

RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

JANUARY 1982
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THE ART OF
HITTING HOGAN'S
POWER
BACKHAND

HOW TO PUT
YOUR BRAIN
BEHIND THE

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SPECIAL SECTION
ON TEACHING
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MARTY HOGAN,
THE EARLY YEARS



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RACQUETBALL

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JANUARY 1982

Vol. 5, No. 1

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WHAT KIND OF GAME IS THIS?

When Marty Hogan and Dave Peck took a week tour of Japan (see "Short Shots"), they learned how the Japanese philosophy of building court clubs differs from the American way.

Hogan and Peck couldn't get over the fact that all courts in Japanese clubs had at least two walls of glass—one side wall and one back wall.

When Hogan asked why, he was told, "Solid walls make it a player's game. Glass walls make it a spectator's game."

Their philosophy makes sense. If racquetball is to grow—at amateur and professional levels—it must be there for everybody to see. If you get spectators interested, players will automatically follow. If you hide it, you have a tougher time getting people to see it for the first time, which means you have a tougher sell in getting them to try it.

Granted, it is more expensive to put glass in but club owners should be thinking of the future. Presumably, most owners are not in the club business for the fast buck, and glass is one way of attracting spectators.

Of course, some owners will scoff at this, and say "Racquetball is strictly a participant sport. Who cares about watching it on television, or the pro tour, or seating for spectators?" These are probably the same people who think court clubs can survive without amenities such as exercise rooms and fitness equipment. Most of the court clubs that were built without amenities are now up for sale.

Having glass throughout the club may be distasteful to some players who are shy and don't want to be on stage. They do have a right to privacy if they want it and to sweat without anyone staring. We're only suggesting here that club owners change the balance somewhat. Instead of 10 solid courts and two with a back wall of glass, the club should have five solid and five with at least one wall of glass and two with at least two walls of glass plus seating.

Racquetball should be out there for everybody to see. If the game is as good as we think it is, there's no reason to hide it.

This issue, the first of 1982, marks the debut of two columns—"Court Memories" and "Service Box." "Court Memories" will take a look at some interesting and sometimes humorous stories from the past. This month we feature, "Hogan, The Early Years."

Our "Service Box" section is basically to introduce new products. But we are not giving you the advertiser's puff material on the product. We are making it more consumer-oriented.

You may also notice our new format, which is basically the design of art director Eiko Cissell. As the year goes on, we will offer more changes. As we have said, "Change is important to growth."

This issue also marks the first time in history we have posed a racquetball professional for the cover. We have put pros on the cover a few times before but the shots always came from tournament action. Next month we will pose another pro or two on the cover.

Putting professionals on the cover doesn't mean we are neglecting celebrities. We realize that people browsing at newsstands are more liable to pick up our magazine if they can recognize someone on the cover. But we also think racquetball has come of age now. By putting pros on the cover, we hope the reader can begin to identify these people as celebrities in their own right.

Ben Kalb

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SIDE OUT

EYE INJURY

I recently suffered an eye injury while playing racquetball even though I was wearing eyeguards.

Apparently certain types of eyeguards are not effective. I was lucky that no permanent damage was inflicted, although it was necessary for me to be absent from work for about a week.

Steve Gilbert
Englewood, Colo.

Editor's note: Doctors recommend eyeguards that have "3mm center-thickness polycarbonate lenses mounted in a frame specifically designed for industry or sports." Eyeguards without lenses could still cause injury because the "elasticity of the regulation ball deforms (in flight) and can penetrate the opening of the eyeguards."

TOURNAMENT PREPARATION

Would you please print an article on how to run a tournament? Specifically, I would like to know how to get sponsors, bid for space at a court club (if you are an outside group), get door prizes donated, what to do before, during and after the event, and how to get a sanction.

I know a lot of preparation goes into making a tournament a success and I hope that your information will assist us in taking care of loose ends.

Mary Frances Howard
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Editor's note: The story has already been assigned and will appear in print soon.

\$10,000 CHALLENGE

Interesting story on the Hogan-Peck \$10,000 challenge. It showed me that even the top professional players are human.

I remember choking in a tournament match a few months ago and thinking that if I were a pro, that wouldn't have happened. Dave Peck proved that even the best players can let things get to them. It only cost me a trophy. It cost him \$10,000.

Phillip Turner
Baltimore, Md.

SHOWROOMS

I noticed your editorial on "Professionalism" in the December issue and, although I agree with most of it, there is one part I don't agree with.

True, racquetball needs to move out of clubs but most of the arenas today are huge and professional racquetball would get lost in them.

I think pro racquetball would be better off moving to a showroom format such as boxing has done here.

Bonnie Black
Las Vegas, Nev.

FICTION

I know you can't take a poll to see how many of your subscribers read the fiction story you had in your December issue but I would bet not too many.

I'm sure your avid readers want tons and tons of instruction, all the better to make them super players. I, for one, however, always enjoy some interesting reading.

I appreciate the fact that you are trying to make your magazine more than just an instruction book. I appreciate that you went to the effort of giving us fiction.

I don't know if your writer will ever get his "novel-in-progress" published but he has my vote.

Leslie Horton
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

HANDICAP PLAYERS

I enjoyed reading the articles in your last two issues on the Special Olympics and the woman who plays on one leg. I think these are incentives to all people, handicapped or otherwise. If they can do it, we all can.

T. Singer
Houston, Tex.

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

I see coverage in your magazine of all the men's events. But what happened to reports on the women's pro tour?

Denise Trapp
Providence, R.I.

Editor's note: The women's pro tour does not officially begin until this month. We will continue to cover the WPRA events as we have always had since the beginning.

COVER POLICY

I read in your November editorial that you are planning to put more pros on your covers. I think this is a fine idea if you do not go overboard.

Put the pros on once in awhile but I enjoy reading about the celebrities, and I hope you save them a place also.

Danny Paul
Portland, Ore.

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PLAYERS

Celebrities and racquetball professionals turned out for the seventh annual Steve Garvey Multiple Sclerosis Sports Classic at the Mid Valley Racquetball Club in Reseda, Calif.

Celebrity exhibitions included Garvey against national champion Marty Hogan, Los Angeles Dodger pitcher Jerry Reuss against *CHIPS* co-star Brody Greer and a mixed doubles match featuring Hogan, Jerry Hilecher and two of the Lennon Sisters, Diane and Kathy.

The audience was also treated to a four-man professional "Shootout" featuring Dave Peck, Mike Yellen, Dan Massari and Hilecher. Peck defeated Yellen, 15-7, in the finals. Peck won \$1,000 and Yellen collected \$500 but both donated their winnings to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Ektelon, sponsors of the shootout, also donated \$1,000.

ESPN taped the Garvey-Hogan exhibition and an earlier Peck-Yellen match (won by Peck 15-13) for nationwide cable network showing.



Steve Garvey and Marty Hogan put on exhibition, which was taped for showing on ESPN.



Professional racquetball champ Marty Hogan is center stage with actor Ron Masak (left) and Los Angeles Dodger first baseman Steve Garvey at Garvey's Sports Classic for the benefit of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at Mid Valley Racquetball Club in Reseda, Calif.

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PLAYERS



Mike Warren and Ed Marinaro of *Hill Street Blues* pose for the cameras in between matches. *Hill Street Blues* actors Bruce Weitz and James B. Sikking were also on hand to play.



One of the tourney participants was Michael Young, former host of *Kids Are People Too*.

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PLAYERS

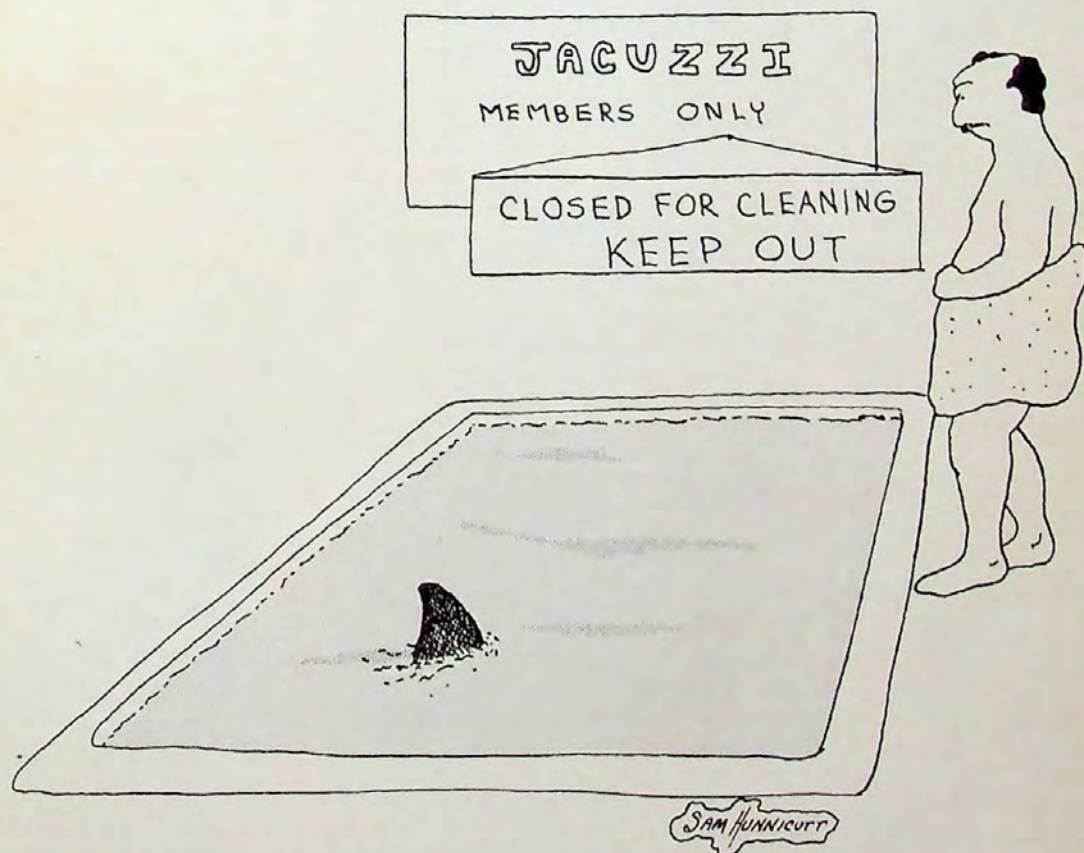


Garvey gets in a little practice with Dodger pitcher Jerry Reuss.



Kathy Lennon (Lennon Sisters) signs autographs prior to her exhibition.

R



COURT MEMORIES

Hogan, the Early Years

BY KEN WONG

The scene is St. Louis, Mo., 1973.

Fourteen-year-old Marty Hogan wins his first national singles racquetball championship with a series of stunning upsets over the best players in the country. He defeats highly favored Charlie Brumfield, 11-1, 11-1, 10-0, 10-0, 11-1, in the finals. Hogan displayed an awesome arsenal of booming power serves and screeching corner kills as he propels himself into the upper echelon of the racquetball elite. . . . Unfortunately, this was just a dream of a 14-year-old kid who happened to be watching two nationally ranked racquetball players, Steve Serot and Jerry Hilecher, put on their daily display of power racquetball at the St. Louis JCCA. That's the way it was long, long ago. But then isn't that the way it always is? The good players didn't want to bother with the dreamers, especially a short, skinny kid who skipped every other ball he hit.

The St. Louis Jewish Community Center Association, affectionately known as the "J," breeds top-notch, power racquetball players, followers of the serve-and-shoot school of racquetball. Hogan, Serot, Hilecher, Ben Kollun, and Doug Cohen are just a few of its graduates. Perhaps it's the atmosphere at the "J." Every kid at the "J" plays power racquetball, but for some strange reason each person develops an idiosyncratic way of hitting shots. When it comes to technique there are no look-alikes.

The racquetball culture at the "J" is like any other highly competitive society: entry into a select group is mainly via a public demonstration of achievement (i.e., tournament wins). Every day the upper echelon of St. Louis racquetball assembled at Court 5. But Hogan didn't belong there. Instead, he practiced his 1,000 skip balls on some other court. But then those were the unwritten rules, the pecking order.

When Brumfield came to town, he was treated like a king. When Steve Keeley biked in, everyone tried to see if they really could read the label on the ball when he hit a kill shot. No one else dared to come to town because these young St. Louis players played a crazy brand of ball—no rallies. Serot, then the heir apparent to Brumfield's throne, had the classic booming backhand. He awed the crowd with his relentless court coverage and diving rekills. Hilecher, with shots as unpredictable as St. Louis weather, pursued his boyhood rival Serot with an intensity which

made one wonder whether it was really only a game.

So if the finest players in the country didn't play Hogan, who did? How did he get to rub shoulders with the players at the top? How can someone develop a whole new dimension in racquetball without playing against the best?

Hogan picked up his first racquetball lesson at the age of six or seven from his mother Goldie who managed the courts at the "J." Football was Marty's first love. But what can you do when your mom drags you to work with her every day, and she happens to work at a racquetball facility. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise. The football coaches weren't that interested in this short, skinny kid. The coaches wanted the big, bulky kids. So, Hogan spent more and more time at the "J" playing two regular partners: his mom and his younger sister, Linda.

Goldie Hogan would defeat Marty every time they played, and Marty couldn't accept this very easily. His solution was to stop playing her and hit shots alone on the court. Thus began the development of the Hogan forehand, the Hogan backhand, and the Hogan power game. On the court alone, away from the glittering limelight of Court 5, the modern power game was born.

In 1972, I entered that inner circle at the "J" when I moved to St. Louis to pursue graduate work in computer science. My ticket was a second round finish in the 1972 Nationals in Memphis. I must have been an enigma to the other players because my bread-and-butter shots were ceiling balls and passes, and a few pinch shots for a change of pace. But heaven forbid if I ever hit a kill shot. In between matches with the top players at the "J," I would watch some of the kids play. Like any aspiring teacher, I could tell that this short, cocky Hogan kid on Court 1 needed lots of help. No one contacts the forehand off the right hip, and that looping backhand had to go. His strategy in the house tournament was all wrong: you can't win by blasting and killing every shot. Surely, by the age of 16, his arm would fall off. And worst of all, he never really looked serious. He looked too happy out there.

This Hogan kid was unbelievably bad. He had so much desire but so little talent. Everything was a skip. Modified recreational table tennis scoring rules were in effect when he and I played. The games

were to 21, but 10-0 or 11-1 was considered a skunk game. Our styles clashed. Pass, skip, Ceiling, skip. The standard outcome was five games in one hour. I would win, 11-1, 11-1, 10-0, 10-0, 11-1, and that was after I had just played two hours with Serot and Hilecher.

The house tournaments were even more embarrassing. Hogan would take a commanding 15-3 lead against a weaker player. No strategy, just go for broke, power racquetball, St. Louis style. He would then change tactics, using drop shots and reverse, backhand, overhead pinches, and the opponent would catch up, 15-15. Hogan would scold himself with screams of, "How can you let this dog beat you" and "He shouldn't even be on the same court." Words of a true sportsman. Hogan would then lose his control, the game, and, finally, the match. To make matters worse, he would explode into obscenities and fits of rage. The spectators couldn't take it. There were even times when Goldie had to step onto the court to stop the shenanigans.

But though Marty could never be accused of taking defeat easily, he really was a nice kid off the court. His only vice was playing gin rummy with the kids. No drinking, no smoking, no drugs.

But growing up was tough. The frustrations of chasing a dream sometime tears us apart and those self-inflicted wounds



appear most often when emotions are high and pressures are at their greatest. One turning point in the development of Marty's on-court maturity came after a second-round loss to Gordon Kelly in the 1969 Nationals. After an encouraging talk with Kelly, Goldie says Marty began to pursue racquetball with more interest. Still, getting into the inner circle at the "J" was not easy. Those exclusive members of Court 5 weren't about to admit just anyone. Even when Marty started winning a few tournament matches, acceptance came slow. People thought his antics and style of play were entertaining but he was not a serious threat to their domain.

As it turned out, by the time Hogan got to play regularly on Court 5 in the early '70s, Serot had moved to San Diego and Hilecher had left for the dilapidated courts at the University of Missouri. Hogan was left to play me and a short, fat kid by the name of Koltun.

The annual JCCA tournament just wasn't the same. Serot and Hilecher didn't show up. That left Hogan and myself in the finals with Hogan finally coming of age. Surprisingly, he had kept his cool. He let his racquet do the talking instead of his mouth.

The rest is history. After spending a summer in San Diego, Hogan smoothed off the rough edges of his game, leveled

out his skip balls into flat-out kills and found out he could play with the best of them. He also added a little height and put on some weight.

Hogan came back to St. Louis and beat Hilecher on Labor Day, 1975 in the Missouri Open. He was knocking on the door of acceptance but it was slow to open for him.

It was not until January 1976, in Burlington, Vt., when Hogan won his first pro tournament that the racquetball world finally found out that the proper contact point for the forehand was the hip; that yes, you can loop the backhand; and that winning comes from a power-based strategy. The door was finally wide open.

R



HOGANALYZING RACQUETBALL

The Power Backhand

*Forget about what others have told you.
This is the way it should be done.*

BY MARTY HOGAN

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

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

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

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

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

TECHNIQUE

It is very difficult to effectively describe the mechanics of any stroke, let alone my back-

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

There are five main features of my backhand: 1. a universal grip—same as the forehand; 2. a full pendulum swing; 3. a very low posture; 4. a powerful leg thrust into the contact zone; and 5. an explosive wrist snap.

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

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

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

A full pendulum swing is necessary to

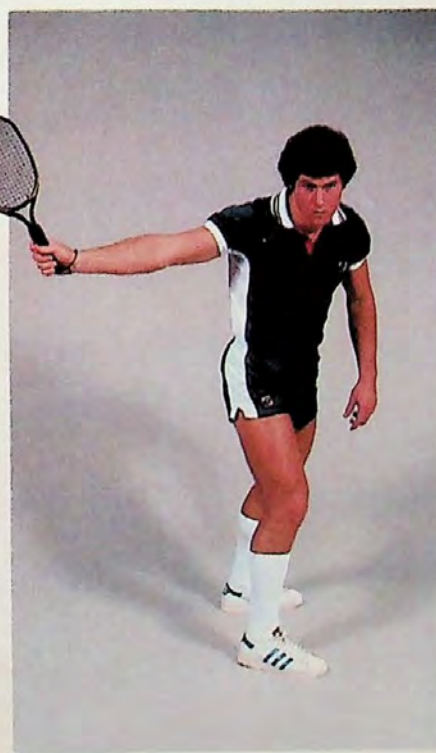
generate maximum power with minimum effort. Many players do not get the full benefit of the pendulum swing because they imitate a bat swing in which the racquet trajectory resembles a roundhouse swing. The proper racquet trajectory is more like a golf swing but with the stroke moving in the plane perpendicular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

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

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

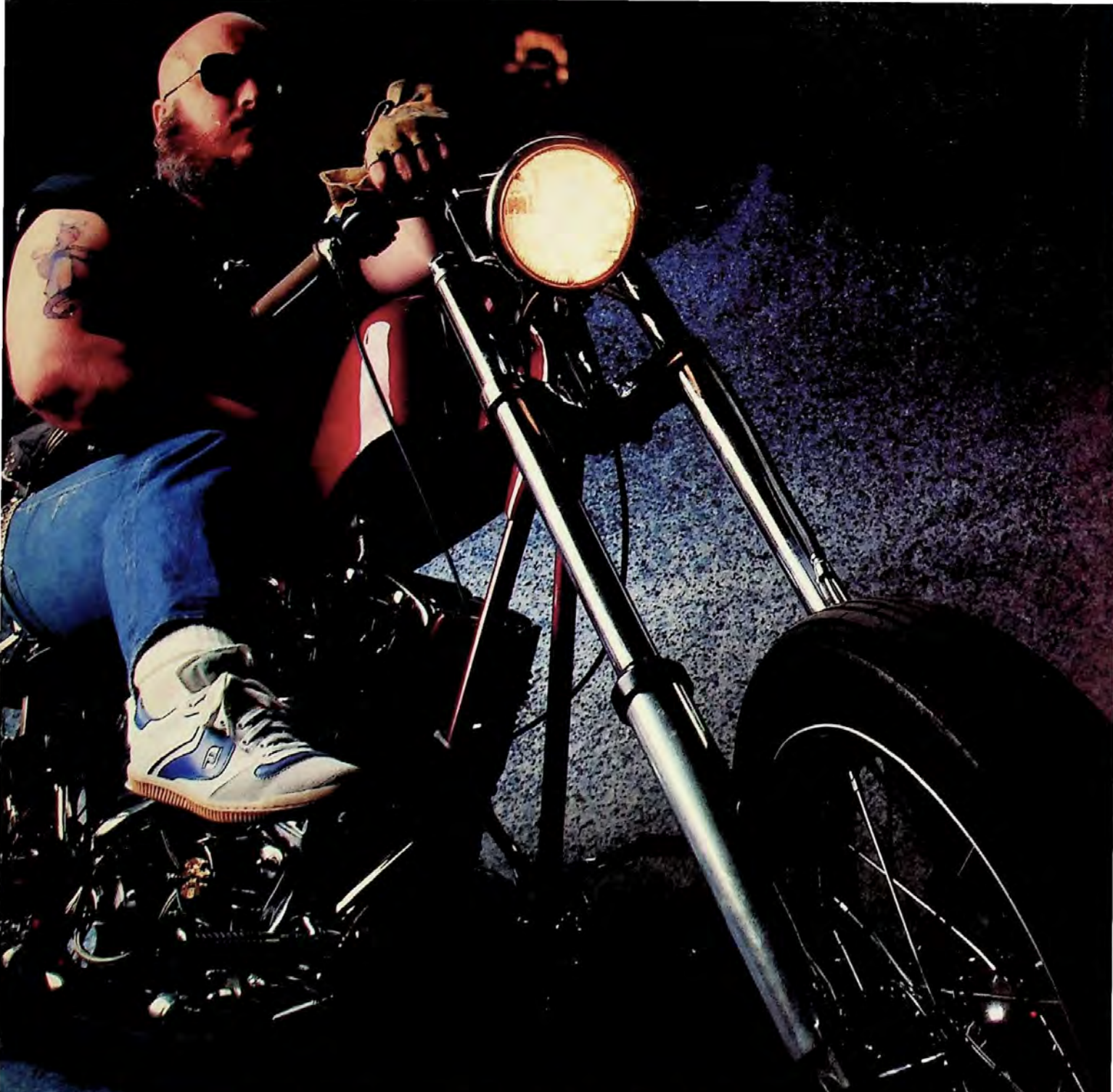
Preparation for the wrist curl is much like a karate punch. The wrist is relaxed, almost floppy, when it is brought back to its maximum extension at the apex of the backswing. This reduces wrist fatigue, and lets you easily adjust to unpredictable shots. But as the racquet begins its journey toward the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

During this setup phase of the stroke, you



To start the backhand, your weight must be transferred onto the back foot in a closed stance. As the ball approaches, draw the arm and racquet back along the perpendicular plane of the forward swing and point the forearm up. At the apex of the swing, the wrist should be curled but relaxed. The shoulders rotate away from the oncoming ball with the right shoulder dropping. The hips shift further toward the back foot. Your upper body should be bent at the waist. Your shoulders and hips uncoil in the swing. The swing levels out just before impact and the wrist snaps. The power comes from the legs, not the arms or upper body.





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HOGANALYZING RACQUETBALL

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

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

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

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

Timing, of course, is the key to hitting with maximum power while expending a minimum amount of effort. It can't be taught on a point by point basis. Rather it must be learned by the "feel technique" in which you spend time on the court feeling the racquet make contact with the ball, feeling the flow of the backhand swing. In all cases, strive for a relaxed swing in which the arm moves freely without hitches or hesitation. Experiment with different techniques to increase your racquet awareness.

STRATEGY

Although the backhand down-the-line shot is more difficult than its forehand counterpart, the best strategy is still to hit about 75 percent of the backhands straight down the line. Mix in about 25 percent backhand pinches or cross-court kills. Three shots down the line and one complementary shot is a good frame of reference. The reason behind this strategy is that as the backhand explodes down the

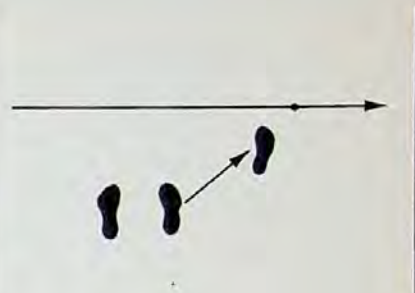
left wall, your opponent will have to contend with the side wall. In addition, it takes much less time for the ball to travel to the front wall when hitting down the line than cross-court.

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

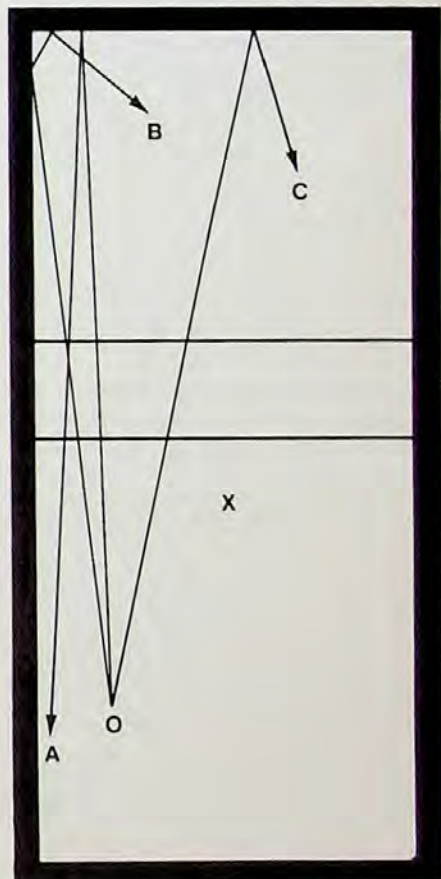
I also follow the same strategy on the backhand return of service. Other pros respond to a drive serve left with a ceiling or pass shot. I choose to shoot into the left corner. Since the backhand is my strength, I go on the offensive whenever I can. I have timed the drive serves of some pros to the point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

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

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



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



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

INSTRUCTION

Put Your Brain Behind the Ball

BY CHERYL PHILLIPS

Strategy is a neutralizer that enables mental ability to compensate for physical weakness.

In the last few years, power racquetball has diluted the previously esteemed position of strategic play. Kill shots took the attention away from systematic ball placement. But, the intrigue of strategy isn't dead yet. In fact, today, players are developing a renewed interest in learning what to do with a shot.

Texas racquetball instructor Bill Sellars explains the brain behind the ball concept. "The winning player is one who does the most thinking and planning." Dallas instructor Pete Wright puts it this way: "Strategy is what makes the game an intellectual one."

When teaching, Wright defers lessons on point planning until after a player has mastered the different strokes, court coverage and conditioning. These building blocks are necessary before advancing to a strategy framework—shot selection, court positioning, ball choice, and attitude.

The theory behind shot selection is based on logic. Says Wright, "If the ball comes off the front wall in a high position, a defensive return with a ceiling ball is your best choice. With a low position ball, an offensive kill shot or pass shot should be used."

Wright figures there are four factors connected with hitting strategy—the height of the ball, the distance from the front wall, the opponent's position, and your ability to set up. There is also a defensive strategy which basically warns you not to set up your opponent.

You will be able to instinctively choose your best shot only after you have learned ball movement patterns in relationship to the angle. "In a matter of seconds, you must assess the direction, speed and trajectory of the shot," Wright says.

Although it may seem as if you need a Ph.D. in physics to be a top court strategist, it's not that difficult to master. It only takes a realization that competitive racquetball entails much more than hitting the ball against a wall. "Learning how to play the angles is like learning to ride a bicycle... you have to practice a lot," says Sellars.

When serving, Sellars recommends that you try to keep your opponent off-balance. "Mixing up your serves will keep your opponent from second-guessing you," he says. After a while, your opponent may learn your patterns, so Sellars advises, "Don't play a formula game. As soon as you think you've

discovered an unbeatable approach, someone will figure it out and use it against you."

Position planning means determining where you should be and where you want your opponent to be. For defensive strategy, Wright recommends that you maintain constant court movement. This puts pressure on your opponent since he or she won't know where to place a shot that you won't be able to retrieve. Offensive positioning is aimed at putting your opponent off-balance. If he is heading for the front court, you hit to the back. The objective is to hit away from your opponent's power and position base.

"The player in the front has the advantage," says Sellars, who recommends using ceiling and 'round-the-world' shots to get the player out of the front court.

"The intrigue of strategy isn't dead yet."

Ball selection is also a variable here. The wide range of ball choices has had the greatest impact on point planning since the game's creation. Wright and Sellars think the variety of racquetballs has produced a radical change in racquetball strategy. "Strategy no longer means mental planning or ball control. A player must virtually be able to adjust his approach to the ball speed," says Sellars.

Before the introduction of the fast ball, strategy was viewed as the equalizer of racquetball. A developed game plan meant someone could compensate for declining stroke agility. "The lively ball has resulted in a sacrifice of ball control and an emphasis on the power stroke," says Wright.

"The fast-ball game is for the flat-belly youth who has cat-quick reflexes, whereas the slower ball is for the fair, fat and forty player who is on the down side of his physical development," says Sellars.

"A constant fluid court motion is essential when using a fast ball, but if the ball is slow, you can shift your weight into the ball (similar to tennis) and create a stop-start movement pattern," says Wright. "The fast ball requires power and technique while the slow ball

utilizes control and mental decision making."

For the average player, developing strategy styles for two different ball types can be confusing. "A player should begin learning point planning with the kind of ball he or she enjoys playing and stick with that style," says Wright.

Your control over your own attitude and an analysis of your opponent's attitude will help round out your point planning. It's essential that you don't get visibly distraught over mistakes. Showing your frustration could be a cue to the opponent to put the pressure on, and it could make concentration a problem in ensuing rallies. Stay mentally cool.

The level of fatigue shown by your opponent is also a significant factor. If the other player seems to be huffing and puffing, play him hard. Place shots that will force him to run around. On the other hand, if your opponent is overly energetic, Wright and Sellars say let him beat himself.

In doubles, successful teams know that the primary considerations are to communicate well and to compensate for each other's weaknesses. When planning your doubles court position, choose a formation that will help you and your partner maximize coverage while utilizing each other's strengths. In the last few years, the "I" or front/back formation has received a lot of attention in doubles circles. But side by side is still the most used formation.

It's a good idea to mix up positioning. "I don't use the classical doubles rotation," says Sellars. "Swapping out is good because it lessens the fatigue and helps balance playing energy. Flexibility not only gives you an advantage. It also keeps the game exciting."

Sizing up the opposition is an on-going process in doubles. As you play, try to identify the weaker player, and be on the lookout for those moments when an opponent begins to choke. Plan your ball placement accordingly. Keep in mind that your competition is viewing you in the same manner, so don't help them by pointing out a partner's faults during the game. Presenting a united front is vital in doubles. "It's self-defeating to get angry at your partner while you're playing. I play by the optimist's creed—forget mistakes of the past and press on to better achievements in the future," says Sellars.

Strategy is what makes racquetball an art, and once a person begins to logically plan his next moves he becomes an artist with an aesthetic appreciation of the game.

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Dallas instructor Pete Wright says that if the ball comes off high, go to the ceiling (top). If the ball is low, you can go for a kill or passing shot.



Conditioning Drills: Your Mind Screams, "It's Pain"

BY BRAD KRUGER

Former national champion Charlie Brumfield has never been known to be a dedicated follower of any grueling training program. In fact, Brumfield has lectured me for hours that time wasted on conditioning one's body should be spent more productively in working on shot selection. But while his lectures seemed to have miraculously cured my insomnia, they did little to remove the fatigue factor from my racquetball matches.

Then, early one morning at a racquetball club in San Diego, I was drawn to a rear court from which came a loud noise. The court seemed shaken by the sound waves and, with curiosity growing, I squinted up against the peep-hole. What came into view was shocking, to say the least. Here, encased

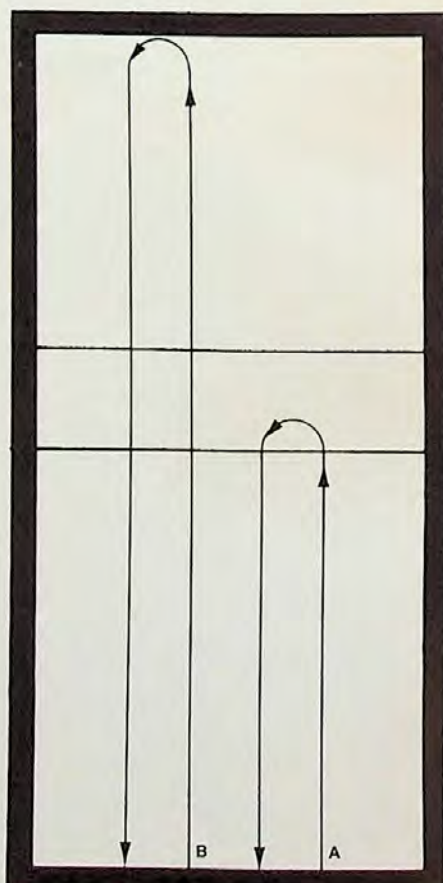
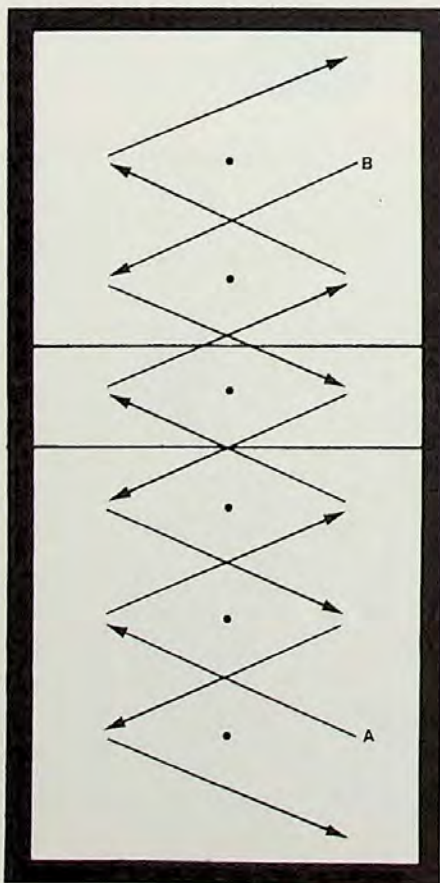
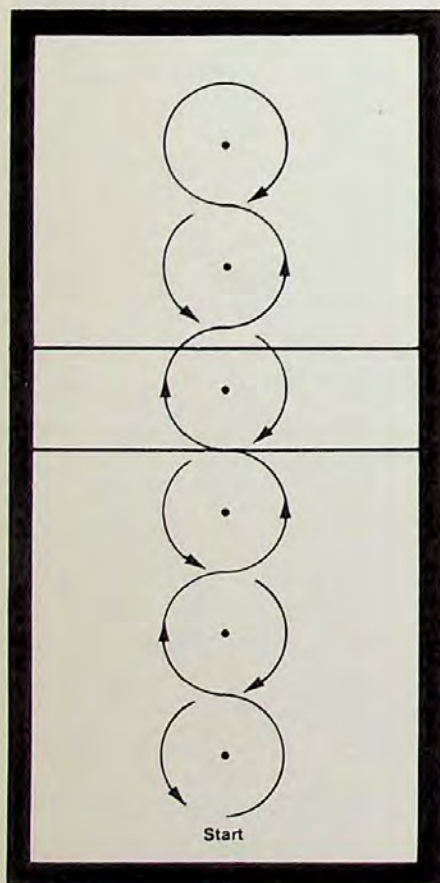
within, creating this disturbance, was Brumfield stomping wildly in all directions like a scared tarantula.

What had I stumbled on? Either Brumfield had flown the coop from his padded racquetball court at a nearby asylum or he was actually conditioning himself. Peering back into the peep-hole, I found my view was blocked by a rather bloodshot, dilated pupil glaring back at me from the other side. Suddenly the court door flew open and I was seized inside by the groping hands of coach Carl Loveday.

Thereupon I was informed that I had indeed witnessed Brumfield's secret training program, en route to his comeback, and was warned not to tell a soul.

More and more it seems, top pros such as Brumfield are adjusting to the ever-changing concepts of conditioning for racquetball. Even if you're not an accomplished pro, proper conditioning is a must.

How does one go about designing a proper training program? According to George B. Dintiman, author of *Sprinting Speed*, "Exercise programs should stimulate movements of the activity for which training is designed, whenever possible." In common racquetball lingo, a conditioning program for racquetball should have actions as close as possible to the actions taking place in a game. For example, in training for racquetball, running wind-sprints would be a much better conditioner than, say, striking a punching bag.



The pan drill (left) involves weaving in and out around stationary objects. A modified version (right) involves shuffling around the objects in a diagonal direction.

The line drill involves a relay race, so to speak. Each runner sprints to the front line and back and the next runner sprints to the front wall and back.

With this in mind, there is no better place to condition oneself for racquetball than in the actual court itself.

PAN DRILLS

Probably the best known follower of this strenuous routine is Rich Wagner, one of the fastest players on the pro tour. However, just about any racquetballer who has trained under the watchful eye of Loveday has been unmercifully subjected to the pans.

Why does Loveday herald these conditioning drills above all others? On the physical side, they aid in footwork, agility, and endurance. On the mental side, they develop a toughness in the player.

To start the pan drills, place six small objects about five feet apart down the center of the court. Players are to weave in and out of the stationary objects. According to Loveday, each drill is to be done until a slight burning sensation is felt in the muscles, then do one more. At this point, after collapsing on the floor from sheer exhaustion, take a short breather and then move on to the next exercise.

Pan drills can be done in the following ways:

1. Quick, quiet, short steps: We've all seen obstacle courses wherein a football player runs through 10 or 12 lined up tires. He looks somewhat like a barefoot gorilla on scorching hot pavement in search of a cooler spot.

Well believe it or not, this is the precise action we are striving for. Staying up on the toes with your knees slightly bent, take small steps as quickly as possible.

2. Quick, noisy, short steps: Same as above only this time, as you change directions, try to make as much noise as is humanly possible. The noise we are ultimately looking for is not the horrid, crunching sound of a heel driving into the floor, but rather the squeaking noise, caused by the friction between your sole's rubber and the court floor.

3. High, knee-ups: Lifting your "knobbies" as high as you possibly can, weave through the objects at a snail's pace. If your knees don't go as high as you thought they would, try leaning back a little bit. Once again, stay on your toes. This drill is only recommended for those of you with relatively strong knees. If you are plagued by chronic knee ailments, or even fear knee problems, it would probably be wise to sit this drill out and take a breather.

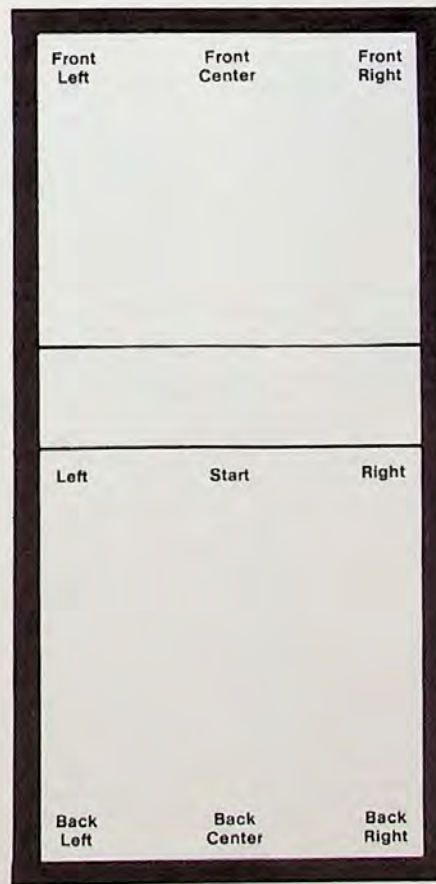
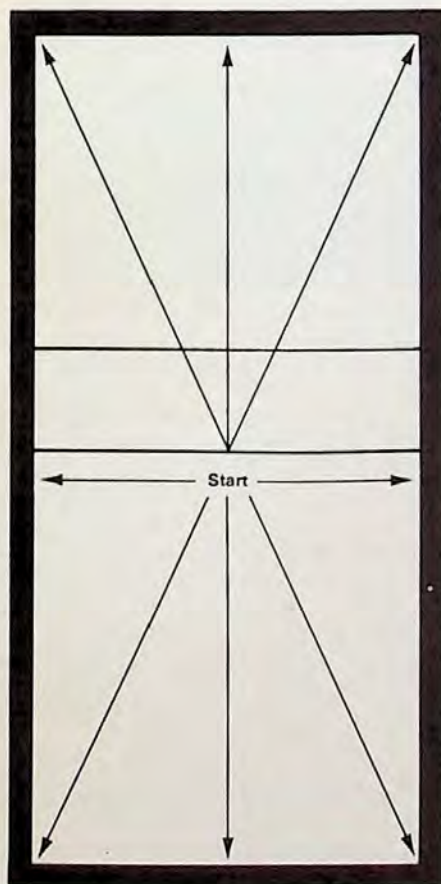
4. The shuffle: For this drill the stationary objects maintain their original positions while the pattern of movement changes slightly. Facing the front wall, start at point A and shuffle four steps diagonally to the left, then shuffle four steps diagonally to the right, and so forth until you reach point B. At this point, turn and, now facing the back wall, shuffle back in the same manner.

THE STAR DRILL

As legend has it, the star drill was designed years ago by frustrated handball players in the pre-racquetball era. That deceptive little black ball they pursued around the court's perimeter seemed to always be just inches away from their calloused hand's reach. If only they could somehow get into position just a bit sooner.

They devised program after program in hopes of finding some drill that would develop this skill, but with every new program, failure soon followed. With nowhere left to turn, the players, as the myth goes, dropped to their knees and, looking toward the heavens for an answer, saw a star.

The star drill is probably one of the best drills for the improvement of all-around court mobility. The drill can be done with more than one person but if you're the type that likes to work out by yourself, it is also very effective. With racquet in hand, start at center court and charge head-on toward any point shown.



The Star Drill is one of the best for all-around court mobility. You start in the center and charge to a certain point (left). Or if you have a partner, you stand in the middle and let him tell you where to run (right).

Stop suddenly within three feet of the wall, then swing your most fluid stroke at an imaginary ball. Quickly scurry back to center court, stopping only for a split second, before sprinting off towards a different target. Continue in this matter until you can't do any more.

For those of you who like to work out with racquetball groupies, the drill is done in the same manner as above, with one exception. While you do the running, the onlookers joyfully tell you which point you are to run towards. You are to continue until you can't do anymore. Then switch positions with your partner.

There are two rules for this drill: First, a participant must always face the front wall. Thus, if you're positioned at center court and want to reach a point along the rear wall, you will have to backpedal in order to get to it. Second, in actual play, will a player turn 180 degrees from the front wall in pursuit of the ball.

The second rule has to do with your partners. For the best results, silence should be held until the running player has returned to

the center court position. Then, and only then, should a new direction be announced. For the sake of the runner's mental stability, it is advised that only one direction be yelled at a time.

LINE DRILLS

The line drills were originally developed from football and basketball training programs and are great for the improvement of one's forward and backward mobility. I first learned them from Canadian pro Wayne Bowes.

Line drills should be done with at least one other person and at a relatively fast pace.

Starting with his back against the wall, player A sprints to the short line and back to the back wall. Then he sprints to the front wall and, once again, returns to the back wall. At this point, in relay fashion, player B takes off. When player B returns, player A is off again, and so on.

How long should one keep up this masochistic ritual? Believe me, if this drill is done properly, your body will inform you when it's quitting time.

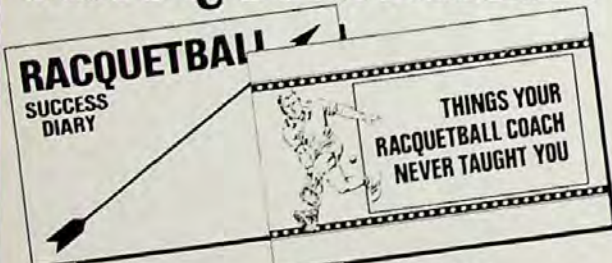
The first time I attempted these drills with Bowes my mind was full of preconceived ideas on how simple and easy they would be. With visions of 30 or 40 reps dancing in my head, I ran in all directions and soon fell down dead.

The first repetition was as easy as I had anticipated. After that it was all downhill, or rather, it felt as if everything was uphill. As the drill proceeded, and my body was slowly overtaken by fatigue, I became completely oblivious to my surroundings. I wound up with eight repetitions.

Each of the drills will improve your mobility on the racquetball court. The line drills will improve your forward and backward mobility, the pan drills will improve your general footwork, agility, and endurance, and the star drills are an excellent exercise to improve your all-around court mobility and agility. These drills go hand in hand with each other but it is recommended that you analyze the weakest area of your own ability to move about the court and devote more time to the respective drill that will develop that specific weakness into a strength.



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Speed Drills

BY LYNN ADAMS

Do you feel sluggish on the court? Is the ball always just a little out of reach? What you need is some speed in those feet of yours.

Racquetball is a game of starts and stops. Speed is a major part of winning. And, regardless of what you may think, there are ways to improve your speed.

A racquetball court is one area you can use to work on speed exercises. I also advise you to do these exercises with a partner. That way you can encourage each other and make sure the other person is not sluffing off.

Prior to any exercise, you should warm up. Since you will be going through a lot of extending and bending, stretch for 10-15 minutes prior to the exercises.

Some of you may be familiar with exercises for long distance running. These are not the same. These drills are geared for the start-and-stop sports.

We start with simple speed drills, concentrating on footwork. Block sprints are what I recommend. They get your heart rate up. Start at the right back corner and run close to the walls in a square. You spring to the right front corner, then do a step-together-step shuffle along the front wall. Then run backwards to the left corner and repeat the step-together-step shuffle along the back wall. Do 3-5 block sprints in a row as one set. Rest a few seconds and do 2-5 sets.

Another beginner's drill is the shuffle swing exercise. For this one, use the side walls as your boundary. Start in the middle of the court and use the step-together-step shuffle to the right side wall. While doing this, take a normal forehand swing. Then do the step-together-step shuffle to the left wall while taking a normal backhand swing. Five to 10 times equals one set and you should plan on 2-5 sets. This drill will get you moving to the ball while preparing to hit.

The next drill is more advanced and if you do it fast you'll achieve what the drill name suggests: burn out. You will need a partner for this one.

Your partner stands with his or her back against the back wall. You start in the middle of the court facing her. She will put her finger in front of her and move it side to side or up and back. You are going to follow her finger. If she wants you to move forward or back, you sprint. If she wants you to move side to side, you shuffle. Do all motions at top speed.

The director should mix up the signals, keeping the person moving in all directions. Keep the drill going for over 30 seconds. Take a quick break and start again. Repeat it at least five times. This drill will improve your quickness and mobility.



Lynn Adams says one of the best off-court speed drills is running up a hill.

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With the "burn-out drill" a partner points out the direction Lynn will move. If she wants you to move forward or backward, you sprint. Side to side movement is a shuffle.

The next exercise is one of the most strenuous you can do on the court. I learned it from pro Mark Martino, who said his speed has improved because of it. It is called the Dime Drill.

Place five dimes about equidistant from the short line to the front wall. Start at the back wall, sprint to pick up the first dime, sprint back to the starting point, and so on until you have gathered up all five dimes. Now reverse the process. Sprint to the number one spot, put down the dime, return to the starting point, pick up another dime and so on.

This drill is good for strengthening the legs. It is also a good aid in the stopping-and-bending motion used frequently in hitting shots. Five to 10 dime drills should get anyone burned out. I started out with three dime drills and have worked my way up to eight so far.

Outside the court there are other speed drills you can work on. Most tracks have white poles set up at 55-yard intervals. Sprint

from one pole to the next, then jog one pole, and so on. Make sure you jog instead of walk because you want to keep your heart pumping. Work up to four laps of the track with this drill.

Another good speed drill is running hills or stairs. Sprint up the hill, walk down it, sprint up it, walk down, etc.

All of these drills are designed to improve your racquetball game, a game for which you need short bursts of speed using large amounts of oxygen in a short period of time.

Don't do these drills all in one day. You can use the first two as warmups and then pick one of the others. That would be considered a pretty full workout. Switch drills on different days.

I suggest doing some sort of speed workouts at least three days a week. Your body may be sore the first week or two, so make sure you plan a lot of pre-drill stretching. Don't let the aches discourage you. In time, they will pass.



The shuffle swing exercise is when the player shuffles from the middle to each side of the court and simulates the proper racquetball stroke.



The dime drill has the player placing five dimes equidistant from the short line to the front wall and then sprinting to pick up each one.

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Journey Away from the Center of the Court (What to Do in Front Court and Back Court)

BY LINDSAY MYERS

Center court positioning is important during a rally because virtually 75 percent of all shots pass through this zone. This suggests that you must be in center court to control play or be prepared for the proverbial "tour of the court."

All players are expected to be center court wizards but what about the rest of the court? What about the other 25 percent of shots? This smaller percentage of shots drags you out of center court but don't get the idea you are out of position. It just means you are faced with a different selection of shots. But because you are in a "no-man's land" area, you will have to make good on a higher percentage of your shots.

Let's say your opponent has just hit a hard and low kill attempt and the ball has been left up about five inches. Your response is to get out of center court and lunge diagonally forward to cut the ball off. Your speed has allowed you to get to the ball and you hope to surprise your swooping opponent by hitting a cross-court kill. Unfortunately you were off-balance and on the run and your shot skipped in.

The first mistake in this scenario is second-guessing the opponent. You should know where he or she is. Never try to guess. You have no margin of error for mistakes on this one. Thinking too much about things will throw off your own shot rather than help place it. If your plan is to kill the ball, it doesn't matter where your opponent is. When the opportunity to kill the ball arises, pretend nobody is on the court with you. This will eliminate the pressure of the shot.

Your second mistake was to go cross-court. Go to the closest corner. Your odds for success are better.

In the front court, Lindsay Myers suggests dumping the ball into the corners. One back court suggestion is to dive diagonally and go for a ceiling shot or pinch.

Reflex returns or into-the-body shots in front court should be driven into the corners by an advanced player, a down-the-line pinch shot should be used by A or B players, and around-the-wall or Z balls by the C or novice player. The reflex shot is almost always hit with a backhand because of the natural position of the face of the racquet in front of the body.

Dumping the ball into the corners is ideal if your position happens to be in front court or along the side-court areas. The set up comes from a hanging floater that catches the side wall off an attempted passing shot. You can hit the ball with a light but firm volley (cross one leg in front of the other) or hit an underhand scoop shot.

Side-court shots are divided into two groupings: set shots and reflex shots. Set shots are your basic bread-and-butter choices. Let's use the left side for the scenario: You lob a Z serve to the right (forehand) side. He goes to the ceiling as expected. You volley the ball out of the sky down the right side. He stretches right and tries to hit the ball cross court left. But the ball is hit too high, and BBs off the back left wall into the side court. Your options depend on your opponent's positioning. You can hit it cross-court to deep right but he has just hit it from there and probably hasn't left that area yet. You can pinch it to the left side wall but you better not leave it up or it will come up right about where he will be. The ideal choice is a down-the-line shot at one-quarter speed, enabling it to die in the left front side court area.

One-step diving or lunging shots are reflex actions and may be your best bets to counter line drives or V passes. You should hit either a ceiling ball or a side wall-front wall pinch.

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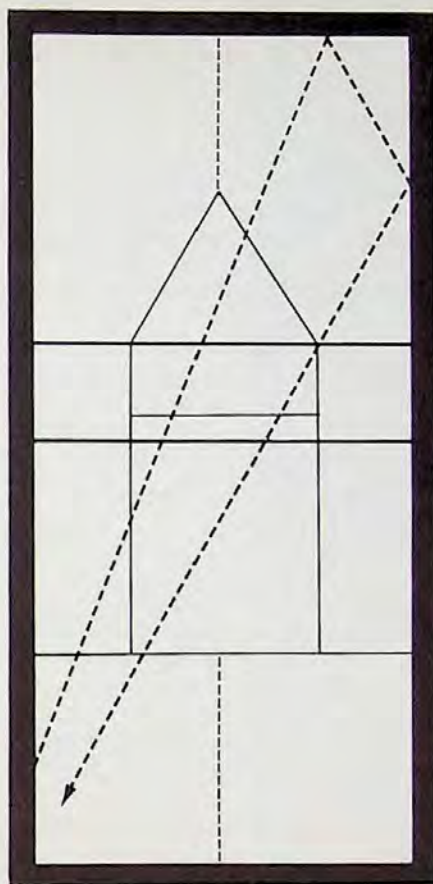
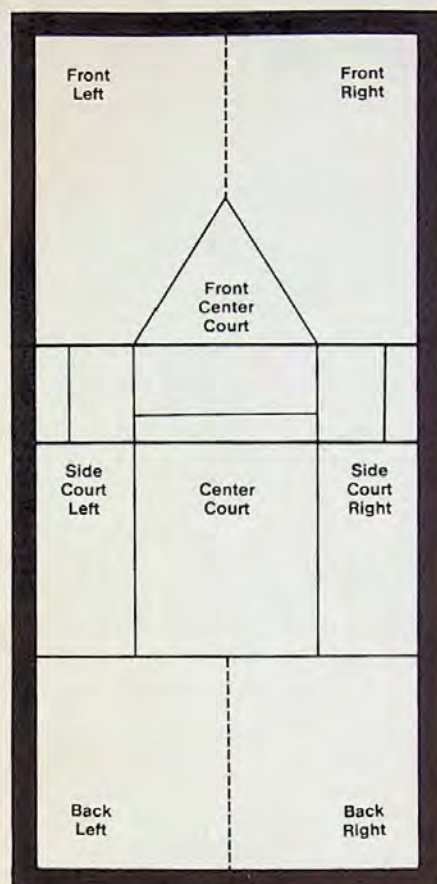
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INSTRUCTION



The map of the court: About 75 percent of play takes place in the center but the rest takes place in other areas. Myers suggests using a sharp around-the-wall shot from back court, which, in turn, will wind up on your opponent's backhand side.

Here's the scenario: You hit a poor serve that comes off the back wall. Prepare to cover a kill. The return comes down the barrel hard and one foot high. Dive diagonally back and try to stab the ball directly into the corners or pinch it. If the shot was not low but, instead, was directly at your face, go to the ceiling. It will give you time to recover.

BACK COURT

When returning the serve, you are already outside the center court area. Your object, then, is to remove your opponent from center court. You basically have three logical options: a ceiling ball up the line; an around-the-wall ball that hits the right side wall first and winds up at your opponent's forehand; or—and this is my choice—a sharp angle around-the-wall shot that winds up in your opponent's backhand corner. The only thing you have to watch out for is your opponent cutting the ball off in the center court area.

Other than those safe shots, your best choice is a down-the-line pass. Your opponent will probably be covering a cross-court pass since that is the shot most people are likely to hit. Try to get the shot past your opponent but don't hit it hard enough so it goes off the back wall.

Retrieving shots in back court brings up some interesting possibilities. Your opponent hits a hard Z to the right. You step over in an attempt to drive it down-the-line. Your shot catches the side wall on the way back and slows up the ball but it still makes it past your opponent. He catches up to it as you cover center court and flails at a shot that hits the side and lands in center court. He tries to get back into center court (just where you want him) and you rip the ball down the left line catching the side wall about 28 feet back. He is forced to scurry around to the back and because he is fast, he managed to get to it. His options are to go down the right line, hit a wide-angle pinch, or, if he can, go to the ceiling. Chances are he will try anything to keep the ball in play. Prepare to cover the front court but don't commit yourself in case he lucks out and hits a ceiling shot. His shot hits the corner and comes out wide. You should punch the ball back into the same corner, side wall first, so the ball can be kept in front court. Your opponent will probably not be able to get to it but if he does, look for a hard desperation shot, which you should be able to easily cut off before it bounces.



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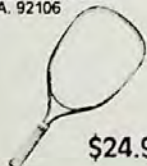
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INSTRUCTION

Gospel According to the Pros

Jennifer Harding on **pinch shots**: "I hit the pinch shot with the same speed I hit every other shot. A lot of players will kind of finesse it. But if your opponent is watching you, he can see you're going to change the speed of the ball."

Dave Peck on **kill shots**: "The kill shot is absolutely the most effective offensive weapon a player can command. When attempting a kill, the key word is patience. You must let the ball fall below the knees before hitting it."

Jerry Hilecher on **overhead shots**: "Hitting down on a ball from above your head is a low percentage shot because it angles the ball toward the floor but there are times when you can break the rules and use it to turn defensive situations into offensive opportunities. The form differs radically from a conventional stroke. In fact, it most resembles a tennis serve."



Davey Bledsoe on **watching an opponent**: "Most beginners run and face the front wall after a shot and react after an opponent's shot has hit the front wall. This is a good way to lose. The key to winning is the ability to read an opponent. As soon as the ball comes off your racquet, you should look back at your opponent, read what he or she is going to do, and set up accordingly."

Marci Greer on **around-the-wall shots**: "The best time to hit them is on the return of any soft serve, either a lob or Z, and they are especially effective in doubles play. They differ from a Z in that they hit the side wall first rather than the front wall."

Bonnie Stoll on **ceiling shots off the back wall**: "When playing a ceiling shot, retreat in the direction of the ball. Ball judgment is the key to determining where it will rebound off the back wall. If you are in center court, back pedal to the ball. Do not turn around and run toward the rear wall."

Rich Wagner on **center court**: "Center court is not always center court. The speed of the ball has a lot to do with it. The faster the ball is hit, the deeper center court becomes. If a ball is hit at chest-high level, it will have a tendency to rebound off the back wall. Thus, your center court area moves back because that is where you will set up for the return."

Rita Hoff on **power racquetball**: "Hitting a racquetball hard isn't simply a question of having big muscles. Brute strength is far less important than technique in generating power."



Mike Yellen on **wide-angle passing shots**: "A wide-angle pass is invariably a cross-court shot. Instead of hoping the return goes in the back corner, you are aiming to eventually hit the side wall at about the same point where your opponent is."

Editor's note: The following quotes were taken from past issues of Racquetball Illustrated.

Janell Marriott on **time outs**: "Time outs are called to correct mistakes, change strategy, stop momentum, catch your breath and to regain concentration. It is most often used as a psychological tool but in some cases it is a physical necessity."



Lynn Adams on **service returns**: "The main thing to remember on a service return is to get off to a fast start. Don't wait for the ball to enter back court before moving. Move as it is hit."



Marty Hogan on **beating the power player**: "Look at the record and you'll see that there's only one type of player who has ever come close to consistently threatening me. He's the player who can stand toe-to-toe with me, slug it out, and get up again when he gets knocked down. There's only one way to beat the power game: fight fire with fire."

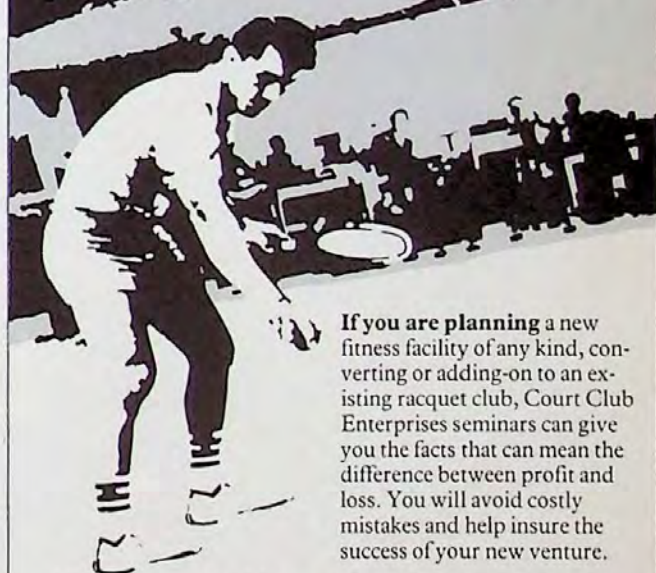


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JUMPING INTO THE RACQUETBALL WORLD

Former United States Olympic long jumper Sherron Boyea has her sights set on professional racquetball and the 1984 Games in Los Angeles.

BY MIKE SNAPP



Over a rare midday lunch of pancakes and eggs, former United States Olympic long jumper Sherron Boyea talks in guarded terms of her recent accident, the only evidence of which is a slightly swollen lip and slightly more bruised ego. "Four stitches," she explains almost apologetically. "I got hit with a racquet in my last tournament. . . I don't know what I'm going to tell my track coach."

If the Boyea name doesn't ring an immediate bell, don't worry. It probably shouldn't. With only a little more than eight months of competitive racquetball under her trunks, Boyea would be the first one to tell you that she still has a long way to go before ever becoming a serious threat to today's top women racquetball players. It is, however, a definite goal this 25-year-old native of Everett, Wash., has set for herself.

That and competing in the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

Already acknowledged as one of the nation's top amateur long jumpers, Boyea is also beginning to make a name for herself on the amateur racquetball circuit. Since January 1981, when she competed in and won her first tournament, she has compiled an impressive record—winning four tournaments and finishing second in three others. Her biggest title came in the women's "C" division in the California Grand Prix Finals.

Dave Bush, her first racquetball coach, is impressed. "She's a good worker, a good practicer and an ideal student," says Bush, racquetball pro at the Torrance (Calif.) Athletic Club. "I would consider her one of the best athletes in women's racquetball today. Now, it's just a matter of her learning the technical skills."

"There's no doubt that Sherron is going to be one of the game's better players," echoes Bobby Stocker, her current coach. "What she needs more than anything else right now is the experience and execution to put it away. The top ladies on the tournament circuit have that. In racquetball, you don't want to think, you want to execute. You want to let your body react."

Boyea has been executing and reacting ever since she was seven years old when she first watched a track and field meet on television and decided that was what she wanted to do. The subsequent decision by her high school coach that Sherron would specialize in the long jump paid off better than advice from E.F. Hutton, bringing her the state long jump record four years in a row, the Washington prep "Athlete of the Year" award two years in a row, and earning her a place on the 1976 United States Olympic team.

Her eighth place finish in the 1976 Montreal Olympics instantly made her, at 20, one of the young athletes to be watched and heavily



Opposite page: Sherron and husband Sean. Top: Sherron goes through aerobic exercise routine that she teaches. Bottom: A little racquetball practice. "There's no doubt that Sherron is going to be one of the game's better players," says her coach.

JUMPING INTO THE RACQUETBALL WORLD



counted on to represent the United States in the next games, scheduled for 1980 in Moscow. However, President Carter's decision to boycott those games, as well as a severe groin injury, dashed any hopes of a repeat appearance.

At least, she says, until the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984.

Now competing for the Coast Athletic Club, Boyea's introduction to racquetball was surprisingly similar to her childhood attraction to track. "I remember seeing a tournament at a local club one day and knew that this was for me," she says. "I got serious the day I said that and immediately started working out two or three hours a day. You have to remember that I've been involved in some type of sport all my life, and at the time, I was afraid that when I quit track I wouldn't have anything like that to fall back on. I was afraid of what my life would be like. I had to find another sport."

One look at Boyea's 5-foot-3, 110-pound frame and you quickly come to understand part of the reason for her phenomenal success. She is, she says, in the best physical condition of her life.

Boyea estimates that she puts in approximately seven to eight hours a day on her racquetball and track workouts. She lifts weights twice a week, works part-time at the Artesia (Calif.) Racquetball Club where she teaches aerobics, attends Cerritos College, and still manages time for her husband of a year-and-a-half, Sean.

It is, she admits, an arduous schedule, but one which she has grown accustomed to over the years. "I've been active all my life," she says. "When I do take one day off I find it very hard to relax. Even when I go shopping, I

constantly find myself running to get it done as fast as I can. I guess it becomes part of you after a while."

Of course, there is always the possibility that the fever-pitch schedule to which she subjects herself will ultimately take its toll, either in loss of concentration or pure physical exhaustion. There are some sound examples to back up this contention. In today's world of modern athletics, few manage to excel in more than one sport at any given time.

So what makes Sherron Boyea so special?

"I think it's my drive," she says. "I remember my mother saying, 'You can't do it all.' And I don't know if that's right or not. I disagree with those people who say that I cannot give equal concentration to both sports. At the present time, they're both very, very important to me. And as long as I'm as successful as I am at both of them, I'll continue to do so."

"As far as my physical conditioning is concerned, I recover very quickly. My track coach can put me through a hard workout for about an hour, have me walk 100 yards, and my pulse will be back to normal. He says he's never seen anyone recover the way I do."

In addition, she says, racquetball encompasses some of the same physical and psychological properties as track, making the combination easier than it may appear. "Racquetball is a fast-moving game," she explains. "You have to be quick, and you have to think. It's a very smart game. You're one-on-one, and I like that kind of competition. It's like track in that respect. In racquetball, there's no one in that room but me and the other guy."

There's the physical relationship, too. "You need a lot of endurance in both sports," she adds. "A lot of strength. You use a lot of the same leg muscles when you're in the squat position and pivoting from side to side. The only reason my track coach really doesn't like the idea of my playing is because he thinks I'll get hurt."

Boyea's natural ability for racquetball has quickly taken her through the ranks. Presently competing in the "B" classification, there can be no mistake made about her future plans. She plans to join the "A" ranks as soon as possible, turn pro right after that, and then, hopefully, make some money on the Women's Professional Racquetball Association (WPRA) tour. "I'd like to win two strong B tournaments and then move into the A bracket," she says. "If I train really hard, I think that I should soon be there."

It wasn't until recently, however, that talk such as this would not have been appropriate—especially from a potential Olympic hopeful.

The words "professional sports" and "money" have been the subject of much controversy for Olympic athletes in years past. While the United States has, unlike most other countries, sought to assure their amateur nature by imposing strict penalties on anyone receiving monetary compensation for his or her athletic ability, it has caused a number of problems for its athletes. Newspapers, magazines and books have all chronicled the all-too-familiar story of the dedicated athlete who, for the good of his country, devotes four years of his life to the Olympic Games and, in the process, neglects the wife,



Sherron's specialty is the long jump. She finished eighth in the event in the 1976 Olympics in Montreal.

husband, or children back home.

But times—and attitudes—are changing. There is a new ruling covering Olympic athletes which would allow her to compete professionally in a sport outside her usual event—in this case, racquetball. "I have to start making a living sometime. If the Olympics were to stand in the way of my turning pro, then I would have to give careful consideration to not going," says Boyea.

Despite the many obstacles that seemingly stand in her way, Boyea says she is committed to the present strenuous lifestyle she has established for herself. She plans to compete in the Sunkist Invitational Indoor Track Meet next month in Los Angeles, as well as the Indoor Track and Field Nationals in New York. But she'll also continue playing in monthly racquetball tournaments. There's still that goal of turning pro to reach.

"Frankly, I really don't know a lot about what's out there in professional racquetball," she says. "I know that I want to play it, though. I heard Lynn Adams talking about it once and she said that the women are doing well financially—that things are really improving. So I know what I want to do, and I know that I need to take it one step at a time. I figure I'll know how to deal with it a little better when I actually get there. And I will get there."



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HOW TO PLAY RELAXED

BY ROBERT L. MORASKY

A 22-year-old woman is playing in her first club racquetball tournament as a novice. Tournaments are supposed to be fun but the night before she had butterflies so badly she could hardly eat or sleep.

A 37-year-old man plays regularly at the club but when it comes to tournaments, playing becomes an agonizing experience. His movements become tight and jerky. He starts skipping kill shots. Then, amid looks of anguish, he'll begin banging his racquet against the wall in sheer frustration. Everyone says he would do better if he didn't get so tight during tournaments. The club pro tells him, "Relax, man... you're beating yourself."

A 28-year-old woman who knows the game of racquetball well, is in good shape, and is coordinated, seems to hit "dumb" shots in competition. She says the ball moves too fast for her to think, so she just hits it as best she can—and she loses points.

These are some of the problems that were brought to the attention of the psychology lab at Montana State University. The school was working on a relaxation technique that had been extremely effective with performing musicians and looked as if it would work with racquetball players as well. Hence began the development of a technique called "performance relaxation for racquetball."

Performance relaxation for racquetball is designed to handle three major problems that many racquetball players experience. First, as with most Americans, racquetball players often don't know how to relax—thoroughly and completely—when they need and choose to do so. Second, as with most people in competition, racquetball players get anxious before and during games. Although it comes in varying degrees and at different times, anxiety still has the effect of interfering with muscle movements and mental concentration. Finally, racquetball players usually cannot control their minds any better than most people—and most people can't focus on a single thought or object for 10 seconds without some specific training. As you might guess, these three problems are not restricted to racquetball players. They are also common with musicians, football and basketball players, long distance runners, skiers, and rodeo cowboys, all of whom find their performance is hampered by these problems.

For the racquetball enthusiast, these three problems mean hitting the ball too soon and too hard, missing the ball entirely, overrunning the ball, losing one's temper at a missed

shot resulting in more missed shots, seeing a serve only after it is half way to the back wall and randomly hitting the ball without thinking about where it should go. Add to this the feelings of anxiety before and during games, and you have a pretty good idea of the changes that can be brought about by performance relaxation.

Deep muscle relaxation is the key to performance relaxation and is also the focus of the first of four parts of the training that athletes go through at Montana State. It usually takes three or four sessions for trainees to learn to relax by using a muscle tightening and relaxation technique that is common to many deep muscle relaxation strategies. The intent at this first stage is to help the trainee recognize what relaxation feels like. At the same time we begin the second part of training which is called systematic desensitization.

"Muscle relaxation is the key to performance relaxation."

Systematic desensitization is a technique for reducing the anxiety associated with stress such as that which racquetball players may feel before and during competition. Each of us becomes sensitive to a set of stressful events that produce anxiety or fear. We weren't born with these; we actually learn them, and we can "unlearn" them—or, rather, learn to not react (be "desensitized") to them. If the stressful events and unpleasant reactions are imagined while practicing deep muscle relaxation, then feelings of tension and anxiety are reduced. Our desensitization training begins with the mild stress events such as signing up for a racquetball tournament or arriving at the racquetball facility. In the later parts of the training the player moves to highly stressful situations such as waiting in the locker room before a game, standing outside the court waiting for another game to finish, missing an easy kill shot, contending with a hurry-up opponent and so on. By having repeatedly paired deep muscle relaxation with vivid imagining of these situations most of the racquetball players respond much less drastically to these stress producers than they did originally.

The third part of performance relaxation involves learning to relax by simply focusing attention on a specific body part and making it relax. The passive approach here is impor-

tant for two reasons: One, racquetball players should be able to mentally relax shoulders, arms, hands or whatever, so that relaxation can occur on the court between serves or between games. Two, by learning to focus attention on specific muscle groups the trainee is preparing for the fourth part of the training which requires and builds upon control over the mind.

The mind is like a drunken monkey. It goes where it wants, it doesn't stand still very often and isn't easily controlled or trained. By using a combination of deep muscle relaxation, attention focusing and "convert behavioral rehearsal" racquetball players can begin to control their minds and improve concentration while playing. During "convert behavioral rehearsal," racquetball players visualize themselves playing a calm, relaxed game with super concentration and intensity. Correct moves with successful results are rehearsed again and again in the mind with even the finest of details being imagined—in slow motion if necessary.

Objective results are hard to come by in a situation like this without resorting to control groups or repetitive measures. Subjectively, the results have been gratifying, and not always of the sort that easily lend themselves to measurement. The most common outcomes are reports that players can follow the ball much better and that concentration on their entire game improves. In addition, for many players the ball (or, perhaps, time) seems to slow down so that, for instance, in the middle of a forehand shot a player will recognize the excess arm tension and relax forearm and hand muscles—all in the space of a few hundredths of a second. Previously while waiting for a serve, a player might have thought about the last missed shot, criticized him/herself, remembered the score and reviewed a strategy for the next shot. Now he or she will simply relax tense muscles while walking to the back court, quickly review game strategy and focus all attention on the ball that is about to be served. With concentration of that intensity, it's no wonder that time seems to expand between the moment the ball is served and when it gets to a relaxed racquetball player.

Certainly, racquetball is not a "mind game" entirely. Skill at racquetball comes from a combination of good physical conditioning, fine motor skills and proper mental preparation. Mental preparedness for top racquetball players includes motivation and knowledge of the game as well as the ability to relax and concentrate. The development of mental skills ought to receive proportionally as much time as the development of physical skills and peak conditioning.

Editor's note: The author is a professor in the psychology department at Montana State University.

Rx FOR WINNING

Sports Myths and Realities

BY WILLIAM SOUTHMAYD, M.D.
and
MARSHALL HOFFMAN



Author William Southmayd, a sports orthopedist, checks arm of Boston Red Sox outfielder Jim Rice.

It is amazing how little fitness buffs and athletes know about their bodies. I don't know where they get their information—from friends, enemies, or witch doctors.

I've treated million-dollar athletes who have a minimal concept of how their bodies operate during competition. If professionals are uninformed, how can recreational athletes be

expected to understand the athletic body?

The first part of this article is designed to dispel many sports medicine myths. It is a sampling of questions I answer everyday in my practice—questions that are embedded in the myths.

Are Amateur Athletes Injured More Frequently Than Pros?

Many medical studies substantiate that the higher the level of competition, the higher the injury rate. On the Boston Red Sox, every player misses at least a few games because of injury. One reason is they play 162 games and 35 pre-season games with very few days

off. There is no recovery time. Another reason is the intense competition. Players go at full speed. They sprint to first base. They run at full speed for batted balls. They give 100 percent physically and mentally. If you expose any athlete to injury risk often enough, inevitably something will happen.

The injury rate increases as the level of competition increases. About 10 percent of children under 12 years of age sustain sports injuries. Thirty percent of high school competitors miss games because of sports injuries. Seventy-five percent of college athletes sustain injuries, but virtually 100 percent of pro

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from Sports Health: The Complete Book of Athletic Injuries, by William Southmayd, M.D., and Marshall Hoffman. Copyright 1981 by Quick Fox, New York.

players miss some competition because of their physical ailments.

The difference between the injury rate and the total number of injuries nationally mislead many people. Although the injury rate in the pro ranks is nearly 100 percent per year, only 6,600 pro athletes compete in the United States. Therefore, from the pro ranks the total number of injuries is low. On the other hand, millions of children participate in sports, and almost four million a year are injured. Even with a low injury rate, the totals are far greater than for any other group.

Is Rehabilitation After a Sports Injury Important?

Definitely. I prescribe physical therapy as soon as the swelling stops. This means that within a day or two, you should be working with a therapist or an athletic trainer.

My reasoning is simple. The therapist moves or mechanically stimulates the injured part, which increases the blood supply to the injured area. The blood brings the building blocks for healing—nutrients, oxygen and inflammatory cells—to the injury.

Most injuries (even a simple ankle sprain) need at least five days to heal. Why let muscles and joints become weak or stiff from disuse? A therapist or an athlete trainer will prevent weakness and stiffness.

In my opinion, quick rehabilitation may cut disability time by at least 25 percent. Furthermore, some injuries such as fractures, joint disruptions, torn ligaments, and cartilages are treated best with an expert physical therapy program.

Are Women More Prone to Injury Than Men?

From a strictly medical and biological standpoint, there is no evidence that women have a higher incidence of injury. Male and female muscles look the same under a microscope. Bone samples also look identical. The musculoskeletal system, on a pound-for-pound basis, is the same.

Christine Haycock, M.D., who has studied this problem, says the number of injuries sustained by women athletes in some sports was initially higher because of poor coaching, improper training, and inadequate equipment. As these factors improved, the injury rate decreased to levels comparable with males injuries.

In a study of female cadets at West Point, a similar conclusion was reached. Because the women had been less active physically in high school, their initial rate of stress fracture

was 10 percent; in men it was one percent. When the physical training program at West Point was gradually increased, the female stress factor rate fell to 3.3 percent. The study also found that the type of sports the female cadets had played did not promote muscular development of their upper extremities. Thus, 92 percent of the women failed the men's performance scale on upper body strength testing. Once they were given the appropriate training, their upper body performance improved greatly.

I have found this to be true in my own experiences. In 1976, I served as the physician for the female Olympic crew trials. The crews were elite female rowers from all over the country; I had never seen more finely trained athletes. It was clear to me that their upper body strength was comparable with any male's of the same body weight.

Size is critical in talking about female injuries in sports. You expect a 160-pound football player to be injured more frequently if he plays against 240-pound players. When comparing their performance and their injury rate with those of males, women must be judged according to their body weight.

If You Work Hard Enough, Can You Be a Great Athlete?

No. The shape of your bones, your muscle type, your coordination, and your reflex speed are all inherited characteristics. Jim Rice, the Red Sox's all-star outfielder, has one of the best slugging performances in the major leagues because he has the right physical ingredients. These talents are God-given. There are only a few Jim Rices in baseball.

The shape of your body (your morph type) determines the sports that best suit you. Muscular persons (mesomorphs) do best in contact sports and court sports. Tall, thin persons (ectomorphs) do best in endurance sports. Obese persons (endomorphs) are less likely to be professional or world-class athletes. Your body type is basically an inherited characteristic.

You can modify your basic body type. An endomorphic person can gain strength, shed weight, and become like a natural mesomorph. Tremendous psychological dedication to athletic activity can increase your skill level no matter what your basic body type.

It is important to be realistic about body build and your athletic interest. You would not expect Carlton Fisk, 6-foot-3-inch catcher, at second base, or Jerry Remy, 165-pound second baseman, behind the plate. Sensitive

guidance of children into appropriate sports helps them find happiness in athletic activities.

Can Doctors Heal You?

Nature is the great healer. Doctors simply assist nature. If I see a patient with a broken leg, I straighten it and hold it straight, but nature heals the fracture. I follow the basic medical axiom: "First, do no harm." I do not want to interfere with normal healing processes; I want to prevent swelling and to provide the necessary rest for the injured part so that a normal rate of healing can proceed.

Thomas B. Quigley, former Harvard football team physician and one of my mentors, used to say, "The person who discovers a way to increase the normal speed of healing of the body will win a Nobel Prize."

Many treatments, compounds, and medications claim to speed the rate of healing. I have not read a single scientific article that demonstrates that healing time can be increased artificially. You cannot beat nature. All doctors can do is to be very careful that they do not slow down nature.

Do Children and Adults Heal at the Same Rate?

A child's body is always in a state of growth. It is like a young tree. Because children's bodies are building and rebuilding all the time, they heal much faster than adults. For example, a child's skin replaces itself every 15 days. But it renews itself in only three days when damaged. That is one-third faster than adult skin renews. For certain fractures the rate of healing for children is twice that of adults. A fracture of the shaft of the thighbone heals in eight to 10 weeks in children and in about 18 weeks in adults.

Should a Sports Injury Be Treated Immediately By a Doctor?

The moment you feel some body part pull, sprain, strain, or break, start RICE, a four-part first-aid program for sports injuries. Do not wait for a doctor's okay.

R is for rest. If you continue exercise and other activities, you may extend the injury. I stands for ice, which is strong medication. Ice shrinks the torn blood vessels. The more blood that collects in a wound, the longer it takes to heal. C is for compression, which limits swelling. If uncontrolled, swelling retards healing. E is for elevation. Elevating the injured part above the level of the heart uses gravity to help drain excess fluid. Because swelling usually starts within seconds, start RICE as soon as possible.

Sports Myths and Realities

Rushing to a doctor's office does not mean that you will be treated immediately. If you have been to a doctor's office recently, you know what I mean. Emergency rooms, where about one-third of sports injuries are treated, are even more crowded. Patients with sports injuries tell me that they have waited four hours to be examined by a doctor. Waiting can aggravate the problem.

Is Aspirin a Weak Medication?

Do not underestimate aspirin because it is cheap and can be purchased without a prescription. Aspirin is an effective pain-killer because it depresses the pain centers in the brain. It is an effective anti-inflammatory agent. Joints love aspirin. In addition to pain, most doctors prescribe it for tendinitis, neuritis, and arthritis. Every parent knows that aspirin reduces fever quickly. Americans consume 27 million pounds of aspirin a year.

Is Heat the Best Immediate Treatment for Injury?

Never put heat on a new injury because heat opens up the broken blood vessels. The result is that more blood collects in the injury, resulting in more swelling. The more swelling, the longer it takes the injury to heal.

The best initial treatment is to ice the injury for 48 hours. Start heat treatments after the initial two-day period. You want to stimulate blood flow because it collects the nutrients, oxygen, and inflammatory cells that heal the injury. Heat at that stage is just the trick.

Can the Body Perform at High Levels Forever?

Athletic performance is a complex equation, of which age is a part. For a while, age is on your side because you are gaining experience. But eventually it turns against you. In my experience there are few major league baseball players who retire voluntarily.

Do All Broken Bones Heal?

There are three bones in the body that are notorious non-healers—the ulna in the forearm, the carpal navicular in the wrist, and the tibia, one of the two lower leg bones. They all have a poor blood supply. About one-third of the time the fracture ends do not unite.

Traditionally, the only answer was surgery. More recently, electrical stimulation has been used successfully. Electric currents passed across the fracture stimulate bone production. It works in 50 percent of the cases.

Does Surgery Restore You 100 Percent?

No. I find that the body never forgets. In most cases the purpose of surgery is to take a joint that is operating at 60 percent and try to get it to a 95 percent functional level. Such a gain makes most surgical operations well worth some risk. But a surgeon cannot restore you totally. Only the creator can provide a

perfect human body. A surgeon's job, in my opinion, is to try to restore body function as close to normal as possible.

Can You Play into Shape after an Injury?

"Playing into shape" is one of the most dangerous myths circulating in sports circles. I do not know where this notion got started, but it is dead wrong.

I use the 95 percent rule. That means the injury must be 95 percent healed before you return to sports. I test the 95 percent rule by comparing body parts. For example, if you have a broken wrist, I compare it with the good one.

The best way to recover from an injury is to rehabilitate—to stretch and strengthen the injured part. With every injury there is some loss in strength and flexibility. Try practices or easy exercise. Playing back into shape is the best way I know to extend an injury.

However, the final stage of any rehabilitation program is to restart your sport. This is not what most people think of when you mention this phase.

COMMON INJURIES

The purpose of this section is to give you guidelines and insight into injuries and how to prevent some of them from happening. I don't advocate self-care. I think that a physician can help your body to heal itself.

Have you ever seen a football player on the sidelines with his foot propped up on a bench, with a bag of ice lashed to this ankle, wearing an Ace bandage? That player is practicing athletic injury first-aid. It is called RICE and is the immediate treatment for almost all athletic injuries, whether you've pulled a muscle, sprained a ligament, or broken a bone. The letters in the acronym RICE stand for:

Rest. Rest is necessary because continued exercise or other activity could extend the injury. Stop using the injured part the minute it is hurt. Use a sling or crutches.

Ice. Ice decreases the bleeding from injured blood vessels because it causes them to contract. The more blood that collects in a wound, the longer it takes to heal.

Compression. Compression limits swelling which, if uncontrolled, could retard healing. Following trauma, blood and fluid from the surrounding tissues leak into the damaged area and distend the tissue. Swelling is sometimes useful since it brings antibodies to kill germs, but if the skin is not broken, antibodies are unnecessary and swelling only slows healing.

Elevation. Elevation of the injured part to above the level of the heart uses the force of gravity to help drain excess fluid.

Because swelling usually starts within sec-

onds of an injury, start RICE as soon as possible. Don't wait for a doctor's orders. First place a towel over the injured area. Then apply an ice pack, ice chips, or cubes over the towel. Do not apply the ice directly to the skin as it can cause the skin to hurt.

For compression, wrap an elastic bandage firmly over the ice, around the injured part. Be careful not to wrap the area so tightly that you shut off the blood supply. The signs of a shutoff blood supply are numbness, cramping, and pain. If any of these occur, unwrap the area immediately. Otherwise, leave the ice pack and bandage in place for 30 minutes. Next, to allow the skin to rewarm and the blood to recirculate, unwrap the area for 15 minutes. Then rewrap it. Repeat this procedure for three hours. If the area continues to swell or the pain increases, check immediately with a physician if you have not already done so.

If the injury is severe, you can follow the RICE program for up to 24 hours. If pain and swelling persist 48 hours after the injury, apply heat. Further treatment depends on the type of tissue that was injured.

When Should You See a Doctor?

In my opinion, you know your body best. If your intuition tells you that you are injured, see a doctor. I tell my patients that they have only one body. Don't gamble with it. Here are other guidelines.

1. Pain. Any injury that causes severe pain. Pain is nature saying that something is wrong. When it talks loudly, listen.

2. All joint injuries. All injuries to a joint or its ligaments should be examined by a physician. If they are not treated quickly, these injuries have a potential for permanence. A joint injury should be immobilized until it is seen by a physician.

3. Loss of function. If you cannot move a limb, an ankle or finger, for instance, then you have a loss of function.

4. Pain in joint or bone that persists for more than two weeks. These tissues are the ones in which the most serious injuries occur.

5. Any injury that doesn't heal in three weeks. All injuries that don't heal should be checked for a structural abnormality.

6. Any infection in or under the skin manifested by pus, red streaks, swollen lymph nodes, or fever. Infections, if uncontrolled, may lead to serious complications. Antibiotics generally bring relief quickly.

How Long Will It Take You to Recover?

The rule in orthopedics is three days, three weeks, or three months. That was almost doctrine in my medical training. But I have learned through hard experience that life and medicine are not so simple. For example:

A fractured finger. Three weeks to heal on the average for children. Three to five weeks for adults.

A broken collarbone. Four weeks in children. Six to ten weeks in adults.

A broken toe. Three weeks on the average.

A simple sprained ankle. Five days.

A simple sprained ankle. Five days.

A mild thigh contusion. Five days.

A hamstring pull. Three to five days.

A simple shoulder separation. Seven days.

You will heal faster if you are in good condition. That seems obvious. But there is a technical reason. People in good shape have a better blood supply throughout their bodies. A marathon runner has to supply more blood to his muscles than a non-athlete, when running.

The degree of the injury influences the healing time. For instance, there are three grades of ankle sprains. A grade I sprain, with mild swelling and tenderness, takes you out of competition for four to five days. A grade II sprain, with severe swelling and tenderness, requires seven to 10 days of inactivity. With a grade III sprain, the swelling is so bad you can't move your ankle up and down. This injury will cost you at least three weeks of inactivity.

One way to extend your healing time is to start back to sports too early. Injured tissue needs time to heal. Tennis elbow sufferers are a good case in point. A tear in the muscle origin which connects the forearm muscle to the outer elbow knob is the cause of tennis elbow in about 90 percent of tennis players. The tear heals with rest. Because the blood supply to this particular muscle origin is minuscule, the healing time can be two to three months. Normally, after a week of rest, many tennis players return to the courts, only to extend the injury. Even daily activities—like lifting bundles or opening a car door—can cause injury. Each time this happens, you restart the biologic clock.

When Can You Resume Your Sports?

There is never a pat answer. As I discussed earlier, different parts of the body heal at different rates. Also some people heal faster than others.

Here are my guidelines:

1. If the injured part hurts at rest, you should not exercise it.
2. As soon as the injured part does not hurt at rest, you may start exercising it minimally. That means slowly. If the pain starts up, stop exercising. Your body is telling you that something is wrong. Listen to your body signals.
3. As soon as you can exercise without pain, increase the intensity and the duration of your exercise program. Expect a little aching. But remember that the moment that sharp pain starts, stop.

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R-1

JUNIOR MEMBER

John Doe, Jr.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

BY RHONDA WILSON

While most court clubs in the country have the "adults only" sign out, there are a few which realize that today's child is tomorrow's regular player.

Like any other serious racquetball player, 11-year-old Nolan Glantz enjoys winning, and his tournament record reflects that competitive spirit. Last March, Nolan took first place in the AARA northeast regional championships in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Turning pro someday is a possibility but not his first priority. Instead, Nolan hopes to win the national AARA singles division for 12-and-under. In racquetball these days, life begins young.

Nolan has a chance to win or place high in a national competition. But Nolan is one of the lucky ones. Other gifted young athletes won't get the opportunity because racquetball clubs around the country have been reluctant to initiate effective juniors programs. In fact, many clubs do not accept junior memberships.

Only recently have some clubs begun to recognize the potential of the junior racquetball player and are instituting special programs and clinics with the hope of inspiring a future Marty Hogan or Heather McKay.

In the state of Washington, for instance, Pepsi Cola pioneered a test which was the first of its kind. The company sponsored the

1981 Pepsi Junior Racquetball Challenge last November at the Family Fitness Center in Seattle. More than 100 juniors participated in the tournament. The Pepsi Cola people have also donated \$9,000 to a junior program at the 13 Family Fitness Centers in the Washington area with more than 1,500 juniors already enrolled.

"If we as a racquetball entity do not recruit junior racquetball players, racquetball will be history in five years," says Bob Bruce, AARA commissioner of juniors and vice president of sports fitness for the Family Fitness Centers. "No one has done anything significant in junior racquetball in the nation."

Bruce, however, plans to change this situation in Washington. "I have three goals in this state," he says. "Number one, I want to see racquetball as an interscholastic sport in Washington by 1985. Two, I want it to be a collegiate sport in schools by 1987 and three, I want to build a strong racquetball association where players can control their destiny."

According to Ed Martin, AARA chairman of the youth development, most clubs are not interested in establishing junior programs. "Our junior program is getting bigger and

bigger and growing every day," says Martin, owner of the Sacramento (Calif.) Court Club. "There are 12 clubs in Sacramento but there's not one which wants to have junior clubs, except us."

Martin's 30-member junior team has access to its own bank account. The money, earned from fund-raisers, is allocated for travel expenses to tournaments and for club uniforms. The team votes on which tournaments they want to attend.

"It's a total learning experience, above and beyond racquetball," says Martin. "We really use the team concept. We approach it on a team level instead of making it an individual sports program."

Martin's sister club in nearby Redding also stresses the team concept. "We make it a point to tell them 'they are on a team,'" says Debbie Carmona, manager of the Sun Oaks Racquetball Club. "Everybody wants to be on a team."

Sun Oaks won the national junior AARA team title last year after the team earned \$6,000 through fund-raisers. Martin took 23 kids back to the AARA junior nationals in Wichita, Kans. in April. They ranged in age from five to 18 years old.

Carmona often plans something unusual for the juniors' meeting each month. Often she stages a 7 a.m. kidnap. Still in their pajamas, she takes the kids out to breakfast

to McDonald's and conducts their monthly racquetball meeting.

"We make it fun for them," says Carmona. "We don't say, 'You have to do this.' We get them to the point where they want to work hard on their own."

Sharing this same philosophy is the All Sports Racquetball and Fitness Club in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. A point system was devised to encourage the juniors to work hard at their racquetball game and have fun at the same time. "We're more concerned with the kids as good people rather than just as good racquetball players," says Jim Winterton, racquetball director.

Winterton divides his juniors into three categories. The "puppies" are in the four to nine age group, the "doggies" are between the ages of seven and early teens and his teenagers are called the "wolves." Each group accumulates points by attending their school gym class, Saturday racquetball practice, finishing household chores and jogging at school once a week. The player with the most points at the end of an eight-week session wins free court time and half price off the next session. The eight-week session costs \$35. The "doggies" and "wolves" can earn extra points by doing book reports on racquetball. The "wolves" must critique a racquetball book.

Each summer the juniors are treated to a visit by pro Dave Peck in a one-week racquetball camp. A group of about 60 juniors stay at a junior college across the street from the club. During that week, Peck serves as an inspiration to the kids while teaching them the basic fundamentals of racquetball.

"I get them to enjoy the game and have a good time," says Peck. "I put cans up on the front wall and they have to aim for the can. If they hit the can once, I buy them a small coke. If they hit it twice, I buy them a large coke and if they hit it three times, I buy them lunch." He smiles and adds, "I owe a lot of lunches."

Peck keeps their concentration by getting the kids directly involved. "What you have to do is tell jokes and ask tons of questions," he says. "If I see someone dozing off I'll point to him and ask, 'What's your power drive?' I usually give a real light lecture and hit and go and hit and go."

Peck thinks the ideal age to start teaching a child fluctuates according to his or her development. He also has some words of caution for those parents who rush the development of their child. "There are some people who try to push their kids but it's too mind boggling to the kid," he says. "It burns out the kid by the time he's 15 or 16."

Winterton agrees. He says he avoids putting pressure on the juniors and discourages over-enthusiastic parents. "I let them (the juniors) be the captains of their ship but I try to be the wind and show them in what direction to sail," he says. "When parents become actively involved I discreetly pull them aside and tell them I don't want any pressure on the kids. What I try to do is keep the parent in the background and as low key as possible."

Winterton adds that he gives instruction to all juniors who are interested in racquetball

and not just to those who are champion hopefuls. "No one person is more important than the program," he says.

It is generally agreed among most club managers that the parents can play an active role in their child's racquetball development by giving them encouragement and support and by letting the child learn at his or her own pace. One club that realizes the importance of the parent's role is the Oakwood Racquetball Club in Valencia, Calif. The club regularly

COMPACT FRUSTRATION

Editor's note: This poem was written by 33-year old Louis Saiella of the Pelham (N.Y.) Racquetball and Health Club after he lost to 11-year-old Nolan Glantz in a tournament.

As I stand on the tournament court
My opponent yet to come
In walks this red-headed little imp.
"Where's your father, son?"

"It's me you're gonna play today,"
squeaked back the meek reply.
I looked and thought with a giant smile,
"This is almost as good as a bye."

Being so kind as I always am
and wishing to avoid a rout,
I lobbed my first serve to the little man
... he promptly rolled it out!

I hit that ball with all the strength
in my muscles and my joints,
but this mini-person with rubber band arms
kept racking up the points.

He hit confounded corners
and wacked frustrating Z's,
though I could eat spaghetti off his head,
he was beating me with ease.

If losing to this 11-year-old
wasn't bad enough,
his hundred fans in the gallery
made it twice as tough.

Embarrassed by this carrot-top
I quickly ran and hid,
and the only thing I could say was,
"Who was that ROTTEN KID?"

holds father and son tournaments. Fathers play fathers and their sons play against the respective sons.

"The difference in teaching juniors is that you can't deal on a concentration point level," says Oakwood general manager Steve Ladanyi. "You have to use as much application as possible. With adults you can use theories and tell them what makes a good shot. With the juniors you have to explain and show them repeatedly what to do. They learn through trial and error."

Ladanyi's juniors program includes teaching coordination, how to hit the ball, court safety, maintaining eye contact and sportsmanship.

The trial and error concept of teaching is taken one step further at the YMCA junior coed racquetball program in Wichita, Kans. The basic techniques of racquetball are taught to children as young as three years old with a unique device. "I devised a peewee program for three to five year olds," says Dwayne Grimes, racquetball director for the Wichita YMCA. "I take a racquetball and hang it at the end of a fishing pole like a carrot hanging in front of the donkey. After they learn to hit the ball when it's stationary, then they can start hitting the ball against the wall."

For the eight-and-under junior players, Grimes plays a game called "No Bounce." "What they do is play racquetball but we change the rules a little," he says. "They have to serve a legal serve but the ball can bounce more than once. But they only get one swing to return the ball." The game was allowed for the first time on a national level last year at the AARA national juniors competition in Wichita.

In many cases, the clubs are mixing positive feedback with their unique training techniques. At Court Sports II in Eugene, Ore., a group of 50 juniors called the "Racquet Benders" participate in an eight-week program which features special treats. A target is placed on one of the racquetball walls and each youngster must try to hit the target. When successful, they are rewarded with a treat such as a soda. The exercise helps develop concentration and eye contact. But each child is given enough chances so eventually everyone succeeds in gaining a treat.

Tupperware and visor sales are held at Court Sports II to raise money for travel expenses to regional and state tournaments. The juniors also shuttle back and forth to challenge juniors from clubs in Portland and Salem.

The club program director has also discovered that a barter system can work effectively. "For every hour of instruction, I expect an hour in return in which the student helps out with the tournaments," says Connie Peterson.

Most racquetball clubs around the country which have spent the energy and patience to establish special juniors programs say they are doing so as an investment into the future of racquetball.

Of all the clubs called by *Racquetball Illustrated*, only a small percentage said they did not allow children in to play. Most clubs say they have set aside some time for juniors—usually all hours except prime time—but very few have any kind of clinic or instruction program set up.

"Generally, we have found that juniors are unruly and we prefer to give the club to the adults who pay the bills," says Tom Lyneis of Racquet World in Denver.

But the ones which do have active kids' programs are also discovering that it gets the parents more interested. "Sometimes parents stop coming to a club when they know they can't bring their kids along," says Martin. "Club owners have to realize that they are growing future racquetball players and are providing themselves a market for future members."

SOAKING UP SUCCESS AT TWELVE

Matt Rudich has been seen on cereal boxes and television commercials but most of his visibility now comes from winning racquetball tournaments.

BY MARK CAMPBELL





"He's a tough player," said one opponent. "His small size is deceiving."

It's hard for 12-year-old Matt Rudich of Las Vegas to find a racquetball partner these days. Many older "A" division players shy away from playing the 4-foot-7 youngster. It's probably because he beats them too often.

Two years after he picked up his first racquet, Rudich won the AARA's national 11-year-old age group title. Several months later he lost a one-point tiebreaker to an opponent three times his age to place second in the U.S.R.A. Nevada State Championships. Rudich also holds two national doubles titles.

Since his move into the 12-year-old division, the little lefthander has won the U.S.R.A. Western Regionals and placed third in the U.S.R.A. Nationals in Chicago last August.

If you haven't seen Rudich devastate his opponents on the court, you might recognize his tiny profile from several appearances on television.

Born in Skokie, Ill., Rudich seemed destined for show business when he began doing commercials shortly after he visited his older sisters at a modeling audition. Much to his surprise, and his sisters' for that matter, "they hired him on the spot," says Marilyn Rudich, Matt's mother.

At the age of five, his photograph was placed on the Quaker Oats cereal box, where it still remains seven years later. Other bits included television spots for Oldsmobile, Kentucky Fried Chicken and Jello, which

kept him busy until his first encounter with racquetball at age nine.

With the move to Las Vegas, Matt's interest in the game increased. "Las Vegas isn't really a place to be in commercials," says Matt's mother. "Matt is concentrating more on his racquetball."

And concentrating he is. Rudich works out at the Las Vegas Sporting House about six hours a day. After-school time is spent on the court. In fact, he even does some of his homework in the club lounge. "I could give the club as my home address," says Matt.

Until last year, the exclusive Las Vegas club had denied membership to children. Rudich was granted one, however, when he captured the AARA national title. He is the youngest member in the club's history.

Now, a year later, Rudich has advanced from a men's "B" division to an "open level" division.

The next step would seemingly be a move into the professional ranks but he knows that takes a few more years of hard amateur training. "I want to get up into the pro range by the time I'm 15," he says.

The rest of the Rudich family, 18-year-old twins Stacy and Sari, father Sidney and mother Marilyn, find themselves at the Las Vegas Sporting House almost as often as Matt. Sidney, a local real estate salesman, is a solid "C" player, but admits he doesn't play

his son too often. "It's because everytime I play him he beats me," says Sidney.

"At least he tries," laughs Matt at the mention of his father's game.

Marilyn Rudich admits to "spending most of my hours at the club." So many in fact, that they even offered her a job. "I guess they felt sorry for me," she says. "I am usually there almost 24 hours a day."

Although she just started playing the game, Mrs. Rudich has been interested in the sport because of her son's career. "I'm a professional watcher," she says.

Stacy and Sari are also players but they don't spend as much time on the court as they'd like. They are backup vocalists for country singer Melvin Dummar, the former gas station owner who jumped out of obscurity after he claimed he picked up a haggard hitchhiker who later turned out to be billionaire Howard Hughes.

Rudich, one of the few 12-year-old open level players in the country, says that the family presence results in support, not pressure.

"My parents don't make me play racquetball and do commercials," he says. "If I wanted to quit I could. But I don't want to."

"He's down here every day because he wants to be," says local club pro Bil Maninna. "His parents don't pressure him. They don't have to. He's got everything it takes to be a



The Rudich family portrait: Mother Marilyn, father Sidney and older twin sisters Sari and Stacy. The sisters are backup singers to country singer Melvin Dummar.



champion and he loves the sport."

Although the seventh-grade student sometimes misses school to attend tournaments, he still boasts of As and Bs in his classes. "My teachers understand that I have to travel a lot, so they give me homework in advance," he says.

Not all of them understand, however. The story goes that one teacher refused to let Rudich participate in a racquetball tournament after suffering a bruised ego when he challenged and lost to Matt.

"Matt can change his game and pace, whereas the stronger player can't," explains Maninna. "It's amazing how, at his age, he is able to discover his opponent's weakness and adjust to it. Adjusting to other people's games is the key."

Former women's national champion Shannon Wright agrees.

"Matt has committed himself to total self-improvement," says Wright. "He's very smart and has very good concentration. His biggest asset is that he doesn't have any weaknesses. His backhand is good, his forehand is excellent. He makes it very difficult for people to return the ball."

Rudich admits that "the key is your technique. It's more of a question of where you hit the ball, not how hard you hit it."

Besides spending hours and hours with Rudich "running his little tush all over the court," Wright has taken a personal interest in the youngster. "We don't just work on racquetball," she says. "If I see there's room for improvement in any aspect of his life, I work on it with him. He's very receptive and he picks things up very fast. We are adding new dimensions to his game every day. Both on and off the court."

Rudich has recently included gymnastics and weightlifting into his daily workouts. "I use gymnastics to stay flexible," he says. "You'd be surprised how much twisting and diving you have to do during a game."

Weightlifting is also an integral part of Rudich's program, to correct what may be his only weakness—his size. "His only problem is that he's kind of small," says Maninna. "However, he can't really help that."

At 80 pounds, Rudich admits that his weightlifting program is done in an effort to increase his frame, but he also "uses it to build up endurance."

Friends and local players on the other hand, seem to be oblivious to Rudich's small build. "He's really tough," admits an opponent, a 6-foot-1 Las Vegas lawyer. "The size is very deceiving."

"He's good under pressure," says another opponent. "If he ever loses, it's not because he beat himself."

While enjoying a reputation as one of Nevada's top racquetball players, Rudich is also respected for his sportsmanship. "He realizes that it's not important to win at all costs," says Maninna. "Whether he wins or loses, he realizes when the game's over, it's over."

Rudich's future plans include obtaining a pilot's license—he loves to sit by the airport and watch the planes come and go, joining the professional racquetball circuit and be-



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Prior to his racquetball career, Matt was best known as the face on the back of Instant Quaker Oatmeal.

coming a lawyer.

Does he have any advice for fellow 12-year-olds?

"If I were a beginner I would start out with a good racquet," says Rudich. "Pick up a racquet you're comfortable with and then take lessons with the club pro. It's a good idea to start with lessons so you don't develop bad habits." Matt seems to know his stuff. He even teaches a weekly clinic to club members.

"Common problems such as holding the grip incorrectly, hitting in an open stance and not snapping your wrists can be avoided with proper training," he says.

"After a while you start to develop your own strategy. You learn that while strength is definitely a factor in the game, it's more important where you put the ball." Rudich attributes various wins over pro football players and other athletes several times his size, to this strategy.

Some people may think that Matt is growing up too fast. But he says that racquetball is helping him grow. He feels no peer pressure. "It's much better than being on a team," says Matt. "I enjoy racquetball. When you win, you do it yourself."

R

HOW TO GET CHILDREN INTERESTED IN RACQUETBALL

BY DR. JACK HUTSLAR

In sports such as baseball, basketball, football, soccer and racquetball, some adult coaches and instructors teach kids the same way they would teach adults. Is this right? Or is a different approach necessary?

Dr. Terry Orlick of Canada and Dr. Vern Seefeldt of Michigan each reported high dropout rates by child players once they got into their teen years. These dropouts said that the games were no longer fun, and fun was the main reason that they were interested in playing sports.

A similar dropout problem was reported by Dr. John Pooley in the *Coaching Review*. He interviewed 50 of 103 dropouts from a Halifax, Nova Scotia soccer program and found out there were two things that would have kept these 10 to 15-year-old boys in the program—more opportunity to play in the games and more balanced competition.

PARTICIPATION

When should youngsters start playing racquetball? If you are referring to formal tournaments, two out of three games and all that, it is hard to say with certainty. Racquetball, as sports go, is rather easy for most players to learn. The concepts of the game are simple. Scoring is easy. Improvement can be attained rapidly. At the same time, it does take a lot of intensive work, as in any other sport, to become a good player. Spending 20 to 30 hours per week in practice would not be unusual. However, in the case of youngsters, it should be their choice. Adults who push youngsters into intensive sport experiences run the risk of turning them away from that sport sooner or later.

Youngsters can be introduced to racquetball as soon as they are able to hold onto a ball. Mothers and fathers can bring their two and three-year-olds into the courts with real and plastic miniature racquets just to "hit the ball around." There should be no intention at

this time to "teach" skills. This is exposure and fun time not a structured practice with repetitive drills. Many racquet centers have courts, pools, exercise space and other facilities. Set aside time to expose the youngsters to all of these movement activities and the implements of the games. Do not wait until they are in school or at some later time.

MOVEMENT EXPLORATION

In racquetball, early exposure may take the form of parent-child "play days" or "tot slots" where the court club staff conducts free or inexpensive introductory programs for youngsters or youngsters and their parents. The emphasis in these sessions should be to give the youngsters lots of racquetball toys to handle. You want the youngsters to have the opportunity to handle balls and racquets and to take a lot of swings at all types of round objects. Balls may be of all types (e.g., balloons, yarn, soft, big, yellow or blue), suspended, rolled, tethered, and tossed. Adults should refrain from making these "drill sessions" on forehands and backhands.

For older pre-school and elementary school youngsters, instruction may take the form of what elementary school physical education teachers call "movement exploration." New skills are introduced through a series of open-ended questions. These questions or statements enable youngsters to respond and become familiar with the game (i.e., racquet, ball, walls, bounces, angles, moving, and making contact) while progressing at their own pace in an unthreatening environment.

Exposure to a variety of situations is important. Here are some ways these questions can be phrased to elicit responses for beginners. Note that there are no right and wrong answers in this approach.

1. Can you bounce the ball on the floor with your hand? Your racquet? In the air? Off the wall?
2. Can you hit the ball? Two times in a row?
3. Can you hit the ball hard?
4. Can you hit the ball easy?

5. Can you hit the ball low off the wall? High?

6. Can you hit the ball from the other side of your body?

7. Can you hit the ball before it bounces? One bounce? On the second bounce?

8. Can you hit the ball to me?

You can develop a series of questions to introduce different skills. Some may be unrelated to racquetball. Others can be more complex and combine moves with strokes. Youngsters up to age 12 can be introduced to the game using this approach.

Pre-schoolers, primary students and some adult players have difficulty tracking the ball. Some seldom make contact with the ball once it hits more than one wall. It is a conceptual problem that does not indicate lack of intelligence or fitness. These people may require many opportunities and exposures to the game just to come up to the level other people have reached after only one lesson.

Those who do not make contact easily need to be advised of their "condition" so they do not set goals for themselves that will lead only to continual frustration and abandonment of the game. If they like the game, despite this little inconvenience, it should be possible to find partners for them who can play at their level. This is one of the key things that makes sports fun for everyone. When you can play with someone at about your level, it is great fun. With realistic counseling, players should be able to handle this conceptual problem without disturbing their self-concept.

LOW ORGANIZED GAMES

For young players who have difficulty tracking a fast-moving ball, regular games may be inappropriate and frustrating. Low organized games can help youngsters make the step up to the real game. Remember the hide-and-seek and kick-the-can games that were played among neighborhood acquaintances? What types of games can you recall that could be modified for racquetball yet still use racquetball skills? Here are a few examples of low organized games.

Editor's note: The author is executive director of the North American Youth Sport Institute.



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HOW TO GET CHILDREN INTERESTED IN RACQUETBALL

1. Half court dodgeball using soft balls.
2. Self tests or challenges: How many times can you hit the front wall without stopping? How many hits can you make in 60 seconds? How many hits can you and your partner alternately hit in 60 seconds? Self tests are ways for youngsters to obtain feedback about themselves. In most cases there is no need to post these results or even keep a record.

3. Two-on-two or three-on-three kickball or two bounce paddleball using a racquet and soft ball.

4. Relays of any type are popular with almost all school-age youngsters. There is no need to confine relays to those 20 foot by 20 foot areas when other facilities are available. Use your imagination. Kids love relays provided the winners are not held too high nor are those who fail to win required to pay too heavy a price.

LEAD UP GAMES

Another more complex way to introduce game skills to youngsters is through lead-up games. As kids, we all remember playing strike-on-the-bounce and horse or 21. These games were great fun. Variations on the racquetball theme include these options.

1. Front-wall-only games.
2. Serve-only games.
3. Backhand-only games.
4. Balloon, soft ball games with coat hanger racquets (socks or hose over a bent hanger) or regular racquets. For the younger players, the slower ball helps them predict where the ball will come down.
5. Wall games played on the short length of the court, with or without racquets.
6. Golfquetball with nine holes marked on the front wall—count the number of strokes needed to play nine or 18 holes, forehand or backhand.

The pace of learning, moving from exploration to low organized games to lead-up games to the regulation game can vary considerably from one youngster to another. Youngsters from a "sports family" may be ready for the regular game by age seven or eight. Others will happily play these modified games in their teen years.

By the age of 12 or so, boys and girls are able to develop a general understanding of complex game concepts through group instruction. However, it is likely that their eagerness to play will exceed their ability to play by a wide margin. In fact, playing poorly can be good motivation to return to more simple games and the fundamentals. Nevertheless, kids, as with adults, would much rather play and keep score than practice. This seems to be a universal truth regardless of the sport. All of this means that for those who are ready to play, instructional sessions should include a variety of activities including drills and games.

COMPETITION

Teenagers and the more sports-oriented pre-teens will want to play in organized or formal leagues. In recent years many people have had some pretty negative things to say about competition for youngsters. But in many cases, the critics have spoken after seeing poorly run programs. From a research point of view, very little is known about competition. It is a complex issue not easily studied. It is known that when you place one person against another, there is improvement through the competitive process. This is regarded as positive.

Those who study and research sport in the field of sociology have come to agree that competition is neither good nor bad. Competition itself is neutral but some people bring undesirable actions to the competitive situation to give themselves an edge. Without these negative elements, competition is like salt and pepper. It adds a little spice to the menu when used in proper proportions.

"Let children play at their level, not yours."

Developing new friends and testing your personal limits at tournaments are regarded as good. Obviously, hitting your opponent, unleashing verbal assaults, and using illegal substances are not desirable. Competition in the sport setting is a healthy activity when conducted properly. When it interferes with family, friends, school or work, then it becomes a social problem that warrants attention.

When a mother or father does not bring the youngster into the program, junior high schools, high schools, church programs, recreation centers, community colleges and other youth agencies may offer many potential players. Special promotional packages, much like those bowling has used for years, can be developed to attract youngsters during the non-adult hours. These youngsters will enjoy intramural and varsity-type leagues.

From these leagues, it should be possible to identify the better players. Like the bowling alley rats and tennis bums, the "racquet rogues" will be there to play at every available moment. Most of these kids will never make a cent as a professional player, regardless of the sport in question, so it is important to encourage these young stars to do their homework and do well in school.

Getting youngsters onto the courts and into leagues regularly provides the basis for par-

ticipation in years ahead. This would be a good place to take special notice of girls in sports. Girls have been neglected generally in sports. While females represent about one-half of the population, they comprise only about 20 percent of the sport population according to one newspaper report.

It would be beneficial to get girls and their mothers involved in sports, particularly when the kids are young. It will make it easier for them to progress in sports at later years. Dr. John D. Lawther of Penn State University reported that when experienced female athletes were compared to new players of the same age, the instructors were unable to bring the new players up to the same level of play as the experienced players, despite the hours needed of added instruction. In short, girls who have never played sports will find it difficult to compete with those who have played sports.

There are two other important points to consider with girls in sports. First, it is likely that boys learn sports from their fathers and girls learn from their mothers. Getting mothers involved should help get daughters involved in racquetball. Second, team and individual leagues should be popular with the 10 to 15-year-old age group. These youngsters like to identify with a team or group. However, losing has been found to be a problem for girls. Boys have been thoroughly indoctrinated that they should never quit. Girls have not received this same brainwashing. As a result, girls tend to drop out more than boys do when perpetual losing occurs. This means that it would be beneficial for girls to shuffle teams frequently or play shorter but more frequent tournaments where long losing streaks are less apparent.

SUMMARY

To sum up, let the youngsters play as much of the time as possible. Introduce them to the implements and skills early, but let them play at their level, not yours. Go through a progression of instruction involving exploration, low organized and lead-up games, and then leagues for the masses. Talk with and listen to the youngsters. They will tell you when they are ready for more intense programs. Let those with the greatest potential emerge and provide them with instruction and opportunity to meet other good players in special leagues. This will help them play at their best. Treat the boys and girls equally, except where the sport experience is new for the older players. Treat each person as though you expect him or her to become great. Be positive, and give each as much positive feedback as possible. You will be surprised at the results.

Among sports, racquetball is high on the fun list. Perhaps a chief concern is to avoid "turning children off" by making the experience too intense too early.

SHORT SHOTS

EKTELON/PONY

Pony, a New York based manufacturer of athletic footwear, has replaced Perrier as co-sponsor along with Ektelon of the annual 16-city championship racquetball tournament.

The regional tournaments begin in early February and will continue through March with the national finals to be held May 5-9 at the Sports Gallery in Anaheim, Calif.

Last year's tournament was taped for showing on ESPN.

Local competition will feature 14 different divisions, including four junior events. Division winners in the men's and women's open and the senior events will be flown to the finals.

National finalists will battle it out for Club Med vacations.

RACQUETBALL COMMERCIAL

Michelob Light has added racquetball to its lineup of television commercials, which will run in 10 and 30-second spots nationally.

Prior to racquetball, Michelob Light commercials had athletes playing football, softball, skiing, hockey, soccer, powerboat racing and tennis.

The commercial was created by D'Arcy-MacManus and Masius advertising agency in St. Louis, was shot at Racquetball World in Canoga Park, Calif., and featured Julian Byrd and Wayne Radford as the players. "Both are actors but both are good players," said a spokesperson for Michelob Light. "It was important to get real players for these commercials."



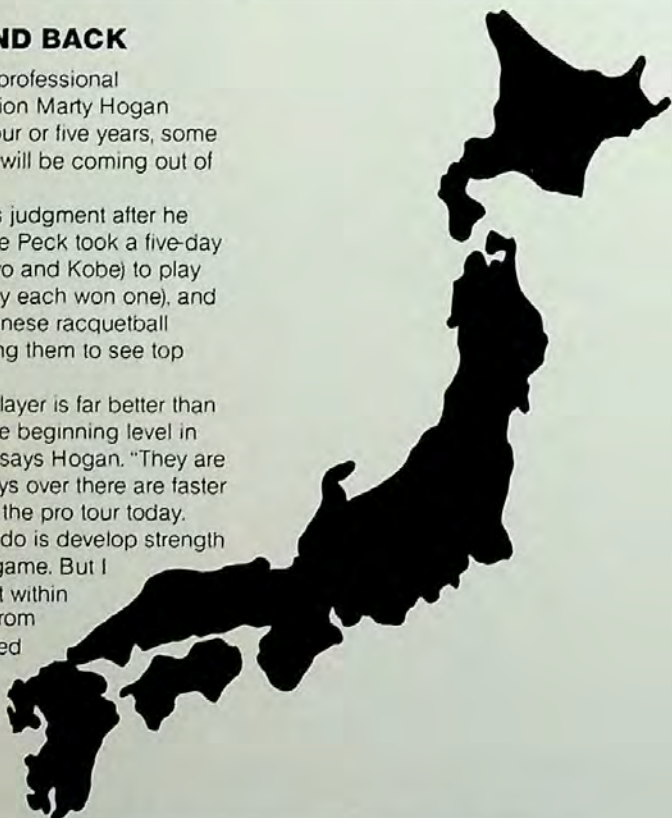
TO JAPAN AND BACK

Four-time national professional racquetball champion Marty Hogan thinks that within four or five years, some of the best players will be coming out of Japan.

Hogan made this judgment after he and fellow pro Dave Peck took a five-day tour of Japan (Tokyo and Kobe) to play two exhibitions (they each won one), and to "psych up" Japanese racquetball dignitaries by getting them to see top players perform.

"The Japanese player is far better than athletes at the same beginning level in the United States," says Hogan. "They are so quick. Some guys over there are faster than any player on the pro tour today."

"All they need to do is develop strength to play the power game. But I have no doubt that within five years players from Japan will be ranked high and a threat to the world title."



SECOND TIME AROUND

Marty Hogan says he will personally put up half of a \$10,000 winner-take-all purse to challenge anybody who has already beaten him in tournament play.

Hogan says some of the players who have beaten him recently on the Catalina

pro tour think they have found his number, and can do it again. He thinks otherwise.

"Some of these guys are bragging too much," says Hogan. "They think that if they can beat me once, they can do it again. I've got my money that says they can't."

HALL OF FAME

Racquetball pro Marty Hogan will be inducted into the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in January, 1983.

Hogan had been nominated to receive the honor in 1982 but because he is committed to play in the Catalina Pro-Am in Hawaii the same night he will be unable to attend the award ceremonies in Los Angeles.

"One has to physically attend the banquet and accept the award to become a member of the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame," said Sy Fussman, organizer of the event. "He (Hogan) will be considered next year."

This year's inductees include former pro football coach Sid Gillman, former boxer Maxie Rosenbloom, gymnast Sharon Shapiro and film producer Bud Greenspan.

The Jewish Sports Hall of Fame will eventually be housed in Tel Aviv, Israel. It's most well-known inductee is former Los Angeles Dodger pitcher Sandy Koufax.

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE XMAS

This may be a few weeks late for Christmas but because people are still in the holiday mood, we offer this cute poem by Lloyd Smouse of Portland, Ore.

'Twas the night before Christmas, at my favorite of clubs,
I was late in the locker-room, changing my duds.
When in came ole George, all covered with sweat,
Said he'd just played the damned'est player, he'd ever met.

Now I'd played ole George, and he ain't easy to beat,
And anybody who could do that to George, I was sure gonna meet.

So I put on my gear, and with racquet in hand,
Went to get a look at the player, this much awe could command.

Out in the lobby, to my wondering eyes did appear,
A funny fat man, in the strangest of gear.
He had on a long pointed hat with tassel on top,
Just barely covering his long snow-white mop.

He wore red long-johns with fur cuffs at his hands and feet,
Darn sure the funniest looking player I'll ever meet.
I broke out laughing, I rolled on the floor!
He just turned and he smiled, and pointed to the glass court door.

"Forget it," I said, "You'll drown in your own sweat."
His bright eyes twinkled, and he said, "Wanna bet?"
I told him, "Come-on old man, don't be a fool,"
I said, "I don't want to play you, that'd be cruel."

He threw back his head, and laughed and he jeered,
"I've seen you play, boy, you ain't to be feared."
Now that fired me up, I was fit to be tied,
I yelled "You old fool, I'll hang you out to be dried."

Still grinning and jolly, not in the least bit mean,
He said, "Get on the court, boy, that remains to be seen."
I whirled and I swore, as I headed for the court,
"Let's get it on old man, this game's gonna be short."

He said, as he came in closing the door,
"Take the first serve, kid, you ain't gonna get many more."
I shook my head thinking, as I walked to the line,
He gave me first serve, this fool's fanny's mine!

I took a deep breath, and let go my best serve,
"I'll show this old man, he's sure got a nerve."
I served my best ace, in the corner it dies,
It came flying back by me, I couldn't believe my eyes!

No time to think I gotta kill this ball,
Fat chance of that, one board up, it just rolled off the front wall.
"I guess it's my serve. You might as well leave,
Or stick around boy, I'll show you shots you'll never believe."



I ran and I scrambled, I damn near knocked down the wall,
I sweated till I dripped, but never got close to the ball.
Then it was over, almost before it began.
He turned, and he bowed, to the gallery's big hand.

He looked at me and said, "Come-on, walk me out,
You gave it your best, of this I've no doubt."
Out in the parking lot, I don't believe it, not to this day,
Stood a whole herd of reindeer and brightest red sleigh.

"Keep working on it kid, I'll give you a rematch, of this have no fear,
Same time, same court, same day next year."
He laughed till he cried, as he climbed up on board,
Shouted to those reindeer, then upward he soared.
I could hear him say, before he flew out of sight,
"Merry Christmas kid, I've had a hell of a nite!"

COLLEGE COURTS

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Dubbed the "Ivy League of the West," Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. has discovered racquetball. In part, it is said to be one of the three most popular participant sports on campus, next to distance running and tennis.

"You can never get a court," says student Yvonne Lanza. "We need practice time and we have to take time away from the recreational players."

Last year Stanford took second place in a western-area racquetball league. A team of six men and four women competed in the six-school competition. First place went to Nevada-Reno. Pepsi-Cola is sponsoring the 1982 league.

Four racquetball and four squash courts built in 1971 accommodate the 12,866-student campus.

The men's top players include Miguel Cortes, Dave Galvan and Doug MacKenzie. The top three women players are Lanza, Lisa Sue Gitkin and B.J. Birger.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

When winter approaches in Illinois, students at Northwestern University in Evanston concentrate on their racquetball game more than any other time of the year.

"We're covered by snow for four or five months a year, so individual sports such as racquetball are very sought after here," says Jim Sheffield, director of operations. "We have a lot more requests for reservation time than we have to give."

Just 15 miles from downtown Chicago, the university's three courts are located in Anderson Hall. Spectators are able to watch the racquetball players from a balcony 10 feet above the courts.

The 6,000-student campus, specializing in liberal arts and religious studies, offers four racquetball classes for credit. Singles, doubles and coed tournaments are also regularly held.

The community is welcome to use the facilities if the courts are reserved by a student, faculty or staff person. The courts are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and there is no fee.

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

"Our courts are always full," says Bill Pieratt, associate athletic director of the University of Kentucky in Lexington. "We could use another 24 courts easily."

Two athletic centers on the Kentucky campus house five racquetball and two squash courts. Built nine years ago, The Seaton Center contains four racquetball courts and both squash courts. The Shively Center, about 300 yards away, holds one racquetball court.

The 23,000-student university also holds intramural singles and doubles racquetball tournaments. Last year more than 100 singles and 45 doubles teams competed for top honors.

"Racquetball ranks second to tennis as far as individual sports," says Pieratt. "Of course in the winter months racquetball is the most popular."

The racquetball facilities are not open to the public. There is no fee for student or faculty use.

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In the hand-laying process, Ektelon positions the fibers with absolute precision on the racquet frame: to maintain ideal weight distribution, and increase the 250G's total flexibility, without negating the "snap-back" capability of the graphite. Because the ball is in contact with the strings milli-seconds longer, your control is increased. At the same time, the unique damping capability of the racquet helps eliminate vibrations. You get an improved feel for the ball... and cleaner, more accurate returns.



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Garden Racquetball Club, Monterey, Calif.

GARDEN RACQUETBALL CLUB **Monterey, California**

Appropriately named for the club's rich display of plant life, the Garden Racquetball Club has the crisp ocean air only a mile and a half away to keep the foliage thriving.

It would seem residents of the beach city might seek a more relaxing form of recreation, but this isn't the case in Monterey.

"We've always competed with the golf courses and tennis but racquetball is really growing, especially over the last two years," says Charles Hauser, club manager.

Racquetball has caught on so well in Monterey that the Pacific Coast Championships is played annually there. More than 300 participants come from all parts of California to compete in the annual event held in January. Pro Larry Myers of San Diego was the winner in 1981.

The 10-court club was built three years ago and now has a membership of about 800. The top male players include Bill Rissel, Bob Lande and Scott Rudoni. The top women players are Betsy Hollister, Barb Scott and Mary Hauser.

Couple initiation fees start at \$150 with monthly dues of \$48, while individual membership includes a \$100 initiation fee and \$32 a month. Members can also work out in a fitness center and relax in an outside jacuzzi.

JACKSON HOLE COURT CLUB **Jackson Hole, Wyoming**

Overlooking the vast snow-capped slopes of the Teton Mountains in Wyoming, the Jackson Hole Court Club is only four miles from one of the most popular skiing areas in the country.

More than 800 members have taken advantage of the ideal winter location since the club's opening two years ago. Jackson Hole's main attraction is a 4,130 foot ski slope—the highest vertical drop in the country.

"Racquetball is really popular during the winter months because people can't go mountain climbing or go in the river (the nearby Snake River) like they usually do during the summer," says Don Wadsworth, club director.

The club's annual Racquetball Rendezvous Tournament in September draws racquetball enthusiasts from as far away as Idaho, Utah and Montana. Last year 125 players participated in the four-day event with Danny Green of Wyoming taking first place.

A lifetime initiation fee of \$150 and a \$20 monthly fee entitles members to the use of eight racquetball courts, a restaurant, travel agency, gift shops and bus service to the ski areas. In addition, housing is available adjacent to the club at the Jackson Hole Club Resort. The resort contains more than 45 condominiums.

A full-time racquetball pro, Eddie Kolsky, is also on hand for instruction.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH **White River Junction, Vermont**

In the icy winter months of Vermont, more than 2,000 racquetball enthusiasts flock indoors to the Fountain of Youth courts in White River Junction.

"It's the only indoor facility around," says Margaret Oriel, club director. "The winter and spring are very busy. We really pack them in."

Members participate in various winter and summer leagues throughout the year to gear up for the club's Central Vermont Open Tournament held in March.

In addition to three indoor racquetball courts, the club offers two outdoor tennis courts, an indoor swimming pool and a weight room equipped with Universal and Nautilus equipment.

Top women players in the club include the Vermont State Open doubles tournament champions, Ann Izzo and Oriel. Charlie Hall and Lou Labounty are the top men players.



Which racquetball shoe fits you best? See our annual Shoe Guide next month.

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TOURNAMENTS

CATALINA PRO-AM

BY THOMAS J. MORROW and RICHARD WADE

Some said it was the weather. Others said it was the new ball. And still others thought that it was the fact that he had not recovered from his four-day whirlwind tour of Japan. But whatever the reason, national champion Marty Hogan was not around in the finals of the \$2,000 Catalina Pro-Am at the Burnsville Racquet Club near Minneapolis, Minn. It was the second straight Catalina journey and the third counting the CBC Classic that Hogan has failed to win.

Hogan's lack of dominance these days proves that professional racquetball is more competitive. Dave Peck and Rich Wagner gained the limelight this time with Peck winning the finals, 11-6, 11-10, 9-11, 11-11, 11-8.

Peck collected \$5,500 and Wagner took home a check for \$3,500.

Hogan, who flew into Minneapolis straight from Japan, apparently could not adjust to the jet lag and was upset by Scott Hawkins, 11-8, 11-9, 11-6 in the quarters.

Peck, who was in Japan along with Hogan, managed to overcome his jet lag, although he said it still took its toll on him. "When I was in Japan I tried to keep some kind of schedule but it was impossible. Between the exhibitions, the time change, the food and the customs, Marty and I really got out of synch," said Peck. "By the finals I was really dragging. I was really tired against Wagner. My legs just wouldn't move."

To reach the finals, Peck defeated Minnesota qualifier Paul Bakken, 11-2, 11-1, 11-2, then defeated Doug Cohen, 7-11, 11-9, 11-0, 11-6.

Wagner reached the finals by defeating Don Thomas, 4-11, 11-6, 11-3, 5-11, 11-8, in the semis. In what was one of the most exciting matches of the tourney, Wagner broke an 8-8 tie in the fifth game to win it. Both players received a standing ovation after it was over.

Twin Cities fans were also treated to two exciting quarterfinal matches with Bret Harnett defeating the Los Angeles pro-stop winner Jerry Hilecher and Thomas upsetting Mike Yellen.

Hilecher took the first game, 11-2, but Harnett came back to win the next three. Harnett led Hilecher 10-4 in the fourth game before Hilecher knotted things at 10-10. Harnett then slammed home the final point. Thomas and Yellen went five games before Thomas won the last one, 11-10.

In the finals, Peck took the first game with ease and won the second, 11-10, after trailing 10-7. Wagner dominated in the next two games, setting the stage for the finale.

PHOTO BY MAVIS SUTTON

It was during the final game that tempers flared between the two and a shoving match cost both players technicals (subtracting one point).

"I disagreed with the call," said Wanger. "I didn't start it. I don't think a technical should have been called on me."

The two players were tied at 2-2, 4-4, 6-6 and 8-8 before Peck scored the final three points. One rally found each player exchanging 25 shots.

"I really wasn't myself during any of that tournament," said Peck. "Rich is a helluva nice guy and a great player and if I hadn't been so tired, I would have really enjoyed playing him more. He was hitting the ball very well."

"This tournament was the hardest adjustment I've ever had to make. I had to learn to pace myself and relax."

Said Wagner, "Even though I lost to him, it was the best match I played the whole tournament. At 8-8, I hit three good shots and he hit three better ones."

"I feel good about my game overall. I'm back where I was two years ago."

Peck said one problem he has had this season is adjusting to the new pro format of 11-point games. "I like the old 21 point games because I would always try to win in two and you could cruise through certain periods. This new format has been a real challenge to me. I have to concentrate all the time now."

SELF/SPALDING

Ruben Gonzales and Janell Marriott came away with victories in the first stop in the six-event Self/Spalding tournament at Centre Court in Rockville Centre, N.Y.

Gonzales defeated Art Diemar, 21-18, 21-5, and Marriott beat Bonnie Stoll, 21-14, 21-12, in pro/am division finals.

In the second regional at Killshot Ltd. in Bloomingdale, Ill., Sean Moskwa defeated Dennis McDowell, 21-13, 11-21, 11-9, and Sue Carow beat Chris Evon, 19-21, 21-15, 11-4.

Winners in the five regionals automatically qualify for the finals, Feb. 12-14, at Los Caballeros Racquetball Club in Fountain Valley, Calif.

B winners were Chris Rockhold and Katie Kaspari in Chicago and Don Costleigh and Vera Frierson in New York. C champions were Derek Buckley and Rea Kulich (Chicago) and Frank Licausi Gladys Tabone (New York). Senior division winners were Jackie Adler and Jim Winterton (New York) and Herb Grigg (Chicago).



Ruben Gonzales does a little acrobatics in trying to reach shot hit by Art Diemar in finals of Self/Spalding tournament in New York. Gonzales won, 21-18, 21-5.

ETC.

● Ed Andrews and Mark Martino of California upset defending champs Jeff Kwartler and Mark Malowitz, 21-4, 14-21, 15-3, to win the AARA National Doubles Championships at the Racquet Club in Monroeville, Pa. Carol Frenck and Andrea Katz of Virginia defeated Helene Burden and Lorrie Pallas of New York, 21-8, 21-5, in the women's championships. In the mixed doubles finals, Jack Newman of Illinois teamed with Sharon Fanning of Tennessee to beat Art Diemar and Debbie Sloan of New York, 17-21, 21-11, 15-3. Other winners included Larry Liles and John Hennen (30+), Rip Miller and Harry Miller (35+), Bud Muehleisen and Myron Roderick (40+ and 45+), Gene Grapes and Al Schattner (50+), David Perelman and Marvin Schnagle (55+), Irv Zeitman and Ike Gumer (60+), Eileen Ehrlich and Martha Callahan (30+) and Pat Mignon and Mimi Kelly (35+).

● Jerry Hilecher defeated Lindsay Myers, 21-13, 21-18, in the finals of the OCC tournament at the Vancouver, B.C. YMCA. Hilecher took home \$2,500 and Myers collected \$1,500.

● Dieter Schmidt defeated Dan Mohr, 21-12, 12-21, 11-9, in the open division finals of the Highlander/Pepino's Open at the Highlander Racquet Club in Brookfield, Wisc. B winners were Chuck Kscinski and Rozanne Sobich.

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SERVICE BOX

OLYMPIC BAG

Sports Graphics, Inc. of Cranston, R.I. has introduced the first model in its collection of International Olympic Committee licensed sports bags.

The Deluxe Gear Bag, made of waterproof nylon, measures 19 inches long and 10 inches wide. It features a main compartment with foam lining and twin-zipper opening. There are two outside compartments and a detachable shoulder strap.

Colors include navy, royal, red and silver with contrasting stripes. Suggested retail price is \$27.95. A less-fancy bag sells for \$19.95.



AMF VOIT HANDBOOK

Need a rulebook? Need a few basic tips to get you started playing? Well, AMF Voit has come out with a 20-page handbook that they are selling for \$1.

The pamphlet is geared for somebody starting out, or any player who wants to keep a set of rules handy.

The reader will also get a few instruction diagrams, racquetball jargon and some basic pointers. Of course, there are also a few plugs for AMF Voit products.

To get one, write AMF Voit, 3801 South Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, Calif. 92704.



EKTELON'S CBK RACQUET

At a suggested retail price of \$165, Ektelon's new graphite CBK racquet is the second most expensive on the market behind DP Leach's Marty Hogan Graphite USA at \$197.

The CBK, used by most of Ektelon's touring pros, is made of a composite of carbon, boron and kevlar.

The wishbone frame allows for a large sweet spot and the racquet comes in two weights—245 and 230 grams.

Ektelon offers a one-year warranty on the frame and a 90-day warranty on the stringing.

This is recommended for advanced players. Novice players should not think that this is going to make them great.



PLAYERS ACTION BRIEFS

Trying to compete with the already established underwear companies, not to mention the numerous designers who have entered the field, British Bulldog, Ltd. of San Rafael, Calif. has come out with "Players."

Players Action Briefs has been created, says a press release, for "the active man with a sense of fashion."

The underwear sells for \$6 and is made of 100 percent cotton. It features a no-roll lycra waistband and a double-lined support pouch.

Comes in bordeaux, navy, buckskin and caribbean colors each coordinated with a tri-color waistband. It is packaged in a box which resembles a cigarette-box look.



FOOT-JOY GLOVE

Known primarily for its athletic footwear, Foot-Joy of Brockton, Mass. has recently come out with a racquetball bag and glove.

The "Sta-Sof" glove is made of specially tanned Cabretta leather imported from Pittards of London.

Comes in a variety of colors. Suggested retail price is \$12.



OFF THE WALL



THE NEXT SHOT...

In honor of Valentine's Day, we put some heart into our February issue:

SHOE GUIDE

How to find the best bets in racquetball footgear.

SHOOTING FOR NUMBER ONE

Touring pros Lynn Adams and Mike Yellen are number two and trying harder.

HOGANALYZING RACQUETBALL

Another in-depth instruction piece from the four-time national champ.

ANKLE INJURIES

How to avoid the most common court injury.

ZEN AND THE ART OF RACQUETBALL

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