who a year ago were sliding back down it faster than melting french vanilla slides down the cone. And everybody says it's because of the new racquets.

Let's put it this way: if the over-sized racquets aren't making these guys play better it doesn't really matter because *they think* it helps them play better. And if they think it, it does. And there isn't a pro racquetball player alive who doesn't live and die by the sword of confidence during a tight match.

I know. What does this have to do with lifting weights?

Oh, I couldn't lift weights to swing the Ektelon or Head or anybody else's mid-over- or super-sized racquet. These companies are smart enough to build the racquets as light or even lighter than "normal" racquets. And while I may not be one of the world's strongest people, neither am I one of the weakest, so manufacturers have to build the racquets so people even weaker than I am can swing them.

But, you see, I have this theory. I'm going to build my own racquet. I'm going to build it very quietly, very cautiously and very big. Extremely big. I figure about 19 feet high and about 15 feet wide, with a hitting surface as wide as a wallyball net and as high as the back wall.

Then I'm going to market these racquets with my name on them, so I get all the royalties and become rich and famous like Marty Hogan, who, if he's lucky, will get maybe five points off me in the Nationals.

Since big racquets seem to improve the game of so many players who otherwise would have been ancient history, I intend to sign to contracts as many of those great players of yore as I can.

Oh, baby! Just think what Charlie Brumfield would have done to Hogan with *my* racquet! Just think of what Bud Muehleisen would have done to Brumfield! And I bet ol' Bill Schmidkte would still be killing forehands in the right corner if he had my special racquet.

With my racquet I think these guys would come out of retirement to claim their fair share of today's prize money. My racquet will add years to the careers of the average pro player.

There are just a few details I haven't quite worked out yet. First, I'm having trouble visualizing how I'll get the racquet into the court. Second, I don't recommend it for doubles. Third, I haven't figured out what to do when Hogan, Yellen and Hilecher start using it against me.

And as you can tell, it's gonna take some strong person to even lift my new racquet, let alone swing it.

That's why I'm going to start lifting weights. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you would like to write a letter to the Editor, please send your comments to: Letters to the Editor, National Racquetball, 4350 DiPaolo Center/Dearlove Road, Glenview, IL, 60025. All correspondence becomes the property of National Racquetball and will not be returned.

NR Double Faults

Dear Editor,

You just double faulted. On page 26 of your 1985 yearbook under WPR National WPR National Champions for 1985, you listed Heather McKay as the champion. Then on page 27 for the Women Players of the Year, you listed Lynn Adams as the 1985 champ. Which one won?

Andrew Lee
Okemos, MI

Side out. Lynn won the WPR National Championship. We found the mistake ourselves after publication, but we're glad you brought it to the attention of all of our readers. —Ed.

Canadian Company Had U.S. Portable Court First!

Dear Editor,

As the designers and builders of the portable squash court now owned by the World Professional Squash Association, we were most interested in your recent (August 1985) article on the 1985 North American Open.

We wish to point out that this was not the first appearance of the court in the U.S.A. as the Boston Open and Toledo Open had preceded the North American Open in New York. The court will be returning to the U.S. during the 85/86 season for the aforementioned tournaments as well as an additional event in New York sponsored by Chivas Regal. Other venues are still under consideration by several groups.

The court was first developed by Playcon for the 1981 McGuinness World Open in Toronto and since then has undergone many changes—with more to come. The two glass sidewalls and glass backwall are of clear tempered glass and not plexiglass as mentioned in your article. The design concepts used for the court now and those proposed for the future are certainly applicable to racquetball.

You may be interested to know that a new ball has been introduced to the

sport for the benefit of the television audience. On a TV. screen, the squash ball appears to be the size of a tennis ball and quite fluorescent as well. A most exciting development and certainly one that can be accomplished with a racquetball.

Michael Taylor
Playcon
Kitchener, Canada

Gregg Peck A Poster Champ?

Dear Editor:

I've been following Gregg Peck's success and rise through racquetball's pro ranking for the past couple of years. I've been waiting for him to win the big tournaments. I knew he could win them and now I know he will keep winning them. He's my favorite player and I'm glad he has finally received the Player of the Year Award. Also, do you know where I could get a poster of Gregg and if there are any pro tournaments coming to Houston?

Chirs Beaudin
Houston, TX

Contact D.P. Industries, Gregg's sponsor at P.O. Box 100, Opelika, Alabama, 36802, 205-749-9001, to see if there is a poster out on Gregg. The nearest pro stop to you will be the MPact Texas Challenge Pro Racquetball Championships at the International Athletic Club in Dallas, Texas, on November 5-10. Call 918-493-3331 for more information on the tournament. —Ed.

Thanks For The Memories

Dear Editor,

Just dropping a few lines to tell you that your coverage of the AARA Singles Nationals in Houston, Texas, was done with great zest. I came in third there in the Women's Open, but the picture and caption about my racquet with the "rainbow strings" went over big at my club where I work. The tournament was great and I had a fun week.

Dot Fischl
Allentown, PA

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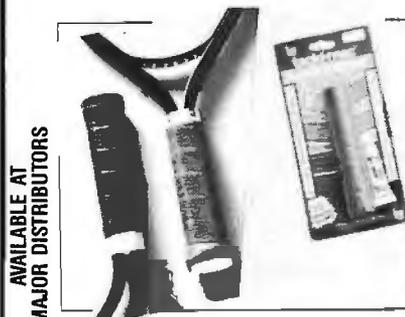
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SHORT LINES

Short Lines features personal stories of racquetball pros, celebrities, and industry leaders. Short Lines is about the special performances of racquetball people around the world, their personal bests and their personal sides.



Ann Christen's new hubby Marty Hogan

Hogan Stars In Married Life

Marty Hogan and long time steady, **Ann Christen** exchanged wedding vows just outside of Hogan's hometown of St. Louis on August 3rd. The evening ceremony took place on Marty's newly purchased ranch, a 30 acre spread in Chesterfield, MO.

"It's great," says Hogan about married life on the ranch. "We've got 9 Texas Longhorns, 9 sheep, 2 dogs, and

a turtle dove. I'll be here most of the time, when I'm not traveling."

Does Hogan credit his marriage with his quick return to the number one spot on tour this season?

"You bet!" says Hogan enthusiastically. "I'm going to write a new instructional series," he goes on kidding-ly. "Marriage and your racquetball game!"

Now that could be interesting. Move over Dr. Ruth! □



Rancher Hogan on his new tractor

Racquetball Fantasy

They say that creativity and a sense of humor are essential survival skills. In the case of **Mike Yellen's** recent clinic at the Harbor Pines Racquetball Club in Melbourne, FL, creativity saved the day.

When a major sponsor of the clinic pulled out of the event, Florida Racquet Journal publisher, Norm Blum came up with an idea that saved the day. Calling the event a "**Racquetball Fantasy**", he set up a challenge court for Yellen. The cost per challenge

\$50.00—take any point spot you want—games to 7.

“Everyone took six points on Yellen,” said Blum, “and everyone lost. The event was a huge success.” Necessity is the mother of invention. Maybe next time, though, Yellen could wear a blindfold and play with an unstrung racquet. The odds might be even then. □



Mike Yellen and court challenger



Leo Riley (top right) and his sales force at Yamaha's Western Barbeque—east meets west finger lickin' style

Cowboys and Engines?

Yamaha International is a corporation widely known for its motorcycles and submarines. However, when **Leo Riley** took the job as National Sales Manager for their sporting goods division, a western barbeque was held as one of the main events during this year's national sales meeting.

Leo is an avid racquetball player who was once Ektelon's Western Regional

Sales Manager. He knows how much fun you can have at hospitality functions due to his longtime association with the sport of racquetball on the court as well as off the court. At Yamaha, his primary responsibilities involve athletic shoes.

Of the barbeque Leo says, “Hey, it was fun, we're in the west, what else could you expect?” Well, a little show business along with shoe business never hurts. □

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Hogan Wins Michelob Light Pro-Am

In the 1985-86 season opener, it was Hilecher Vs. Hogan In The Final

by Drew Stoddard



You could say that Marty Hogan has always been outstanding in his field, but apparently during the brief summer break from the pro tour he spent more time standing out there than he did on the racquetball court. According to friends, after his loss to Gregg Peck at the DP Nationals in June, Marty junked his summer training schedule, opting instead for marriage and a few weeks of blissful mingling with the cows, pigs, and such that roam around for some reason behind his large Missouri spread.

No matter: the man has kill shots in his chromosomes. When the 1985-86 RMA Tour season came to life at the \$15,000 Michelob Light Pro-Am in Stockton, California, Hogan kicked the mid-western mud from his Nikes and

continued a decade-long tradition of trouncing the competition in the first ranking tournament of the season. After giving away a game per match in the first four rounds, Hogan flew by Jerry Hilecher in the finals, 11-10, 11-4, 11-5, to win the \$5250 first prize, and boosted himself past Mike Yellen to #1 in the pro rankings. Yellen didn't compete in Stockton.

It was a bit of sweet revenge for the man of the Mack-truck build. Last year the event at Stockton's sprawling West Lane Racquet Club was the second of the season, and Hogan was stung badly in that tournament by Gregg Peck in a horribly lopsided final.

This time around Peck didn't make it far enough to threaten Marty; Jerry Hilecher, who has near-legendary con-

trol over the Texan (5-2 lifetime), bumped Peck off his defending champion's pedestal with an 11-9, 11-4, 11-8 win in the semifinals.

How about that Hilecher? The guy seems to have his own souped-up DeLorean for going back in time. Thirty-one years old and going on twenty-two, Jerry (also from the mid-west) has been pushing backhands on the men's tour for 12 years now. (As Hogan jibed after the final, "He'll be back—he's been coming back for 20 years"). Whichever incarnation Hilecher's career is currently in, it's a good one: his win over Peck advanced his pro ranking from fourth to third.

For his new sponsor as well as himself, Jerry picked a good time to finish high. As he swept over Dave Johnson, John Egerman, Gerry Price, and Peck on his way into the finals, Hilecher brandished a flashy new oversized racquet made by Head, and still in prototype form. In fact, he was one of six players in Stockton who used the new oversized frames. The racquets, which have much larger hitting surfaces than standard models, were introduced by Ektelon about a year ago and Head more recently. Prior to Stockton, no pro had ever used an oversized in tour competition.

Actually, the Head racquets (which were used by Hilecher, Doug Cohen, John Egerman, Jim Cascio and Sean Moskwa) are called "mid-size"; by dimension, they fall about evenly between standard frames and the original Ektelon "macro" design. From a distance the Head's increased size is not always obvious.

No, in Stockton if you wanted to see some serious oversize action, the player to watch was Ruben Gonzalez. Sporting a sleek new composite version of the pioneer macro design, the popular New Yorker muscled his way past Mike Griffith, Sean Moskwa, and Steve

Lerner, before finally surrendering to Hogan in Sunday afternoon's first semifinal, 2-11, 11-5, 11-10, 11-2. His appearance in the final four at Stockton—only his second trip to the semis in two years—silenced in one quick stroke the persistent claims by some “experts” that no one could play world-class racquetball with an oversized racquet.

It's a type of heresy to question the time-honored axiom among racquetball pros that racquets do not score points, players do. But it's difficult to ignore the results in Stockton. Six players used oversized racquets, and each had just a few weeks to adjust. Four of the six—Hilecher, Gonzalez, Cohen, and Cascio—reached the quarterfinals; Hilecher and Gonzalez each notched their best finish since Baltimore last March. So much for the experts.

One time-honored axiom did hold up in Stockton: the “season-opener syndrome” took a big toll in the early rounds. Three of the top eight seeds—Cliff Swain, Bret Harnett, and Scott Oliver—were dusted on the first day of competition.

Harnett, the tournament's sixth seed, frequently sputters in the early rounds, and Jim Cascio pulled his plug-wires completely with a 4-11, 11-8, 11-2, 5-11, 11-6 upset in the round-of-32. Cascio has been racking-up an impressive list of upsets during the last 12 months, and seems to be growing stronger by the tournament. He followed his win over Harnett with a three-game drilling of Corey Brysman, before falling to Gregg Peck in the quarters.

Oliver's problem came in the round-of-16. Seeded seventh and playing in front of his home-town Stockton



Jerry Hilecher signals to the referee in the final against Marty Hogan

crowd, Oliver fell victim to Doug Cohen, 11-4, 4-11, 8-11, 11-10, 11-4, in an unusually tough second-round matchup.

But the most stunning match of the Stockton competition occurred in the first two hours of play in the main draw. Fifth-ranked Cliff Swain, pro racquetball's *enfant terrible* and defending Ektelon champion, was soundly trounced by Jack Newman of Chicago in three quick games, 11-7, 11-10, 11-0 (yes, that's the correct score). It was the first round-of-32 loss for Swain since his win in Tulsa last February, as well as the foremost victory of Newman's young pro career.

Newman might have had the tournament of his career had it not been for another of the tour's bright young players—Steve Lerner of Southern California. Lerner, who has long been recognized for his natural talent and good speed on the court, roared out of an 18-month slump by taking out Dan Obremski and then Newman, in four and five games respectively. Although Steve was stopped by Gonzalez 8-11, 6-11, 11-10, 11-5, 11-4, in the quarterfinals, he lost only because he was unable to convert at match point in the third game.

As is the tradition in the season opener, inconsistent and streaky play was the order of the day, even among the top-ranked players. Hogan, in particular, seemed to have fits keeping his mind on the game, sharpening-up only as each match started to slip away.

Hilecher was the exception. Despite claims that he had played little during the layoff, Jerry rolled over everyone in his path with stunning ease. Prior to meeting Hogan in the final, Hilecher disposed of every opponent in three games, and kept the first three—Dave Johnson, John Egerman, and Gerry Price—under six points per game. In his first game against Gregg Peck, Jerry scored eleven straight points to win after falling behind 0-9.

In the early stages of the final match he looked like he might continue that trend as he moved to a 10-7 lead in game one, when the clutch finally engaged on the great Hogan machine.



D.P. National Champ Gregg Peck (right) lost to Hilecher in the semis

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Hogan: kill shots in his Chromosomes

Knowing well how dangerous it can be to let Hilecher play with a lead, Hogan turned on the fire and began drilling the ball with thunderous power. His win in the first game may have been a bit jittery, but games two and three were flawless—Hilecher never got within striking distance.

"I just had to come back into town to atone for last year," Hogan told the Stockton crowd after his win. "I thought I played really well, and Jerry had kind of an off day."

Hogan also commented on why the pros enjoy playing at West Lane Racquet Club: "The hospitality and entertainment here in the evening is some of the best we've seen, and I'm not talking about the 17-year-olds. I'm talking about the barbecue."

Absent from the Stockton tournament were Mike Yellen and Dave Peck, both because of minor injuries. Peck's no-show dropped him to eleventh in the RMA rankings—out of the top 10 for the first time this decade. His drop is of no little concern to his fellow pros; Peck remains one of the most formidable players in the game, and if his ranking were to drop to 12th he would face one of the top four seeds in the second round. Both Peck and Yellen were expected to be healthy for the second stop of the season in Davison, Michigan.

Sixty-two professionals and nearly five-hundred amateurs entered the competition in this year's Michelob Light Pro Am, which was staged under the watchful eye of West Lane manager

Rob Farrens. The tournament was sponsored by Michelob Light and Pepsi Cola. □

MICHELOB LIGHT PRO-AM WEST LANE RACQUET CLUB STOCKTON, CA AUG 29 - SEPT 1, 1985

ROUND OF 32:

Hogan d. Ferrin; 11-6, 11-10, 8-11, 11-4
Gross d. Navarro; 11-2, 11-7, 11-5
Cohen d. Levine; 11-5, 11-6, 11-0
Oliver d. Bronfeld; 11-7, 11-1, 7-11, 11-5
Gonzalez d. Griffith; 11-6, 11-5, 11-2
Moskwa d. Gross; 11-9, 11-10, 10-11, 11-7
Lerner d. Obrenski; 11-3, 11-9, 6-11, 11-6
Newman d. Swain; 11-7, 11-10, 11-0
Hilecher d. Johnson; 11-2, 11-1, 11-5
Egerman d. Green; 11-8, 11-5, 2-11, 11-10
Andrews d. Harripersad; 11-7, 5-11, 11-2, 11-9
Price d. Clause; 11-7, 11-4, 11-1
Cascio d. Harnett; 4-11, 11-8, 11-2, 5-11, 11-6
Brysmen d. Wagner; 11-7, 10-11, 11-9, 11-3
Ray d. Conine; 11-5, 11-8, 7-11, 5-11, 11-2
Peck d. Hawkes; 11-3, 11-5, 11-3

ROUND OF 16:

Hogan d. Gross; 11-2, 5-11, 11-3, 11-6
Cohen d. Oliver; 11-4, 4-11, 8-11, 11-10, 11-4
Gonzalez d. Moskwa; 7-11, 8-11, 11-1, 11-8, 11-4
Lerner d. Newman; 11-6, 7-11, 11-4, 6-11, 11-0
Hilecher d. Egerman; 11-5, 11-5, 11-2
Price d. Andrews; 7-11, 11-7, 11-3, 11-1
Cascio d. Brysmen; 11-9, 11-4, 11-8
Peck d. Ray; 11-5, 11-3, 6-11, 11-3

QUARTER FINAL ROUND:

Hogan d. Cohen; 11-8, 11-8, 6-11, 11-8
Gonzalez d. Lerner; 8-11, 6-11, 11-10, 11-5, 11-4
Hilecher d. Price; 11-6, 11-6, 11-6
Peck d. Cascio; 11-8, 5-11, 11-0, 11-3

SEMI FINAL ROUND:

Hogan d. Gonzalez; 2-11, 11-5, 11-10, 11-2
Hilecher d. Peck; 11-9, 11-4, 11-8

FINAL ROUND:

Hogan d. Hilecher; 11-10, 11-4, 11-5



The appreciative crowd at the West Lane Racquet Club in Stockton, CA

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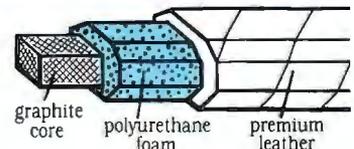
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B & C Players: Use The Yellen Forehand Pinch!

Charlie Garfinkel's 'Spot' Racquetball

by Charlie Garfinkel

Watching Mike Yellen play professional racquetball for the past eight years has been a distinct pleasure. I also had the good fortune or misfortune, depending upon your point of view, of playing him in a one game exhibition in the Ektelon Regionals this past spring.

Yellen's wide variety of shots and unerring accuracy greatly impressed me. His outstanding physical and mental skills have placed him at the pinnacle of the pro racquetball tour. And yet, many of the theories and shots that he uses, can readily be emulated by B and C players.

It continually amazes me as to how many B and C players have purchased magnificent looking warmup suits, only to take them off as soon as they start exercising or warming up. Notice that Yellen and most of the pros keep their warmups on before the match starts, to keep their body warm and limber.

Even though Yellen is warmed up and has broken a sweat before he steps on the court to practice his shots before a match, he hits his first few shots easily and effortlessly. He wants to get a feel for the ball and the bounce of the court.

Many B and C players walk on the court before a match and try to hit both forehands and backhands as hard as they can. Although their accuracy is low, they're more concerned about impressing their opponent with their power.

Yellen also practices intelligently during his warmup. That is, he concentrates on his kill shots, side wall shots, ceiling balls, and serves. Although B and C players may practice most of the aforementioned, they rarely practice their serves. Therefore, be sure to hit

8-10 drive serves, in addition to a few lobs before commencing play.

Once the match is under way Yellen is a joy to behold. His first serves are a mixture of medium and fast paced drives, intermingled with occasional Z and high lob. However, I've often seen Yellen use a high lob on his first serve for an entire match if he was playing against a powerful, but erratic player. By slowing the game down he continually frustrates the power hitter who wants to blast every ball.

More important, regardless of the type of serve that he's using, Yellen will use a serve that he feels will be most effective against the particular player in a given match. He's not leery of changing his first serve if it isn't working, a lesson that B and C players should learn as they develop serves that are most effective against different opponents.

Before serving his second serve, Yellen always looks to see where his opponent is stationed. (He also does this on his first serve.) Usually, he'll serve a high or medium lob second serve. Yellen *never* doublefaults. Unfortunately, many B and C players do. So, regardless of the second serve that you use, be sure that you put the ball safely in play.

When the ball is in play, Mike rarely makes unforced errors. He continually stays to the ceiling or passes until he gets the shot that he wants. When he does, it doesn't matter whether he hits it with his forehand or backhand, he usually puts the ball away. B and C players who follow Yellen's strategy will find themselves making fewer errors and winning more points.

As much as I admire Yellen's ability to maneuver his opponents around the court and his ability to make few un-



Charlie Garfinkel, winner of 14 national titles, writes each month on his 'spot' theory of racquetball play that can get you out of a 'bad spot' and put your opponent 'on the spot'.

forced errors, there are two other parts of his game that stand out.

First, his concentration is second to none. A match that remains firmly entrenched in my memory is the DP National Professional finals in Atlanta in 1984. Mike played Marty Hogan in a match that would crown not only the winner of the largest prize money event of the year, but also the national champion for 1984.

'When you've got a setup in front court—pinch it.'

The match, because it was poorly refereed, lasted three and a-half hours. There were many appeals by both players, and it seemed that most of the calls were going against that Yellen.

Even though it was obvious that Mike was visibly upset at some of the calls, even going as far to tell the referee that one call was the worst that he'd ever

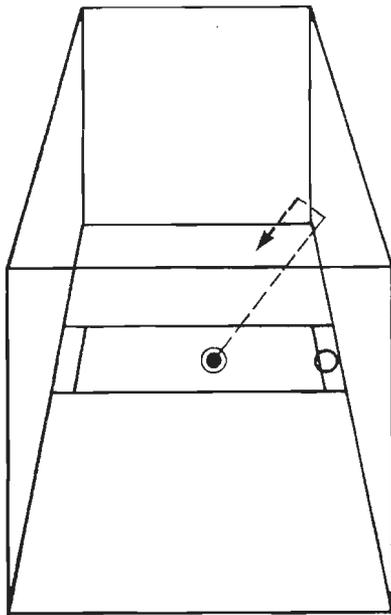


Diagram 1

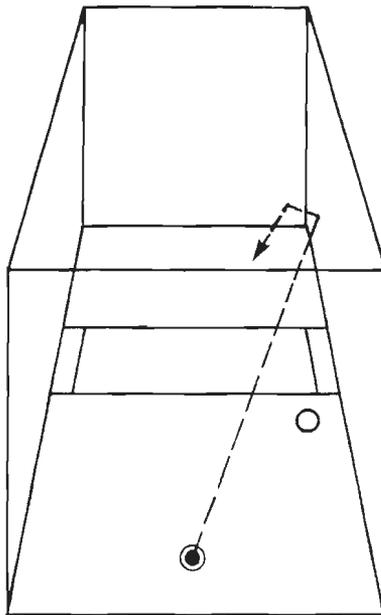


Diagram 2

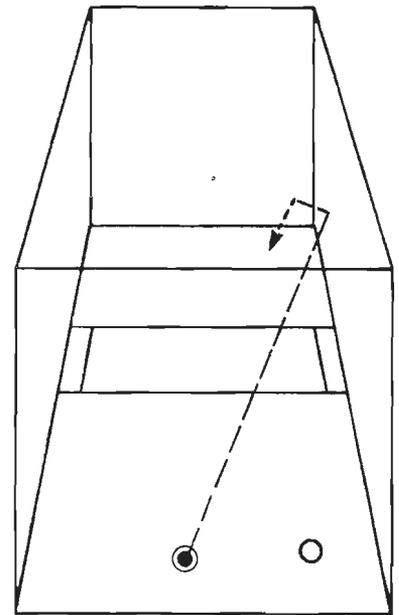


Diagram 3

seen, he kept his composure and concentration. And when Hogan broke to a 6-3 lead in game five on an incredible hot streak, Yellen calmly took a time out. After collecting his thoughts he resumed play and put Marty out of serve.

Mike then played very intelligently and calmly to win the fifth game. Hogan was the one who made a few unforced errors that led to his own demise.

If you're playing in a tournament or a practice match, and the referee or your opponent makes an obvious call—forget it. Use your adrenalin to concentrate on the next point.

If you're tired, have lost a big lead, or you're losing badly, take a time out. This will give you an opportunity to collect your thoughts. You can then decide on what strategies and shots you can use to regain control of the match.

The second, standout portion of Yellen's game is Mike's ability to use the right side wall pinch shots. When he has an opponent out of position he always seems to know when to hit that shot.

When he is stationed in front of his opponent near the service line, Yellen is able to produce a wide variety of shots. And he has an amazing knack of knowing how far back from the front wall he should hit the right side wall to ensure his opponent will never reach the ball.

For optimum right side wall selection, aim as close as possible to the right side wall-front wall juncture. **Diagram 1.** From this position, a wide

'If you're playing in a tournament or a practice match, and the referee or your opponent makes an obvious call—forget it. Use your adrenalin to concentrate on the next point.'

angle pinch shot would be foolish because the angle would push your shot to the middle of the front wall. If the shot isn't a flat rollout, your opponent would have an easy return.

A common error in this situation by many B and C players is to try to shoot a kill shot straight in, pass down the line, or hit a cross court pass. Unless you hit a perfect kill or pass down the line, a hinder can easily be called on you, blowing a perfect scoring opportunity. Hitting a cross court pass will allow your opponent plenty of time to react and return your shot. So, when you've got a setup in front court—pinch it.

Another shot that Yellen uses extremely well could add several points to your game. In **Diagram 1**, Mike is stationed in the middle of the service box with his opponent directly across from him. At first glance it appears that Mike is going to hit a cross court kill or pass. However, at the last moment, he hits a deadly right corner pinch. As you can see by the angle of the shot, it is virtually impossible for his opponent to return.

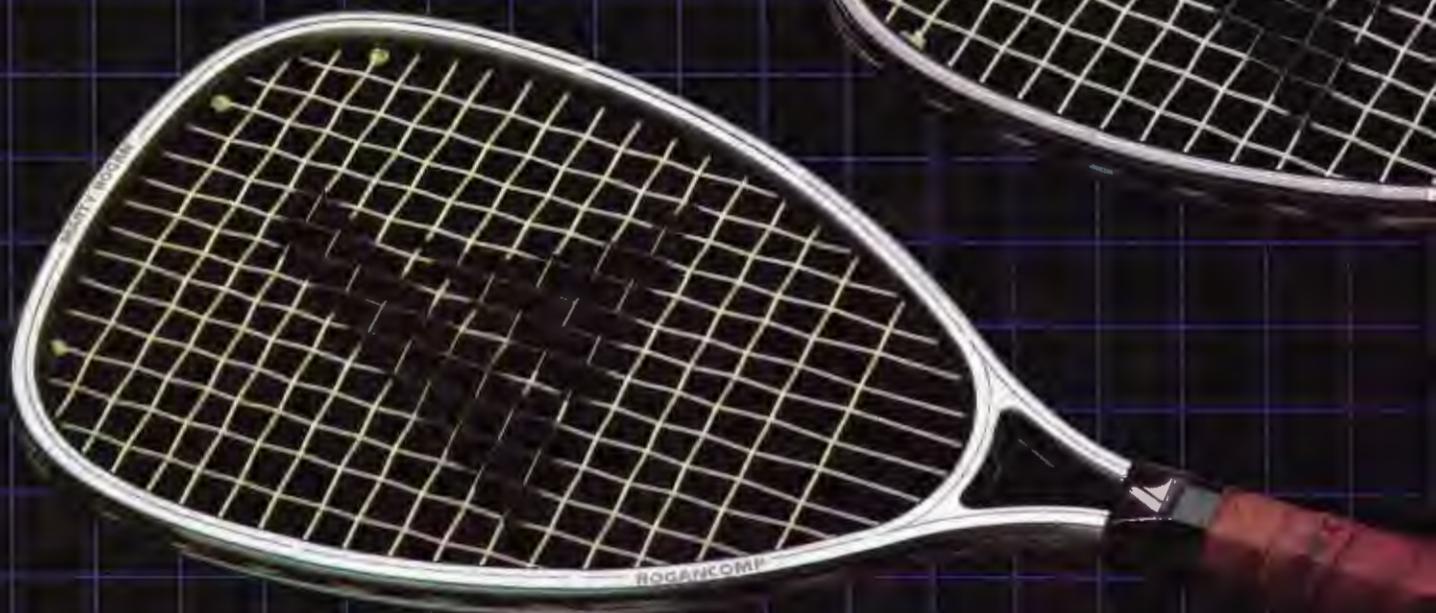
When Yellen is positioned in deep, back court in the middle of the court, he'll often try a right side wall shot when his opponent is positioned near the short line. Although this shot may appear risky at first, you'll note in **Diagram 2** that the ball is moving away from his opponent, taking a great deal of the risk out of the shot.

As for Yellen's ceiling game, it is unequaled. In addition to keeping his opponents pinned in the back of the court, he constantly puts pressure on them by putting away any ball that they miss-hit or leave short.

If he is involved in a long ceiling ball rally, he'll sometimes attempt a forehand overhand pinch shot into the right corner as shown in **Diagram 3**.

Shooting forehand side wall shots when the opportunity presents itself can greatly improve your game, but stay away from wide angle corner shots. Hitting the "spot" as close to the right side wall-front wall crack as possible is what you should be striving for. After all, if it's good enough for Mike Yellen, it should be good enough for the rest of us. □

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SL (230-245)	▲	▲	▲



San Francisco Has It All

The 'City by the Bay' beckons you to come and play – and play racquetball

by Victor Block

If you have ever been in San Francisco on business or pleasure, you're likely to agree with countless people who consider it one of the most inviting cities in the country—if not the world—to visit. Yet many of those who hold this view have difficulty pinpointing just why it is so.

Perhaps it's the cosmopolitan air, based in part upon an ethnic diversity equal to that found anywhere. Or the hills, which serve as backdrop to the eclectic mixture of gingerbread Victorian homes and towering modern skyscrapers. Maybe it derives from the effort to merge the best of the past and the present, which results in an amalgam that combines the latest in high-tech convenience with such nostalgic keepsakes as an archaic cable car system and an antiquated cannery.

Whatever the reasons, few question the claim that San Francisco is as in-

vitig to visit as it is liveable. It is one of the most scenic cities in the world and one of the most compact—as well as a destination where those so inclined may enjoy racquetball in pleasant surroundings.

It doesn't take one arriving in San Francisco long to experience the international flavor that pervades the city. Chinatown—the largest Chinese quarter outside Asia—is well known. But fewer people are as familiar with the city's large populations of English, Irish, German, Italian, and Japanese-born residents, and its sizeable Hispanic and Black communities. This United Nations-like variety offers the visitor a potpourri of neighborhoods, each with a distinctive character, and many within an easy walk, or bus or trolley ride, of each other.

Adjacent to bustling Chinatown is Nob Hill, where railroad barons and

other early entrepreneurs built lavish mansions. Japantown offers a Ginza-like variety of shops, restaurants and tea houses. Fisherman's Wharf is just that, a center of seafood restaurants and street stands. The Cannery—a mid-19th century produce cannery—today houses, shops and boutiques, as does Ghirardelli Square, a former chocolate factory.

These residential and shopping areas are among the city's most popular tourist attractions. Others include the cable cars, Golden Gate Park, an outstanding zoo, and—surprising to some—Alcatraz.

San Francisco's cable cars were returned to service little more than a year ago after a \$60 million rehabilitation. A crosstown ride aboard one of the century-old keepsakes—the only *moving* National Historic Landmark in the country—costs just \$1.

Golden Gate Park is a 1,000-plus acre sanctuary of lakes, trees and flowers. It encompasses art museums, an aquarium and planetarium, and a music concourse for Sunday concerts. Be sure to drop by the Japanese Tea Garden, a five-acre retreat with cherry trees and *bonsai*-type conifers, an arched bridge, a fascinating gift shop and a pavilion where kimono-clad Japanese women serve tea and wafers.

The grey concrete and metal of Alcatraz, set in the bay, stands in stark contrast to this gentle scene. Here many of the nation's most notorious lawbreakers were incarcerated. A visit aboard the ferry that leaves Fisherman's Wharf provides an introduction to these infamous men and—for those willing—an opportunity to briefly experience the darkness and silence of solitary confinement.

Thoughts of prison fare may tempt those returning to the mainland to head for one of some 4,200 eating establishments that make San Francisco a great dining destination, with something for everyone. Interested in a budget-stretching meal? You can't go far wrong in Chinatown or North Beach, or along Polk Street between Geary and Filbert, or Lombard from Laguna to Divisadero. For a picnic lunch, the Little Italy delicatessens in North Beach offer all you'll need. Or stop at one of the seafood stands along Fisherman's Wharf for a loaf of sourdough bread and fresh crab or shrimp cocktail.

If you prefer a more formal meal, the city offers equal variety. My dinner at the elegant Pierre Restaurant in the Hotel Meridien compared favorably with those I've enjoyed anywhere. The menu—designed by three-star "nouvelle cuisine" chef Alain Chapel—features such treats as poached filets of sole with wild mushrooms and roast asparagus (\$13.50) and lobster salad with squab supremes and black truffles (\$16.50).

The new San Remo serves fine Italian cuisine in a handsomely restored Victorian setting. Alejandro's mixes traditional Mexican fare with Peruvian classics, Spanish favorites and such surprising but pleasing creations by owner Alejandro Espinosa as rabbit simmered in peanut butter, and sole sauteed with garlic and paella.

You'll encounter equal variety in accommodations, from pensions to penthouses. Perched on Nob Hill are the plush and pricey Fairmont, Huntington, Mark Hopkins Inter-Continental and Stanford Court Hotels. The two-year-old Meridien offers a French flair; a top-floor VIP suite with a \$1,500 per

night price tag; standard rooms with a sitting area in the \$140-\$185 (double) range, and special weekend packages that begin as low as \$79 for two people (for information call toll-free 800-223-9918).

Two hotels at the San Francisco International Airport—the Holiday Inn and Grosvenor Airport Inn—have a special arrangement for their guests to use the racquetball and other facilities of nearby Schoeber's Athletic Club, 425 Eccles Avenue, telephone (415) 873-8500. The daily fee is \$6, while other visitors to the city pay \$8 to enjoy the club.

In addition to six racquetball courts (one glass walled), Schoeber's—which has just completed a \$400,000 renovation—has Nautilus and Olympic free weight equipment, Lifecycles, aerobic conditioning equipment and a 2,400-square-foot aerobics room, basketball and volleyball, sauna, steam and whirlpool.

The Royal Racquet Club, 1718 Rollins Road in Burlingame, just south of San Francisco International Airport, is a private club for members and their guests with 13 racquetball courts. It offers more than 50 aerobics classes weekly, and has Cybex Eagle Fitness and Olympic free weights; a cardiovascular training center with rowing machines, Lifecycles and treadmills; sauna, Jacuzzi and steam rooms, and basketball and Wallyball facilities. Guest rates are \$7 per person a visit.

While club rules say guests must be accompanied by a member, manager Dena Aslanian-Williams said, "Be sure to tell your readers to let us know that they're visiting the San Francisco area." The Royal Racquet Club's phone number is (415) 692-3300.

Much more public is the YMCA of San Francisco at 166 Embarcadero. An \$8 per person day pass entitles visitors to the use of all facilities, including 45 minutes of play on either of the two racquetball courts. Advance reservations are necessary. Call (415) 392-4219 on Monday to reserve to play Tuesday or Wednesday; call Wednesday to play on Thursday or Friday, and phone on Friday to use the courts Saturday or Monday. The athletic facilities are closed on Sundays.

From Alcatraz to a great zoo, ethnic neighborhoods to Nob Hill, San Francisco has plenty to offer in the way of things to see and do—including racquetball. Among all the quotes and words of praise about the city, one of the greatest tributes is paid by the message in a fortune cookie that delights diners at a restaurant in Chinatown: "Paris is the San Francisco of Europe." If you've been there recently or visit soon, you're more than likely to agree!

For additional information, contact the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau, 201 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94103; telephone (415) 974-6900. □

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The Search For Chinese Racquetball

Was it possible that there were racquetball courts in Hong Kong?

by Keith Strandberg

I stepped onto the sun drenched tarmac at Hong Kong's Kai Tak airport and marveled at the mixture of incredible natural beauty and urban squalor.

"Going to China and Hong Kong," I had told the editor.

"See what they have in the way of racquetball," he had replied.

O.K. Sounded easy enough.

Finding my fortune might have been a little easier, and I'm sure if I had spent as much time on the latter as I did on the former, I'd be rich.

First, I tried the conventional ways. I asked the hotel desk clerk. "What rackieball?" I called the local fitness clubs. "No, sir. You're in Hong Kong, you have to remember." Then I called some of the country clubs. "Tennis, yes. Squash, certainly. Racquetball? Most assuredly. . . *not!*"

But, still, I had the assignment and I could have used a game, so I stuck with it. I pounded the streets, alleys, beaches and nightclubs of Hong Kong, looking for the elusive racquetball haven of Hong Kong. I went to Repulse Bay, Lookout Bay, Causeway Bay, Junk Bay, Clearwater Bay. . . I would have gone to the Bay of Pigs if I heard they had racquetball there. And I had no luck.

I saw millions of tennis courts, billions of squash courts, but there wasn't a racquetball court or club to be found.

Then, I met up with Larry Brown, a transplanted California-Hawaiian who runs International Fitness Associates Limited, the leading fitness consultant and management firm in Asia. "Looking for racquetball, huh?" he said over the phone. "Got a morning?" I told



The author stretching in front of the Great Wall of China

"Looking for racquetball, huh?" he said over the phone. "Got a morning?" I told him I had the whole day and I'd go to Beijing if I had to.'

him I had the whole day and I'd go to Beijing if I had to. "Meet me at the Discovery Bay Ferry Pier."

Discovery Bay! Now, why didn't I think of that?

On the 30 minute ferry ride out to Discovery Bay, Larry confided that Hong Kong didn't exactly embrace the sport of racquetball. "In fact, we are going to the only two courts in all of Hong Kong, and they're only busy about an hour every other day."

We got to Discovery Bay, a beautiful, secluded planned community with its own fitness club—The Discovery Bay Residents Club. Larry had overseen the building of the club, and was in charge of managing the fitness end of it, so we made a bee line for the courts.

There they were, the object of my desire for the past week in Hong Kong. The reason for sleepless nights, a sun burnt neck and sore feet.

And they were dark.

"They're like this most of the time," Larry said. I asked for a ball and a rac-

quet, just to hit on them for a little while, but there wasn't time. The ferry was leaving for the mainland.

"Besides, we're going to be redecorating and restructuring the club," Larry told me as we walked out. "Those courts will soon become an aerobic fitness room."

I got back on the ferry a broken man, and as we pulled away from the Discovery Bay dock, I watched the sun set on Hong Kong racquetball.

Larry, who does a great deal of work in Mainland China, assured me that he believes in the future of the game, and, because of racquetball's popularity in Japan, feels that there may be a market (a huge one) in the People's Republic of China. That's over a billion people swinging racquets at little blue balls! Can you see it?

Larry promised that he'd keep me up to date on Asian events in racquetball, and I'll make sure to pass it on to you. Until then, it's ping pong for this reporter while I'm in China. □

Playing Doubles To Win!

Part I – Inside tips on offensive and defensive doubles strategy

by Lou Fabian & Gene Grapes

Editor's Note: Gene Grapes has teamed with Al Schattner and Sam Caiazza to win five national racquetball doubles titles. Along the way they have shared seven regional and seven state doubles titles in the open, seniors, and masters divisions. Their legacy is by no means another Horatio Alger story. It is, however, a story of championship technique utilizing brain over brawn.

Championship doubles means teamwork between two individuals. Individuals who play good, fundamental doubles are as interchangeable as parts on a well-tuned automobile. A meshing of skills between partners is essential for success. These skills include communication, position during the rally, serve and serve return, using strategy to defeat the opponents, and the will to win.

Doubles is a team game. The absence of any of these skills between partners spells disaster. To develop these skills, you must: (1) develop at least an average singles game; (2) play with one partner for a long period of time; (3) utilize good doubles fundamentals.

This article cannot supply you with the missing skills. It can, however, provide an understanding of the techniques and knowledge that are necessary to greatly improve your chances of winning in doubles.

Beginners Must Communicate, Drill, and Maintain Proper Court Position

Communication

Communication is probably the most important quality of a good doubles team. Ideally, you and your partner should communicate so well that you actually play as one. Four periods of

communication are critical: before a match, during play, during timeouts and after the match.

Prior to a match, discuss general coverage patterns, offensive tactics, and serves that will be effective. Try to anticipate the opponents' moves and how to counter them.

During play, verbal signals should be loud and clear. Leave no doubt as to what should be done (i.e., "mine,"

"yours," "switch"). Use your timeouts for communication or to stop the opponents' momentum. Plan counter moves against unexpected maneuvers.

After each match, review your performance with your partner. This will help you remember successful moves and discover where improvement is necessary.

Cheer your partner on. Encourage him or her to go for bread-and butter

'This article cannot supply you with the missing skills. It can, however, provide an understanding of the techniques and knowledge that are necessary to greatly improve your chances of winning in doubles.'



Many players think that doubles racquetball is the ultimate challenge

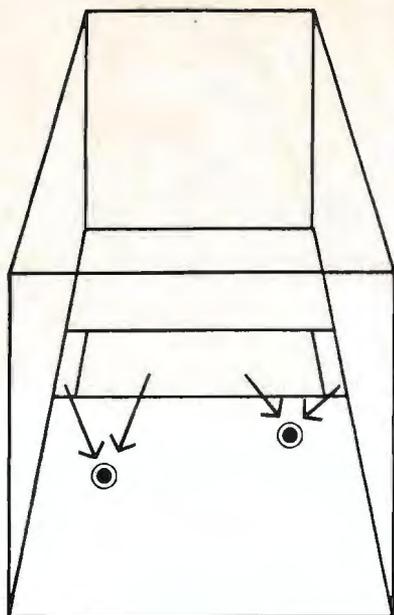


Diagram 1

shots. Never criticize on the court. If your partner is playing badly, handle this quietly and calmly during a time out. Keep any criticism completely constructive. Your partner is just as sensitive and trying just as hard as you.

Drills

Doubles by nature requires practice of special situations which frequently occur during the game. The partnership should include the drills which follow as part of the normal warm-up routine before a match. These drills will provide practice at warm-up and shot execution, familiarity with the power of a game situation, and adjustments in court position.

Front Court Rally

Beginning players should position themselves three feet behind the short line on their respective sides of the court, facing the front wall. Hit the ball hard cross court to your partner and prepare for the return shot. Concentrate on keeping your returns low and regaining position after every shot. Keep the drill going as long as possible. Then switch sides.

Intermediate players should perform the same drill. Emphasis, however, should be placed on killing the ball. A variation is to kill the ball down-the-line, then cross court, while your partner kills your cross court shot down-the-line. Then kill the ball cross court back to you.

Advanced players can increase the drill difficulty by pinching the ball back and forth to one another. Also, try the same variation as above. Kill the ball

straight, then pinch it to your partner. Your partner kills it straight, then pinches it back to you. Another variation is to kill the ball cross corner, then pinch it to your partner (great for foot-work). All drills must be practiced by both partners from both sides of the court.

Position During the Rally

The 'I' formation is the offensive/defensive alignment that places one team member up front to handle all kill shot retrievals and rekills while the other partner floats in the back court. The back court player's primary responsibilities are to return pass attempts, ceiling balls and hit back wall kills. The front court player can be easily attacked by four methods:

1. Move the back court player until he is exhausted. This will take the edge off his defensive game. Also, the front court opponent becomes ice cold!
2. Serve to the front court opponent, and shoot the first ball before he can rush into front court.

'If lefty-righty is the best, what should you do if you are not fortunate enough to find a southpaw partner?'

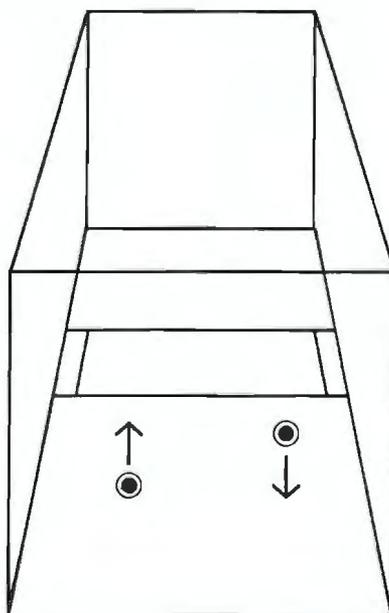


Diagram 3

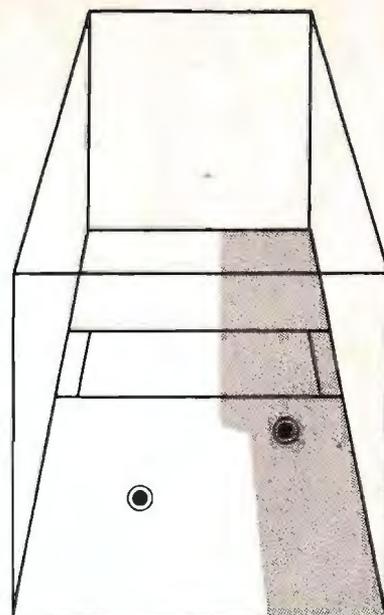


Diagram 2

3. Keep the ball low with down-the-line, passes and pinches. Leave no chance for your opponents to make an effective return.
4. Use ceiling balls to force the deep player into the backhand corner until he makes a weak return. Then shoot the ball to the uncovered corner.

The vulnerability of the I-formation makes side-by-side a much better alignment. Side-by-side gives excellent coverage of the front court with each partner covering his own side. However, side-by-side needs two quick individuals using their forehands to keep power drives from getting past. Otherwise, the left-side player, forced to use the backhand up close, will be pounded unmercifully by 'V' passes.

Thus, most doubles teams play a *diagonal* formation which allows the left side player to protect himself by playing back slightly. The right side player then stays slightly up to cover kill shots.

Since the majority of players (including those who play doubles) are right-handed, and since a right-hander has a tendency to hit cross court when reacting to a fast shot, most hard drives in doubles then will go to the left side (cross court for a right-hander).

A lefty rarely plays the right side so there is always a right-handed forehand covering drives on that side. The right side player is then free to play closer to the short line.

Diagram 1 shows standard court position for two right-handed players during the rally. Move to these positions as soon as possible after the serve,

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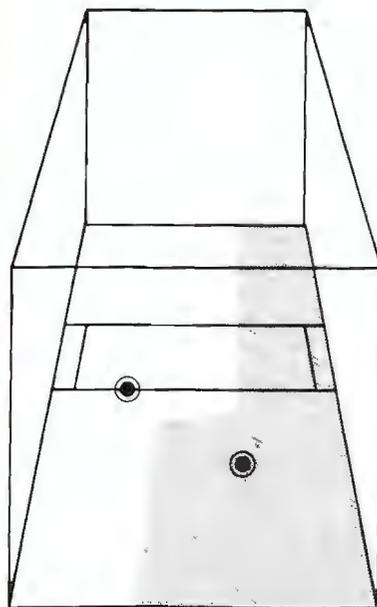


Diagram 4

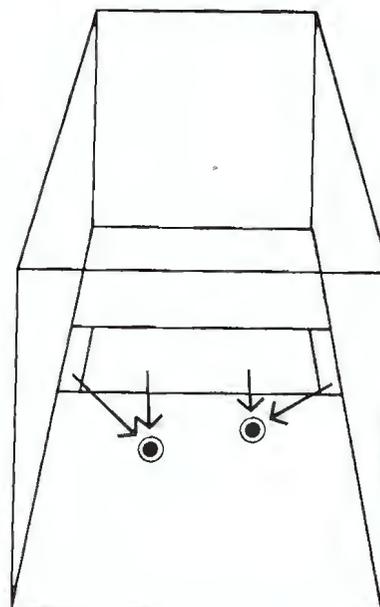


Diagram 5

regardless if you or your partner has just served.

The rally position is designed to cover the pass shot and give maximum court coverage with partnership balance. The partners should move in unison as if tethered to the front wall through a pulley **Diagram 2**. When one partner moves forward to play a shot the other partner is drawn back an equal distance to compensate. A team with this ability lets shots go for an easier play by their partner. Restraint is the key! Do not stab at a pass shot—let it go for your partner who is covering.

To defeat opponents who are playing the correct position, hit around-the-world balls and Z-balls. Hit them softly and high so as not to come off the back wall. To break the opponents' momentum, take a time out.

Diagrams 3-4 show court coverage responsibility for two right-handed partners as the diagonal defense expands and contracts. The picture should resemble a modified 'L'.

The lefty-righty formation shown in **Diagram 5** distributes an equal area to cover with the faster, stronger partner in the front position. Move to the middle next to each other. Make it difficult for your opponents to exploit the backhands. Look over your outside shoulder and be in a "drop step" position with your outside foot back. This forces your opponents to shoot to your forehands. Avoid using your backhands to take away center play. However, the modified 'L' coverage pattern is still used here.

The lefty-righty combination has proven to be an excellent arrangement

for winning doubles. Those two big forehands can be hit down their respective side walls, and a good player can often run around a shot directed down the middle to pick up a forehand.

If lefty-righty is the best, what should you do if you are not fortunate enough to find a southpaw partner? Here are a few tactics to defeat the lefty-righty team:

Try to create a situation where both of your opponents go for the same ball. Keep the ball low to their backhands and use angled shots. For example, hit most of your serves to the middle. Not only will this confuse the opposing team, but you are likely to see a backhand used for return of serve rather than the more powerful forehand. For example:

1. Serve a low, hard drive up the middle. Be careful to keep this serve very low. The opponent will have time to adjust to a forehand if it comes off the back wall too forcefully.
2. Serve a medium speed Z serve into the middle (7 and 8 feet up on the front wall). This will confuse your opponents and, since it is a slowly developing serve, keep the ball off the back wall.
3. The right side player should use pinch shots, cross corner pinches and low Z-shots into the left corner.
4. The left side partner should exploit the right side opponent and the middle of the court with angles shots.

Next month: Part II examines Intermediate and Advanced doubles. □

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So why not give a gift that helps all year around by keeping a person fit? Sounds like a good idea. At least it does to us, but after all, we here at National Racquetball Magazine are concerned with racquetball—"The Fun Sport of Fitness".

What follows are four pages of interesting gifts that center around racquetball and fitness. And thanks to our model, Jennifer, shopping through these pages makes it easy on the eyes.

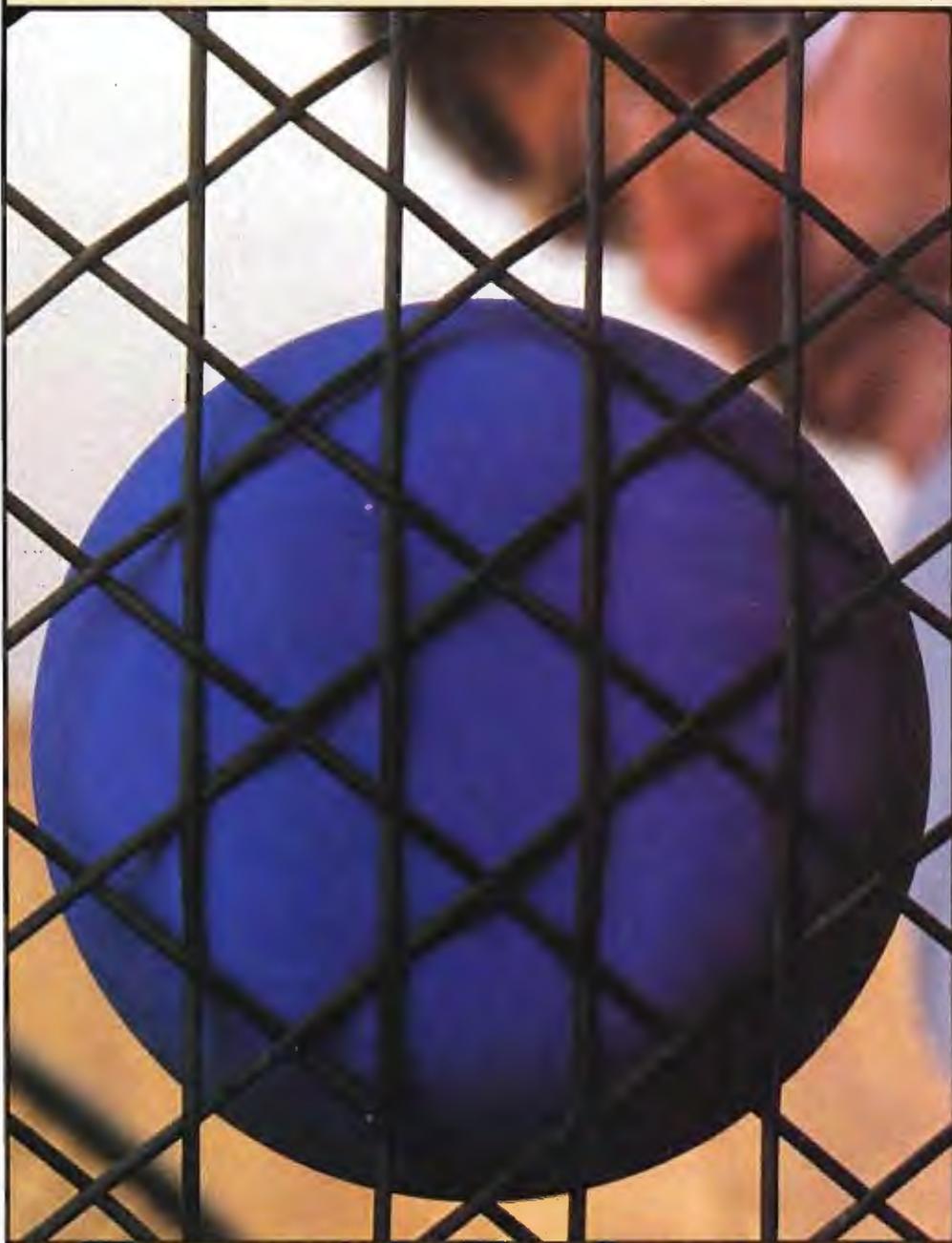
A convenient list of the supplier's telephone numbers appear at the end of the guide so you can order directly from them if you wish.



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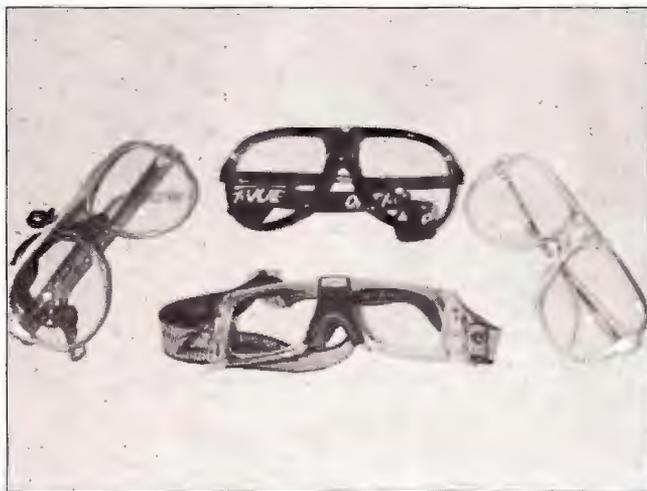
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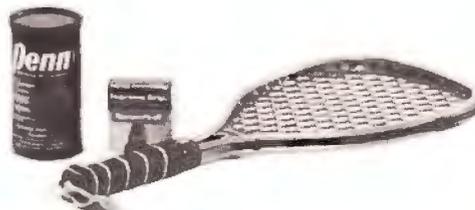
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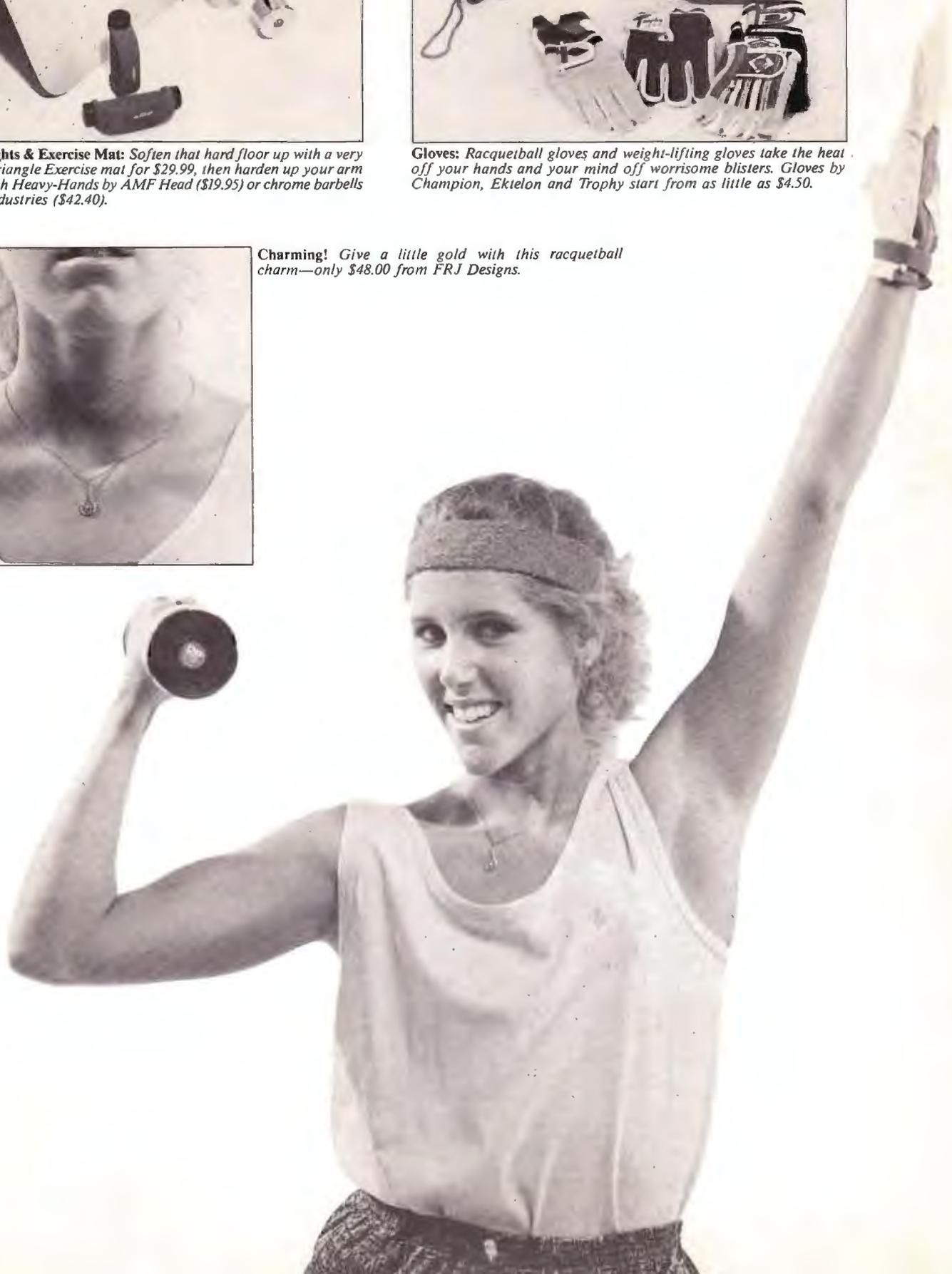
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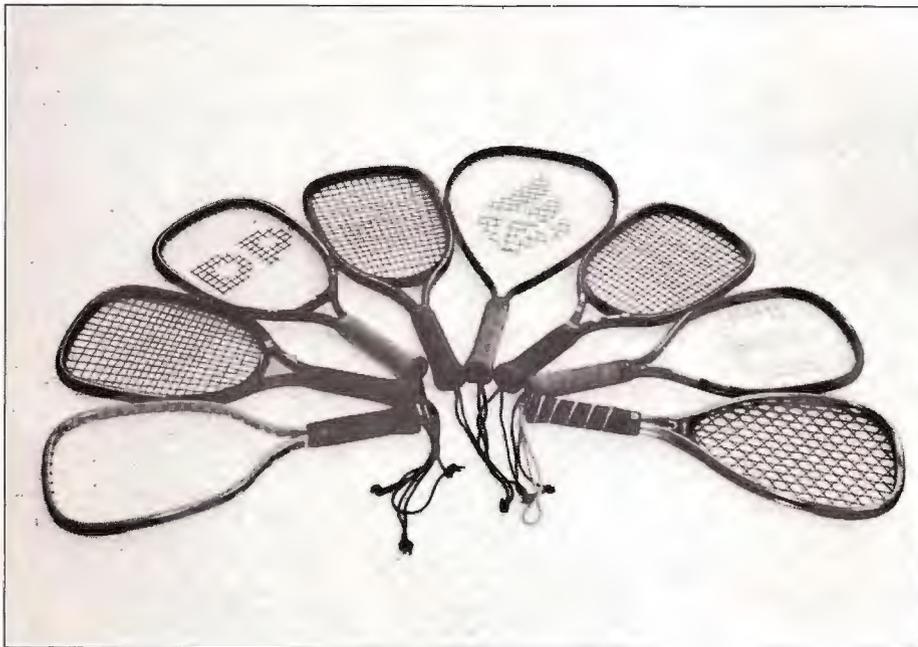




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National Racquetball Magazine: Of course we couldn't resist putting in a plug for ourselves, and why not? Where else are you going to find a gift that gives all year for under \$10! See our special gift subscription rate card in this issue.

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A Man With A Lot Of 'Sole'

For a man who plays without shoes, Dorance 'Sonny' Frymire has many who have followed in his foot steps

by Chuck Leve

If you select a day, any day, and wander over to the YMCA in Williamsport, PA, you're likely to catch 55-year-old Sonny Frymire down on a racquetball court, battin' the ball around, giving a young kid some pointers or playing a vigorous game against a would-be phenom.

You'd see the little finesse shots reminiscent of a racquetball age gone by—drop shots, lobs and the unexpected. And while perhaps 20 pounds heavier than when he was winning eight Pennsylvania state championships in 10 years, Sonny Frymire can still play with the best of 'em.

And he can still run with the best of them. He can still quietly stalk the court and make that "get" with the best of them. But unlike the rest of them, Dorance, "Sonny" Frymire does not

wear shoes. In this age of super soles, Frymire is, has been, and most likely always will be that lone racquetballer who plays barefoot.

Today, he does it quietly in the courts he helped build nearly 25 years ago when he was a director of the Y. Back then, Frymire (pronounced Fry Myer) was a local legend who took his show on the road throughout the northeast, but only once ventured onto the national scene—that being 1969 in the first International Racquetball Association (IRA) international championships, where he went to find out how good he really was and finished in the top eight.

And, all through his career, Sonny Frymire disdained shoes.

"I've got exceptionally wide feet," he said (5E width). "And shoes that were

comfortable just weren't easy to come by back then. So I started to play without them."

According to Gene Grapes, another Pennsylvanian still active in national tournament play, (and the guy who beat Frymire to win the state championship those other two years) Frymire had a distinct advantage by being shoeless.

"He never lost his footing," said Grapes. "He had unbelievable balance for a man his size (6'2, 230 during his competitive days). But most of all, you never knew where he was. You couldn't hear his feet like you can with players in shoes."

Frymire's feet were legend in the northeast during the rapid racquetball revolution throughout the 1960's and early '70's. In tournament after tournament he never once worried about for-

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getting his sneakers, a paradoxical term if there ever was one since Frymire was the one sneaking around and those in shoes were announcing their arrival, whereup Sonny would hit the other way.

"Oh, I tried shoes now and then," said Sonny, now owner of a real estate and insurance company, "but I'd wear through the sides in no time. Shoes were a lousy investment for me."

Frymire still plays at least three times a week, still shoeless. And when asked about the certain stories that must have accompanied his lack of toe coverings, he merely shrugs and says, there really aren't any.

For example, Sonny has never had a blister or a callous on his feet! He has never stubbed his toes or had his feet stepped on! He has never slipped on perspiration on the court!

"I perspire profusely when I play," he said, "especially when I was playing competitively. But none of those things ever happened!"

Grapes, who feels the era of the lively ball severely handicapped Frymire's style of play, can recall only one story relating to Sonny's feet, that being when a particular tournament director decided it was "too dangerous" for Sonny to compete without shoes.



Sonny Frymire has played with the ultimate 'sneakers'—his own two bare feet for over 25 years



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"Sonny calmly pulled out his rule book that he carried just in case," said Grapes, "and handed it to the tournament director. 'Find me the rule that says I have to wear shoes,' he said. Of course, there was no such rule."

Despite not playing competitively for years, Frymire still gains great enjoyment from racquetball, primarily in teaching and bringing along new players. He tutored Craig Guinter who became perennial Pennsylvania state champ and a top northeast player.

Those who watch him today believe he could easily hold his own in his age category, should he elect to play the

major tournaments. And while that's not where he's "at" these days, oh, there were tournament days.

"We used to travel all over the northeast," told Peggy Frymire, Sonny's wife of 33 years. "I did a lot of gallery standing in those days (this was before glass courts with comfortable seating). We met so many nice people and we have the fondest of memories."

Sonny takes a great deal of pride in his role of helping to spread the racquetball gospel in the early years. And it's deserving pride.

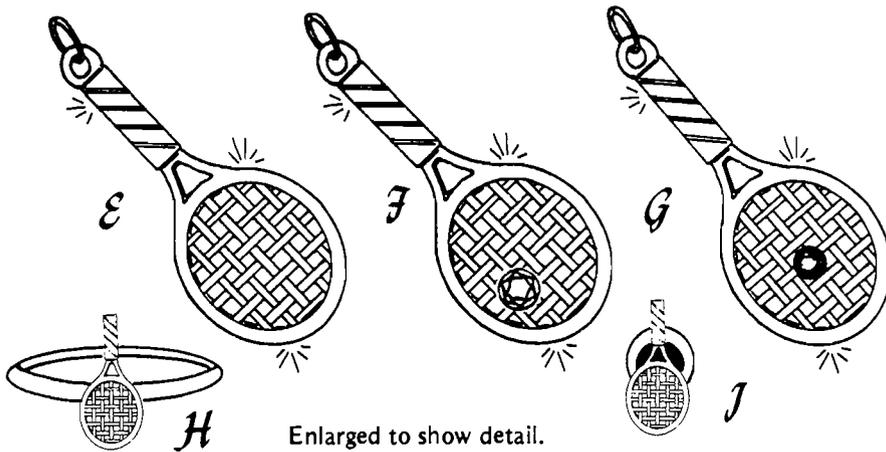
Traveling to Wilkes-Barre, Pittsburgh, New Britain, Paterson, NJ and

scores of towns along the way, Frymire was truly a good will ambassador of racquetball. In 1962, as a director of the Williamsport YMCA, he was instrumental in having the Y's first three regulation courts built.

Playing on substandard courts with eight foot high ceilings, he traveled to New Britain, CT for his first tournament back in 1961 and finished second on regulation courts. He lost in the finals against a guy who used a (now illegal) three wall serve which Sonny admits "drove me crazy"

"Sonny Frymire dominated the sport in Pennsylvania in the 1960's," said

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'Sonny calmly pulled out his rule book 'Find me the rule that says I have to wear shoes,' he said. Of course, there was no such rule.'

Grapes. "Many players of all ages owe much of their ability to Sonny. He set the standard."

The standard, that is, except for footwear.

Frymire can recall only one time when his feet got the best of him, and it was at that 1969 Internationals in St. Louis. Having won the eastern regional, he was awarded an airline ticket to the tournament, but not wanting to go alone, he talked a friend into coming with to play doubles, and Sonny offered to split his winning ticket.

People often forget that 1969 was the age of slow balls, long rallies, wooden framed racquets that weighed a ton, hot courts, and best of three games to 21 matches. Singles and doubles were always played together at the same tournament. If you went both ways, it was customary that you would play four matches in one day, if you kept winning.

So it was for Sonny and friend.

"After I finally lost in the quarter-finals (21-18 in the third game) I knew I had reached my limit," said Sonny. "That night every muscle in my body cried out for mercy. I could barely walk up the stairs. I could hardly sit."

Dorance "Sonny" Frymire, a racquetball legend in his own time, writes his own ending.

"Racquetball is for me," he says. "It keeps you alert, it's always a challenge and I still have fun playing." □

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OFF COURT FITNESS

By Jean Sauser



A New Attitude

by Jean Sauser

When historians look back on this decade, there's a strong possibility that they may mistakenly ask themselves why our generation never wore anything but our gym suits. That's because warm-ups and sneakers have become not only acceptable, they are currently considered to be the height of fashion—a sort of cultural uniform. What's happening?

Fitness is no longer a cultural phenomenon, it's part of our culture. Finally it's socially acceptable to act young, regardless of your age, look good and feel great without being accused of blatant narcissism, or having a terminal case of immaturity.

It's really no surprise that when Billy Crystal, this year's hottest comedian says "You look mahaavelas!", we all laugh with instant self-recognition. And when he closes out his character at the end of his act by reminding us that "It is always better to look good than to feel good", he makes an equally humorous point about our culture and its current health club obsession. If what the doctors say is true, that one sign of good health is a good sense of humor about one's self, then this is surely an indicator that our society is indeed getting healthier.

Besides comedy routines, there are other signs that fitness is 'alive and well' and living in our culture. Take the music industry. The flagship music publication, Rolling Stone has Nike ads flashing across its pages. Catch Tina Turner's comeback tour. She makes age 45 look like 15-years-old and moves faster on stage in four inch heels than Hogan on a racquetball court. How does she

do it? Tina, like Jane Fonda, John Travolta, Jamie Lee Curtis, and numerous other stars of the 80's, works out.

The spirit of fitness is on our indoor and outdoor racquetball courts as well. Last month, one of our writers, Lou Kaplan wrote, "Old is anyone ten years older than you?" Mr. Kaplan (an outdoor player in his 60's), is 'right on' for the generation that identified with the slogan "Never trust anyone over thirty." Nowadays, most of us are over thirty but are more physically active than when we were twenty.

Another big cultural contribution fitness has made is that it has closed the generation gap. Lately, all of us consider ourselves part of the Pepsi generation. We do our aerobics to Michael Jackson regardless of age, sex, creed or color. Or, we blast our way to fitness by running with Walkmans on our heads and Patti LaBelle's hit record, *New Attitude* in our hearts.

Courtside chats with another one of our writers, Charlie Garfinkel, reveal that stationary biking saved his racquetball game as well as his knees. You see, the Gar is in his 40's now and he'll be the first to tell you that older is better, as long as you take care of yourself.

Now that fitness has become an acceptable part of our culture, what's the future going to be like—well, as one of our well-know racquetball advertisers say, "Fit for Life". One of my racquetball buddies told me the other day, "Life is just one big participator sport." I say, thank God for racquetball, fitness and America's new attitude for a healthy life. □

Pro Files In Fitness – Dave Peck

The 1982 National Champion explains his routine for coming back from an injury

by Tony Lovitt

To the casual observer, Dave Peck's chunky 5'11", 185 pound frame leaves the impression that "Dave Peck" and "physical fitness" are contradictory terms. Actually, the opposite is true. A serious, gifted athlete since his days as a wrestler and football player at Andress High School in El Paso, TX, and later at the University of Texas—El Paso, Peck has been no stranger to the training gym.

Dave Peck is a solid, well-built, big man. He has amazing quickness coupled with not-so-surprising strength. He was the first professional player to dethrone Hogan a few years ago and even though Hogan is now number one again, Dave Peck still gives him fits.

Off the court, Peck has trained and Peck has rehabilitated. In 1983, he had a mid-court collision with Mike Yellen that resulted in an internally bleeding leg injury that required surgery. After undergoing two major surgeries, Peck 'rehabbed' his way back to health with a training program that gave him a pro semi final finish when he reappeared on tour nine months later.

Dave is currently training alongside brother Greg under the supervision of Sports Trainer Don Fields (see last month's Greg Peck Fitness Pro-File). If there's anyone who knows the ins and outs of training, it's Dave Peck.

The following short interview provided some interesting insights to Dave Peck's opinion's on fitness and racquetball.

What's a typical training day like in the life of Dave Peck?

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays are my blowout days. I really work hard those mornings on weight training. Usually, I'll take a break for lunch, take a brief rest, then pick it up again in the afternoon by riding the stationary bike.

Occasionally, I'll run about two miles for a change of pace, but because of the



'Pro racquetball is a very aggressive game and you can't play with the thought of getting hurt. If that's in the back of your mind all of the time, you're in trouble.'

size of my legs, I get what I call "chub rub"... a kind of chafing that occurs when my thighs constantly rub together during running. Sometimes, I could start a fire down there with all the friction!

Tuesdays and Thursdays are my play days. I'll spend an hour or so working on racquetball shots by myself and then another couple of hours playing with another player. Although, if I'm hav-

ing trouble with a particular shot, I'll spend the whole day working it out by myself.

How is life with two stars in one family?

Greg and I work out quite a bit together. We get along so well because we're only competitive when we play against each other at racquetball tournaments. There's obviously a rivalry there. We don't compete in non-competitive situations, like with material possessions...who has the best car, etc.

Have you fully recovered from your thigh injury?

I'd have to say that I'm still less than 100 percent. You know, one of the problems is that no professional athlete can stay away from training and competition for the full recommended recovery period. Mentally, you fail to maintain tournament toughness. Physically, you run the risk of getting re-injured by coming back too soon. I think I came back a little too soon and I was a little gun shy. When I felt like I was getting too close to a player, I would ease off and it would affect my shots. Pro racquetball is a very aggressive game and you can't play with the thought of getting hurt. If that's in the back of your mind all of the time, you're in trouble. Right now, I'd say I'm 90 percent of normal physical health. About six months ago, I was at 80 percent. So, I'm still working hard to fully recover.

What have you done to train differently since the injury?

I've modified my training and also go to a physical therapist here in Austin. My physical therapist works me out on a muscle stimulator which works on my thigh muscle. The stimulator really tightens up the muscle in order to strengthen it.

Have you done anything with a nutrition program?

Well, I've just gotta have my Honey-Nut Cheerios every morning! Basically, I've been trying to cut down on sweets and junk food. Also, and this is hard for a "good ole Texas boy" who loves to eat steak...but I've been eating more carbohydrate-rich food, like spaghetti and pizza.

So many people dislike the idea of serious training for racquetball. What are your recommendations on starting a program?

I would advise someone to define what their objectives are before beginning any on-going training program. Ask yourself why you want to run, ride the stationery bike, lift weights, whatever? Believe me, if I wasn't playing racquetball at the professional level, I wouldn't train nearly as hard as I do. In any event, if you are going to start a program, get professional advice, start out slowly, and build up gradually. Don't burn yourself out on weight equipment one day so that you can't get out of bed the next day. Consistency is everything. □



Greg Peck spots Dave Peck in some serious free-weight squats

'Pro racquetball is a very aggressive game and you can't play with the thought of getting hurt. If that's in the back of your mind all of the time, you're in trouble.'

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The Furious Body

Caution: Adrenaline and Endorphins at work in sports

by Jean Sauser

It's a common scene in the sports world. A racquetball player skips a shot, a football tackle grabs a facemask of his targeted quarry, a hockey player gets his shot blocked, and in a flash, tempers explode, fights break out and chaos rules for a few high-voltage moments. It makes sports exciting, but in the fury of emotion, careers and games can be lost. Can this intensity be controlled?

Yes and no.

The mind cannot control the release of the powerful adrenaline and endorphin secretions which are released into the body when it is aroused in sports situations. But the mind can understand what these secretions are doing to the body and through understanding, control the result. To ignore what is happening can bring on injury and defeat.

Adrenaline

Adrenaline, simply stated is a power-packed hormone manufactured by your adrenal gland located right above your kidney. It's technical name is epinephrine. It is secreted along with other hormones (called catecholamines), when your body needs to be quickly aroused.

Almost everyone has heard about adrenaline. Many times it has been responsible for such miraculous feats as toddlers lifting refrigerators off their puppy dog's tails, or mothers lifting cars off their children after car accidents. It is true, that in part, adrenaline is responsible for these feats.

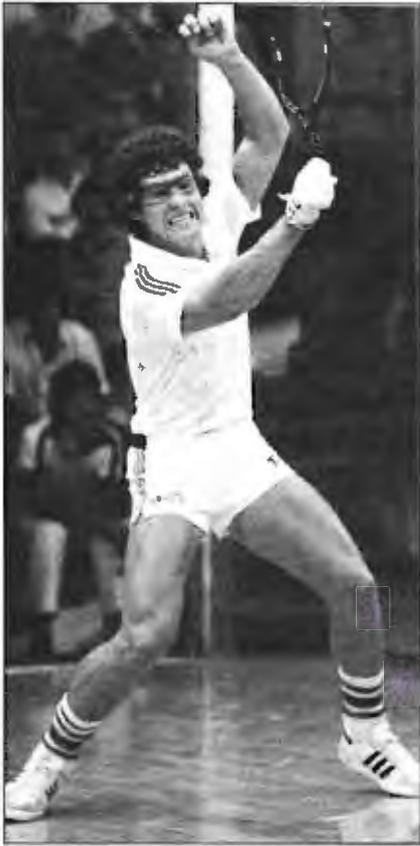
Adrenaline is not a form of energy for your body, however. It is a catalyst that results in making the changes necessary in your body that creates energy within 20 to 30 seconds after arousal. Adrenaline readys your body for "fight or flight". The physical changes that occur through your body's release of adrenaline are an increase in heart rate, increased blood pressure, and the release of sugar in your blood for quick energy.

When you feel alarmed, adrenaline is released by your body and the above physical changes occur, enabling you to



Adrenaline and self-control run amuck. Jerry Hilecher and Ben Kolton at their worst some years back show us how not to do it.

'Almost everyone has heard about adrenaline for such miraculous feats as toddlers lifting refrigerators or mothers lifting cars off their children.'



Adrenaline runs high in the Hogan racquetball camp, but the champ knows when to call time outs to keep the kind of self-control he needs to win.

react to whatever situation you are in with more vigor. The more you feel alarmed, the more adrenaline is released and the more you feel like fighting, or fleeing. That's why some of us panic and fail in situations where others triumph. It's based on how we perceive the situation we're in at the time.

Racquetball brings on adrenaline. How you use it from there can either make you a winner or a very big loser. It all depends on your on court thought processes. Those players who have "cool heads" on the court are the ones who have controlled responses to the various situations that come up on the court. In their case, adrenaline works for them. Adrenaline released in the presence of a controlled head actually gives you the quick reflexes and power you need to make a powerful kill shot, or scamper after and re-kill your opponent's near winner. Adrenaline released in the presence of a lost temper causes a loss of control in your shots.

Here are some tips that will enable you to make your adrenaline release work for you instead of against you, on

'Release of endorphins into the blood stream greatly decreases your sensitivity to pain.'

the racquetball court, or in other sports situations that cause your body to release large amounts of adrenaline.

1. *Learn To Control Your Temper.* A lost temper loses more games than it can ever win. Lost tempers are the biggest mistakes most racquetball players make.

2. *Call Time Out When You're Over Excited And Falling Behind.* Getting over excited while falling behind in a match means that you are losing control mentally. Instead, call a time out and collect your thoughts. The end result will be the precision of your shots returning as well as your opponent's lead dissipating.

3. *Play The Game Against Yourself.* All of the best athletes do this first. They simply do not worry about what their opponent is or is not doing. Instead, they concentrate intensely on one shot at a time, every play as it happens, and adjust their strategies according to what shot patterns are occurring at the time.

4. *Play Your Hardest While Ahead.* This is an old trick that Rod Laver said enabled him to dominate tennis for so many years. What it means is that when things are going right, keep your concentration level high and the winning momentum will surely be maintained.

Endorphins

Endorphins are morphine-like substances that are secreted by specialized nerve endings in your brain. Racquetball does not bring on the release of endorphins, but aerobic exercise does. Therefore, if you are training aerobically for racquetball (and you should be), you need to be aware of what endorphins can do for you to prevent them from working against you.

Endorphins are released into your blood stream when you've been exercising aerobically for 30 minutes or more. They give you that euphoric "runner's high" feeling that is commonly associated with hour long aerobic exercise classes, or long, slow running distances like 10K races and marathons. This wonderful feeling is what keeps people

running, biking, swimming distance, cross country skiing, or simply going to exercise classes on a regular basis.

Release of endorphins into the blood stream greatly decreases your sensitivity to pain. Therefore, when working out aerobically, you must pay close attention to your body because you are dealing with a increased threshold to pain.

Many a runner has run on a broken bone to finish a race only to find out later that the dull pain he had felt the entire time was a sign of much greater harm. Endorphins prevented the runner from perceiving what would be obvious in normal situations. Also, during long periods of aerobic exercise, a lactic acid buildup can occur (waste products in your muscles), resulting in a slightly disoriented feeling. This, combined with an insensitivity to pain caused by endorphin release during exercise, can



Endorphins are released into your bloodstream during aerobic exercises such as running, swimming, biking and cross-country skiing

mean trouble in the form of injuries for you.

Stay in touch with your body at all times during your aerobic workouts so that you can capitalize on the good feelings you get on endorphins while remaining injury free. Use the following guidelines to discontinue exercise in the interest of injury prevention:

1. *Prolonged Dull Pain.* Stop your workout immediately if any part of your body feels dull pain. Rest a day or two. Upon returning to your workout routine, you shouldn't experience the pain again. If you do, it's time to check out the condition with your physician.

2. *Intermittent Sharp Pain.* Again, stop. Your body is trying to tell you something and you are not listening. Same as above. Rest, return, consult your doctor if the condition persists.

3. *Achey Feelings.* Take a day or two off. You could be getting ill. Aerobic exercise can make an illness more serious, especially if you've picked up a virus. The best action to take is to prevent illness by resting your body instead of working it out.

Adrenaline and endorphins are a necessary part of on and off court performances. You can make them work for you rather than against you, but only if you start from the head down.

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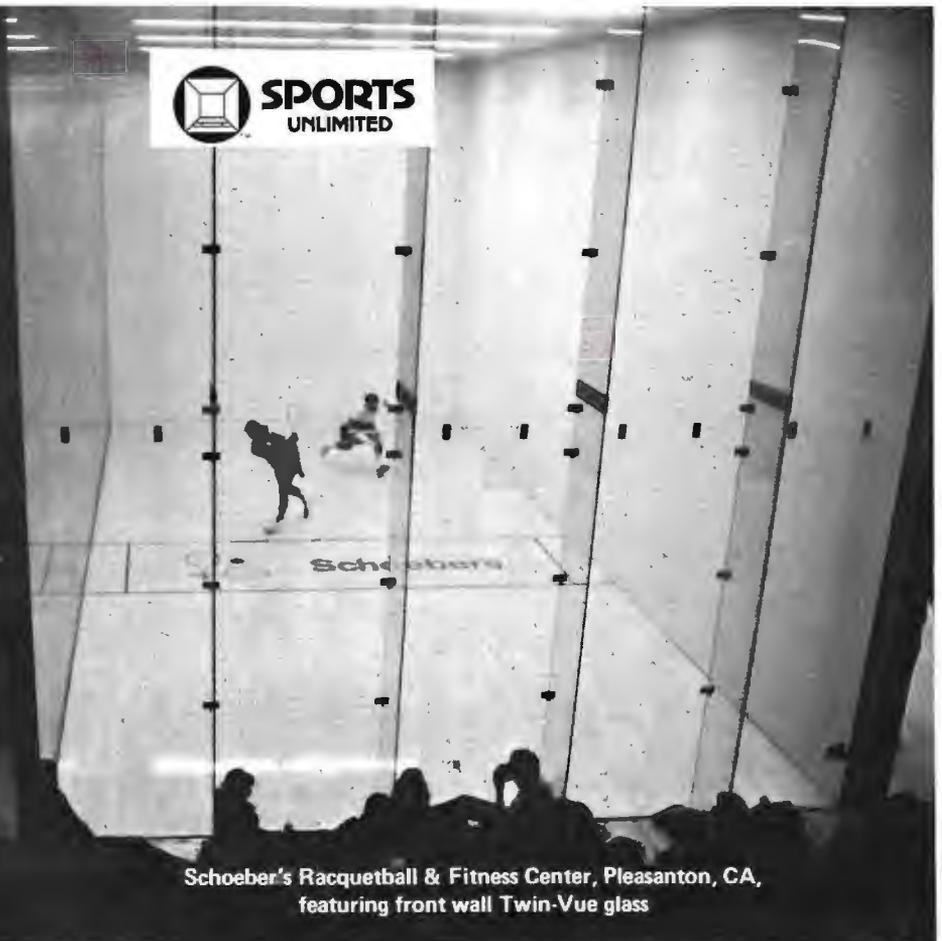
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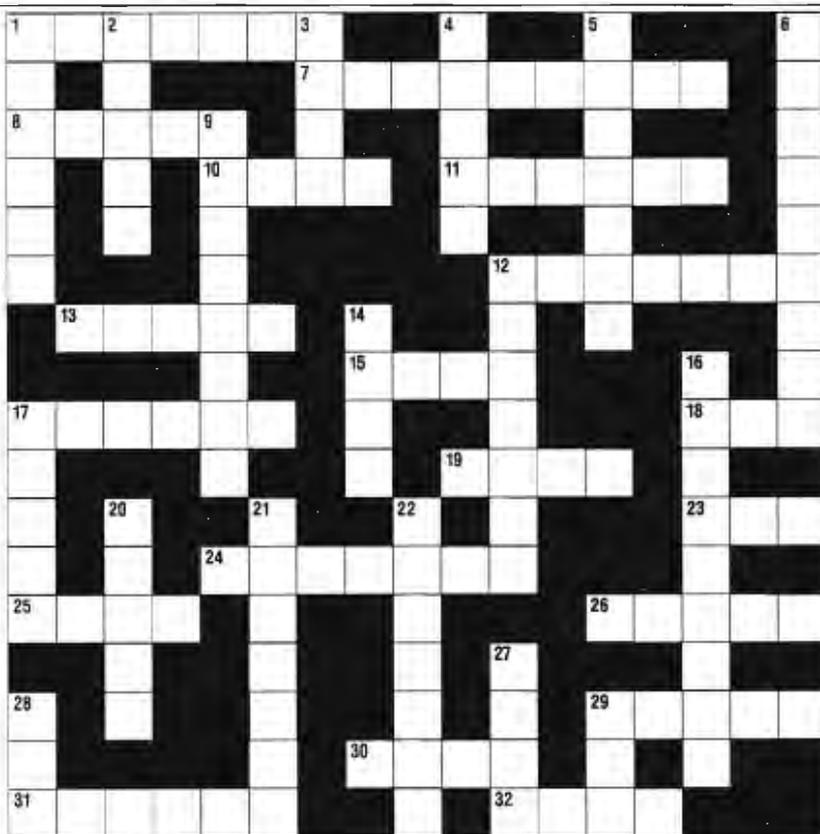
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Across

Down

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 The players club | 1 Action to react instinctively and swing |
| 7 Impede opponents move to the ball | 2 The juncture of wall and ceiling |
| 8 Slang term for putting your entire body into the shot | 3 Each player is allowed three per game |
| 10 A type of stance to swing | 4 To deliver the ball to start play |
| 11 Known as the fly-kill attempt to hit a ball | 5 Shot hitting the ceiling is a _____ shot |
| 12 Interferes with opponent's effort | 6 Shot whose objective is to win the rally |
| 13 An illegal serve | 9 Serve that hits front wall then angles into back corner |
| 15 Shot that hits so low a return is impossible | 12 Serve hit with medium speed that does not come off the back wall |
| 17 Serve hitting the front wall and does not come off the back wall | 14 Ball that hits floor before front wall |
| 18 Serve that takes two bounces before returned | 16 Shot that hugs side wall so closely it is difficult to return |
| 19 Term for shot that is easy setup | 17 A defensive shot that hits high and ricochets into both side walls |
| 23 Type of serve | 20 Kill shot that angles low off the front wall and one side wall |
| 24 Serve that touches side wall but doesn't come off the back wall | 21 Shots that end the point or wins the rally |
| 25 An illegal serve | 22 Serve that fails to carry over the back service line |
| 26 Ball that strikes the junction of side wall with floor | 27 The game's center of attention |
| 29 Ball that takes an unexpected carom | 28 Term for ball taking second bounce in back corners |
| 30 Sides of the court | 29 Racquetball is good exercise and good _____ |
| 31 Hits that give your opponent points | |
| 32 Zone on the playing floor | |

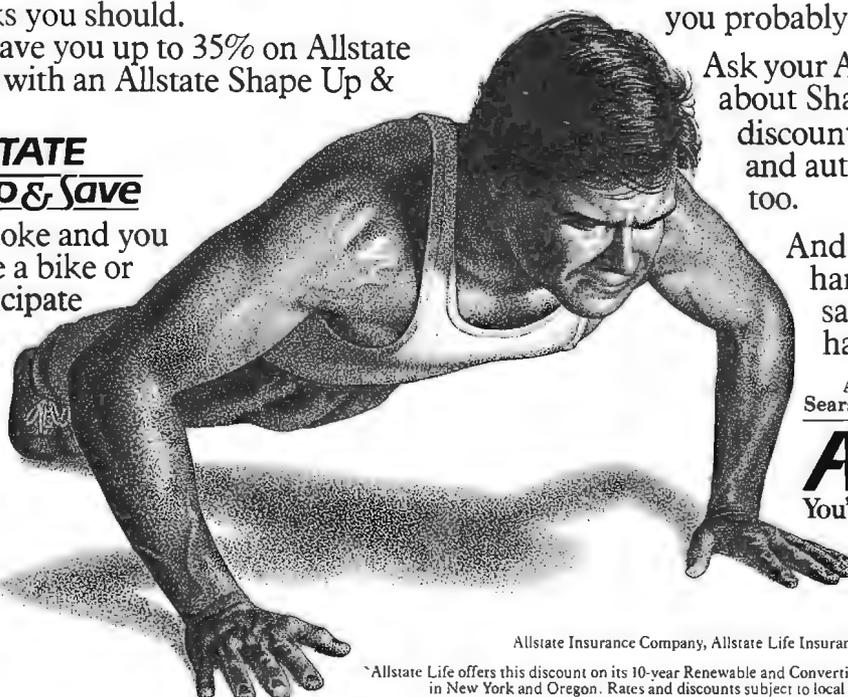


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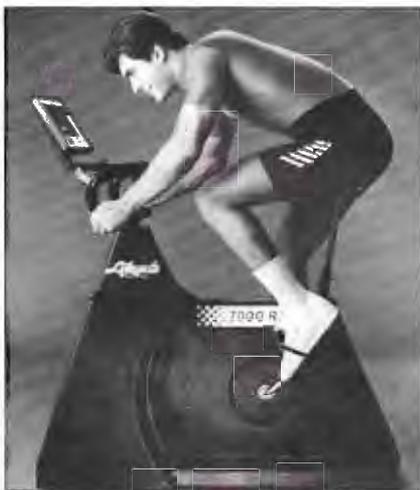
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NEXT MONTH!

When you open the cover of December's National Racquetball Magazine, you'll find it packed with great stories and features. First of all, December is Racquet Guide month, so, get ready to gawk at the new racquets, debate over the Oversized, and look at new stringing patterns. Also, the women pros will have the results of their first stop of the season without Heather McKay and the men's tour will have results from their Davison and Arlington stops. Plus, much more. See you in December!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1985-86 RMA MEN'S PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR

MASTER SEASON SCHEDULE

Aug. 24-Sept. 2, 1985

\$15,000 Open
West Lane Racquet Club
Stockton, CA
Winner: Marty Hogan
2nd: Jerry Hilecher

Sept. 18-22

\$15,000 Open
Davison Racquetball Open
Davison, MI
Winners: TBA

Oct. 2-6, 1985

\$15,000 Open
Crystal Racquet & Health Club
Arlington, VA
Winners: TBA

Oct. 16-20, 1985

\$15,000 Open
D'Lites Pro Racquetball Classic
Omaha, NE
Winners: TBA

Nov. 5-10

\$15,000 Open
MPact Texas Challenge
International Athletic Club
Dallas, TX
Racquetball Promotions
918-258-7518 (days)
918-258-2897 (nights)

Dec. 11-14

\$15,000 Open
Gold River Winter Classic
Gold River Racquet Club
Sacramento, CA
Ed Martin
916-282-3070

Jan. 15-19, 1986

\$15,000 Open
Arizona Athletic Club
1425 West 14th Street
Tempe, AZ 85281
Jack Nolan
602-894-2281

Feb. 12-16

\$15,000 Open
Tulsa Open
Tulsa Racquetball/Aerobics Club
Racquetball Promotions
918-258-7518 (days)
918-258-2897 (nights)

Feb. 26-March 2

\$15,000 Open
Griffith Park Athletic Club
5400 Kennedy Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45213
Mike Sipes
513-351-3000

March 25-29

\$15,000 Open
Big C Athletic Club
1381 Galaxy Way
Concord, CA 94524
Tom Martin
415-634-3528

April 16-20

\$15,000 Open
Merritt Racquetball and
Fitness Center
Security, Baltimore, MD
RAMB - Dave Pivec
301-532-2250

April 30-May 4

\$22,000 Open
Ektelon National Championships
The Sports Gallery
2560 East Katella Avenue
Anaheim, CA 92806

May 14-18

\$15,000 Open
Rocky Mountain Health Club
1880 Westland Road
Cheyenne, WY 82001
Steve Galassini
307-634-8884

June 10-15

\$33,000 Open
DP National Championships
Site To Be Announced

FOR RMA TOUR INFORMATION

Drew Stoddard, Commissioner
702-826-6037

WPRA 1985-86

SEASON SCHEDULE

Oct. 17-20

\$10,000 Open
Pacific Mutual Pro/Am
Los Caballeros Sports Complex
Fountain Valley, CA

Oct. 24-27

\$12,000 Open
Anchorage Athletic Club
Anchorage, AK

Jan. 17-20, 1986

\$10,000 Open
The Courthouse Fitness Center
Rockwall, TX

Mar. 14-17*

\$10,000 Open
The PAC West Athletic Club
Tacoma, WA
*Date Tentative

April 11-14

\$12,000 Open
Sportsworld Athletic Club
Lawton, OK

May 1-4

\$18,500 Open
Ektelon National Championships
Anaheim, CA

June (TBA)

\$30,000 Open
WPRA Nationals
Site To Be Announced

FOR WPRA INFORMATION

Jim Carson, Commissioner
714-641-7452

AARA NATIONAL EVENTS

Oct. 24-27, 1985

National Doubles
Cheyenne, WY
Winners: TBA

April 11-13, 1986

Intercollegiate Championships
Playoff Athletic Club
2191 Post Rd.
Warwick, RI 02886
Contact: 401-738-0833

May 21-26

National Singles Championships
(Qualifying required)
Site To Be Announced
Contact: AARA 303-635-5396

June 28-July 2

National Juniors Championships
(Qualifying required)
Site To Be Announced
Contact: AARA 303-635-5396

July TBA

World Games
(Qualifying required)
Site To Be Announced
Contact: AARA 303-635-5396

July-August TBA

AARA Elite Training Camp
(Qualifying required)
Colorado Springs, CO
Contact: AARA 303-635-5396

October 23-26

National Doubles Championships
Racquet Power
3390 Kori Road
Mandarin, FL 32217
Tom Collins, 904-268-8888

MAJOR SPORT CONVENTION CALENDAR

Oct. 17

IRSA Eastern Fall Conference
Hilton Hotel
Lowell, MA
Jeanne Murphy
617-734-8000

Oct. 25

IRSA Mid-Western Conference
Hyatt Regency-O'Hare
Chicago, IL
Jeanne Murphy
617-734-8000

Nov. 6

IRSA Regional Convention
Regency Hotel
Denver, CO
Jeanne Murphy
617-734-8000

Nov. 7

IRSA Regional Convention
Loewes Anatole Hotel
Dallas, TX
Jeanne Murphy
617-734-8000

Feb. 19-23

IRSA National Convention
Operaland Hotel
Nashville, TN
Suzanne Lentke
617-734-8000

RANKINGS

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

WPRA RANKINGS JUNE 20, 1985

Ranking	Player	Points
1	Lynn Adams	316.75
2	Vicki Panzeri	208.00
3	Terril Gilreath	140.00
4	Caryn McKinney	110.00
5	Marcy Drexler	108.00
6	Janell Marriott	88.25
7	Heather McKay	81.50
8	Liz Alvarado	75.00
9	Diane Bullard	59.25
10	Cindy Baxter	56.25
11	Laura Martino	54.00
12	Molly O'Brien	44.50
13	Joyce Jackson	42.75
14	Fran Davis	40.00
15	Jennifer Harding	39.00
16	Babette Bell	38.50
17	Bonnie Stoll	36.00
18	Marcy Greer	35.75
19	Marcy Lynch	26.50
20	Martha McDonald	22.50
21	Sandy Robson	18.00
22	Linda Porter	15.00
T	Shannon Wright	15.00
24	Val Paese	14.00
25	Terry Latham	12.50
T	Trina Rasmussen	12.50
27	Dot Fischl	10.00
T	Mona Mook	10.00
T	Cathy Nichols	10.00
T	Mary Pat Sklenka	10.00
31	Toni Bevelock	7.50

RMA PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR OFFICIAL PROFESSIONAL RANKINGS SEPTEMBER 1, 1985

Ranking	Player	Points
1	Marty Hogan	522.16
2	Mike Yellen	481.10
3	Jerry Hilecher	431.57
4	Gregg Peck	414.79
5	Cliff Swain	389.06
6	Ruben Gonzalez	310.09
7	Gerry Price	237.79
8	Doug Cohen	237.03
9	Scott Oliver	227.57
10	Bret Harnett	217.06
11	Dave Peck	206.68
12	Cory Brysman	179.00
13	David Gross	173.45
14	Ed Andrews	167.65
15	Jim Cascio	154.59
16	Mike Ray	153.91
17	Andy Gross	149.37
18	Jack Newman	139.60
19	Dan Obremski	136.30
20	Wagner, Rich	122.66

21	John Egerman	120.05
22	Steve Lerner	110.79
23	Brian Hawkes	98.77
24	Dave Johnson	77.64
25	Egan Inoue	67.19
26	Dolwain Green	65.77
27	Sean Moskwa	64.13
28	Andy Roberts	56.71
29	Mike Levine	55.89
30	Evan Terry	52.90

AARA/ARHS NATIONAL TOP 50 RANKINGS SEPTEMBER 12, 1985

Men's Open

Ranking	Player	State
1	Fred Calabrese	MA
2	Dan Obremski	PA
3	Ed Andrews	CA
4	Andy Roberts	TN
5	Tim Hansen	FL
6	Doug Ganim	OH
7	Tom Montalband	NY
8	Aaron Katz	TX
9	Joey Cline	NJ
10	Dave Negrete	IL
11	Charlie Nichols	FL
12	Sergio Gonzalez	FL
13	Todd O'Neil	VT
14	Mark Morrison	FL
15	Mark Hegg	CO
16	Bruce Christensen	NY
17	Jim Cascio	PA
18	Jim Hamilton	IN
19	Don Kelly	CO
20	Dan Ferris	MN
21	Todd Thielens	SD
22	Scott St. Onge	MA
23	Don Costleigh, Jr.	NY
24	Richard Hull	FL
25	Scott Reid	TN
26	Mike Ray	GA
27	Oscar Gonzalez	FL
28	Tom Fournier	ME
29	Rodger Lindwall	CO
30	William Gottlieb	MI
31	Stu Hastings	MI
32	Paul Marino	CA
33	Brian Valin	CD
34	Vinnie Ganley	FL
35	Jim Jeffers	IL
36	Dave Bennett	CO
37	Mitch Campbell	FL
38	Sean Moskwa	IL
39	Mike Lowe	CA
40	Skip Merrill	TX
41	Rob Kulp	FL
42	Howard Nixon	IL
43	Jim Owen	NM

44	Tom Riley	MA
45	Mike Spugnardi	ME
46	Dave Watson	OK
47	Mark Mikulla	IN
48	Kelvin Vantrease	OH
49	Garr Thompson	NY
50	Ruben Gonzalez	NY

Women's Open

Ranking	Player	State
1	Cindy Baxter	PA
2	Terry Latham	TX
3	Cindy Doyle	NY
4	Chris Evon	IL
5	Nan Higgins	MA
6	Claudia McCarthy	VT
7	Mary Dee	VT
8	Mona Mook	CA
9	Marcy Drexler	CA
10	Martha Adams	GA
11	Robin Levine	NY
12	Cathy Nichols	CD
13	Cathie Fredrickson	MI
14	Sheri Anderson	MI
15	Diane Bullard	FL
16	Pam Beck	PA
17	Dot Fischel	PA
18	Sandy Robson	IL
19	Terry Singletary	OK
20	Diana Almeida	CO
21	Debbie Mackell	IN
22	Joy Eon	ME
23	Trina Rasmussen	CA
24	Joetta Hastings	MI
25	Malia Kamahoahoa	VA
26	Anne Calderone	NY
27	Jan Curtis	FL
28	Kay Kuhfeld	IN
29	Babette Bell	FL
30	Joan Azeka	IL
31	Lynn Price	IN
32	Kathy Gluvna	TN
33	Rosemary Magliano	IL
34	Janell Marriott	RI
35	Michelle Gilman	OR
36	Anne Barneburg	FL
37	Diane Fields	IL
38	Cindy Overstake	OK
39	Linda Porter	TX
40	Angela Wyble	CO
41	Molly O'Brien	PA
42	Toni Benelock	TN
43	Kelly Cremeans	IN
44	Laura Fenton	NE
45	Cheri Kent	ME
46	Jean Oeschger	CA
47	Kim Tiedeman	WA
48	Lisa Ecker	MI
49	Sharron Fanning	TN
50	Janet Burke	MA

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For questions about the RMA men's pro rankings, contact: Drew Stoddard, Commissioner, 702-826-6037.

For questions about the WPRA women's pro rankings, contact: Jim Carson, Commissioner, 714-641-7452.

For questions about the AARA/AHRS amateur rankings, contact: Luke St. Onge, 303-635-5396.

SIDE OUT

By Drew Stoddard



Where Do We Go From Here?

I get a lot of questions from people as I travel around with the men's pro tour, but undoubtedly the most common is this: "Why hasn't pro racquetball made it as a major professional sport?"

Looking at it from the inside for a couple of years now, I've come up with a theory: I believe pro racquetball is where it is because we have never collectively decided what role the pros should play in the development of this sport.

From almost any perspective, the pro game has staged a strong comeback recently. After hitting its first peak around 1980, some fierce politics sent the pro tour into a steep nosedive—it nearly disintegrated completely in the summer of 1983. The women's tour caught the whiplash effect and hit the skids about a year later. I sometimes wonder how many people in this sport know just how close pro racquetball came to extinction in early 1984.

But racquetball has a life of its own; somehow, despite the obstacles we put in its way, racquetball survives. When things were at their bleakest some sorely-needed leaders emerged. The Racquetball Manufacturers Association was formed and committed both effort and money to the re-establishment of a strong pro tour. And the men players began working as a group, even in the absence of a formal players association.

The result has been a rapid reversal in the direction of both tours. At 14 events and \$250,000, the 85-86 men's tour is as big as any in history. And, it now appears the WPRA will play some ten events for nearly \$150,000—about twice the total of last season.

In general, things are looking pretty good; but not nearly good enough. Actually the pro game is back to where it should have been three years ago. Now comes the big question: Where do we go from here?

The answer is not clear-cut. Few sports have successfully made the transition from minor to major status. It is clear that we are going to have to make some major changes to do it. Here's why:

About 98% of the prize money on this year's RMA and WPRA tours is local, and tournament promoters have just about reached their limit in securing sponsorship money. Many of them are now putting up \$15,000, and raising that much locally is a gargantuan task—if you don't believe it, try it.

Clearly, the easiest way to increase prize money is to sign a national sponsor. The infusion of a few hundred thousand bucks—the amount spent on a single 60-second Super Bowl commercial—would send pro racquetball into orbit. To date, however, it's been a tough sell. Not for lack of interest; we are regularly contacted by potential sponsors—some very large—about backing the pro game.

The problem is, pro racquetball cannot presently offer the kind of visibility needed to attract big money. It's frustrating, because it appears the visibility could be achieved if we just had the facilities to satisfy the current spectator demand. Virtually every club at every pro stop is packed to the rafters now, but since most clubs hold fewer than a thousand spectators we don't really know how much demand exists.

Television coverage is a possibility, but there too, we are limited by the facilities. It is almost impossible to televise racquetball when given the restrictions of even the finest exhibition courts now in existence.

So where do we go from here? The more I ponder that question, the clearer the answer becomes: we must move now to construct a four-glass-wall portable court, and use it as the prime exhibition court for every stop on the pro tour. Pro squash has been using such a court on their European tour for over a year now, and the results have been astonishing. The technology for a racquetball court of this type exists now—the court itself does not.

The portable court would immediately solve two problems: spectator seating would be limitless, and television cameras could work unrestricted. Its use should attract a sponsor, but even if it didn't, the increased gate receipts alone could double the current purses.

The obstacle, of course, is money. While the exact cost of the court is still undetermined, you can be sure that the first number on the price tag will be followed by five zeros, maybe six. Right now, no one in this sport is willing to invest that kind of money solely on the theory that it should work.

The pro game is healthy, and even without change it should continue to grow slowly from here on. We now face the question of how far we want it to go. Pro racquetball is within striking distance of greatness; if we decide to go for it, the solution is a simple one. Not cheap, but simple. □

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