

RACQUETBALL

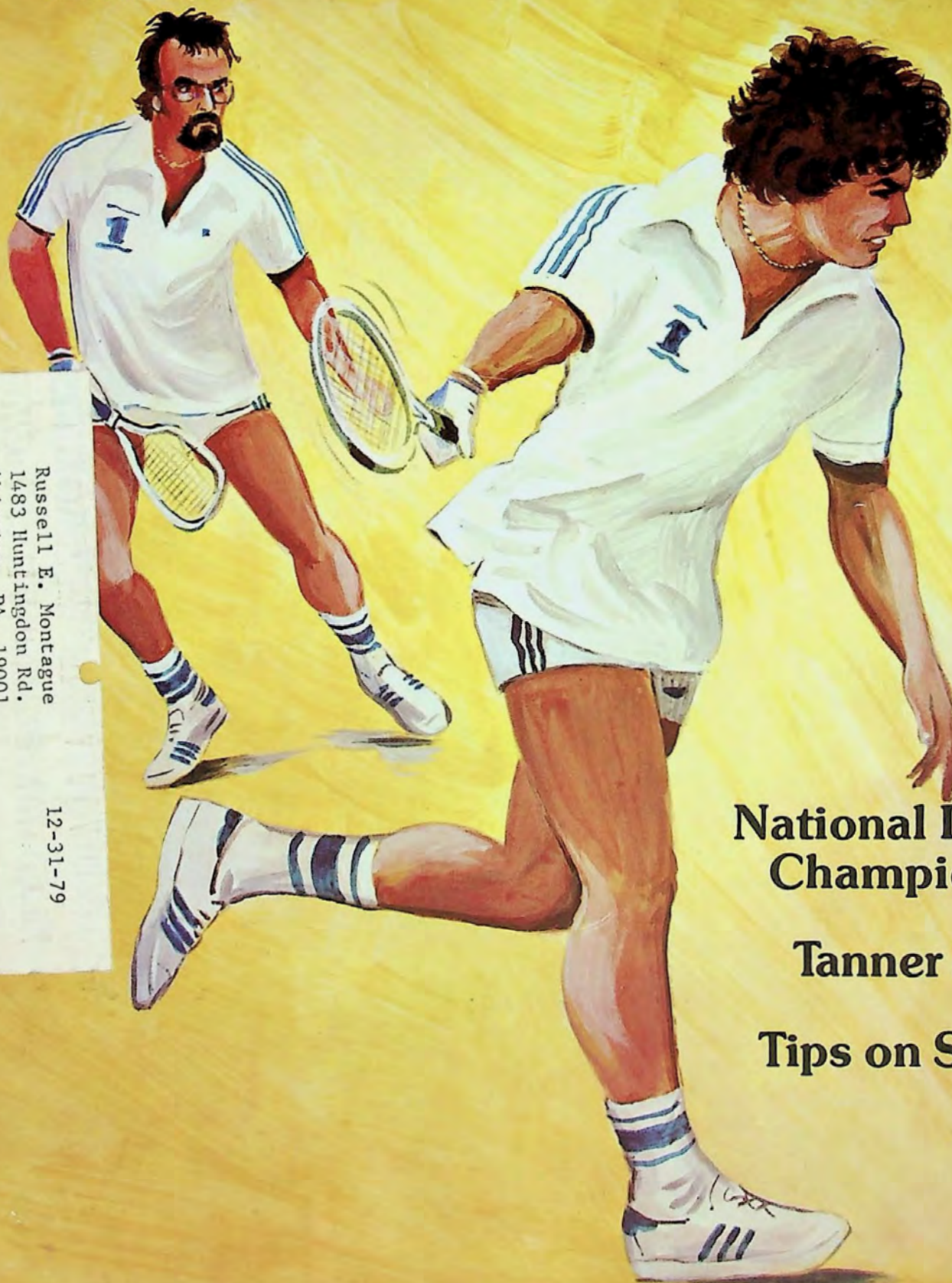


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International Racquetball Association



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This issue of Racquetball Magazine reflects changes **you** asked for in a recent questionnaire. More instruction, more medical and skill articles, and more yet to come. Keep writing us your suggestions.

Big things are ahead of us this year in Racquetball — more television, more tournaments, more Pro events — and you are in the middle of this action through your membership in the IRA. Encourage your friends to join now!

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The cover: Marty Hogan kept his winning streak hot by taking down Charlie Brumfield in the finals of the Tanner Pro-Am.

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Rules Revised '78

As this magazine goes to press, so do the newly revised Rules of Racquetball. This new printing, long overdue, should be available to all players shortly. It has been a long and arduous task, but one that was sorely needed to cope with the growth and expansion of racquetball. I'd like to pass along my thanks to Mike Zeitman, V.Z. Lawton, Hallie Singer and Bob Folsom for their aid and encouragement in helping me complete this job. New equipment, changes in balls and expanded interest in tournaments, necessitated these changes and I sincerely hope that the new rules will contribute to keeping our sport the fastest-growing court game in the world and a continual joy to play.

When I was elected National Rules Commissioner in May of 1977, I promised that I would be guided by the wishes of the players, and since our organization is run solely for its players, a questionnaire was sent to all members. The results were overwhelming. Tabulations, analysis and interpretation of your replies, though time consuming, were necessary to make sure your interests were represented in these rules. I feel these rules reflect your wishes.

For example: the fifteen point tie-breaker rule received the greatest support. However, an analysis of thousands of replies by age groups showed that the majority of older players, Masters and Golden Masters, preferred the best two
(continued on page 30)

Editor's Note — Leonard Marks is the National Rules Chairman of the International Racquetball Association. He has recently completed a revision of the IRA's rule book, and here he explains some of the changes and the reasoning behind them.



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Strategy...the cerebral game

by Steve Keeley



Editor's Note — The following instructional article on Basic Singles Strategy is an excerpt from Steve Keeley's cassette tape instructional course **Racquetball Lessons Made Easy**. This six lesson package includes two one-hour cassette tapes and a course booklet of "photo-motion" pictures and diagrams. It is available for \$7.95 plus \$.25 postage from: Cassette, 6369 Reynolds Rd., Haslett, Mich., 48840.

Strategy connotes the skill employment and coordination of tactics and shots to play ball to your fullest potential. This, in short, is the cerebral game. I'll deal here with basic singles strategy in three areas: Strategy on the service, on the service return, and on the rally.

Strategy on the Service

Service strategy is simplified when you consider that there are *two levels*, or altitudes, to serve from: 1) the low zone, and 2) the high zone. Basically, contact the ball in the *low zone* (that is, mid-calf to knee high) for drive serves and low Z-serves. Contact the service ball in the *high zone* (that is, mid-thigh to chest high) for garbages, lobs and high Z-serves.

Any serve struck from the *low zone* is generally done to elicit a *weak return*. For example, an accurate drive serve to the backhand often forces a feeble return. On the other hand, any serve struck from the *high zone* is generally done simply to *put the ball into play* without making an error on the service. For

example, a good garbage serve forces a ceiling return, but not a weak return.

Which zone is better? The argument between the low and high zones is a classic case of *compensation*. A low zone serve (for example, a drive serve) elicits more return setups, but is difficult to accurately put into play every time. A high zone serve (for example, the garbage) forces few return setups, but you can get the ball into play nearly every time without error.

A helpful hint: the *low zone* drive and Z-serves are more effective with a *faster* ball. Conversely, the softer *high* zoners are more advantageous with a *slower* ball. In addition, the power player usually utilizes the low service zone, whereas the control player favors the higher zone. Of course, you must consider the reverse; that is, if your opponent is a lethargic lobber and passer, blast him with *lows*. But if he's a speed freak who thrives on bullets and a fast pace, lull him with *highs*.

Further argument on the comparison of the highs and lows of service would be moot. Your service repertoire should include at least *two* serves from each of the two levels.

This leads us to *variety* on the service. Here again, it is a compromise. Service variety confuses the receiver; he must expect the unexpected, which is rough. Accordingly, most professional players use about *four* staple serves which they vary seemingly at random throughout the game. Yet, now and then these same pros discover a blatant weakness in the service returner's game. Then you see the *same* serve over and over. Thus, temper your favorite service variety with common sense by badgering your rival with a specifically potent serve, sacrificing the surprise factor.

Service strategy also entails the concept of center court, a basically circular area shown in diagram 1. Serve mostly from about the *center* of the service box. You may move lateral to this station for certain favorite serves as long as you realize that you must scurry back into center court following the service stroke.

Furthermore, direct most of those low

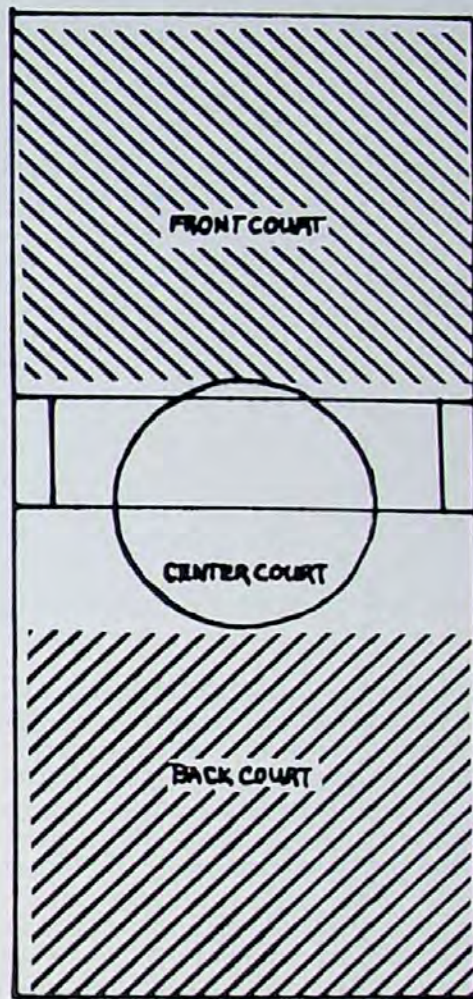


Diagram 1

Generally, serve from within the center court circle. Also, your court position dictates your shot selection: kill in front court, kill or pass from mid-court depending upon your opponent's position, think defensively.

and high level serves at your competition's *backhand*. This is usually his weaker stroke, plus his stronger shot directional vector — cross-court, as opposed to down the line — takes the return right to your stronger side — the forehand. The novice is often in a quandary as to *where* to go after swatting the ball into play. Serve, then back two or three steps out of the service box toward the rear corner at which you sent the service. In other words, since most of your serves go to the backhand, or left rear

(continued on page 50)

National Doubles Championships

worth waiting for...

By JACK BRENNAN

Construction delays hindered the kick-off of the International Racquetball Association's 9th annual national doubles championships, but when they finally got rolling, complete with capacity crowds, a healthy pinch of the spice labeled "upset" and the type of play one expects from the No. 1 team in the world, it was evident that the anxious days of waiting were not in vain.

The IRA and a field of some 150 teams were ready to go in late fall, but the planned tournament facility, Racquetball World in Fountain Valley, Calif., was not. The new Orange County layout had been unable to overcome a series of setbacks in its construction schedule, and tournament backers began the search for an alternate site as opening day approached.

Thanks to yeoman work by members of the IRA, California Racquetball Association and the nearby Los Alamitos Racquet Club, play was begun two weeks later at Los Alamitos. It was thought by many that those who had la-

bored behind the scenes were deserving of acclaim at least equal to that of the players who made the tourney such a visible success, but such is not the lot of administrators.

The glory, instead, was gobbled up by Steve Trent and Stan Wright, who allowed more than 10 points only twice, breezing to the national men's amateur championship. Charlie Brumfield and Steve Serot surprised no one by taking the men's pro title; nor did women's pro winners Karin Walton and Shannon Wright.

Stan Wright, a tall, powerful left-hander, and Trent, a cat-quick right-hander, were regarded as the amateur team to be reckoned with from the very beginning, but the stock of the second-seeded San Diego twosome was a sure bet after their brutally convincing 21-14, 21-6 victory over top-seeded defending champions Gene Gibbs and Bob Kraut in the championship match.

If the mere fact that Gibbs and Kraut had been dethroned was not altogether shocking, the ease with which Wright and Trent accomplished the coup certainly was. The defending champs' incoming scores, which included as 13-21

Craig McCoy pirouettes to scoop up the ball from the back corner as opponent Rob Baruck looks on.



Shannon Wright homes in on a back wall BB and Peggy Steding can only watch.

Editors note: Jack Brennan is a sports writer for the Memphis Press-Scimitar evening newspaper.



Zuckerman and Hilecher scatter as Serot and Brumfield rip another photon.

Shannon Wright shows concentration plus as her partner Karin Walton holds off Jan Pasternak.



We did it again: defending champions Charlie Brumfield and Steve Serot congratulate each other.

loss in the second game of their semifinal victory over hot youngsters Larry Meyers and Kenny Kaihlanen, were admittedly not as impressive as those of the challengers. But no one at Los Alamitos, save perhaps Wright and Trent themselves, could have anticipated the one-sided finale which left a packed house gaping in appreciation.

If, in fact, the crowds at Los Alamitos were denied anything, it was the charge which would have come from a wire-to-wire dogfight in one of the major championship matches. Brumfield and Serot turned out the lights on Jerry Zuckerman and Jerry Hilecher by scores of 21-7 and 21-12 in the men's pro final, while second seeds Wright and Walton blasted No. 1 seeds Peggy Steding and Sarah Green 21-9, 21-12 for the women's pro title.

In the amateur final, Wright and Trent took front court position on the first serve of the match and rarely relinquished it until they had walked out with the championship. Not even Gibbs and Kraut, it was noted, could win while hitting defensive shot after defensive shot.

The last match was simply more of the same for the victors, who had advanced

with wins over Dan Gerard and Adolfo Aguilera (21-3, 21-2), Rob Baruck and Rich Handley (21-6, 21-6), and Jim Pool and Gary Lusk (21-9, 21-19). Pool and Lusk were awarded third place when Meyers and Kaihlanen were forced to forfeit the consolation match because of an injury.

In the men's pro event, Serot's play was a definite surprise even though he and Brumfield were the defending champions. It had been thought that Brumfield had carried his St. Louis partner to some extent the previous year, but such was not the case at Los Alamitos. Rather than looking like the player who had seemingly been forced over the hill by injuries at age 20, the 21-year-old Serot appeared to have regained the form which had earned him the reputation of a budding superstar at age 16.

Serot gave Brumfield the offense he needed from the left side and Brumfield took care of the rest from the right. Zuckerman, who had been rolling out points all weekend before the championship match, couldn't keep it up when the big chips were on the table. Neither Zuckerman nor Hilecher were able to find the powerful serves which had been the undoing of their early-round opponents,

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and the defending champs had no trouble taking advantage.

Brumfield was clearly at his best, and that means big trouble for anyone when they're up against the top doubles player in the world. Brumfield owned the right side against Hilecher as he and his partner picked up championship checks of \$1,000 each.

Fans not arriving until the later rounds of the men's pro competition might well have been puzzled over the whereabouts of the tourney's second-seeded team, Marty Hogan and Craig McCoy, but they were by no means alone. Hogan and McCoy were no doubt still wondering themselves after dropping their first match in a shocking upset to the unseeded Los Angeles twosome of right-handers Mark Morrow and Bruce Radford.



For many, Morrow and Radford vs. McCoy and Hogan was THE MATCH of the tournament. Hogan and McCoy won the opening game 21-13, but the underdogs erased a 12-20 deficit in the second game of the match to force a third game with a 21-20 win. They then sent their heavily-favored foes packing with a 15-13 victory in the third game, as Rad-

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National Doubles

ford upstaged Hogan by rolling out the last four points of the match.

Morrow and Radford stayed alive with a subsequent 21-17, 21-16 win over Steve Keeley and Jerry Jones, but Zuckerman and Hilecher made pumpkins of the Cinderella team by scores of 21-11, 21-9 in the semifinals.

The fourth-seeded team of Dr. Bud Muelheisen and Davy Bledsoe also met an untimely end, forfeiting a quarterfinal match to Dave Charlson and Roger Sowders when they refused to wear the official tournament shirt. Charlson and Sowders were dispatched 21-16, 21-16 by Serot and Brumfield in the semis.

Sarah Green had a quick explanation after she and Steding, the top-seeded team, were beaten by Wright and Walton in the women's pro final.

"I just stunk," she said. "Peggy couldn't do anything because I was so bad, and she never plays well against Shannon anyway."

Wright and Walton, the No. 2 seeds, had advanced to the championship match with an easy win over Bette Weed and Linda Siau (21-10, 21-5) and a slightly tougher one over Jan Pasternak and Jenifer Harding (21-7, 20-21, 15-8).

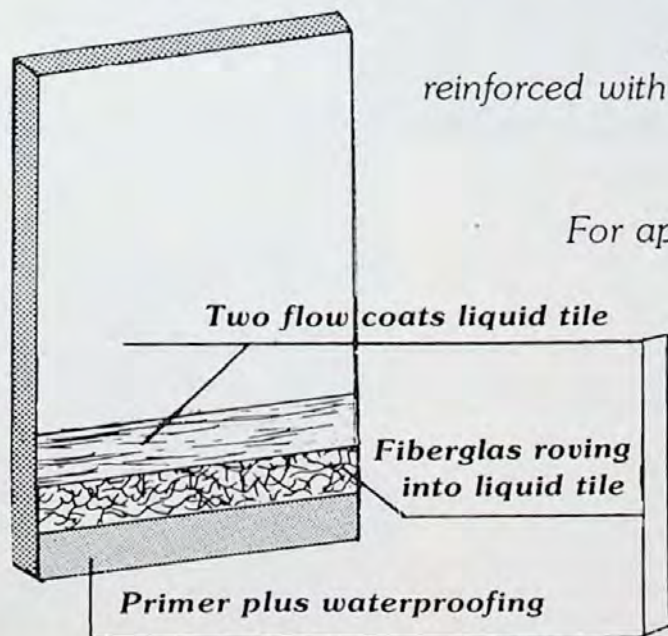


Despite his forfeit in the pro competition, Muelheisen did win a title, teaming with Bob McNamara to defeat Myron Roderick and Jim Austin 21-12, 21-11 in the senior men's championship match. In other championship matches, Carl Loveday and Don Green outlasted Ike Gumer and Irv Zeitman 21-5, 6-21, 15-13 (Golden Masters), Gene Grapes and Al Schattner won 21-19, 10-21, 15-7 over Bill Sellers and Richard Walker (Men's Masters) and Jody Lilly and Pete Maccarone downed Jerry Conine and Charlie Hauser 21-19, 21-10 (Contenders).

For the record, those folks not appearing in the box score who helped get the tournament off the ground during the hectic change of sites included: John Wavell, (owner) and Gary Shrigley (manager) of the Los Alamitos Racquet Club, Phil Ivaldy (president) and Bruce Ross (vice-president) of the California Racquetball Association and his lovely wife, Carol, IRA executive secretary Halie Singer and IRA counsel John Baird.

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*Editor's Note — This is the second in a series of instructional aid articles by Michael Mjehovich, a former physical education teacher and now racquetball professional. Excerpts are taken from his publication, **Racquetball—Step-By-Step**, available by sending \$2.95 to: Racquetball—Step-By-Step, 1155 Weyburn Lane, Suite 12, San Jose, CA 95129.*

Court Positions

(A) Offensive Strategy

Court position is one of those "reactions" which is difficult to teach as compared to a skill. Yet it is one of the most vital elements needed for a successful game. Court position is considered a sixth sense a player must have. It usually is developed over a period of time. Some people are gifted with this combination of natural judgement of speed, distance and body movement in any direction, at any time. Most players improve at this with time and some find it is a never ending battle.

The reason I am spending time to discuss court position is because of its unseen value to the offensive player. When you can judge the speed of a shot that your opponent has just hit, you will "automatically" move to the spot on the floor to where proper contact should be made. This quick reaction to the proper contact position on the court will enable you to concentrate more on the shot you will use and less on added movement needed to reach the ball.

Another example of the advantage of good court position is in the ceiling game. Whenever a ceiling ball is hit the key to a good return first depends on whether or not you are able to be in a balanced posi-

tion on the floor before you have to start your return swing. The majority of mistakes made during a ceiling ball rally stem from the player swinging *before* he is in the proper position. This increases the difficulty of the chest high, or overhead return significantly. Your feet must be planted, ready to move forward as you swing. This is accomplished when you react to your opponent's ceiling ball by properly backpeddling into position as you keep your eye on the ball. This will bring you to the desired court position in time for a good return.

The question though is *how* can you react in time if you don't see the ball until it rebounds from the ceiling? The answer is, you can't, meaning you must always have your opponent in sight. Using peripheral vision, you can follow the flight of the ball as it comes off your opponent's racquet. There is great value in this split-second advantage of knowing which direction the ball is going. You can't depend on this alone to give you good court position but if you don't have the blazing speed or cat-like reactions of a pro it will help your game immensely. As you watch your opponent return the ball to the ceiling your reactions automatically start. You will not have to think about where to move as before. This will give you a step or two in moving to the correct position, which, in most cases of missed shots, is all that was lacking.

The most important offensive court position is located in the service area. Anytime you are able to hit a ball from around the short line, you increase your odds of a winning shot. A server has a dominant position on the court after the serve has been hit. This is only true if he takes advantage of this court position. After he serves he immediately assumes the "attack" position (just outside service area, in the middle of the court). This position has the server "opened up", ready to follow and react to his opponent's return. With this in mind, the opponent has the added pressure of knowing a weak return means certain trouble. This, coupled with a difficult serve, helps to give the server a definite psychological edge.

Keep this in mind the next time you play. Apply the idea of moving to the "attack" position whenever you can during a rally. If you hit a shot which puts your opponent in the back court area, treat it as if he is in the return of serve position and move to the "attack" zone, ready to move with his return. If you can do this at the proper time, (opening up to the ball), you will notice you will be in control of most of the rallies. This is known as controlling the middle of the court, or "at-

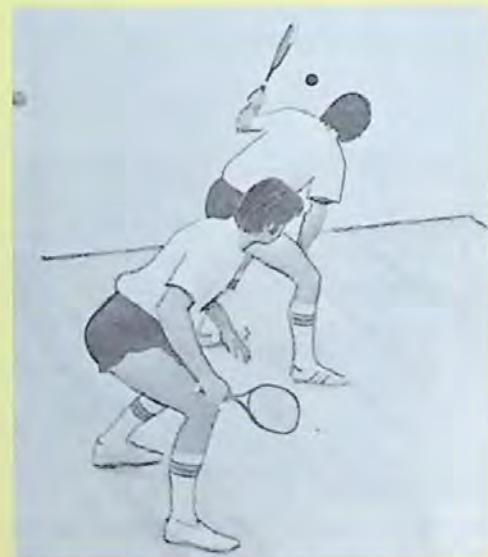
tack" area. What you've now done is transferred the idea of the server's "attack" area and made it simply the "attack" area to be controlled by whoever gets there first.

As with the serve, there are shots used to move a player out of this area or neutralizing the advantage of being in the mid-court area. They are: 1) ceiling ball 2) straight passing shot 3) cross court passing shot. That is what makes the game of racquetball a fast action "chess game". For every offensive move there is a defensive move. Offensive court position puts the first pressure of return on your opponent and that's where you want it.

(B) Defensive Strategy

In most sports you are given a chance to defensively challenge your opponent when he is making a move, or offensive shot. Not so in racquetball.

Once you have hit the ball you must make every effort possible to get out of your opponent's way while he is attempting to return the ball. Failure to do so may result in an avoidable hinder (loss of point or serve). So it is clear to see there is nothing you can do to stop your opponent from taking his shot. You may, however, utilize defensive court position as your opponent is hitting the ball. Proper defensive court position will cut down the shot selection your opponent has, as well as put you in a good position for a return if your opponent's shot is not a winner. The most common defensive positions used are: 1) defending the back wall, 2) defending the ceiling ball, 3) a fast rally.



1) Defending A Back Wall Return

Assume the first mistake has already been made. You have hit a shot that is going to rebound off the back wall giving
(continued on page 18)

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(continued from page 16)

your opponent an offensive return. At this point his return may or may not be a winner. Always be ready for an error by your opponent. You must react just as your opponent reacts to any back wall return. For example, if the shot is coming off the back wall on the right side of the floor, proper defensive court position would put you just to the left of your opponent, a few feet in front of him. You want him to be able to see you. This causes a distraction and may affect the return. You should be in an open position, facing the side wall, awaiting his shot so you can return the rebound.

If your volley rebounds hard off the back wall without bouncing first, do not move past the short line with your opponent. This would put you totally out of position for a return of his shot. In this case you play the percentages and stay directly in the middle of the court awaiting your opponent's shot.

If you do not think your opponent is very strong with the back wall return, your defensive position will be back away from the service line anticipating a high return. If your opponent is very strong off the back wall, it is a good idea to try and anticipate his shot, (straight pass, cross court, pinch, etc.) and move to the desired area of return. Obviously

the odds are not in your favor but you want your opponent to know you are ready to re-kill his shot if it's a bad one. This pressure, along with his being able to see you physically out of the corner of his eye, may cause a skip ball just at the right moment. A play such as this can change the composure of the game instantly.



The key reason for positioning yourself in front and either to the right or left of your opponent, is to legally cut off his choice of shots. You must allow your opponent a straight shot to the front wall. This means you cannot stand directly in the path of a straight return. If you stand just to one side, you leave a straight shot and the near side wall. Your body, if in the right position, will take away the return to the opposite side of the court. If

your opponent hits you with a shot aimed for the front wall, a hinder ball is called and the point is played over (assuming you were not directly in front of him). You don't want to crowd your opponent as this would leave you open for a cross court return. But you want him to know you're ready in case of a mistake.

2) Defensive Position For The Ceiling Ball Return

The correct defensive court position in the case of the ceiling ball is very similar to the back wall strategy. For example, you have just hit a ceiling ball driving your opponent into the back court area. Your ceiling ball will bounce in the direction of the back wall about seven to nine feet high. This typical ceiling ball demands the use of an overhead return by your opponent. As your opponent sets himself up for his shot you must also move into the proper position. If your ceiling ball has forced your opponent to the left side of the court you will want to move to the center of the court a few feet in front of your opponent. This will put you just to the right side of his position. As with defending the back wall return, the idea here is for your opponent to be able to see you out of the corner of his eye. The same principle of added pres-

(continued on page 20)

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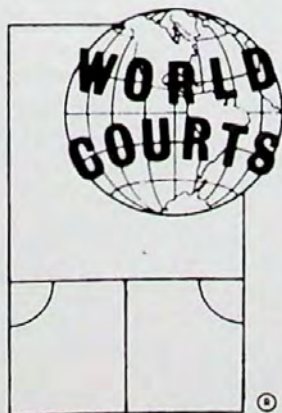


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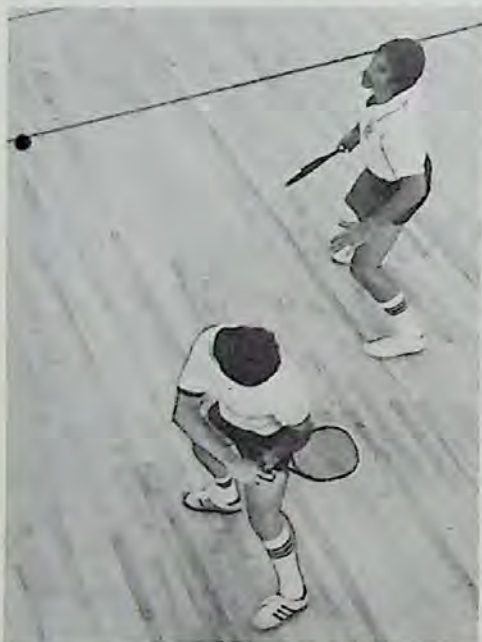
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(continued from page 18)

sure, knowing you're ready for a mistake, is used. In this position your opponent's best percentage return would be another ceiling ball. As soon as you see this ceiling return developing it is very easy to move into position for your next shot. This defensive position will leave you ready for the ceiling ball return as well as put you in a good position for more offensive shots your opponent may try.

From the overhead return position your opponent may try a variety of shots — overhead drive (straight pass), overhead cross court pass, overhead pinch shot, or the overhead "Z" ball. These shots are most successful against the player who takes a "back to his opponent" position in the back court area expecting a ceiling return. The proper court position as explained, along with using the open stance so you can see your opponent, will discourage your opponent from trying a risky shot. You want to be in a position to return any of your opponent's shots with authority. If you can do this, your opponent will more likely elect to use the ceiling return. In the case of a ceiling return you are now on the offensive side of the game.

If your first ceiling ball was hit short allowing your opponent to use a regular forehand or backhand ground stroke, you must be ready to react to a number of offensive shots. It is very important to use the same positioning each time.



As you play more and more racquetball you will find your ceiling game will become much more important when you are playing against someone who knows, and uses, the proper defensive positions. For, it is from the defensive

position that one mistake by the offensive player will turn the defensive player immediately into the offensive player.



Most beginning racquetball players do their utmost to stay out of their opponent's way after they have hit their shot. This is understandable especially after they have received their first "road map" (a colored bruise that results when hit on the back of the leg by a hard hit ball). After receiving our first "road map" many of us usually cling to the side walls during a rally.

Once you overcome the fear of being hit and realize it's part of the game things change. The advanced and intermediate player will now use tight positioning (not



crowding) hoping to intimidate his opponent's shot. The experienced player will be able to either hit a shot designed to beat or hit his crowding opponent. Unless he is ready to take severe pain your crowding opponent will now change his game plan. The point here describes the fine line between a good defensive position and deliberately crowding.

3) Fast Rally

During a fast rally it is mostly reaction and instinct which will move you into the

correct position at the right time. You should be able to master the back wall defensive position before you can properly react during a fast rally. Your object is the same. Keep yourself in the open stance position as much as possible.

If your opponent is running after one of your shots, move to the middle of the floor as quickly as possible in anticipation of his return. Do this without losing sight of your opponent. Depending on your



level of play, the offensive player will always have the advantage: the better the player, the greater the advantage. The players who can add proper defensive positioning to their games will increase the amount of returns they will make, not to mention the quality and quantity of their re-kills from these returns.

In most cases being hit with either the ball or a racquet is the defensive player's fault. This is not to say that you should hug the side walls, but occasionally we all get too close. It's better to be aggressive than passive. ●

DANE WINS GREENLAND RACQUETBALL TOURNAMENT

Chris Uggerholt, Danish Arctic Contractor employee, powered his way past Air Force Captain Tom Koch in the finals to win the first Thule "Handicap" Racquetball Tournament at Thule Air Base in Greenland.

Jens Helstrup, Danish Fire Department, held on through five grueling matches to win the consolation bracket by squeaking past the tournament's "senior" player, 54-year old Tony Scott.

In the first "Top of the World" racquetball tournament at Thule, Captain Dennis Lundquist defeated tournament director Captain Tom Koch for the men's A championship. In the B bracket Boyd Reyburn beat Preben Andersen while Fleming Gamman beat Knud Rasmussen in the C division. Senior Airman Sandy Priest beat Bente Nielsen in the women's final. ●

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Regional Tournament Information

West

Site: King's Racquetball Court
14731 Golden West St.
Westminster, CA 92683
714-898-9843

Entry Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Chuck Hohl
14731 Golden West St.
Westminster, CA 92683
714-898-9843

(Make checks payable to: IRA Western Regionals)

Play begins: April 28

Information: Chuck Hohl, 714-898-9843

Housing: South Coast Plaza

666 Anton
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
714-540-2500

or

Costa Mesa Inn
3205 Harbor
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
714/557-8360

Roast Beef dinner given by King's Court
Sat. night.

Northwest

Site: The Court House
7211 Colonial
Boise, Idaho 83705
208-377-0040

Extra Events: Open Doubles
Men's and Women's B
and C Singles
Senior Doubles

Entry Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Bob Petersen
7211 Colonial
Boise, Idaho 83705
208-377-0040

(Make checks payable to:
IRA Northwestern Regionals)

Play begins: April 28

Information: Bob Petersen,
208-377-0040

Housing: Royal Inn of Boise
4115 North Curtis Road
Boise, Idaho 83704
208-376-2700

North

Information to come

Midwest

Site: His & Hers Racquetball Club
951 West Outer Rd. P.O. 471;
Arnold, MO 63010 (St. Louis)
314-296-2006

Extra Events: Men's B, Women's B,
Women's Novice, Men's
Novice; Golden Masters
55-59, 60-64, 65 & over;
Jr. Boys and Girls 13 and
under, 15 and under and
17 and under

Entry Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Leonard Marks
200 S. Bemiston
Clayton, MO 63105

(Make checks payable to IRA Regionals)
Entries close April 24

Play begins: April 27, 6 p.m. (Please call
club April 26 for individual
starting day)

Information: Leonard Marks or Dan
Hilecher, 314-469-1989

Housing: Inn St. Louis (Best Western)
4234 Butler Hill Rd.
Arnold, MO
314-894-0700 or
1-800-528-1234

Southwest

Site: Racquettime
6701 West Wilshire
Oklahoma City, OK 73032
405-721-9205

Extra Events: Men's B and C
Women's B & Seniors
Men's Doubles

Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Jerry Linton
6701 West Wilshire
Oklahoma City, OK 73032
405-721-9205

Make checks out: IRA Southwest

Regionals and mail to RACQUETIME

Play begins: Friday, April 28th at Noon

Information: Jerry Linton, 405-721-9205

Housing: Motel "6"
820 So. Meridian
Oklahoma City, OK 73032
405-946-6703

South

Site: The Racquet Centre
440 Interstate North Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30339
404-955-5555

Extra Events: Men's B & Novice
Women's B

Entry Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Bob Siegel
The Racquet Centre
440 Interstate North Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30339

Play begins: April 28

Information: Bob Siegel, 404-875-6426
John Thiel, 404-377-0241

Housing: Squire Inn
2767 Windy Hill Rd. S.E.
Marietta, GA 30339
404-432-3251

Mid-Atlantic

Site: Capitol Courts
P.O. Box 218
Sterling, VA 22170
703-437-7474

Extra Events: Men's B
Women's B

Fee: \$20 first event, \$10 second event

Where to send entries:

Paul Saperstein
P.O. Box 847
High Point, N.C. 27261

(Make checks payable to:
IRA Mid Atlantic Regionals)

Play begins: April 27th at 6 p.m.

Information: Paul Saperstein or
Ed Remen, 703-437-7474

Housing: Holiday in Sterling or
Mariott at the Dulles Airport

Northeast

Site: Racquetball International
14 A Street
Burlington, MA 01803
617-273-1026

Extra Events: Men's B & C First 64 in
each division to register
will be eligible
Women's B

Entry Fee: \$20 for ONE EVENT ONLY
Add \$9.00 for each guest for
Saturday night banquet
Players attend for cost of
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Where to send entries:

Dan Giordano
122 Ent. Rd.
Bedford, MA 01730
617-861-3212

Make check payable to:

IRA Northeastern Regionals and Mail
to: Dan Giordano

Play begins: April 28 at 8 a.m.

Information: Dan Giordano,
617-861-3212

Housing: Holiday Inn of Burlington
Wheeler Road and Middlesex
Turnpike
Burlington, MA 01803

Official Entry Blank

INTERNATIONAL RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



West	Region 1—California, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii.
Northwest	Region 2—Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska.
North	Region 3—North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin.
Southwest	Region 4—Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas.
Midwest	Region 5—Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio.
South	Region 6—Alabama, Mississippi, So. Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, Kentucky.
Mid-Atlantic	Region 7—Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., No. Carolina, Pennsylvania.
Northeast	Region 8—New Jersey, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York.
East Canada	Region 9—New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec.
West Canada	Region 10—Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan.

- ☐ Open Singles ☐ Womens Open Singles
☐ Senior Singles (35 or over) ☐ Womens Senior Singles (35 or over)
☐ Masters Singles (45 or over) ☐ _____extra event
☐ Golden Masters Singles (55 or over) ☐ _____extra event

Name of Partner (if needed) _____

Contestant must show, or obtain, current IRA Membership Card

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I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the International Racquetball Association, its affiliated clubs and their respective agents, representatives, successors and assigns for any and all injuries which may be suffered by me in connection with my participation in Regional or International tournaments.

Date _____ Signature _____

Entry Deadline

Monday, April 11, 1977

\$10 fee for late entries if accepted

Entry Fee

Check the info for your regional

Official Ball

Seamco 444

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Official IRA.

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The IRA will award to the Open Singles winner full round trip air coach fare and to the other singles winners (excluding extra events) half round trip air coach fare to the IRA Championships May 26-29, 1978.

Trips will only be awarded to those winners who play in the same event in the Internationals as they won in the Regionals (for example an open winner who chooses to play pro or seniors will not be awarded the trip). If the winner does not use the trip the runner-up is eligible.

Qualifying

The qualifying rule has been dropped for this year. However Regional finishes will be a determining factor in seeding for the Internationals.

(this entry blank will be used for all regionals. Check the page at the left for information specific to your regional)
April 28-30, 1978

_____Regional

Please enter me in the event(s) checked:

Age _____ as of May 26, 1978

ANKLE STRAINS, SPRAINS—TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

By DR. JAMES B. PHILLIPS



Dr. James B. Phillips received his bachelor of science degree from Middle Tennessee State University, his master's degree in enzyme physiology from Vanderbilt University and his doctorate from the University of Tennessee Center for the Health Sciences in Memphis, Tenn. Dr. Phillips currently is doing a three-year residency in maxillofacial surgery at the Wilmington Medical Center in Wilmington, Del.

In racquetball, ankle injuries are some of the most common causes of reduced performance and complete loss of playing time. It is common to divide ankle injuries into such types as strains, sprains, tenosynovitis (Tendonitis), contusions, dislocations, and fractures. For this article, only the most common racquetball-related injuries will be considered—strains and sprains.

STRAIN

The ankle joint is subject to strain possibly more than any other joint in the body. The reason for this is two-fold: (1) the ankle joint bears the athlete's entire weight; and (2) the joint is subject to intense force as a result of constant explosive-type accelerations and decelerations during a match.

Strains refer to injuries which involve the muscle-tendon unit. The strain may be chronic (from overuse), or acute (from instant overstress). The severity of the injury ranges from mild (first degree), to moderate (second degree), and finally to severe (third degree).

Achilles tendon strain is probably the best-known of the racquetball associated muscle-tendon injuries. The majority of Achilles ten-

don strains occur during accelerations. Strain may occur at either the attachment of the tendon to bone, or at the muscle-tendon junction. Complication by chronic tendonitis is frequent.

Another often seen but usually misunderstood problem is chronic pain or cramping in the bottom of the foot. This is an example of chronic arch strain. The arch of the foot is supported by the posterior tibial tendon and aids in flexing. When switching from street shoes, which generally have a heel, firm side supports, and adequate arch form, to athletic shoes, which, as a rule, have no heels, minimal side supports, and questionable arch support, the tendon is placed in a static strain at its attachment in the arch of the foot. Ensuing tenderness occurs at the inside of the arch with pain and aching spreading outward.

Treatment of acute strain is local heat, rest of the involved area, protection against further injury, and steroid therapy if the severity of the condition dictates. Under no circumstances should further activity be permitted. Attempts by the anxious player to shorten the required treatment time usually results in a prompt recurrence. No function that causes pain should be allowed.

Achilles tendon injuries are usually the result of overstretching the tendon. Recurrence of this injury can be partially pre-

vented by adequate strapping of the ankle to prevent hyperextension of the foot. With such protection, the racquetball player may run or jog at a steady pace, but not accelerate violently, jump, or turn suddenly—in short, not any activity that requires explosive muscle action. A relatively mild Achilles tendon injury will probably require at least 10 days of inactivity followed by moderate amounts of increasing activity until any movement made is pain free.

If the strain involves the aforementioned posterior tibial tendon, a well-fitted arch support may be helpful. After a period of taping that supports the arch, a flexible support should be supplemented or athletic footwear worn that gives a more adequate arch support.

SPRAINS

As opposed to a strain which includes a motor (muscle) element, a sprain is a stretching or tear (either partial or complete) of a ligament or ligaments supporting a joint. In racquetball, most ankle sprains are caused by a sudden forceful separation of the bones making up the ankle joint and resulting ligamentous tearing. Sprains, which comprise the majority of injuries about the ankle, can also be arbitrarily classified into three groups—mild, moderate, and severe.

(continued on page 26)

ANKLE SPRAIN DIAGNOSTIC CHART*

	Mild Sprain		Moderate Sprain		Severe Sprain	
Condition	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Pain		mild		X		severe
Redness	X			X		X
Swelling		slight		severe		severe
Ligaments torn		few		ruptured		severe
Hemorrhage	X			X		severe
Abnormal joint motion	X			X		X
Tenderness		local		sharply localized		extreme
Can player be on feet?		X		yes but painful	X	
How long off feet?		not at all		at least 2 wks, with taping		cast at least 3 weeks
Can you take part in competition		X	X		X	

*Cemey, J.V., *Athletic Injuries*. Charles C. Thomas, 1963. p.30.

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Just as every player strives for consistency, so are his demands for court playability. That's why I designed a superb court panel.

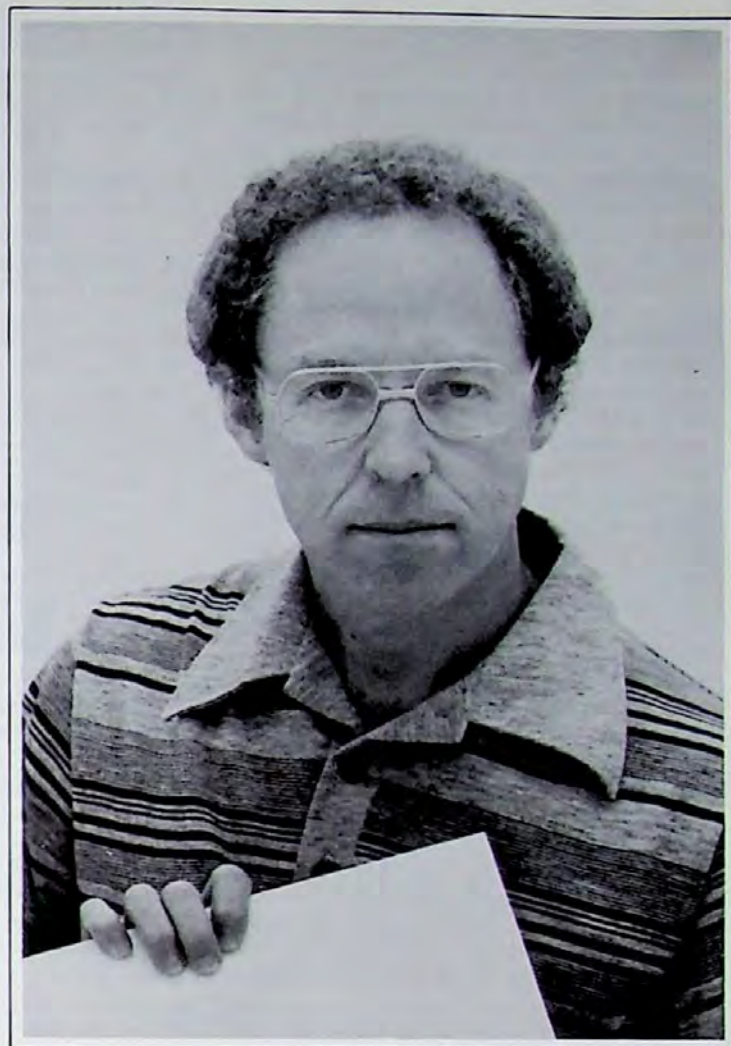
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M-M Panel plays just like concrete. Every bounce is true. I tried to make the ball bounce different than concrete, but it was super. And, the new insulating, sound-deadening properties are the state-of-the-art.

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Dr. Bud Muehleisen
1976 International Racquetball Association
Senior Singles Champion

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bud Muehleisen". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "B" and "M".

**For the best panel, the best price and the best
consulting service, call or write now.**

M-M Court Systems

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(continued from page 24)

Mild (first degree) sprains have some torn or stretched ligamentous fibers, but the strength and functioning of the ligament have not been impaired. To such a case, you would expect to find minimal symptoms; local tenderness, local swelling, pain with forced motion, and moderate pain with walking.

Moderate (second degree) sprain has a definite loss of strength because the ligament(s) have been partially torn. The strength of the ligament may vary depending on the remaining intact fibers, but walking may be possible since direct weight bearing does not put strain on the ligament. The injury most often occurs when the foot is sharply inverted (as in stepping into the side-wall/floor junction, or partially stepping upon an opponent's foot) followed immediately by a fall and severe pain. Swelling may be localized at first but quickly becomes diffuse about the area. Whereas in a mild sprain treatment is generally supportive, a moderate sprain has definite weakening and requires protection whether with ridged compression bandage or a walking cast for 10 to 20 days.

Severe (third degree) sprain results from a complete or near complete tear of the ligament, and treatment is restorative in nature. There is extreme pain accompanied with considerable swelling. The disability is very severe and the player usually requires assistance with walking. Treatment can be either surgical or non-surgical, but in either

case recuperation is extended.

When dealing with sprains an adequate history of the injury is extremely important so that the correct diagnosis can be made; you should be able to answer the following:

- (1) Where is the pain? Is the pain continuous or intermittent and what causes that change?
- (2) Exactly how did the accident happen?
- (3) How freely can you move your ankle? (as compared with the uninjured side)
- (4) Is there any swelling at all? Where is the swelling? (again, compare with the uninjured side) Is the swelling localized or generalized?
- (5) Does the ankle joint abnormally squeak, crack, pop, or grate when moved?
- (6) Has that ankle been injured before? If so, how did that injury compare with this one?

TREATMENT

The **immediate** treatment for all three degrees of sprains are identical, namely:

- (1) Stop competition immediately
- (2) Prevent swelling by ice, compression, and elevation
- (3) Support the ligament (compression taping)

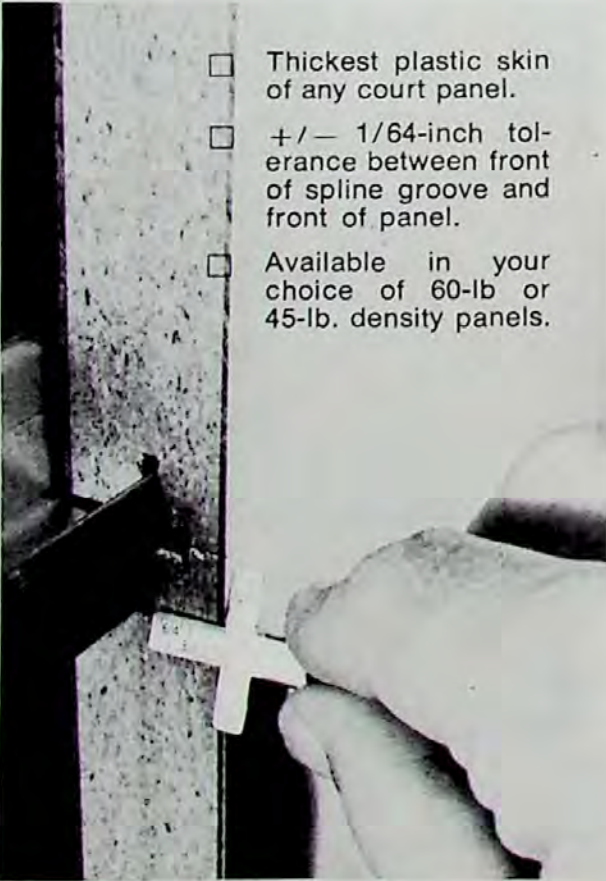
The following specific four day therapy program for moderate sprain care is adapted from Cerney:

First Day

- (1) Elevation—for one hour following the injury
- (2) Cold packs—for one hour following the injury as a "cooling out" phase. Then dry the ankle and initiate contrase packs (a compression pack with sponge and elastic bandage which is alternated with hot and cold for 15 min each)
- (3) Massage—massage the leg gently with liniment. Aid venous circulation **toward** the heart, but do not touch the ankle
- (4) Prepare the ankle for taping by removing hair from foot and lower one third of leg. Spray the area with tincture of benzoin to provide a tacky surface. Tape the ankle to support from lateral forces.
- (5) Do not apply heat. Elevate the leg during rest or sleep. Treatment during the first day is designed to limit swelling and pain. Approximately 24 hours after the injury, application of heat may begin. The heat promotes absorption of blood and fluids which have accumulated in the area.

Second Day

- (1) Remove the adhesive tape
- (2) Use **one** of the following methods to encourage circulation.
 - (a) Hydrotherapy—place one foot and leg in whirlpool bath for 15-20 minutes at a temperature of 103° F.

- 
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SPORTS
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- (b) **Infra-red lamp**—Apply analgesic to ankle, then fold a large turkish towel in thirds and saturate with warm water. Include the foot and leg in a short spiral bandage and arrange the heat unit about 18" from ankle. Time: 20 minutes.
 - (c) **Ultrasonics**—The application of sound waves with the foot and ankle in water is the preferred treatment. Time: 7 minutes at 5 kilowatts.
 - (d) **Hydrocolator pads**—Heat the pads in boiling water. Cover with a dry towel and transfer to the ankle. The foot and leg should be draped with plastic sheeting to retain heat. Re-apply pads as necessary for 1 hour.
 - (e) **Contrast baths**—Alternate foot baths utilizing two buckets with 3 minutes in hot water and 1 minute in cold water. Repeat process three times and end with cold water.
- (3) **Massage**—again massage the leg gently with linament or analgesic "rubs" which stimulate local circulation.
 - (4) **Manipulation**—work the ankle gently to tolerance.
 - (5) **Apply tape** as on the first day and try to keep walking.

Third Day

- (1) **Contrast baths**—Alternate foot baths utilizing two buckets with 3 minutes in hot water and 1 minute in cold water.

Repeat process five times and end with hot water. (Hot at 105° F and Cold as from faucet)

- (2) **Apply elastic bandage**: Apply cotton elastic bandage in figure-8 and spiral up the ankle
- (3) **Exercising**—Calisthenics and jogging in place without limping. Do not favor the injured ankle.

Fourth Day

Examine the ankle. If the ankle can move through a full range of motion without pain (compare with the uninjured side), a full exercise program as follows may be designed.

REHABILITATION

This program is intended for first degree and mild-moderate second degree sprains only.

- (1) **Check range of motion**
 - (a) **Flexion**—flex foot as far as possible, point toes upward.
 - (b) **Extention**—extend foot as far as possible, point toes downward.
 - (c) **Inversion**—turn soles of feet inwards.
 - (d) **Eversion**—turn soles of feet outward.
- (2) If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion, (equal to the unaffected side) and without pain, do the following exercises:

- (a) **Foot Circles**—foot circumscribes a small circle. Ball of foot down first, then in, up, and finally out.
- (b) **Alphabet**—sitting on a table with knee straight and only the ankle extended over the end of the table, you print in capital letters the entire alphabet with your foot.

- (3) If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion and without pain, do the following exercises:

- (a) **Towel Exercise**—sitting on a chair with the foot on a towel, pull the towel up under the foot with toes. After successfully completing the above part, place a weight on the other end of the towel to offer resistance.
- (b) **Pick-up Exercise**—pick up marbles, small pieces of sponge rubber, or partly used gauze roller bandages. Alternate placing the object in the hand opposite knee of good leg and in the hand behind the buttocks of the injured leg.
- (c) **Toe Raises**—Stand with feet one foot apart and toeing-in. Rise on toes as high as possible without pain. Also repeat this exercise with toes pointed straight ahead and pointed out.

- (4) If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion and without pain, do the following exercises:

- (a) Repeat range of motion exercises

(continued on page 62)

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off the wall shots

By Mike Zeitman

**Practice alone and
keep in shape
to be a winner.**

Sure, everybody likes to be a winner, and I've never met a racquetball player who wouldn't like to improve his (or her) game. But desire alone is seldom enough to make you a better player, and even dedication will only go so far unless you channel your energy in the right direction.

Consider the following example, a player who can be found in all shapes and sizes on courts across the country.

"I can't understand it," he mutters to himself after another frustrating match. "I play every day, but I never seem to get any better. Maybe this isn't my game."

At least this fellow knows he has a problem, but he's all wrong in his method of attacking it. He has the right idea in believing the adage that practice makes perfect, but he fails to realize that "practice" means more than standing in the middle of the court, exchanging easy returns with your playing partner.

If he's really serious about improving his game, he'd do well to learn something that pros like Marty Hogan and

Charlie Brumfield have known for years — you'll improve your game faster if you practice by yourself.

I keep my own game in shape by playing just three days a week and practicing alone the other four. You can do the same by cancelling a few of the matches you've arranged, and leave time for a simple, three-step workout.

Your session begins and ends with a jump rope in your hand instead of a racquet. Getting in shape should be your first goal, and there's no better way to do it in a hurry than by jumping rope.

Boxers have sworn by this exercise for years, and other athletes are beginning to learn of its benefits to the legs, arms, heart, lungs and overall coordination. Doctors have proven that jumping rope will do more for your body in less time than swimming, jogging, tennis, or even racquetball for that matter.

You won't make the rope fly like Muhammed Ali right away if you've never jumped before. But you'll get the hang of it soon enough if you get some good advice on the proper length of rope from a sporting goods salesman, and start by jumping without the rope. Don't pick up the rope until you can bounce on the balls of your feet with a steady rhythm.

I jump about 3-5 minutes before and after I practice my stroke, and when you're in a tiebreaker feeling fresh as a daisy, you'll know it's because you've been jumping rope.

Now you're ready to work on your stroke with what I call the Reverse-'S' drill. Your goal is to develop a forehand and backhand shot which will rebound close to the side wall without touching it. It's called the "wallpaper ball," and it forces your opponent to go the maximum distance to make his return.

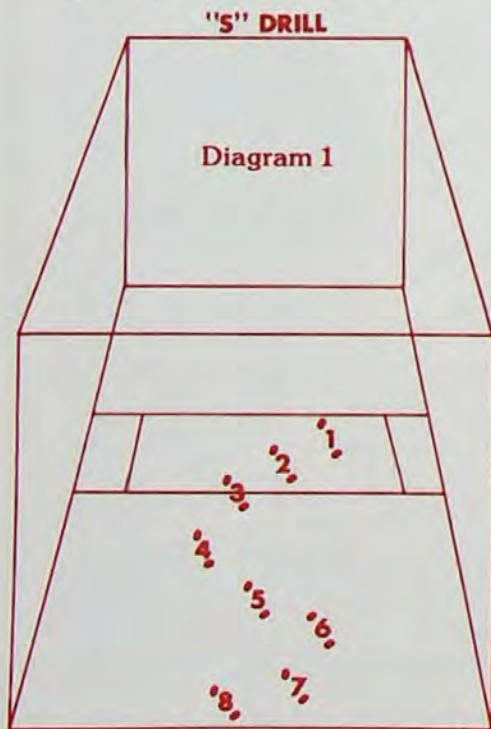
To learn this shot from every angle on the court, repeat it from the spots indicated on the diagram, bringing your point of impact with the front wall to the left as you move toward the center of the court.



It's important to remember that the shot doesn't have to be extremely low and hard. A shot that rebounds up two feet from the floor is still a good shot as long as it doesn't nick the wall and pop right out to your opponent. The normal forehand or backhand stroke is vital because you lose control when you over-swing, and your shot is too slow to be an effective passing shot when you under-swing.

You may hit an occasional pinch shot that hits the side wall and rolls out with no chance for the opponent to return, but keep in mind that this is a low-percentage shot. You can't be satisfied with anything less than a ball that hits near the side wall and comes straight back, bouncing before it reaches the back wall.

(continued on page 54)



The Ajay Racqueteers

**They drive opponents
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From our **Spoiler**, the largest legal racquetball racquet, down to the **Vendetta**, the lightest around, Ajays are murder on the court, but not on your pocketbook.

The Ajay lineup includes 10 models, 6 head shapes. And when it comes to value, they run the others off the court. See them at your sporting goods dealer or department. Gangbusters!

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BULLET—Right on target! A new elongated teardrop sweet spot.

AVENGER—Great follow through! Comes in three colors with popular elongated rectangle shape.

EXCALIBUR—Very sharp! Color-coordinated tournament nylon strings, aluminum frame in rectangular shape.

VENDETTA—Strong finisher! Lightest weight you can buy, yet a heavy hitter. Teardrop.

HUSTLER—Gets the job done! Composition rectangle frame.

CM300—Money player! Probably the best value you can buy. Teardrop.

DIGGER—Unbreakable! Great for beginners. ABS rectangle frame.

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(continued from page 7)

out of three fifteen point maximum matches.

Accordingly, for all IRA sanctioned tournaments, including Regionals, State Championships and Nationals, Masters and Golden Masters will play to the best two out of three fifteen point maximum games. In all other classes, it will be the best two out of three twenty-one point games with the third game, if necessary, to fifteen points.

I might mention that in the older brackets the fifteen point maximum games were endorsed by the medical authorities we consulted.

To maintain tournaments at the fairest and most equitable competitive level, we have re-organized the classifications among the lower and upper age groups. Juniors are now divided as follows: amateurs under age eighteen, amateurs under sixteen and those under fourteen.

The Golden Masters classification has been broken down into the following classes: fifty-five to sixty, sixty to sixty-five and over sixty-five. Presently, all other age groups remain unchanged.

Since it is recognized that some regions have a preponderance of players in certain age groups and others have very few players in similar groups, for all offi-

cial tournaments we require that there be a minimum of six players in a bracket for official recognition. Round-robin results will not be recognized at Regional and National levels.

Where an insufficient number of players are available for a particular bracket, the tournament director shall have the authority to place the age groups in a single class for the Juniors and Golden Masters. As our sport continues to grow, we recognize that further break-downs in classification will be necessary. However, for now these should suffice.

The membership overwhelmingly requested that we maintain our present rest periods between games. Accordingly, there will be two minutes between the first and second games and a ten minute rest period between the second and tie-breaker fifteen point third game.

Another rule change voted upon by the members is one covering the use of linesmen. It has been ruled that due to the speed of our game it is virtually impossible for one referee to cover all facets of play. Accordingly, linesmen have been given the authority to rule on all areas of play as does the referee. This includes hinders as well as shorts, skips, double bounces etc. What this means is that, on

appeal, a referee may be overruled and the linesman's call shall stand. This will certainly preclude any prolonged arguments over decisions and will expedite play at all levels.

Perhaps the most innovative addition to the rule books is the incorporation of explanatory footnotes and the section covering guides to the referees. So much of our game refereeing is based on judgment that it was thought advisable to give our players all the explanatory help available. I am sure we shall all benefit by these refereeing aids.

There are those among us I am sure, who, due to their personal physical condition, have different ideas about the rules under which the game should be played. I realize that we could not completely satisfy everybody. However, I am also sure that in up-dating these rules we have taken into consideration the wishes of the vast majority of our players, the rapid expansion of the game of racquetball and its widespread media coverage. Racquetball today is a participant sport. It is rapidly becoming a spectator sport, and that is not only good for the game but for the players as well. Our game continues to grow and the International Racquetball Association, I am proud to say, is keeping pace with that growth.

How can you be sure to have a successful racquetball-handball club?



Despite the fact that racquetball is the fastest growing sport in America today, a number of clubs are experiencing problems. We at Spaulding currently own and operate 8 clubs, with more on the way. With our successfully proven programs, we can help you in many areas:

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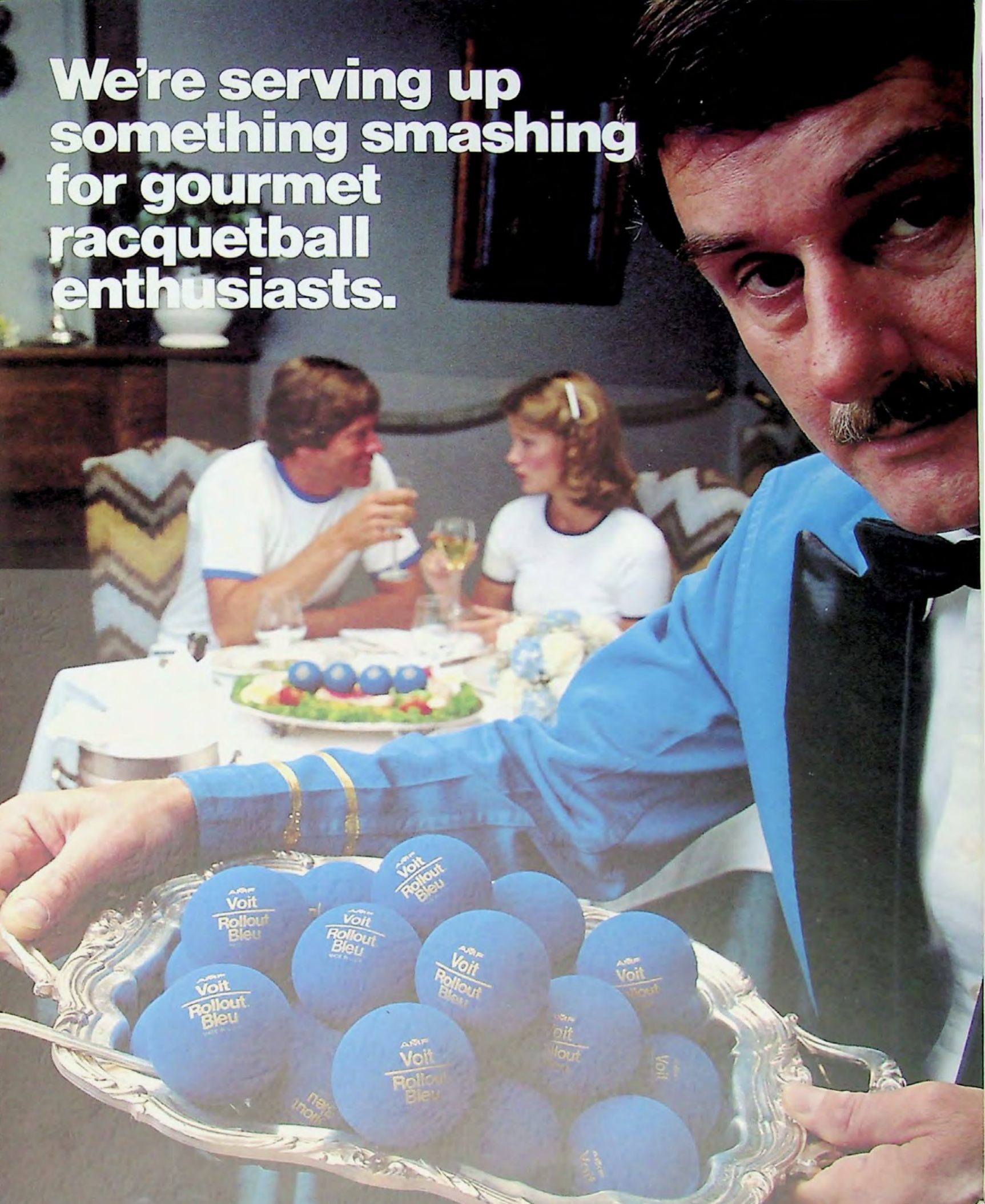
Investment — For the individual with no interest in club operation, but looking for a sound investment and good return, we have a plan that you will find quite attractive.

Call or write Scott Bemis today for more information on the plan(s) that will be of interest to you.



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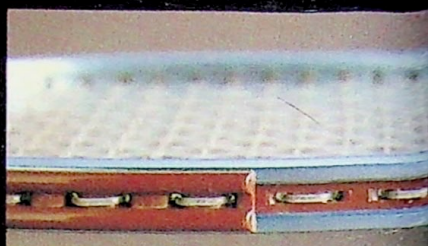


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Impact One and Rollout Bleu have the consistent play of AMF Voit quality. And in a game like racquetball, consistency counts.

The unique frame shape gives a larger hitting area and enlarges the "sweet spot."



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A top quality expanded vinyl head cover featuring a YKK long-life zipper is included with your new high performance Impact One racquet.

Top grade calfskin leather wraps around the grip to give you a sure grasp for complete control.

Thicker walls add 33% more area for seam-binding and less chance of splitting.



Voit quality control insures a consistent ball inside every can you open.

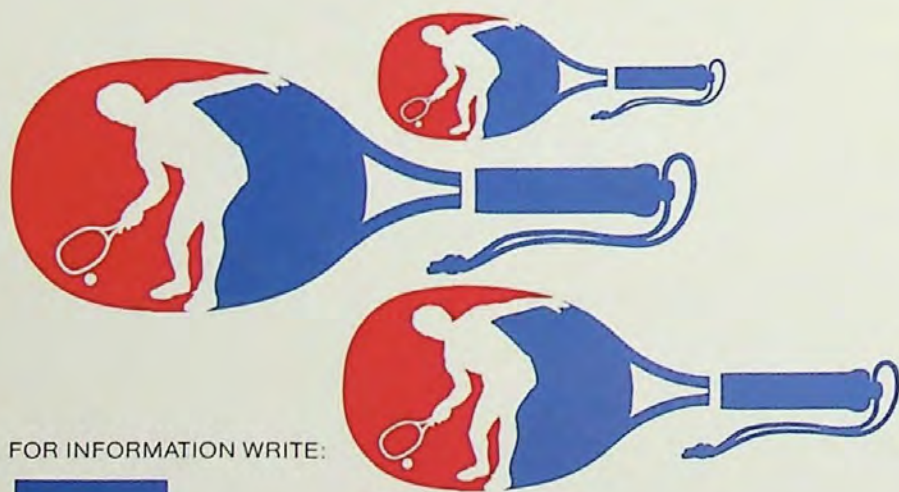
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IRA NOTES

Ektelon/Pony National Juniors

Local qualifying play in the Ektelon/Pony IRA National Juniors Racquetball Tournament is rapidly approaching and if early participant interest is any indication, the event is off to a great start.

The tournament will be comprised of local and regional qualifying play with the finest national juniors squaring off in the finals which will be held in Detroit May 12, 13 and 14th, 1978.

Registration for the tournament will be handled through local court clubs and all junior players are urged to contact their club for details. Information is also available through the IRA.

Local qualifying play will be held the weekends of February 17-19, and 24-26. Any youth, educational or athletic group may sponsor a qualifying local event simply by contacting the IRA.

The tournament entry fee of \$12 will entitle players to court time, hospitality, the tournament ball, a free T-shirt and certificate of participation.

Winners and runners-up in the local playoffs will receive trophies and ribbons and advance to regional play at the participating site closest to their residences.

Regional competitions are slated for April 14, 15 and 16 in the following locations: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Denver, Dallas, St. Louis, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Detroit, Atlanta, Boston and the New Jersey Meadowlands.

Regional winners will receive trophies, free transportation to Detroit for the finals, emblazoned tournament shirts, racquetball shorts, an Ektelon racquet and a pair of Pony racquetball shoes.

Thirty-six young men and an equal number of young women will emerge from the regionals to shoot it out in Detroit May 12, 13 and 14th.

The two national winners in the 17 and under age division will receive lump sum scholarships of \$1,000 each to be used in furthering their educations in addition to trophies. ●



A New Recruit for Racquetball

William B. Tanner played host to National March of Dimes Poster Child, Denise Nankivell during her recent trip to Memphis. Denise, a healthy looking six year old was born with Vitamin D resistant rickets. Patients with this birth defect of body chemistry do not retain calcium or phosphates from foods. When Denise started to walk, the weight of her body caused her legs to bow. At the age of two, she had surgery to straighten her legs.

Denise takes daily doses of phosphate and Vitamin D, to allow for correct bone formation. This therapy and braces have helped to strengthen her legs. Denise has responded so well that her braces have been removed for a trial period. This makes her the first Poster Child to appear without braces and exemplifies the strides the March of Dimes has made in research and treatment of birth defects.

Denise symbolizes the hope that all children can one day be normal.

William B. Tanner, State Chairman for the March of Dimes gave Denise a tour of his racquetball facilities as well as an impromptu lesson or two. With the racquet Mr. Tanner presented Denise, he hoped to have added a new convert to his favorite sport. Denise enjoyed the lesson and rated it even with her tennis lesson from Chris Evert. Mr. Tanner would not say, but we think Denise gave him a tough game.

Mr. Tanner in his role as State Chairman will be enlisting the support of businessmen across Tennessee to aid the March of Dimes in its fight against birth defects. With support from Mr. Tanner and his colleagues, hopefully all children born with birth defects can be given a chance for a healthy normal life. ●

Stretching

by Bob Anderson

A Stretch for the Calf Muscle:

A stretch that is very easy to do but is so very good for your calves (gastrocnemius) is a stretch using a wall or something for support.

Face a fence, or wall, or something you can lean on. Stand a little ways from this support and rest your forearms on it with your forehead on the back of your hands. Now bend one knee and bring that knee toward the wall. Keep your other leg straight and the heel down as you move your hips slightly toward the wall. Keep your toes pointed straight ahead. (Fig. 1) You should feel a good stretch in the calf of the straight leg. This is also a good ankle stretcher.

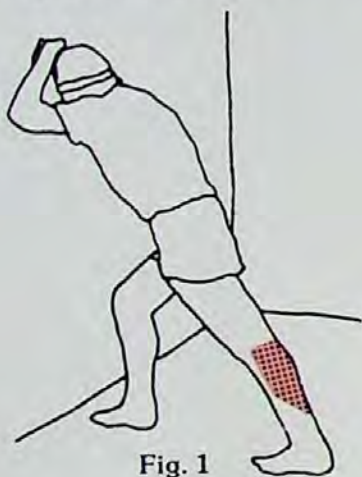


Fig. 1

If you want to stretch the achilles tendon from this stretch, slightly bend the back knee, keeping the foot flat. This gives you a much lower stretch which is also good for maintaining or regaining ankle flexibility.

This calf, achilles tendon, and ankle stretch is very good to do before and after running. It really puts some life into the calves. It is an easy stretch that can be done practically anywhere.

By stretching one leg at a time as described above you are able to isolate and control the stretch in the calf muscle much more effectively than if you were to stretch both legs at the same time. Try stretching both legs at the same time and feel the difference in the stretch you get compared to stretching one leg at a time. Keep your heels down as you move your hips toward the wall.

Leg and Groin Stretches to Do Lying on Your Back with Your Legs Up Against a Wall:

A wall becomes very useful in stretch-

ing the legs, while you relax on your back. When doing these stretches you must be aware of the easy stretch, and then the gradual increase into the de-



Fig. 2

velopmental part of the stretch. Do not stretch in the drastic stretch. These stretches are very easy to do and should be approached in this way.

Start with your legs elevated close together, and your butt about three to five inches away from the wall so that your lower back is flat and not arched or off the mat. At first elevate your feet this way for only about one minute. Gradually increase the time until you can do it for five to eight minutes. If your feet start to go to sleep roll over on your side and then sit up. *Don't get up quickly after elevating your feet.* You may get a light-headed feeling if you stand up too quickly.

With your legs up against the wall, it is possible to stretch the inside of your legs. Slowly separate your legs, with your heels resting on the wall, until you feel an easy stretch. Hold the stretch and relax.

As this position becomes easier with time and patience you should gradually stretch further by lowering your legs a little more. An advanced position is shown in Fig. 2. Do not try to copy this position but stretch within your limits. Do not strain. The wall makes it possible to hold these stretches longer in a relaxed, stable position, without wasting energy from a lack of balance.

Remember to keep your butt three to five inches from the wall. If you are too close to the wall you might feel tightness in your lower back.

Other ways to stretch against the wall:

Put the soles of your feet together, resting them against the wall. Relax. To increase the stretch, use your hands to gently push down on the inside of your thighs until you feel a good, easy stretch.

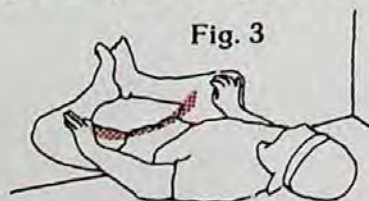


Fig. 3

(Fig. 3) Do not push directly on your knees but a little above them. Relax while you stretch.

To isolate and increase the stretch in each side of the groin area straighten one leg out. This should create more of a stretch in the groin area of the straight leg. (Fig. 4)

When doing a series of stretches, go from one stretch to another slowly. Do not speed through them. Hold stretches for fifty to sixty seconds. Do not stretch in the drastic stretch.



Fig. 4

How To Sit Up From A Legs Against the Wall Position or From Lying on Your Back:

Bend both of your knees and lower them to the mat on one side of your body. While resting on your side, use your hands to push yourself up into a sitting position. By using your hands and arms in this manner you take the pressure, or stress, off the back when sitting up.



Fig. 5

Leg and Groin Stretches To Do Using the Corner of A Mat:

Sitting on the corner of the mat, place your legs and feet along the outside edges of the mat. (Fig. 5) Find a position that is easy to relax in. Use your arms and hands behind you for balance and support. Using the mat this way stabilizes your legs and makes it easier for you to hold a stretch.

If the above stretch is easy for you and you would like to increase the stretch, move your body slowly forward, sliding your legs down along the sides of the mat. Keep your toes and feet upright. Do not let them turn in or out.

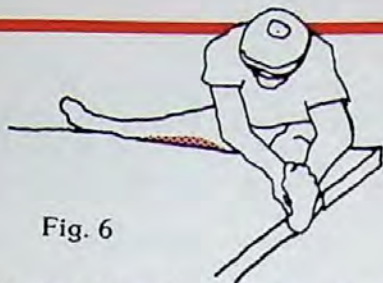


Fig. 6

To stretch one leg at a time, sit on the corner of the mat in a position that is easy to hold. Turn to face one foot and bend forward at the waist in that direction. Reach down with your hands and hold some place on your leg which gives you an easy stretch. (Fig. 6) Think of your forehead going toward of just beyond your knee. Be aware of the stretch and the importance of being relaxed. Sit up and stretch to the other side in the same way. Stretch the tight side first. Use a towel if necessary.

Another stretch which can be done sitting on the corner of a mat is also a minimum test for flexibility. The flexibility which is required to pass this test has a lot to do with agility — the ability to move laterally, or to the side. You can develop a certain amount of increased agility through gradually becoming more limber in this somewhat hard to stretch area.

Sitting on the corner of the mat in a comfortable position, face straight ahead and bend forward at the waist with legs straight. Put your hands on top of each other in fists in front of you and bend forward until your forehead can rest on them. (Fig. 7) Comfortably hold that position for at least fifty seconds. This is a minimum test of flexibility.



Fig. 7

If you are unable to do this without your legs bending or twitching, or are unable to bend over far enough to touch your fist with your forehead, you need to work on this stretch. *Don't strain.*

To begin with, you may need to practice sitting for only a few seconds at a time in this position with your arms behind you for support. When this becomes comfortable for longer periods of time, begin bending forward at the waist until you can rest your elbows on the mat. This may take several months of working on it a few minutes a day. With

patience and time you will be able to do what may seem now an impossible feat.

Normally wasted times, such as waiting for something, or watching TV, are good times for short periods of stretching. One question that may generate some energy is, "Why not? What else am I doing?". If we use normally wasted time regularly in a positive manner, there will be positive results in the way we feel — in the way our body/mind becomes more energetic and full of life.

Muscle tension can be greatly reduced by stretching. At the first sign of muscular tension stretch to counteract this tension. It is necessary for us to learn how to stretch anywhere and at practically any time so that we can stretch when we feel the need. The way to keep muscle tension at a minimum is to stretch the area of tension at the first sign of tightness. Tension is something that builds up. It is much better to work on relieving it a little at a time, keeping it at a minimum without letting it build up.

Feel free to stretch anytime. Don't worry about other people. Every time you stretch you will feel good from it. Work on relieving that tension and tightness. Learn how to control how you feel.



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Women's doubles: Francine Davis & Bonnie Stoll

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Oklahoma State University
January 13-15

Men's open singles: Kent Taylor, (Stillwater)

Men's master singles: Ken Denney, (Oklahoma City)

Men's senior singles: Jim McPherson, (Oklahoma City)

Men's open doubles: Myron Roderick & Kent Taylor, (Stillwater)

Men's 40 & up doubles: Bill Reese (Dallas) and Dean Lemmon (Topeka)

Women's open singles: Joyce Jackson (Oklahoma City)

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(continued on page 46)

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Strategic Variations

By Dr. Victor I. Spear

If racquetball were like golf, there would be only one legitimate object of concern: yourself. Your shots would have no direct relationship to your opponent's shots. You would both be playing the same game, trying to shoot the low score. But golf is a solo game. At the moment of truth, when you make contact with the ball, you are alone in your own little world with that ball, and your opponent has nothing to do with it. You are virtually playing alone all of the time. You can plan your golf shots well in advance, so as to achieve the best possible score on every hole.

But racquetball is not like golf. It is an action-reaction sport. It is a four-wall chess game. Every move you make must be at least partially based on the previous move and current position of your opponent. If you bull-headedly plan your game too far ahead, and plow ahead with your preconceived ideas at all costs, while ignoring what your opponent is doing, you are going to be slaughtered. If you are unable to adapt your game to that of your opponent's strengths and weaknesses, you are going to find yourself losing, time and again, to players of lesser ability. Every move you make should be designed to cancel out his strengths and exaggerate yours, to cover up your weaknesses and magnify his.

When a player has a weak backhand, you'll be hitting more left side shots, and when he has a forehand weakness, you'll hit more right-side shots, etc. These are glaring, self-evident magnets that need no further discussion. But there is some value in discussing further the matter of **style**. The overall approach to the game varies so much from player to player, that individual shot weaknesses diminish in importance when compared to the total picture. I'd like to discuss two extremes in style, **the gunner** and **the rabbit**. If they have ability equal to yours, and you play the same game against both of them, you will most certainly lose to one or the other. If you'd like to beat them both, read on.

BEATING THE GUNNER

This is the guy who goes out on the court with one intention and one intention only — to shoot. At least half of his shots are attempted kill shots. Now if he is a terrible shooter with an ego problem, and just persists in hitting the ball into the floor, you have nothing to worry about. But if he is a good shooter who can roll them out with fairly good consistency, you have a considerable problem to cope with. What should you do?

The answer is clear: **shoot more**, i.e., go for more winners.

I find it very curious that few players reach this conclusion. The usual response to this

kind of thinking is: "Why shoot more? I will only be playing **his** game." This is both superficial and erroneous analysis. You won't be playing his game at all. You will be **taking away** his game.

One of the most common strategic errors in the game is to try to play the move-the-ball-around, waiting game against the Gunner. This approach is suicidal. What you are waiting for is death. Don't be oblivious to the inevitable. The longer the rally goes on, the more likely it is that he will get his shot, and roll it out. For some unexplained reason, most players feel intimidated by a Gunner, and withdraw into a defensive shell. They are reluctant to shoot with him, when that is precisely the way to beat him. Try to hit as many early winners as possible, so that he has fewer opportunities to exercise his strength. You must take more aggressive chances against this player. You must kill more serves. There is nothing more deflating to a Gunner than to watch you hit a good kill shot serve return. You stop him from scoring before he even has one chance to shoot the ball. There is no way he can **serve** a kill shot.

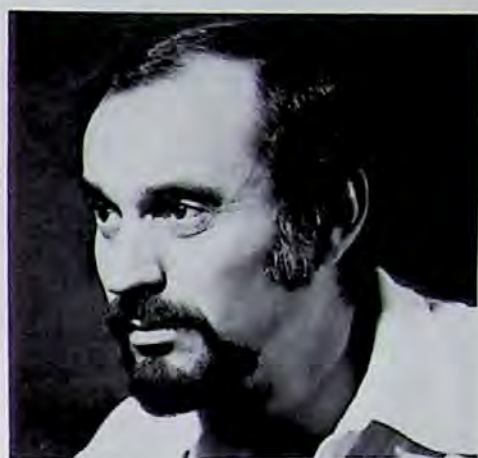
The same strategy applies to playing anyone who is clearly better than you are. The longer the point goes on, the more likely he is going to win it. So why not shoot more? You wouldn't dispute the fact that your chances to win a five point game would be better than your chances in a full game. Doesn't the same reasoning apply to an individual rally?

I was faced one day with the dismal and potentially embarrassing prospect of playing an exhibition game against a professional who was in town giving a racquetball clinic. I thought about my chances, concluded that they were somewhere between zero and none, and realized that I had three choices: leave town, call in sick, or go out on the court and **shoot everything I could get my racquet on**. Naturally I chose the latter strategy and managed to get thirteen points, which was about ten more than I would have gotten with my usual methodical, waiting game.

Remember some of these thoughts the next time you come up head to head with your local champion, or draw the number one seed in a tournament.

BEATING THE RABBIT

This is the guy who gets to everything. This is the guy who has great agility and quick reflexes. The speed demon. The racehorse. This is the guy who reminds you of Charlie Hustle, charging all over the court, diving on the floor, crashing into walls, but always hitting your best shot back. This is the guy you have to beat three times to get one point.



The following article is one of a continuing series of articles by Dr. Victor I. Spear from his book **How To Win at Racquetball**. The book, containing 75 pages including diagrams, can be purchased for \$4.45 (paperback) from Win Publishing, Camelot Towers, Suite 204, 1415 East State St., Rockford, Ill. 61108.

Dr. Spear, a 1959 graduate of the University of Michigan Medical School, is a practicing physician in Rockford, Ill. He also plays racquetball, having won the Rockford City championship in 1972 and 1974 and the Tri-City Tournament in Janesville, Wisc., in 1976.

But he is usually not a great shooter. He is basically a retriever. (If he is also a topnotch shooter, you'd better find someone else to play with.) Now if you try to go out and shoot against the Rabbit you are going to get killed. Half your kill shots he will save, and the other half you will hit into the floor, trying to hit it lower and lower so that he won't get to the ball.

The identical principle should be applied to the Rabbit as we did to the Gunner: take away his greatest strength. Since his strength is speed, play the type of game in which speed is not an asset. This means throwing as many left corner ceiling shots at him as you possibly can, with a few Z-balls mixed in for variety. Hit winners only when he has been forced into a weak return that gives you such a good set-up that you can beat him three ways. It makes no sense at all to take high risk gambling shots against the Rabbit.

This strategy, designed to nullify his talents, will eventually frustrate him so much that he is likely to make some bad shots.

A final word on returning serve: It makes much more sense to hit kill shot serve returns against the Gunner than against the Rabbit. Trying to hit kill shot winners from the back court against a good Rabbit with

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center court position is certain to lead to your ruination. Unless you hit a roll-out, you will never get back into the point.

Summary: **Gun down the gunner.**
Bore the rabbit to death.

HOW TO TURN A LOSING GAME AROUND

No matter how good a player you are, some days you are going to find yourself in the frustrating position of being far behind an opponent who is **not** a better player than you. How do you reverse this trend?

In tennis, the best coaches will always tell you to stay back if you are winning by staying back. But if you are losing with that strategy, you must rush the net more often. The same principle should apply to racquetball. Never argue with success, and don't be oblivious to failure. With the score 13-2 against you, you had better call a time out and think things over. But don't waste your time out. Use your thirty seconds to carefully and methodically plan specific changes in your game that might produce a turn-around.

1. Serving—If you have been concentrating on left side serves, try a few more to the right. If you have been hitting low drive serves, hit a few more lobs and off speed Z-serves.
2. Serve returns—This is the most likely source of your troubles. If you have been unable to control the ceiling shot to the left corner, try hitting a few to the right. If you have been hitting aggressive kill shot and passing shot returns without success, go back to a controlled ceiling game. If the reverse is true, try killing more serves.
3. Choice of winners—Some players are more easily beaten with kill shots than passing shots, and some the opposite. If necessary, change over to a predominance of one over the other. If your kill shots are coming up high, or skipping in low, try a few cross-court kill shots. Just a small change in the angle can get you back on target again.

Now don't misunderstand the purpose of all this. I'm not suggesting that you spend weeks and months developing a sound racquetball strategy, and then go out and throw

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it all away just because you lose a few points. What I am trying to encourage is that you develop a versatility in your game which will allow you to change the tempo **temporarily** whenever necessary, in order to interrupt the momentum of a steam-roller. No one can deny the value of momentum in an athletic struggle. Once you have recaptured this all-important force, you will be able to go back to your usual game with more favorable results. But you must do something to break up a long losing streak, even if it means hitting a few shots which are relatively unnatural to your style.

Nothing baffles me more than to watch a player losing point after point after point in exactly the same manner. **Stupid!** You may lose, but go out there with the attitude that your opponent will have to beat you ten different ways if he's going to beat you at all. In that case, you have lost to a better player, which is no disgrace. What really hurts is to lose to someone you should destroy.

Consider another possibility. It could be that you haven't sized up his game correctly. Perhaps the shots that make up your usual game play right into the strongest parts of his game. Unless you want to lose, you had better change your style for a while. You might discover, quite by accident, some glaring weaknesses in his game that you might never have found without exploring uncharted territory. I remember one match being completely reversed by simply changing to a right-side Z-serve which I found out (almost too late) that my opponent handled

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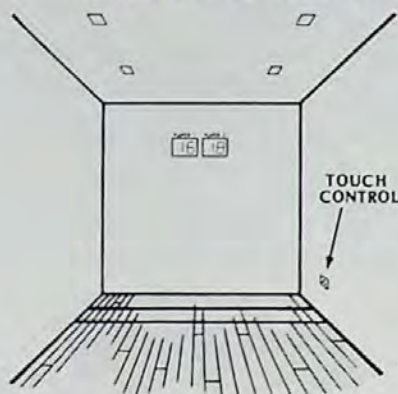
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very poorly. Psychologically, it can be devastating. It's like having your pants pulled down in public in the fourth grade.

One final and very important point: No matter what aspects of your game you elect to change, the change must be highlighted by **more hustle**. This may seem unnecessary to point out, but it takes more effort than you might think. It goes completely contrary to your state of mind at the time. It is a very human tendency to let down some when you're losing badly. Most of us tend to run the least when we need to run the most. The only way to get out of a slump is to run harder. Dig after some of those kill shots that seem to be out of reach. You might surprise yourself and get to a few.

And what's more, running harder will help to ease the tension, which may have been the problem in the first place.

HOW TO WIN WHEN YOU'RE EXHAUSTED

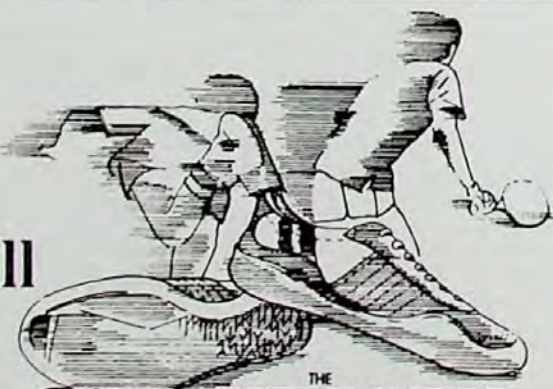
I know that some of you readers out there are in my shoes—over 40, legs starting to give out (to say nothing of the lungs), endurance on the wane, speed no more than a distant memory. What is worse, we are frequently playing against an opponent fifteen years younger, faster, more durable, and invariably heartless and insulting, as he stays on the court to play another hour with someone else, while we stagger off to the intensive care unit, clutching a picture of George Blanda to our hearts.

Now it's one thing to sit down and plan a perfect racquetball strategy to guide us under normal conditions. The above, however, could hardly qualify as "normal". So it behooves us to develop a sub-strategy within the strategy, a "Plan-B" of sorts, to be unveiled when we can no longer execute according to theoretical guidelines. Perhaps you have your own set of warning signals, such as when your nailbeds begin turning blue, or when you stop sweating on one side of your body, or when you've just had to call time out with the score three to two, or when your wife leaves the gallery to call your insurance man, or when you begin to see palm trees and watery oases in front court.

All is not lost. With the application of a few minor adjustments, it is still possible to pull through.

1. This above all—**get your head together**. Guard against the common mental errors that you would never commit at any other time, such as fading or drifting after a serve, failing to move toward the ball after hitting a cross-court passing shot, etc. We generally think of fatigue as something that affects our shooting and running game. I think it is potentially more devastating to our **thinking game**. It is infinitely more difficult to concentrate when you are hang dog tired, but concentration becomes even more critical at such

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- times. If you can't think straight, you might as well give up.
2. Be more careful not to serve up any pumpkins. Remember, it is not critical that you make a great serve, but you must avoid hitting poor ones.
3. Hit a kill shot serve return every good opportunity you get. You must change your usual percentages in this situation. Obviously, it is to your advantage to keep the rally as short as possible. What is more important is this: Your execution of shots will have a quality inversely proportional to your fatigue level. The very beginning of each point is the time when you have the most energy. So why not set yourself up and go for a winner as often as you can. The longer the rally goes on, the more likely you are to make an error.
4. Hit your forehand ceiling shots with an overspin stroke, similar to the way a tennis serve is hit, with a quarter-turned face. This will allow you to get the ball into the back court without swinging so hard. You may hit this shot with overspin normally, but if you don't now is the time to do it.
5. Play an aggressive game. Don't make the mistake of trying to "pace yourself", so as to save something for the later stages. You'll never see the later stages. Go for every point. Try to make the game as short as possible, and you have a chance.
6. Don't cut corners on energy consumption by failing to set your feet properly before hitting a shot. One of the major flaws of a tired player is that he begins to hit backhand shots from a flat-foot position facing the front wall. You won't get away with this short-cut. Always make your full turn, facing the side wall, and stride into your backhand strokes.
7. Take the full ten seconds allotted to you by the rules between every point. It is stupid for a tired player to walk up and serve the ball immediately after winning a long rally. Stand there and take a few deep breaths. And **think**. Then serve.

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(continued from page 38)

Rocky Mountain Open

Albuquerque, New Mexico
September 30-October 2

Men's open singles: Harold Lujan
(Steamboat Springs, Colo.)

Women's open singles: Jan Corsie
(Albuquerque)

Senior's singles: Ernie Nello

Master's singles: Bob Sanchez

Golden master's singles: Fred Capio

Juniors: Gregg Peck (El Paso)

Open doubles: Jim Austin &
Marc Aurbach (Houston)

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Cincinnati, Ohio

December 16-18

Round-robin winners:

First: Steve Sulli and Clyde Senters

Second: Jerry Davis and Jack Soble

Third: Danny Clifford and Rob Abrams

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Fort Devens, MA

December 2-3

Men's open: SSgt. Danny Giordano

Seniors: MSgt. Mike Donoghue

Masters: John Lepore

Women's: Jane Rogers

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As a uniquely personal gift for Ed
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Lynn's lucky timing won the family
some \$400 worth of racquetball equip-
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Clubs, and five hours of free court time.

Ed is operations manager of National
Storage Company in Kalamazoo and is
an all-round athlete who made the var-
sity swimming and football teams in high
school. Lynn is a registered nurse who
works part-time at Bronson Hospital in
Kalamazoo.

The Sports Illustrated chain reached
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Hogan and Wright Sweep

By JACK BRENNAN
Memphis Press-Scimitar

"Marty Hogan, meet Shannon Wright."

"Shannon, this is Marty."

Formalities such as the above were not actually employed at the Dec. 4 conclusion of the 4th annual IRA-sponsored Tanner Pro-Am in Memphis, but one had to wonder if the idea was considered.

It had, after all, been quite some time since the two brightest young stars in racquetball had encountered each other in the winner's circle at the same tournament.

Wright had taken off on the high road last summer with her victory over Peggy Steding in the national championships, but Hogan had been forced to detour with an upset loss to Davy Bledsoe. Hogan, of course, had won five straight meets on the fall tour by the time of the Tanner's Dec. 1 opening, but Wright had long since fallen by the wayside. She hadn't won since the nationals, and was seeded sixth for the Memphis event.

So here's to the Tanner Pro-Am, matchmaker par excellence. Despite the setbacks each had encountered during

the past six months, it was hard to imagine a winning combination more likely to be repeated at future tour stops than the reunited pair of Hogan and Wright.

Hogan entered the men's competition as the No. 1 seed, and had no intention of seeing his winning streak come to an end.

"I really was surprised to lose in the nationals," he said. "I had made up my mind to come back strong this season. I wanted to make no errors and win 'em all."

Hogan had not lost a game at the Tanner as he prepared to square off against No. 3 seed Charlie Brumfield for the championship, but was admittedly preoccupied with holding his often explosive behavior in check for the television cameras which were recording the match. And when Brumfield erased a 19-12 deficit to win 21-19 in the first game, the crowd at Memphis State University's Physical Education complex was thinking upset.

But Brumfield, 10 years Hogan's senior, wasn't counting his chickens. "I

can't go three games," he gasped when his frantic comeback was completed.

Charlie knew what he was talking about. He fought gamely as Hogan rebounded to win the second game in workmanlike fashion 21-15, but he ran out of gas in the third as Hogan captured the title in a 15-3 blowout.

The cocky Hogan later contended that his victory was never in doubt.

"I knew I had him," Hogan said. "Physically I was in twice as good a shape as he was. It was only a matter of time before I beat him."

And while looking cool for the TV cameras might have been important for the St. Louis native, he eventually determined that it wasn't as important as winning.

"I don't know if I was trying to tone down my behavior or what," he said, "but I was aware of the cameras and I wasn't playing like I should have been. In the tiebreaker I just made up my mind to forget everything and go out and beat him bad."

Aside from keeping his hot streak since



Tanner Pro-Am

the nationals intact, the victory filled a void in Hogan's personal list of accomplishments. The Tanner had been one of the few tournaments he had never won.

Other Hogan victims included Steve Chase (21-10, 21-16), Jay Jones in the quarterfinals (21-14, 21-15), and fifth-seeded Craig McCoy in the semifinals.

Steve Keeley, the 29-year-old veteran from San Diego, had shocked No. 2 seed Bledsoe 7-21, 21-16, 15-7 in a quarterfinal match, but Brumfield wrote Keeley out of the championship script with a 21-18, 21-12 win in the other semifinal.

Wright's image, tarnished by her ineffective performances earlier in the fall, wasn't improved as much as her supporters might have hoped when she eliminated No. 3 seed Jenifer Harding in the women's quarterfinals 21-16, 16-21, 15-8. Harding suffered a badly twisted ankle in the third game of that match, and it was suspected that the less deserving player had won — especially when No. 2 seed Jannell Marriot poleaxed Wright 21-4 in the first game of their semifinal match.

So much for suspicions. Wright came back to mash Marriott 21-13 and 15-5.

In the championship match, Wright went on to show that she hadn't lost her old knack for making Peggy Steding's life miserable. She beat her (the No. 1 seed) 21-20, 21-13.

Like Brumfield in the men's final, Steding rallied strongly from a 19-12 deficit in the opening game, but she didn't take it far enough. A key point in the game occurred when Steding, serving at 18-20, claimed that her return had bounced twice before Wright picked it up for what referee Jerry Hilecher ruled a clean get. Most observers agreed with Steding's view of the play, even Shannon's coach, but Hilecher's ruling was upheld.

The point was eventually a hinder, and Steding kept her serve to tie the game at 20. But the dispute loomed large when Wright came back to win 21-20. The second game was anticlimactic, with Steding and a large part of the crowd apparently still brooding over the alleged injustice of game one.

(continued on page 60)



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Strategy—the cerebral game

(continued from page 11)

corner, back out along an imaginary diagonal toward this area, as in diagram 2.

The distance to retreat along the

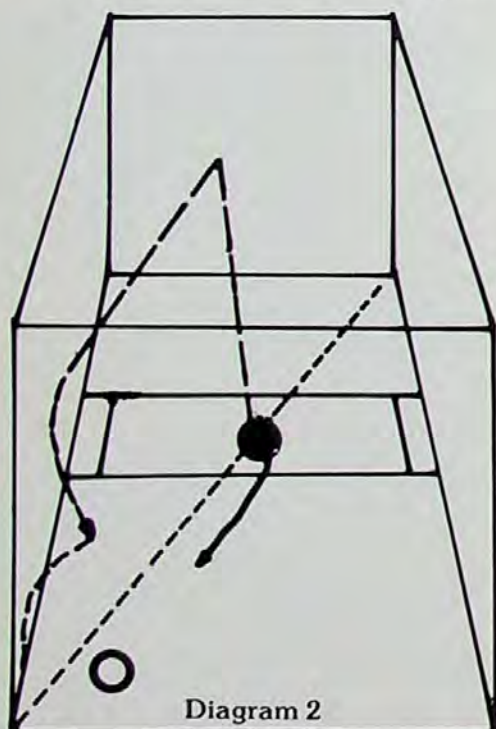


Diagram 2

Retreat at an angle toward the corner to which you served. Back up four or five steps if the serve was well-placed, a couple of steps or not at all if your serve was weak.

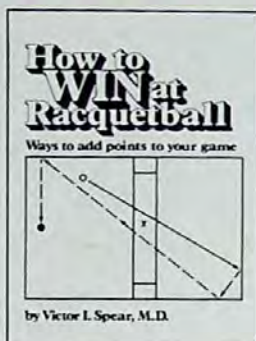
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diagonal depends on the accuracy of your serve. By way of example, a satisfactory garbage serve lets you tread posteriorly along the hypotenuse four or five steps toward the left rear corner. But an uncontrolled drive serve which rebounds off the back wall for a setup should be complemented by only a one or two step retreat, or none at all.

Intelligent racquetball demands that you watch the ball when it is your opponent's turn to swing, and this is especially important after the serve. As you retreat along the diagonal, observe the ball flying toward your opponent and see if you can anticipate his return by scrutinizing which way he steps into the ball, his racquet angle, the height of contact and his overall countenance. For example, when you see the guy angle his step toward the left side wall, contact the ball off the rear foot and ankle high, with dilated pupils and a dead animal sneer on his lips, expect a kill into the left front corner.

Strategy on the Service Return

That brings us to strategy on the service return. As with the serve, the reigning factor here is center court positioning. Diagram 1 roughly defines the three court areas, including center court. As in chess, whoever dominates center court emerges the eventual victor.

I hinted earlier that because the receiver initially stands in deep court and the server in the center court epicenter, the prime objective in returning service is to exchange court positions. Do this with a defensive shot (Z-ball, around-the-wall ball or ceiling ball) or with a drive. Recall that the mainstay of service return is the ceiling ball. When in doubt, go up.

You may utilize the ceiling to return any serve, low or high zone. Experiment in a practice game by returning every serve, whether it's tough or a plum, to the ceiling. In the ensuing practice game be just as single-minded, but avoid the ceiling on every serve return. Then compare the scores. Of course, neither of these all-up or all-down strategies is sound, and most pros unconsciously adhere to the rule of thumb: Return any serve that must be taken above the knees with a defensive shot (usually a ceiling ball). Return any serve that may be taken below the knees with an offensive shot (pass or kill). And if you think about it, most serves rebounding off the back wall are in the below-the-knee category, if you allow them to drop, so return these offensively.

Another racquetball service return rule of thumb: Move up and take the serve on the fly (before it bounces) whenever feasible. Your volley shot need not be a

thread-the-needle pass or kill, because the server is still thinking about his serve by the time your shot zooms past him. Experience is the best teacher on when the time is ripe to fly shot the serve return. It helps to "read" or observe the server's idiosyncrasies. For example, he may step toward the right front corner when about to serve to the right side. If he does this and you see he'll contact the ball in the high zone, expect a garbage to the right. Indeed, the most valuable anticipatory clue here is which of the two service levels the server chooses. If he drops the ball lower than knee height and bends deeply at the knees, prepare for a drive or low Z. However, if he stands upright in the service box like Frankenstein at attention and subsequently contacts the sphere shoulder high, be ready to move up to fly the ball as he begins his service motion.

Strategy on the Rally

The rally follows the serve and its return, and here the strategic implications are more significant, more complicated. The essence of strategy on the rally is to know your own capabilities and foibles, to be aware of your opponent's capabilities and foibles, and then to hit the shots you have found through experience to be most effective in garnering points.

Specifically, the cornerstone of rally strategy is the use of *complementary shots*. This is another way of saying, "Hit the ball where the other guy ain't." For instance, if one of your shots runs your rival forward and to the right, your next complementary shot would require your opponent to retreat back and to the left. Diagram 3 demonstrates how your present shot may complement your preceding one.

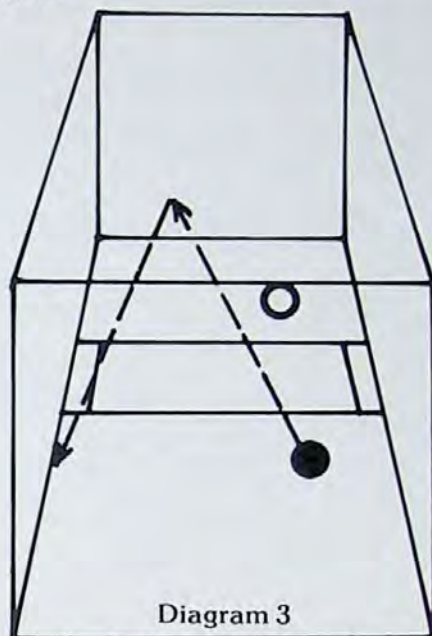


Diagram 3

Another important facet of rally strategy is the concept of *offensive vs. defensive play*. Remember that the aggressive player is the better player, within the following guidelines. Suppose you are stationed in center court, with your competitor lingering in deep court, and it's your turn to hit the ball. Administer an offensive thrust, usually a killshot. Contrarily, if you are presented with a setup in back court with your opponent in center court position, hit a pass or defensive shot.

Thus, attempt different shots depending on your court station, and to a lesser degree on your opponent's position. Review diagram 1 which portrays the three general areas. Usually, kill *front court* setups. Handle *mid-court* setups aggressively (pass or kill), the specific shot hinging on the defensive player's stance. Generally, when in *back court* think defensively, unless your opponent is out of position. Your shot selection will evolve into a more *offensively* oriented attack as your proficiency advances.

Finally, everybody wants to *kill* the ball, which isn't a bad desire at all. You are familiar with the killshot stroke, but what of killshot strategy? Assuming you can kill the ball (that is, you have the physical skill grooved), simply direct
(continued on page 54)

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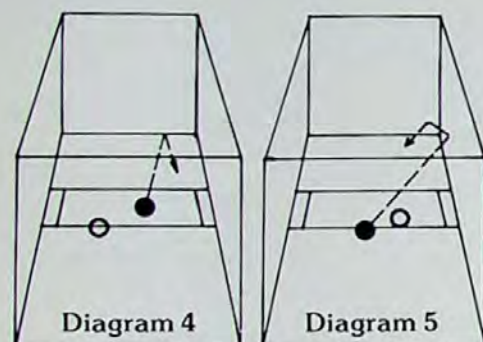


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(continued from page 51)

most forehand kills into the forehand corner, and most backhand kills into the backhand corner.

Now that you're shooting for the proper corner, you may use one of two types of killshots: the *straight-on* which hits the front wall first, and the *sidewall first pinch*. Common sense dictates which to choose in any given situation, as in diagrams 5 and 6. Basically, pinch or straight kill depending on which type takes the ball away from your opponent.



Game Plans

Let's conclude this synopsis of singles strategy with the *game plan*. As in any sport, it's important to formulate some plan of attack prior to the opening serve, or at least during the game's early stages.

Is your upcoming opponent an obese slug? Then plan to run him around with a fast volley of passes and kills. Is he inconsistent and impatient? Then stay up to the ceiling, awaiting the sure-to-come setup. Again, your pre-game plan depends on both your and your opponent's strong and weak points.

This is not to say that you must strictly adhere to any preconceived game plan. A pre-match strategy which proves faulty once actual play commences can always be altered. Here, the ancient sports adage holds: "Always *change* a losing game, and always *maintain* a winning game."

Sooner or later your best-laid game plan will go awry. What do you do? First, call time out. Next consider *why* you're losing. There can only be two reasons related to your game plan. Either your game plan is okay but you're not *executing* it well (missing shots), or your original plan of attack was *wrong*, period. In the first instance, simply determine to execute better. (Try a few practice shots during the seconds remaining in your time out.) In the second case, you're gonna have to *think*. Come up with another feasible plan. Better yet, fall back on the *alternate game plan* which you conceived prior to play.

Off the Wall Z-Shots

(continued from page 28)

Although this drill can also be used to practice kill shots, keep in mind that a passing shot will be more effective than a kill when your opponent is in front of you. If he's in front, when you try to kill and your shot comes out too far, he is in good position, and a re-kill wins the point.

Those who persevere with a jump rope and the Reverse-S drill should notice marked improvement in their

stamina and technique, and you can't really have one without the other.

If your stamina falls down, your technique always goes with it. Knowing what you're supposed to do isn't going to help if you're too tired to execute.

On the other hand, you can be in the best of shape, but if you aren't hitting the right shots, you're just beating your brains against the wall.

So follow these hints, and you'll beat your opponent instead.

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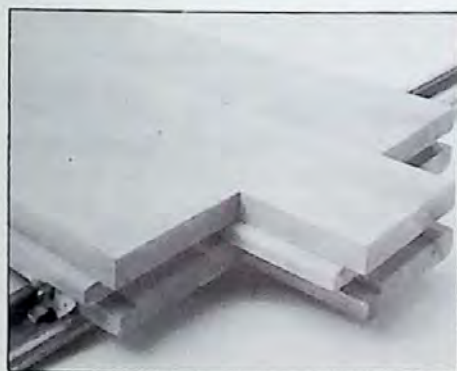
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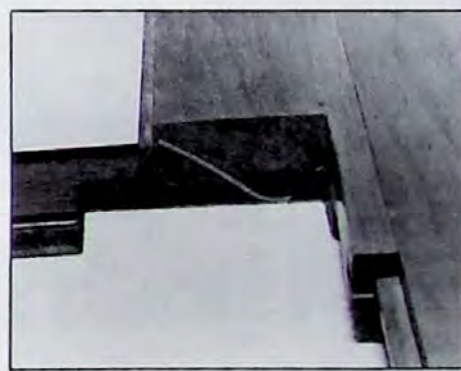
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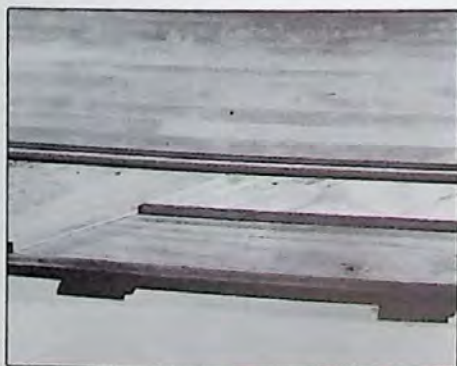
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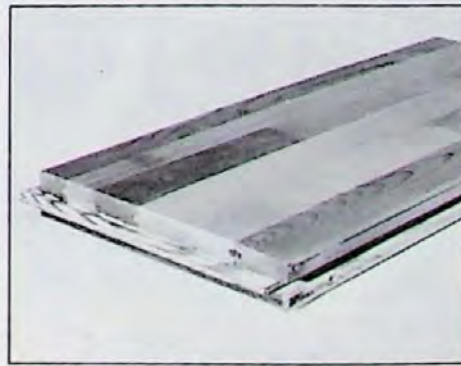
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May 26-28

IRA Nationals

National Court Club Association

The National Court Club Association was formed less than a year ago by court club owners who felt there was a need for a group to promote racquetball on the management level.

John Wineman of The Court House chain serves as the association's president. He explains that the NCCA offers group benefits to club owners and disseminates information to developers who are interested in building racquetball clubs. The association does not try to encourage or discourage potential builders, but simply provides enough accurate information to help them make a responsible judgment.

"A lot of the information available previous to the creation of the NCCA was misleading," Wineman explains. "As a group of actual owners with first-hand knowledge of court clubs, we are able to educate developers about the costs of building and operating a club, and about the kind of people they must reach to support it."

Within less than a year, the NCCA has already signed on more than 250 members. Membership dues in the NCCA are contingent on the number of clubs an individual represents. The fee is \$100 per club plus \$10 per court each year. So, for example, the owner of an 8-court club would pay \$180.

"But," Wineman explains, "because of the benefits we offer, most people actually save money. I can give you a specific case where a club paid \$320 and saved \$5000."

The most significant benefit of association membership is the group purchasing program. "A property and casualty insurance plan is available that can save clubs literally thousands of dollars a year," Wineman says. "But you've got to be a member of NCCA to be eligible."

"Court club owners have as big a stake in the industry as anyone," Wineman says. "Maybe even bigger than the manufacturers when you total up the investment in physical plants and equipment by clubs across the country."

"We have a tremendous interest in what happens," he continues, "and when there is standardization of play, of rules, or of products, we want to be involved. And if there are complaints about tournaments or about the industry in general, we want to hear about them."

Further information can be obtained from: NCCA, 45 Oak Street, Suite 9, Northfield, IL 60093. 312-869-6660.

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(continued from page 49)

The loss was doubly tough to swallow for Steding after her sparkling performance in the earlier rounds. She had convincingly beaten Donna Meager (21-5, 21-2) Jan Pasternak (21-15, 21-3) and Sarah Green (21-9, 21-8).

The highlight among the competitions in other divisions came in the Men's Masters, where Memphis' own William B. Tanner (that's right, Tanner like in Tanner Pro-Am) won the championship with a 21-18, 15-21, 15-9 decision over Billy Evans.

Considering that it was his first time to win his own tournament, Tanner didn't think he had been a rude host.

"No one believed I could do it," he said. "It was quite a thrill. I knew it was going to be tough, so I went back to an old training program Mike Zeitman and I had worked out; I think it helped me play well."

In men's amateur play, John Dunlap of Memphis won over Gary Stevens of Memphis 18-21, 21-14, 15-5 (Class A), Mike Gordon beat Joe Pipkin 21-13, 21-12 (Class B) and Ken Strong downed Jeff Boyd 21-16, 21-12. (Class C).

Hogan's mother, Goldie, and his sister, Linda, each reached the finals in women's amateur play. Linda won the B title 21-12, 21-15 over Pat Froeba, but Goldie was blasted 21-6, 21-2 for the A championship by Barbara Faulkenberry of Clearwater, Fla. Froeba also lost in the

Class C championship match, falling 21-11, 21-10 to Kathleen Morgan.

The Men's Seniors championship went to Jerry O'Neal of Birmingham, Ala., who beat Ron Leon of Memphis 21-13, 21-13 in the title match. Marlowe Phillips of St. Louis came back to beat Louisville's Irv Zeitman for the Golden Masters trophy in a 7-21, 21-9, 15-10 match.

Pete Tashie of Memphis was the winner in 17-and-under Juniors, topping Doug Weisman of St. Louis 21-15, 10-21, 15-14. Two Memphis players battled in the 15-and-under, with Keith Blackmon beating Billy Gamble 21-20, 17-21, 15-12.

Mike Zeitman, assistant to the president of the IRA, credited work by both sponsors and individual volunteers for making the fourth Tanner Pro-Am the most successful in history. Among those Zeitman singled out for kudos were Lee Peebles, Larry Lyles, Irv Zeitman, Stacy Long, Kathy Mizell, June Green and all who served on the hospitality crew. Special thanks to sponsors Charlie Drake of Leach Industries, Bob Coate and Al Mackie of Seamco Sporting Goods, D-Con and Cuervo Tequila.

Zeitman also expressed thanks to Memphis State University for hosting the tournament at its physical education



complex and to WKNO-TV for taping the event. The tournament will be aired on PBS March 26 at 4 pm CST.



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Ankle Sprain Rehabilitation

(continued from page 27)

- (1 above) with a friend giving resistance to the exercises with his hands.
- (b) **Hopping Exercise**—first standing on the good ankle, hop as high as possible, then repeat on the injured ankle.
- (5) When you can perform the hopping exercise equally as well as on the good ankle without pain, do the following exercises:
- (a) (1) Active jogging and walking with ankle strapped
1. Walk 25 yards; jog 25 yards
 2. Walk 24 yards; jog 50 yards
 3. Walk 25 yards; jog 75 yards
- (2) **Straight ahead**—repeat above walk and job exercise except at 1/2 speed.
- (3) **Straight ahead**—repeat above walk and job exercise except at 3/4 speed
- (4) **Straight ahead**—repeat previous exercises except at full speed.

(Note: anytime you have to limp, stop all running)

- (b) When you can sprint at full speed and without a limp, then run circles both clockwise and counter clockwise. Start with large circles and work down in size.
- (c) When you can run the circles at full speed without a limp and without pain, then run figure eights.
- (d) When you can run figure eights at full speed without a limp and without pain, then run a zig-zag course for approximately 100 yards.
- (e) Finally, the last step is to test yourself on right angle quick cuts to both the right and left. If you can do this without limp and without pain, then you are again ready for competition.

Recurrent sprains are due to multiple factors, i.e. poor overall conditioning, inadequate or inappropriate diet, loafing during play, and just plain bad luck.

Conditioning plays one of the major roles in the etiology of ankle sprains. Normal metabolic waste products (lactic acid and others) produced during vigorous exercise are usually removed via the bloodstream. Some of this lactic acid is resynthesized into sugar (glycogen) but the remainder builds up in the muscle tissue. The end result of this build-up is fatigue, and fatigue, as a direct

result of inadequate conditioning, contributes to injury. Most ankle injuries began at the point of fatigue.

An adequately balanced and nutritionally sound diet is of prime importance in maintaining overall health and a high level of physical conditioning. Megadoses (1-4 gm/day) of natural Vitamin C may assist in rapid healing of ligament and tendon injuries. A diet balanced in protein, fats, carbohydrates, and vitamins has previously been discussed, but the importance of trace minerals in athletic diets has only lately been emphasized. Some authors endorse prescribing manganese glycerophosphate (140 mg/6 times a day) to reduce ankle sprains, their severity, and to promote faster healing.

Finally, loafing in any athletic endeavor is to invite injury. Anyone that has played racquetball knows that most on-court injuries (being struck with the ball, racquet, court hinders, tripping, falling and diving, etc.) occur when you are loafing—usually as a direct result of fatigue from inadequate conditioning.

In any sport that places a premium upon the player who can start, stop, and alter direction quickly, there will always be ankle strains and sprains. By maintaining adequate physical condition prior to competition; following some common sense steps immediately after any ankle injury; and allowing sufficient time for healing post-injury; serious ankle injuries and their sequelae can be markedly reduced.

Bibliography available upon request.



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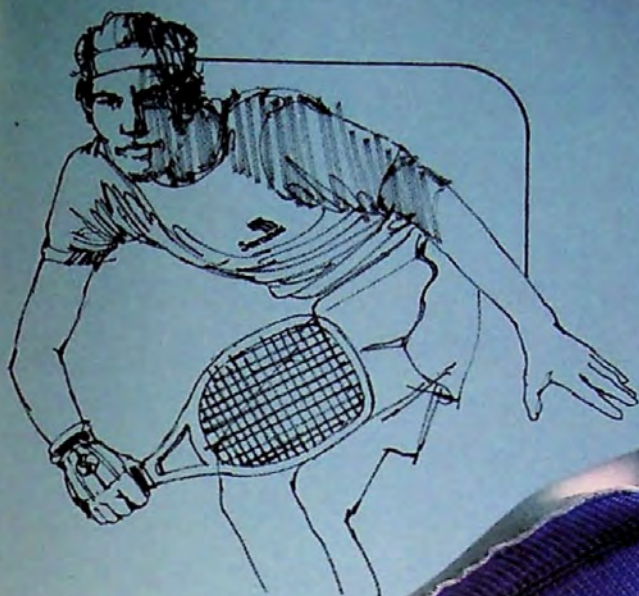
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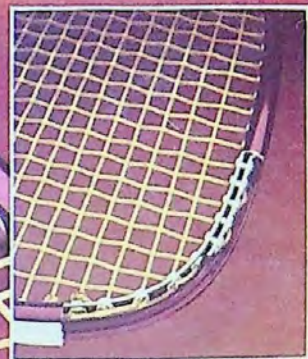
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