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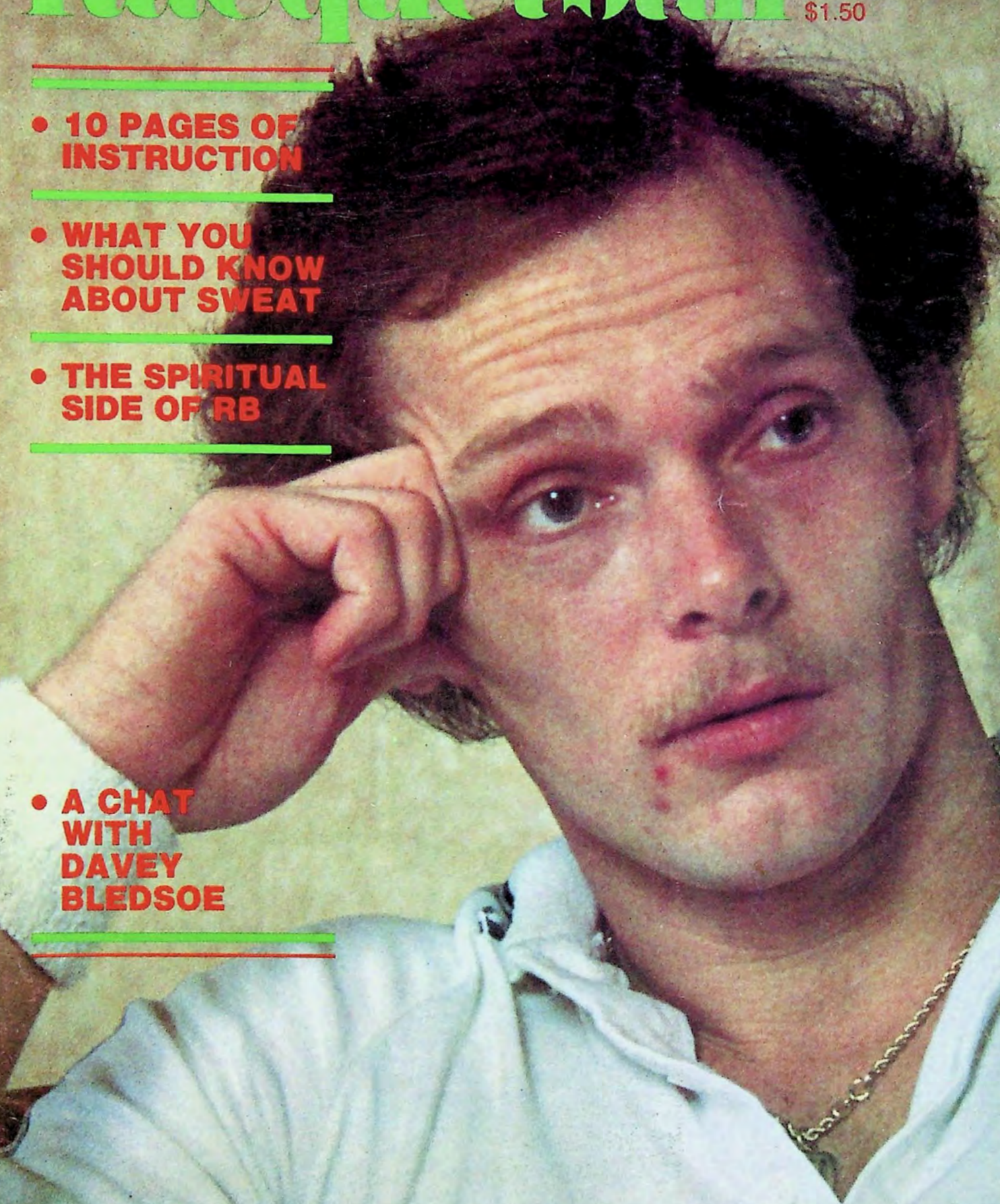
Vol. 6 No. 3
March, 1978
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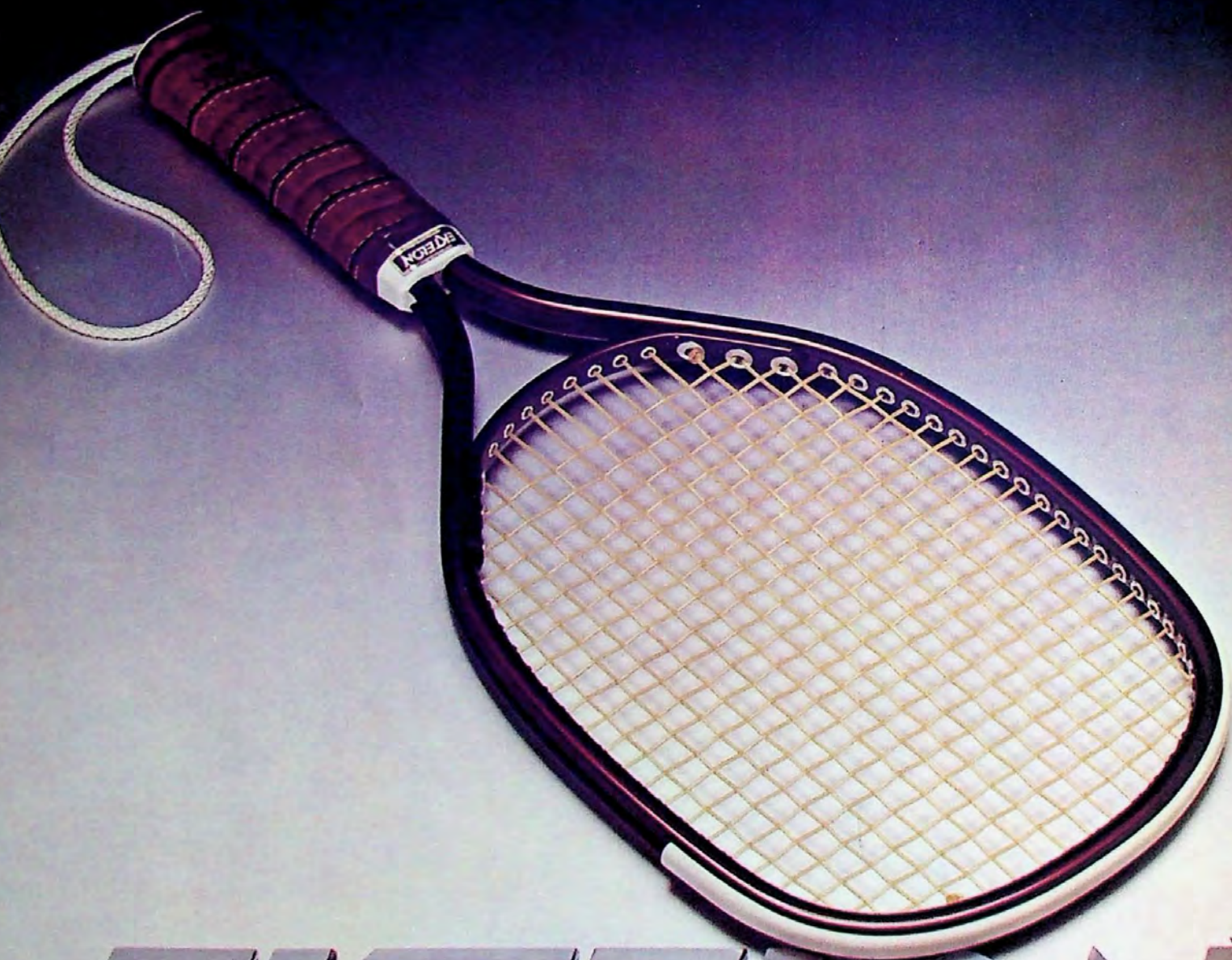
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Vol. 6 No. 3
March, 1978
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On The Cover . . .

National Champ Davey Bledsoe relaxes during a recent photo taking session accompanying his discussion with west coast editor Nick Longhurst. For Bledsoe's incisive remarks, turn to page 64.

— Photo by Boyd Holloway

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SPALDING

What's The Difference? . . .

There is quite a difference! Sport is a many faceted business with a different appeal for different people. Needless to say, most everyone follows one sport or another. Some people are content to be spectators; some are participants. That brings up an interesting question: "What is better, to be a spectator or to be a participant?"

To me, the difference between watching and winning is almost impossible to describe. Maybe it's too much to expect everyone on earth to become a participant, but can you imagine how much better the world would be if we were all healthy . . . and happy? Television has made it very easy for us to sit by the fireplace jawing instead of jogging, building fat instead of muscle. Exercising our lungs in the bleachers is absolutely no substitute for shagging flyballs. In the end, you'll discover the difference, and there IS a difference.

It is the American tendency to become armchair warriors and give no thought to the virtue (and the effort) of participating. I would like to get every one of the armchair warriors off their duffs and into a court. They would soon learn that playing is more fun than watching. And racquetball is just the right game because anyone can play it. I've seen many a Mom beat Dad. And my daughter beats everyone at our house. Talk about family fun . . . nothing beats racquetball. It's year-round friendly competition.

Personally, I like racquetball because it is a participants' sport. It is good for you; it heals; it blesses; it builds. That is basically the reason for our heavy involvement. To promote watching would be utterly meaningless. To promote participation, insuring good health and physical fitness, is meaningful. It contributes to the general well-being of the junior generation and affords a wonderful alternative for the senior generation. Growing old can't occur in a life that is fully occupied with enthusiasm, sparkle, and tiptop condition.

That brings me to the main point. Let's not lose sight of our objective. Today there are many money-making opportunities in racquetball; so many, one wonders how much longer we can avoid the fragmentation that has split tennis far and wide. How much longer can we keep out the gimmick tournaments, the sex battles, and the promotions that profit the promoters instead of the sport?

Now that our objective is clear, let's not lose sight of it. For the seniors, the profit we seek in play is not financial, it is physical. For the juniors we seek character, not cash. While we devote considerable time and money to promote professional play, our heart



also belongs to the amateurs. One day soon our budget will bless the amateurs far more than the pros. Count on it. Our objective has always been to contribute to the well being of men and women, boys and girls alike. With special emphasis on amateurs. And women! Sorry, fellows!

That's why I would like to keep racquetball the way it is. Amateur. Family. Character. Long life. Keep it away from the promoters. Let's keep it in the family. Make everyone a participant. And that's not going to be easy. Promoters think nothing of health, fitness, character, or family fun. They are selling whatever produces cash, not competition. And that's why I ask every one of you to participate, not observe. Be a part of this great program to build a healthy mind and body in our boys and girls. Racquetball can do a lot of good if you work instead of watch. Don't sit on the sideline and be a spectator; join the team and be a participant.

Let's make something more than entertainment out of our sports! ●

Bob Kendler

"I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him."

Ecclesiastes 3:14

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Helping Each Other

Perhaps you don't know much about this, but the U.S. Racquetball Association recently sent a check for almost \$5,000 to our affiliate — the Michigan Racquetball Association. The check was the MRA's share of membership/subscription monies which recently came in to USRA headquarters.

I bring this up for a number of reasons. First that money will go a long way in promoting racquetball, through the USRA and MRA. Most state affiliates work on a skeleton budget where finances are always looking over their shoulder. Now Michigan can plan effective programs to stimulate further our sport in their area.

The bulk of these subscriptions came through an arrangement negotiated by USRA president Bob Kendler and Craig Hall, president of Sports Illustrated Court Clubs. As S.I.C.C. clubs continue to spring up, new members are introduced to racquetball and *National Racquetball* magazine through the club.

Support such as this from a court club chain enables three primary goals to be achieved. First the state organization receives substantial funds with which to operate. Secondly the circulation of *National Racquetball* increases dramatically, and thirdly members of Sports Illustrated Court Clubs continually receive the magazine.

From a marketing standpoint this third goal is important. Racquetball's success is due largely to the ease with which the sport is learned. How many times have you heard that racquetball can be enjoyed the first time on the court?

By the same token, however, those players who might have strayed away from the sport for a while, for whatever reasons, can be constantly reminded of the benefits of racquetball, as well as the continuing developments within the sport.

This reminder is often enough to get that player playing again.

The USRA allows a discounted rate on bulk subscriptions of 100 or more. Court clubs, YMCA's, JCC's, schools and universities, as well as state chairmen, should take advantage of bulk subscriptions — not only will the individuals save money, but there also will be additional funds available for local promotion.

And that really is the key to the USRA's refunding of money back to the state affiliates. We feel strongly that for the national organization to be most effective in promoting racquetball on a national scale, we must have the direction and cooperation of the state chairmen.

There is no way we can know what will be most effective in your state, if we're not experts on the racquetball situation where you are. But we can expect that from our state chairmen.



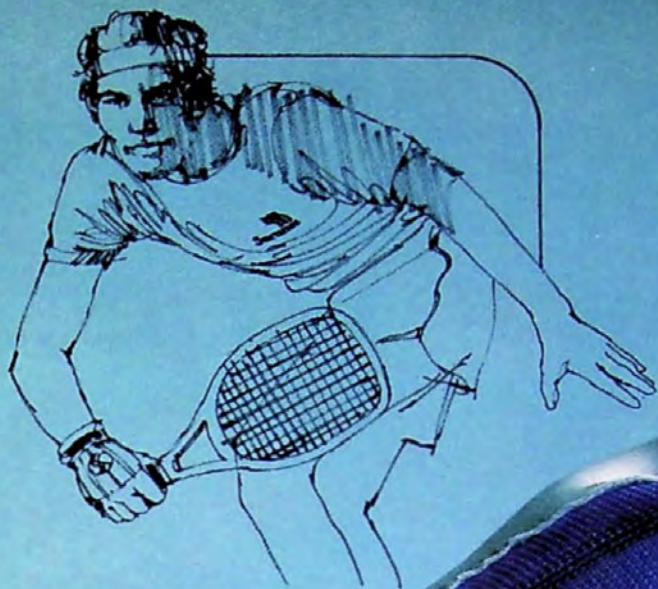
If funds are a problem, it is the duty of our people to create a cohesive and effective membership drive. Contact the clubs in your state, the leagues, the places where groups of people play.

For racquetball's growth to continue we must all work together to bring the greatest number of players possible to realize the great benefits of our sport.

If this is accomplished, there is no limit to the heights we can attain — together.

Big things are upcoming regarding the National Juniors Championships, sponsored by Seamco Sporting Goods and Leach Industries. The Juniors is my personal favorite tournament of the season and is always a superb event, both in competition and fun.

This season's National Juniors will be August 1-6 at the King of Prussia Racquetball Club just outside Philadelphia. Owner/Manager and Pennsylvania State Chairman Jim Pruitt promises the most exciting and fun-filled junior event ever (see page 13). ●



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Upcoming Events

King of Prussia Named To "Crown" Top Juniors

King of Prussia Racquetball Club, 1978 host of the National Juniors Championships. All 11 courts should be red-hot with activity.



The King of Prussia Racquetball Club, the dream come true of owner/manager Jim Pruitt, will be hosting the National Juniors Championships August 1-6, 1978.

The event, co-sponsored by Seamco Sporting Goods and Leach Industries, is the third annual U.S. Racquetball Association sanctioned National Juniors Championships.

King of Prussia Racquetball Club is also host of the second women's pro tour later this month.

"We're tremendously pleased to be able to host such an important tournament," said Pruitt, who is also Pennsylvania state chairman of the USRA. *"It's going to be a fun-filled and entertaining week."*

King of Prussia Racquetball Club, an 11 court facility, is located just northwest of Philadelphia. Four of the 11 courts have glass of some kind including one with a full glass side wall.

Pruitt is no stranger when it comes to hosting big tournaments. He was

tournament chairman of the Lansing, MI, stop on the Seamco-sponsored NRC pro tour in February of 1975.

"Hosting the National Juniors is a special kind of job," said USRA National Commissioner Joe Ardito.

"The kids present a number of situations that might not normally occur during a regular tournament."

"Yet the event is always tremendously rewarding. To see the sportsmanship and good manners of these kids as they compete with each other is just wonderful."

The tournament will feature the 10 winners of USRA Regional Juniors tournaments in each age bracket (Boys 17, 15, 13-and-under and Girls 17, 14-and-under) totalling 50 winners. Additionally, 30 at-large players will be invited to round out the 80 participants, 16 in each category.

All players who qualify or are invited will receive round trip air fare, lodging, and food for the entire tournament, as well as the normal tournament amenities such as souvenir shirts, racquetball bags and other prizes.

"Everybody is going to go home a winner," said Ardito. *"No stone will be left unturned."*

Pruitt, who labored for over two years to see his facility finally built, promises the same.

"I want the juniors to remember this tournament, no matter how they play," he said. *"We're going to make sure they all have fun."* ●

Record Prize Money For Nationals

Prize money in record amounts will be offered at the U.S. Racquetball Association's National Championships, June 17-24, 1978, at Sports Illustrated Court Clubs-Lemontree in suburban Detroit.

Seamco Sporting Goods and Leach Industries, co-sponsors of the Colgate national championships, have committed \$30,000, double last year's figure, to prize money for the pros. First prize is tentatively set at \$6,000.

In addition to the money prizes, Sports Illustrated Court Clubs will present its first annual Racquetball Sportsman of the Year award.

Equally outstanding will be the viewing accommodations for spectators at the Lemontree club, showplace of the S.I.C.C. chain.

Featured matches will be played in Lemontree's three-glass-walled championship court, surrounded by tiered seating for 600 around all three sides.

Four other courts have glass back walls, permitting good viewing even of less than headline competition.

Other amenities of the luxurious Lemontree club, open both to competitors and visitors, include a bar and lounge overlooking the

championship court and featuring discotheque entertainment, a lavishly-equipped exercise room, whirlpools, saunas and a fully-equipped nursery staffed by professionals in child care.

For sightseeing, the Lemontree club is just a few minutes from world-famous Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum where Henry Ford assembled the household articles and machines of many American generations and the actual buildings where American history was made. Equally close is the University of Michigan with its many cultural attractions.

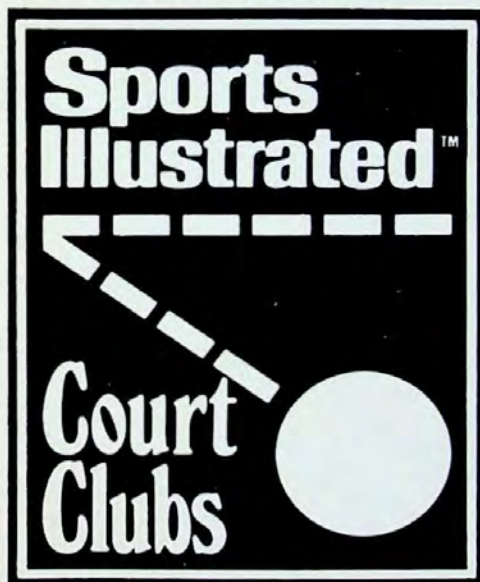


Portion of lake front at Lemontree complex.

For contestants, there will be a varied round of activities including lakeside parties and lake cruises on beautiful Lake Belleville on which the Lemontree complex fronts; swimming in lake or pool; golf on Lemontree's nine-hole course; volleyball, badminton and tennis and, at the close of the tournament, a championship banquet.

Between 600 and 800 entries are expected, a record total, for the 12 brackets of general play in men's and women's divisions.

Gil Schmitt, Sports Illustrated Court Clubs' director of training and research, heads the local organization for the Nationals this year. ●



Official Men's Professional Rankings As Of February 1, 1978

1. Marty Hogan, St. Louis
2. Charlie Brumfield, San Diego
3. Davey Bledsoe, Kingsport, Tenn.
4. Jerry Hilecher, St. Louis
5. Steve Serot, St. Louis
6. Craig McCoy, Riverside, Cal.
7. Jay Jones, Los Angeles
8. Ben Koltun, St. Louis
9. Steve Keeley, Haslett, Mich.
10. (Tie) Mark Morrow, Los Angeles
Mike Yellen, Southfield, Mich.
12. Richard Wagner, San Diego
13. Steve Strandemo, San Diego
14. (Tie) David Fleetwood, Memphis
Jerry Zuckerman, St. Louis
16. (Tie) Paul Ikier, Minneapolis
Jeff Bowman, San Diego
18. Steve Chase, Phoenix
19. (Tie) Bill Schmidtke, Minneapolis
John Lynch, Chicago

Official Women's Professional Rankings As Of February 1, 1978

1. Peggy Steding, Odessa, Tex.
2. Jennifer Harding, Portland, Ore.
3. Janell Marriott, Salt Lake City
4. Sarah Green, Memphis
5. Kathy Williams, Hazel Park, Mich.
6. Shannon Wright, San Diego
7. Karin Walton, San Clemente, Cal.
8. Rita Hoff, St. Louis
9. Martha McDonald, Gainesville, Fla.
10. Jan Pasternak, Houston
11. Sue Carow, Glenview, Ill.
12. (Tie) Jan Matthews, La Jolla, Cal.
Jean Sauser, Northbrook, Ill.

Covering The Court

From *The Racquetball Book* by Steve Strandemo with Bill Bruns. Copyright ©1977 by Steve Strandemo and Bill Bruns. Reprinted by permission of Pocket Books, a Simon & Schuster Division of Gulf & Western Corporation.

Properly played racquetball is a game where you are bending and stretching and continuously moving from shot to shot, with few delays and breaks in the action. Thus, if you hope to play your best for the entire match, your goal must be to *conserve energy while reaching as many balls as possible*.

For example the court will seem much larger than it really is when you're always out of position. Smart opponents will have more room to hit the ball away from you, and though you might have excellent retrieving ability, your body won't last long as you charge pell-mell after every ball. In the end you will lose to better players because of one basic fact: you are running away from the game.

But when you focus all of your movements around your center-court position, *the game comes to you*. Nearly all of your work will be confined to a coverage area that stretches only about 11 to 15 feet behind the back service line and to within about two feet of the side walls. Your speed, size and stretching ability will determine how effectively and efficiently you cover this center-court area, but if you play it right, you will be in a better position to retrieve rally shots into the back seven or eight feet of the court, and anticipation will usually enable you to cut off passing shots within two or three feet of the side wall. The only time you will venture into the front-court area will be to dig up your opponent's kill attempts or a weak shot that has barely reached the front wall.

The following three points should help you expand your *offensive hitting range* within the center court area by eliminating much of the guesswork and hesitation you might have in playing the ball and by making you more aggressive as you cover the court.

Learning to "Read" the Front Wall

Here are some hints for judging more precisely where the ball will travel after rebounding *straight off the front wall*, without hitting a side wall—and what you should do, assuming you have a good center court position:

- If your opponent's shot is traveling at a reasonable velocity and strikes the front wall 0 to 12 inches off the floor, its bounce will pull you into the front court, and will very likely result in a kill.
- A ball hitting 12 to 24 inches high with good speed will bounce once and carry into or near the center court area, where you must cut it off before it gets past you, because it will die in deep court. You may think you have to move up into the service zone area in order to protect yourself against these low drives by your opponent, *but this is a common myth*. Even a ball that hits only 18 inches high on the front wall, with good velocity, will still take its second bounce well beyond the back service line. Furthermore, when you try to position yourself in front of the center court area, you leave yourself extremely vulnerable to passing shots.
- If the ball hits about 36 inches high, then it will come back to you in the air at about knee to waist level, and you will want to volley it—at whatever level it is coming. Don't back up and try to let it drop lower, and don't let it go to the back wall, because your goal is to maintain center court positioning.

- Any ball that strikes the front wall about 48 inches up should be a welcome sight: let it go by, because it will hit the back wall on one bounce or in the air, and then rebound into center court for an easy setup.

Although plain old experience will teach you where the ball actually travels straight off the front wall, you'll make some interesting discoveries for yourself by practicing on an empty court and by watching other people play.



For example put a piece of tape at one-foot intervals up the front wall so you have an accurate visual reference, and then stand about 30 feet away and blast forehands toward the tape. See for yourself where the ball actually takes its first bounce, and how far it carries toward the back wall when it strikes the front wall at various heights and speeds. Chances are you'll discover that the ball bounces much deeper on the court than you might have thought.

Let's say you're in center court, 25 feet from the front wall, and the ball hits 18



inches high with good velocity. The crucial thing to remember is that you will never have to thrust forward to reach this shot before it bounces twice. Just stand there at 25 feet, with your weight evenly distributed, and let the ball come to you easily on one bounce. You might have to stretch and get low as you stroke the ball, but you'll never have to hurry forward and then lunge to make your hit.

By experimenting in this way you not only improve your shot-making skills, but you also sharpen your perception of what it means to keep the ball low off

the front wall—and the setups you give your opponent when you leave it up high. You also gain a much better sense of where similar shots by your opponent are going to land.

You can also learn a lot by watching other players as you wait for a court or as you cool down following a match. When you're not playing, you'll find it's much easier to notice patterns occurring and see where the ball goes after hitting at different speeds, angles, and heights off the front wall, and how it then reacts off the side walls, and the back wall.

Also try to observe passing shot angles. It's easy to be fooled by the geometry involved, unless you're an experienced pool player. I know that when I place beginners in the middle of the court and tell them, "*Hit the ball down the side wall into the back corner, but don't hit the side wall,*" their first couple of tries invariably strike too close to that side wall—instead of hitting virtually in the middle of the front wall. Thus, the ball proceeds to ricochet off the side wall and into mid-court.

Anticipation

Good anticipation is a mental skill that will improve your playing ability and help you neutralize a stronger opponent, even as you are working to develop better strokes. Racquetball is like a fast-moving chess game, and your ability to anticipate your opponent's shots can gain you that extra split-second that allows you to reach more balls, or to set up better for your shots.

Your anticipation should start as soon as you see your opponent start to set up on his shot. If he is hitting from off to one side, turn slightly so you can watch the ball come into his racquet. Then study his body positioning and his swing, and try to anticipate either a defensive shot like the ceiling ball (the racquet will be traveling on an upward angle, since this shot must hit the ceiling before rebounding into the back-court area), or an offensive shot like the kill or pass, where the racquet angles downward from its ready position around the head. Most beginning and intermediate players practically call out their shots by

making no attempt to disguise their stroke—and they usually get away with it because their opponent isn't watching for clues.

You may not be able to determine exactly *where* your opponent is going to hit the ball, but you can anticipate when he's going to hit so you can ready yourself for probable center-court action. Expect errors. Don't be surprised if your opponent hits a ball that you can't reach. Remember, you can cover nearly the entire court by being in center court.

Too many people walk onto the court prepared to play defensively, and when the match begins you can see them thinking: "*Opponent, please don't hit a winner.*" They don't realize that errors are much more frequent. By waylaying these shots into the middle, and returning them offensively whenever possible, you will stretch your opponent from one side of the court to the other. This will give him less time to set up and swing properly, which should lead to even more errors. So you will get a nice cycle going.

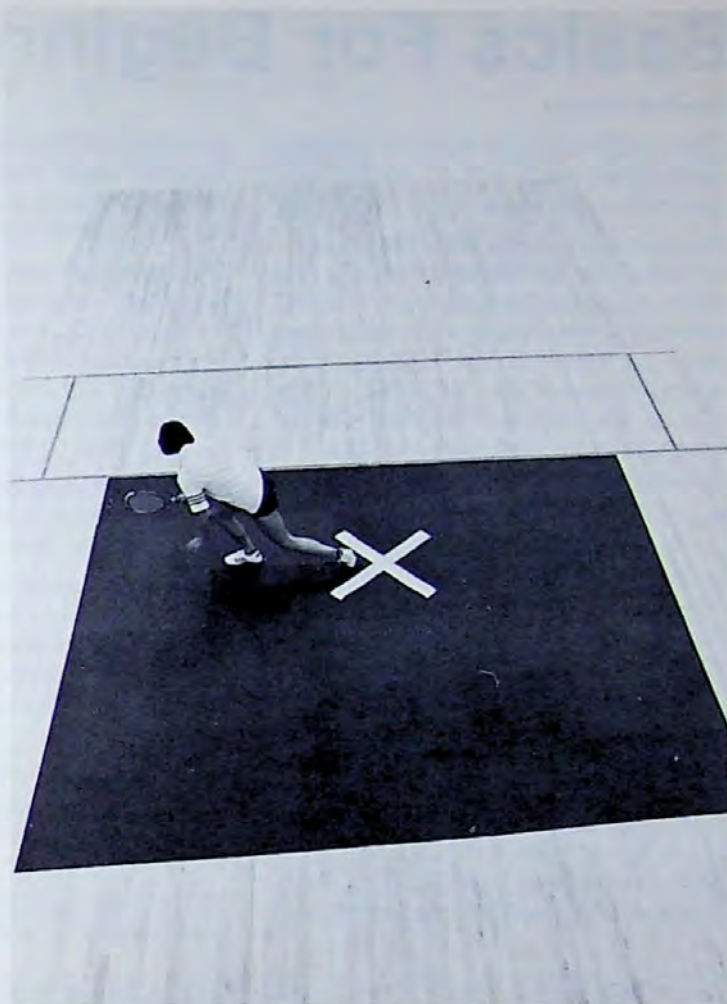
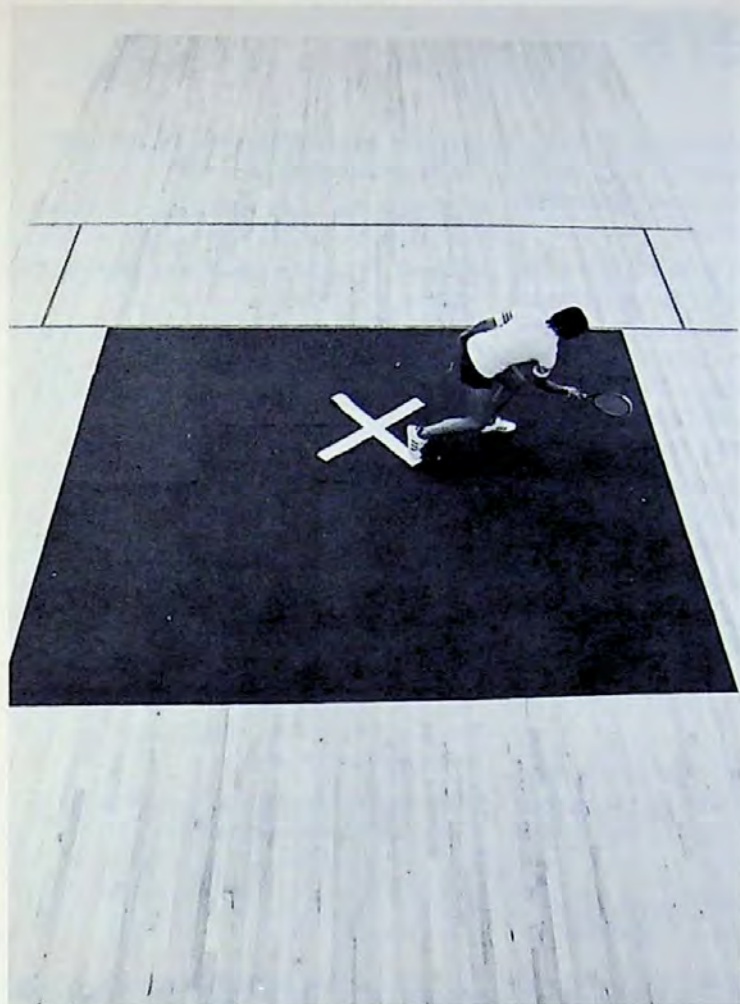
Moving to the Ball

Racquetball is such a fast-moving, quick-starting sport that good strokes will be wasted if you don't have the footwork and reactions to reach as many balls as possible with enough time to set up properly. To help you move to the ball better—keeping in mind that you rarely will take more than two or three steps from a good center-court position—try to learn the following basics:

- Start preparing for your next shot as soon as you complete your follow-through. Relocate your center-court "X" in relation to where the ball is traveling, and where your opponent is located.
- Trust your instincts as soon as the ball leaves your opponent's racquet—if not sooner. In fast-paced racquetball, you'll seldom have time to confirm the exact direction of every shot. If you see the ball deflect off any side wall, hold your ground near the middle because the ball will rebound into that area.
- If you're playing center court, this is a game of hitting a ball that's coming fairly close to your body, or taking one long step or a long stretch to reach a ball that's traveling along a side wall. It's not a game of pitter-patter little steps, or a long series of steps. If the ball is hit very low on the front wall, then you'll have to move forward, but you're only going to have time to take one or two thrusting steps before the ball bounces twice.
- As you wait to see the direction of your opponent's shot, keep your heels on the ground, with your weight evenly distributed. You don't want to be up on your toes, as in tennis, because most balls are going to come to you with good velocity in the center-court area



The hitter shows how an easy comfortable stretch will enable her to cover nearly all of the center-court area from the "X." With a forceful stretch, she could come within a foot of the side walls.



and you'll want to be in a solid position to hit. As the caliber of your competition improves, you'll probably have to be a little more cautious of your opponent's kill attempts and be ready to move forward more often.

- When waiting for the ball, plant your feet about two feet apart—wide enough to give you a strong foundation, yet close enough to enable you to really stretch out or move toward the ball. Try to work out a comfortable compromise.

- Keep your knees slightly bent as you move about the court, with your back relatively straight or at just a slight angle. Not only will you play better, but you'll look like a racquetball player. You

want to move toward offensive shots in a low neutral position because the ball is coming low and your goal is to return it as low as possible into the front wall. Thus, you're already down close to the floor for the shot before you even start your swing, and you'll always have good balance—ready to thrust out quickly for the ball, wherever it goes. But when you remain in a high position by failing to bend your legs, you have to go down to hit the ball properly, then you come back up, and then you go down again for the next shot. If the ball goes quickly to one side and you're up

high in a stiff-legged position, you have a harder time pushing off with your back leg and stretching out toward the ball. You also won't have good balance.

- As you move about the court, carry your racquet comfortably around waist level so you can bring it up quickly into a ready position. You'll lose too much time if you carry it down around your ankles. ●

Basics For Beginners

Service Faults

There are three basic kinds of serves in racquetball, each with its own built-in possibilities for error.

The *lob* serve starts with the server in the box a little left of center. Ideally, the ball is hit gently so that it arcs back toward the left rear wall, coming down about six feet from the back wall. In reality, however, the ball often is hit right up the middle. This offers one's opponent a big, fat, lazy ball to kill or otherwise give you a hard time.

The *drive* serve is delivered low and hard from the center of the serving box, just passes the short line, and hits the side wall within five feet of the short line. In actual play this shot is often mis-hit, and it comes off the wall in perfect position for a forehand or backhand kill by your opponent.

The *Z* serve is the most difficult for the new racquetball player. The shot starts from a little left of center in the serving box, hits the front wall near the right corner, caroms to the side wall, then travels all the way back to the left wall

just short of the deep corner. It then, ideally, "dies" irretrievably. (Oh, how beautiful it is to watch one's opponent flail at a perfect *Z* serve!)

The cardinal mistake is to hit the side wall first — an instant out. Beyond that, most bad *Z*'s are hit too far from the front corner and then describe either imperfect *Z*'s or, worse, other letters. These often spell "out" because they tend to offer opponents a set-up.

In all serves, hitting to your opponent's strength gives him or her an unnecessary advantage.

Avoid the middle of the court when serving; start thinking "corner, corner, corner." Keep your opponent off balance by serving into the deep corners and alternating your serves to these corners.

Serving deeply will give you time to get into the center-court defensive position (an imaginary six-foot circle just behind the short line).

Veteran pro and teacher Jean Sauser says, "Serving gives you your first

chance to outsmart your opponent. Take advantage of it."

Practice the *lob* until you can make it land where you want it to land — about six feet from the back wall along one side or the other.

Don't be afraid to use your power on a *drive* serve. Sometimes speed will stand in for accuracy and get you a winner.

The *Z* serve should be practiced more than the *drive* and *lob* together because, when mastered, it can improve your game tremendously. Pick out an aiming area on the front wall and keep hitting to it. A *Z* serve is short of a billiard shot; it will reward you handsomely when you incorporate it into your game. It's the one shot that the good B player must learn before ascending to the A's.

It sometimes helps to put little tape marks on the wall as aiming points, the way pros Jay Jones and Charlie Brumfield have done experimentally.

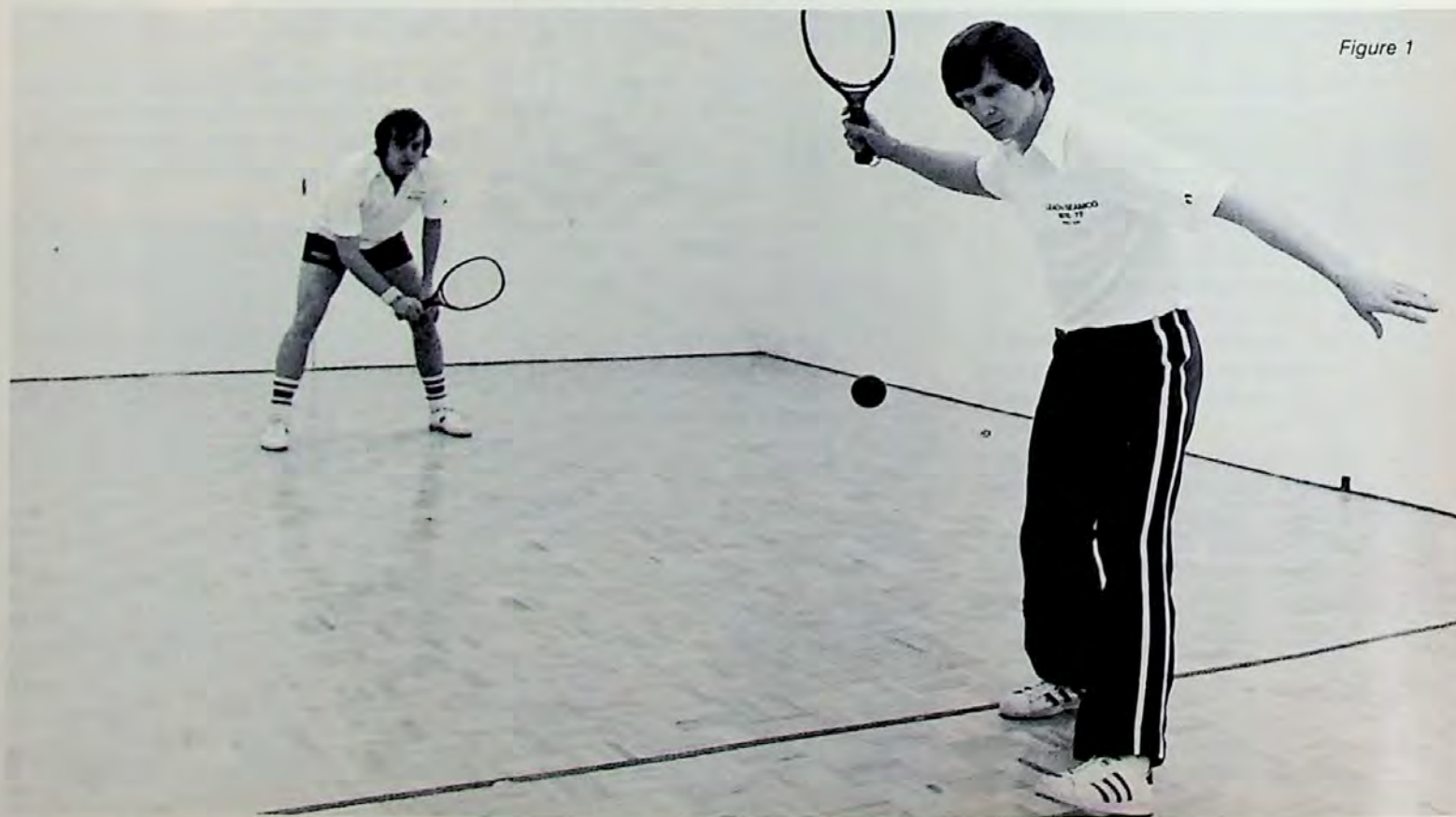


Figure 1



Figure 2

Not studying opponent (Fig. 1)

Serving without properly maintaining a continuous study of your opponent often results in the loss of your serve by a fast pass shot on either side. You had the initiative, starting play, and ended up with the feeling that you weren't quite "ready."

If the server only watches the ball and the front wall before putting the ball in play, he runs the risk of having the receiver creep up and cut the served ball off in mid-air. This forces the server to be caught off guard when an unanticipated return shot is made.

Give A Look (Fig. 2)

There is a degree of instant "psyching" going on between server and receiver just before the serve. There is a shuffling of feet, a focus of attention by the receiver, a sway perhaps, as many tennis players do to keep their concentration and to keep from freezing up and losing alertness.

Just before serving you should glance at the receiver. This informs him that you know exactly where he is, and he won't be able to surprise you by darting in to hit a serve on the fly or otherwise outmaneuver you.

By studying your opponent just before you serve, you can become an expert at detecting whether he or she is leaning to one side or the other or playing farther to one side than the other. Take instant advantage of this intelligence and serve to the weakness!



Figure 3

Jammed serve (Fig. 3 & 4)

A jammed serve results from hitting the ball when it's too close to your body. Your elbow is crushed into your body, and the shot is weak and generally ineffective. The server who jams himself in this way invariably pops the ball up too high, leaving an easy hanger for a competent foe.



Figure 4

Leave Room (Fig. 5 - 8)

When serving a *drive* serve, the ball should be dropped away from and in front of the body, allowing enough room for a full swing. The timing of the hard serve should be worked on so that when the ball is struck, it is below knee level and travels a low, hard path to the wall, snapping back as a tough shot for your opponent to return.



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

Practice dropping the ball so that you can hit it with optimum power from the best position. Soon you will be able to move the ball all over your opponent's territory from the same serving position, adding a tool to your arsenal. Remember: the key is to drop the ball far enough away from your body and hit it while it is below knee level. ●

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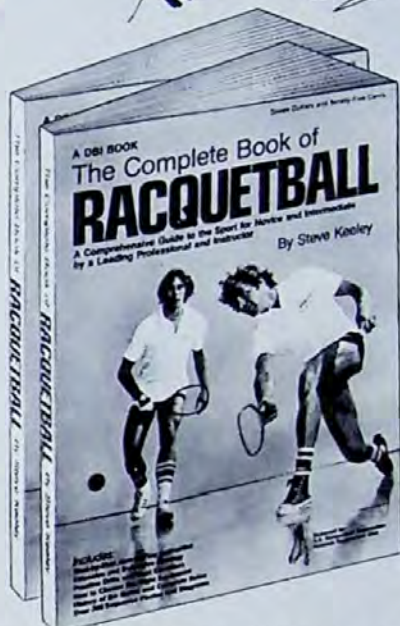
"Keeley, a three-time national singles paddleball champion and 1973 and '74 national singles racquetball runner-up, has written the complete guide for racquetballers. More than 550 photographs and 288 pages, covering the game from history and equipment to playing tips and terminology. The jargon of the court jousters. Racquetball repartee. It's a winner, whether you're a greenhorn or a seasoned pro." (Chicago Tribune)

"Keeley has combined his court talents and writing skills in a long-awaited instructional book. He inserts humor and brief personal glimpses into his own past to emphasize certain points. Nevertheless, this 'wetting down' of dry reading material is delightfully doctored without sacrificing logic or clarity." (National Racquetball)

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"This book will not only define the terminology being slammed around the courts, but more importantly it will broaden your appreciation and knowledge of the sport. Keeley guides the reader through every facet of the game, every angle of the court. His writing skills are almost as sharp as his racquetball prowess. He not only composes a thorough and comprehensive guide to understanding and playing the sport, but he succeeds in adding a dimension of humor. The book provides intelligent reading for those of you who are striving to become proficient players." (Pickwick Newspapers)

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"Heavily laced with photos of Keeley demonstrating the technique of the sport, the book may soon become the standard instructional instrument of racquetball." (The Sunday Journal)

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OKAY, KILLER. If you think you know racquetball, try this quiz.

1. After serving, you should move to what position on the court?
2. How many kinds of hinder are there?
3. What's a "Gravity Ball"?
4. You enter the service box and nervously bounce the ball 3 times. One more bounce for your serve means a "side-out". What do you do?
5. In a contest between Amoeba Man and Mobey Benedict, which would you bet on?
6. True or false: Donuts are good for you.
7. Which of these are dirty words: (a) anterior; (b) crotch serve; (c) butt.
8. What's the meaning of (a) R.A.W.? (b) A.W.B.? (c) S.D.?

Answers

1. Server should back two or three steps out of the service box toward the rear corner at which he directed the service (Keeley tells how to play for position).
2. Two: avoidable and unavoidable (Keeley explains all the causes of each).
3. Intended kill shot struck softly to cause ball to skip into ceiling juncture (c) is the term; strikes the wall-floor or wall-floor wall. (b) is a serve that the front wall. (a) means "toward the front wall."
4. None. (a) means "toward the front wall."
5. Amoeba Man is any sluggish player. Benedict was 1965 National Paddleball Champ. (This book is a treasure of historical background.)
6. Bad for you. Donut means the same as shutout (Keeley tells how to prevent them).
7. None. (a) means "toward the front wall."
8. (a) Run-Around-the-Wall (b) won't count when play returns. (c) South Dakota. (Don't you know anything?)

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This is the first of a monthly series by Chuck Sheftel, president of the American Professional Racquetball Organization (APRO). Among services APRO offers professional racquetball teachers are a certification program, seminars and conventions.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Safety is an important factor in racquetball. Many people are initially hesitant to play racquetball because they're afraid they might get hurt. Teaching the correct safety techniques of racquetball is essential.

The player always should try to protect the face area. There are numerous ways to do this, including putting the arm or racquet up to partially cover the face. (See Figures 1 and 2.) Also eye guards or glasses may be worn so that the player does not shy away from watching the ball.

Sometimes an instructor has to use a method we call "teaching the wrong way" to get a beginner to avoid injury. This is the approach to use if the pupil makes the same error over and over again. In that case the teacher must have the student exaggerate the reverse of the error. To teach face protection, for example, the instructor should tell the player to completely face the front wall and not watch the ball.

After confidence increases, the instructor should get the player to peek around the shoulder (Figure 3) to view the flight of the ball. An experienced player viewing the ball all the time can see where the ball is going, where the opponent is moving to hit the ball and where the opponent's racquet is swinging.

All of these elements contribute to playing a safe game.

A good instructor always gives a pupil a number of ways of learning a stroke, understanding a strategy or developing safety techniques. All teaching should be handled in many different ways to meet the needs of many different players. ●

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Racquetball



Terry Fancher

Public Relations

"Whether anyone stops to realize it or not," says USRA/NRC public relations director Stuart Rowlands, "everything our association does has its roots in public relations." If we take a close look at our programs, at *National Racquetball* or at anything we do — it all goes back to bringing a good image and steady growth to racquetball.

Building a good image for our players, our association and all of our activities is a never ending process. We try our hardest to make everything that we do as prestigious and as successful as possible, whether it be a magazine article or an amateur tournament. As Bob Kendler reminds us "just do the best job possible in everything you do, and your deeds will speak for you."

We try to instill this philosophy in all of our representatives who serve the amateur racquetball community. Even when we are brand new in bringing racquetball to a certain area, if we conduct quality tournaments and provide good service to our players, eventually our efforts will receive respect.

This leads me to emphasize this attitude to all of our players and members. We want to stress good public relations in anything that we are connected with in racquetball. Whether it be a positive newspaper article written about the game or quality National Championships, we are all representatives for our sport and should keep this foremost in our minds in dealing with the public. Thus the prestige of our game will continue to grow.

Complete Amateur Section

If you notice something different in our state racquetball section, you will see that it's now entitled "amateur racquetball." This signifies that this

USRA section will include everything pertaining to those players not competing at the pro level, or about 99.9 per cent of the participants in the country.

The reason for including all amateur news in one section of *National Racquetball* is to make it as easy as possible for the majority of the racquetball players to quickly locate news of upcoming events, find tournament results, discover who to contact in a particular state to get racquetball information and to find out how to improve the various state associations. We wanted one complete section devoted entirely to the players who make up the majority of our association.

Join the USRA

This brings me to the next important point. For state, regional, pro-am, and national championship events subscribers to *National Racquetball* receive individually mailed entry forms for these events. State chairmen use our mailing list for state members to receive entry forms, state newsletters and other information. For all USRA events in a particular region we now send mailers or entry forms for our events.

All active racquetball players should take out a subscription to our magazine and receive the only monthly publication which entitles the subscriber to a membership in the state as well as national association. Since we are becoming more and more efficient and active in all areas of the country, communications are all important between players and the USRA. So take out a subscription today and join the racquetball family.

Computer Service for Subscribers

Thanks to the Louis Zahn Data Service Corp. the subscribers of our magazine

will now receive computerized billing. The service by our friends at Zahn also includes many efficient systems which will aid our state associations. This includes a monthly print-out of each member's name, address and expiration date along with a designated membership number. In the near future membership cards probably will be issued by the computer, according to the state.

This service was begun on a trial basis by Tom Street and Al Shetzer at the Illinois State Racquetball Association. It was adapted to suit the USRA, and the state associations. In the past memberships were recorded on labels to be sent to the states and sometimes not updated. Now weekly lists are received by us, and updated much more quickly for greater accuracy.

State chairmen sanctioning a tournament and needing a current list for checking USRA memberships can receive pertinent information upon request, can get pressure sensitive label lists, lists of all court clubs or YMCA's in their state, and receive membership card numbers, as well, for all state members. That's a big help!



If you would like copies of ladder and league rules used by various state associations, write Terry Fancher, National USRA Coordinators, or Dan Bertolucci, associate coordinator, at 4101 Dempster, Skokie, IL 60076. Terry and Dan also invite you to send them rules which you are using successfully in your association.

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Meet Your State Chairmen



Colorado — John Mooney

If you were a handball player and you broke a finger, would you stop playing? No — and such was the case with John Mooney, only John switched from handball to racquetball. And with that change our retired United States Air Force Officer is the single person most responsible for the existence of the Colorado Racquetball Association and an obvious choice for our USRA State Chairman.

John's married and the proud father of seven children. It was during his Air Force career that his activity in racquetball began. John has won numerous titles in handball and racquetball including USRA 1975 Senior Doubles Championship in Las Vegas.

John's constant companion is his wife Rosemarie, also an active racquetballer. They incorporated the idea of their state organization in 1975 because they felt it was a needed organization. Since that time the Colorado USRA state association's activities have included such things as providing clinics, tournaments, state ranking system, along with the establishment of a central news agency to publish newsletters.

Through John's involvement he has been able to witness a long dream come true with the construction of an athletic club in Colorado Springs housing 10 racquetball/handball courts. John feels that racquetball is a game for a lifetime and a rapidly growing sport. We at the USRA feel that through John's efforts and the Colorado Racquetball Association, it will even grow at a faster pace.



Tournament Results

Reporters, take note: Help make our typesetter happy by sending us your tournament results typed double or triple (preferred) space with one-inch margins all around. Thank you.

Wisconsin

The Sun Prairie Racquetball Club hosted its Second Annual Thanksgiving Open Racquetball Tournament Dec. 2-4. Joe Wirkus successfully defended his title with a 21-9, 21-15 win over his younger brother, Jim. Connie Peterson of Madison took the women's Open Championship with a 18-21, 21-12, 11-4 win over Linda Frank also of Madison.

The men's Open field was an excellent draw. Players like Joe Wirkus, Paul Ikier, Jim Wirkus and Jon Derkson led the way. Despite the excellent draw few upsets occurred. Jon Derkson of Appleton, the fourth seed, fell in the round of sixteen to Bruce Thompson of Sun Prairie 19-21, 21-12, 11-9.

The most exciting match of the tournament also proved to be a mild upset as Jim Wirkus of Fond Du Lac, third seed, defeated Paul Ikier of Madison, number two seed, 21-16, 20-21, 11-10. Seating was nearly impossible to come by, as the players exchanged serves twice at 10-10 in the tie breaker. Jim got game point on a backhand rollout to end the exciting match. Jim then went

on to play his brother two hours later. A close match was expected and probably would have been, but Jim suffered with leg cramps the entire match. The final tally was 21-15, 21-9.

Other winners included Julie Jacobson of Madison over Karen Finklenberg also of Madison for third in the Women's Open 21-8, 21-18 and Ken Frank of Madison over Paul Ikier for third place in the men's Open by a forfeit; Men's Class C champion was Joe Fucci of Appleton over Gene Sunday of Kenosha 21-13, 21-19; third place in Men's Class C went to Mickey Faris of Fond Du Lac with a 21-18, 21-6 win over Duane Appledorn of Sun Prairie; Women's Class C went to Lou Bradley of Sun Prairie over Judy Van Train also of Sun Prairie 12-21, 21-12, 11-6. Consolation winners were Scott Schultz of Appleton, Men's Open; Sharon Telander of Janesville, Women's Open; Jon Oehrlein of Sun Prairie, Men's C and Nancy Krause of Sun Prairie Women's Class C.

— Bruce Thompson

Georgia

The First Annual Georgia USRA State Doubles Tournament at Courthouse I in Marietta drew some 80 entrants Oct. 11-13.

In Men's A Finals, Bob Siegel and Don Wurster defeated Vic Matich/Wayne Vincent 21-16 and 21-19 for the crown. Semi-final action saw Siegel/Wurster defeat Marshall Chamberlain and Barry Rhodes 21-11 and 21-10 in a match involving a 15-minute injury time-out for a forehead wound on Siegel. Matich/Vincent defeated Tom Marshall/Ron Scallion 21-12 and 21-14 also in semi action.

Third seeded Men's B John Derdeyn/Ron Pang defeated fourth seeded Ray Irwin/Norm Cates in an exciting three-game final match, 21-9, 11-21 and 11-5. Semi-final play saw Derdeyn/Pang defeat Don Mayfield/Bill Rhuland 21-12 and 21-11; and Irwin and Cates over Jerry Wickliffe/Jim Cook in a 21-19, 14-21 and 11-7 match.

Men's Novice finals action saw Mike Brumby-Wade Boggs defeat second seeded Jess Grenstein/Steve Boyce 21-14 and 21-17. Brumby/Boggs defeated Tony Barbaris/Chuck Steinberger 21-12 and 21-4; and Greenstein/Boyce defeated Charles Allen/Charles Dugan 21-10 and 21-9 in semi play.

Women's Novice was won by Nancy Willard/Stephany Budenbender. Second place was won by Dee McBee/Anne Berg.

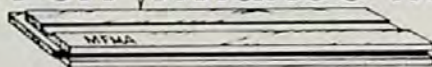
The tourney was perhaps the most successful state doubles tourney Georgia has seen.

Idaho

Ted Bell won the Eastern Idaho USRA Invitational Oct. 21-23 at the Idaho Falls YMCA, in a field that drew players from Sun Valley, Twin Falls, Pocatello, Blackfoot, Idaho Falls, Rexburg and Driggs. Second place went to Dirk Burgard and third to Ron Shipley.

In the Eastern Idaho Thanksgiving Open Nov. 18-20, also at the Y, Danny Green took first in the Men's Open, followed by Tom Reese and Ron Shipley. Green/Shipley won the Open Doubles, Burgard/Tom Jones came in second and Reese/Keller third. Robert Rankin topped the Men's B competition, with Pete Waylett taking second and Phil Baldree taking third. Men's C winners were Clint Rouse, first; Mike Barrett, second and Dean Packham, third. Ed Henry, Ron Writz and Dave Guth were Men's C first, second and third place winners. Mary Ann Lambert was the best in the Women's Open, and Pat Guth and Sandy Trainer took second and third.

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Illinois

Bob Deuster, Jim Clemons, Jack Schuberth, Sean Wilfong, Steve Boren, Bruce Weiner, Rich Samson, Bev Franks, Maryann Livingston, Cheryl Smith and Karen Paice took home the championship trophies awarded in the 11 divisions of the Vittert Chicago Open staged Dec. 2, 3 and 4 at The Court House racquetball clubs in the Chicago suburbs of Arlington Heights, Northbrook and Schaumburg.

The 11 emerged victorious from among the more than 300 players entered in the tournament.

Final round results at Arlington Heights Court House:

Open: Bob Deuster d. Ric Dern 19-21, 21-20, 11-8.

Senior: Jim Clemons d. Shelly Clar 11-21, 21-14, 11-6.

Masters: Jack Schuberth d. Dick Porter 21-17, 21-9.

Novice: Sean Wilfong d. Len Kutyla, 21-14, 21-8.

At the Schaumburg Court House the final results were:

B Division: Steve Boren d. Glen Gibellina 8-21, 21-14, 11-10.

C Division: Bruce Weiner d. George Silva 21-13, 6-21, 11-9.

Juniors: Rich Samson d. Boris Caravalla 18-21, 21-15, Caravalla withdrew in the tie breaker

At Northbrook, where the women's competition was held, the final round results were:

Open: Bev Franks d. Hope Weisbach 17-21, 21-12, 11-7.

B Division: Maryann Livingston d. Elyse Markman 21-16, 20-21, 11-3.

C Division: Cheryl Smith d. Kathy Tracy, 21-2, 21-13.

Novice: Karen Paice d. Lois Jandris 21-10, 21-17.



Jim Clemons, Chicago, left, defeated reigning Illinois State Seniors champion, Shelly Clar, Northbrook, in the finals of the Men's Seniors division of the Vittert Chicago Open at the Arlington Heights Court House. Clemons won 11-21, 21-14, 11-6.

Maine

The second annual USRA Maine Closed Racquetball tournament was held Dec. 9, 10 and 11 at Down East Court Club in Falmouth. Maine USRA chairman and tournament director, Kevin York, said, "this was the best USRA-sanctioned tournament to be held in the state of Maine. All the matches went off on time, the hospitality was great and everyone had a super time. The competition was stiff - I've never seen so many matches go to tie-breaker."

Results were as follows:

Men's A (finals): Phil Soule d. Bruce Lewis 21-18, 16-21, 11-6.

Men's A (consolation): Jim Simmons d. Dave Secino 21-11, 19-21, 11-9.

Men's B (finals): Jim Purcell d. Bob Waterman 21-17, 21-10.

Men's B (consolation): Jim Daye d. Mike Francoire 21-8, 21-16.

Men's C (finals): Cris Hikade d. Mark Giguere 21-9, 21-5.

Men's C (consolation): John Foley d. Carol Conneen 21-12, 21-10.

Men's Doubles (finals): Steve Dubord/Carl Fenwick d. Steve Veilleux/Steve Carrabee 21-19, 21-12.

Men's Novice (finals): Juan Gonzales d. Bill Gayton 21-6, 21-3.

Women's (finals): Joyce Guiles d. Barbara Lovejoy 21-19, 21-6. Derek Simmons won the pre-teen round robin.



Upcoming Events

April 14-16

Down East Women's Racquetball Classic, Down East Court Club; Open tournament A, B, C, Novice, Double and Senior divisions. For entries write Kevin York, tournament director, c/o Down East Court Club, 170 Route One, Falmouth, ME 04105, or phone 207-781-4281.



Beyond The **pen**

We welcome your news about over-35 players.

Forty-four-year-old Phil Siegel likes the one-on-one competition he gets in a game of racquetball with his son Jeff, who's 19.

His Son Sharpens His Game

Father and son racquetball partnerships are not that common, but Philip and Jeff Siegel are proving that two family members can enjoy the game together.

Over the past few years Philip, 44, and his 19-year-old son, Jeff, have become resident father and son players at the Mid-Town Court House on Chicago's near north side.

Jeff currently is attending school at the University of Arizona, but his interest in racquetball has remained high with all signs pointing that he will go a long way in the game.

For Jeff, who plays and practices racquetball "an average of three to four hours a day at Mid-Town and the Tucson Athletic Club," the game has produced some great benefits, the most important that he is in top physical shape. Philip likes the fitness aspect of racquetball and he enjoys the one-on-one competition. He gets a special kick out of watching the improvement in his game — and his son's.

Already Jeff has played well in the junior tournaments in Illinois, the midwest and throughout the west, the latter during his academic year in Arizona. He's now eager to play in the Open division at the national level, a goal that's not out-of-line considering he has played well against such players as Marty Hogan and John Lynch.

Philip, a Chicago businessman, said he is proud of his son's involvement in the game they both started playing five years ago at the Duncan YMCA.

"We started out where I was beating him more than he was beating me," says Philip. Now his son has the upper hand (Jeff usually spots his dad 14 points) and Philip admits that "I'm a student" when it comes to playing Jeff. Jeff's lessons concentrate on Philip's backhand and back wall shots and on his front wall and side wall kill shots.



Father and son have never won any competitive championships as a team even though Jeff has placed consistently high in a number of junior tournaments during his freshman year at the University of Arizona. Philip usually plays seniors and claims to like the game — win or lose — simply for the sport and exercise.

"I always feel that when you play with someone better you're learning, you're improving," he said. The older Siegel plays racquetball three or four times a week. He has found that playing the sport with business associates helps him bridge the social gap in a business relationship.

In addition to the Siegel men, their female counterparts are also beginning

to participate in racquetball. Daughter Lorry, 18, has played racquetball for credit in her gym class at Mid-Town and takes lessons from Jeff whenever he's in town. Siegel's wife, Carol, is now in the process of learning the game.

It looks as if father and son might not be the rare partnership much longer. With mother and daughter joining the duo, the Siegel's may become a "racquetball" family — both within and beyond the Open division. ●

—Fred Newton

Women In Racquetball



Carol Brusslan

Save Space for Their Trophies

Ten months ago, when we began this *Women in Racquetball* section with a survey of feminine participation in our sport, we found that the average age for women racquetball players was 28.

We haven't checked again, but we bet that age is climbing. And it's not just because the original players are getting older.

It's because women like Barbara Anderson have learned how good it feels to put their own trophies on the mantelpiece.

Barbara, who's 46, tried racquetball for the first time in October of 1976 after she watched her son play the game at Texas Christian University, where he was a senior pre-med student. By the end of a season of daily play Barbara collected three trophies from the Lombard, IL's Cove Courts, brought them home

and set them on her mantle. To make room for her gold and silver racquetball players she removed a few of the speed skaters her son had won during those years Barbara sat at ice rinks watching him compete.

Barbara, who thinks older women "enjoy sweating because when we were younger, we thought it wasn't proper," now feels let down on a day without a vigorous match — either doubles with her husband or singles with other women at the club.

She assures older women that they'll get over the initial aches that "younger women don't feel as long," and she likes the fact that older women have to play "a heady game because you can't outrun the younger gals."

But then age is a relative thing. For Barbara Anderson is a "younger player" to Dora Mitchell, whose story you'll read on the next page.

—Andrew Anderson photo



Barbara Anderson and the trophies she won her first year in racquetball.

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Grandma, Come out of the Woodwork

by Dora Mitchell

Capital Times photo



Dora Mitchell says her new racquetball friends are "refreshingly young."

I am 71 years old. The reason I did not play racquetball till I was 68 was because I did not know the game existed. In my youth I had played tennis, badminton, squash and golf, but when we moved out into the country, and at the time I did not drive, I more or less dropped all games.

My discovery, in 1974, of a queer little sawed-off racquet and an exasperating, bouncing black ball, opened up a whole new world to me, and reopened a whole old one, too. Once more I was in an athletic world of sports talk, competitive play, physical exhaustion, showers and locker rooms, T shirts, warm-up suits, shorts and gym shoes. I really was a little old lady in tennis shoes, choosing with delight a new, strange racquet to play with after all those years.

Oddly enough it seems to make no difference that I am old. Everyone I play with, I have noticed, shows not the least compassion for my advanced age, beating me with cheerful consistency. Occasionally very small children in the locker room will eye me doubtfully, thinking for a brief moment it is their grandmother they see, cavorting about in nothing but a bath towel.

"My Grandmother's younger"

One of the people who seemed to mind most was the manager of the Y.M.C.A. where I play. I think he was afraid I would die on the court and he would have to dispose of the body. "My Grandmother is younger than you are", he once said to me plaintively, and when refereeing my first tournament called anxiously from the gallery "Are you all right, Dora?". He has since learned to accept me, and treats me kindly.

For the most part I play with people about the age of my two sons, and they never, for a moment, make me feel old. I am included in their games, their competitions and their parties, and their generous friendship rejuvenates me.

Occasionally a new acquaintance will hesitate, and I can see the

question coming "Excuse my asking, but do you mind telling me how old you are?". I don't mind at all, but I have stopped replying "and how old are you?" as it seems to generate some embarrassment.

Once, in my ignorance, I entered a tournament at the Eau Claire, WI, Y.M.C.A. not realizing it was an open tournament, and, drawing the third seeded player, went down in miserable defeat; whereupon the generous committee bestowed on me a gleaming tankard, on which was inscribed 1776, it being the bicentennial year. The tankard was given me for age, not achievement.

The great danger of this kind of indulgence is that one begins to feel smug; one is acclaimed, not for one's play but for one's age, and that should be avoided at all costs. Last year I had the rare privilege of taking part in a clinic given by Doc Muehleisen on his courts in Del Mar, CA. Impressed by my age, not by my play, he arranged a very brief moment on television with him, kindly sending me gentle balls I couldn't miss. "When you are 70", he told the envious clinic members, "I'll put you on television".

Playing racquetball at 70 is no big deal. As we are often reminded it is a game for all levels of play; find a friend, a racquet, a court and a ball and get out there and enjoy yourself.

Parents Teaching Parents

Recently there has been an upsurge of interest in the younger racquetball players. The recent success of the National Junior Championships in Lombard, IL, holds tremendous promise for the future. Racquetball promoters are looking to these young people to boost the game into outer space, but I think the time has come to look to the untapped resources of the older generation. Everywhere clubs are starting leagues for juniors. You see parents anxiously helping their children to learn, but you don't see those parents helping *their* parents to learn.

Anita Schwarz, who's 56, plays each day with a different B level opponent. Dora Mitchell is her only regular competitor who is older than 35.

As I return from the racquetball courts I pass through the gym where senior citizens are having their weekly exercise class. Grasping the backs of a circle of chairs, they briskly raise first one leg and then the other. It is time those chairs were taken away, and those briskly waving legs learn to stand on their own feet, out there on the racquetball courts.

Maybe we can lure the older generation from the tennis courts. The game, being so much older than racquetball, has players who have continued through the years from youth to age. Racquetball is so young that we have not had time to age with it; so we must go out looking for the older players, impressing on them it does not matter how old you are. If your hair is thinning, wear a bandana; if your knees are knobby or your legs are bowed, wear a warm-up suit, keeping it on indefinitely to show that your opponent has not yet taxed you to the stripping limit.

As the game becomes more and more popular the proportion of amateurs to professionals will increase enormously. The clubs, springing up like mushrooms all over the country, will depend for their income on the eager, frequent members who play for pleasure rather than prizes; there will be leagues and ladders to accommodate all ages.

Profit in Older Players

It is here the older players will prove so profitable, with plenty of time, no young children, money to spend. They will be available to help with tournaments, no doubt have many contacts, and joy of joys, be a great referee source for desperate tournament managers.

Older men, who have played handball for years, are slowly being won over to racquetball, but it is the older women we must go after. Let's get those grandmothers out of the woodwork and on to the courts, and before we know it, there will be a whole string of Golden Mistresses — Classes A, B, C and Novice.



Among all the students watching their SkyHarbor Court Club Teacher Jean Sauser on page two of Inside Racquetball for Women Harriet Turpin, on the far left, seems most intent. It might be that she remembers the attention she had to pay as a Raddcliffe College field hockey player in the 30's. The 72-year-old took up racquetball last year because she believes people her age "should have a younger outlook."

Arthur Shay photo

Retired Colonels Prefer Racquetball

Imogen Averett and Norma Busse are taking up a new sport at the same time they embark on new careers.

The women play racquetball at the Racquetball and Handball Club of San Antonio (TX) two or three times a week. Imogen shot golf in the low

80's, but found the sport too slow, and started playing racquetball two years ago at the San Antonio club. Norma, who also water skis and plays tennis, switched to racquetball because she could play the game rain or shine.

Norma, who is 51, and Imogen, 57,

slip their racquetball games between studies for new careers following their retirement as colonels in the United States Army. Now Imogen is majoring in art at the University of Texas and Norma is a freshman at St. Mary's University law school.



Imogen Averett, left, and Norma Busse choose racquetball over tennis, golf and water skiing.

photo courtesy Racquetball and Handball Club of San Antonio

Playing Tip # 7

This Playing Tip from *Inside Racquetball for Women*, which goes back to basics. "How to stand" might be among the first pointers for a beginning player, but it also needs reviewing by more experienced competitors.

Art Shay and Jean Sauser's book, which explains racquetball through a mistake-correction technique, is now on sale in hardcover and paperback at court clubs and bookstores. The book covers preparation, grips, body positions and movements, racquet strokes, game strategy and a summary of rules.

Mistake: **Poor Base of Support**

Pointing feet in opposite directions produces a poor base of support. This may be the proper "first position" of ballet, but it is ineffective in a racquetball court. Many women move about the court this way, one foot pointing to the back wall, the other pointing to the front wall. If you stand still on the court in this position, you will feel how unstable it is. A poor base of support makes it difficult for you to put the ball where you want it. You will be somewhat off balance, hence out of control, and the ball will fly off your racquet with the same degree of imprecision.



Correction: **Point Your Toes toward the Side Wall**

The simplest way to correct this fault is to point your toes toward the side wall. This will pull your body into better striking position. You should now be well balanced and have more power available, and you should be able to control the direction of the ball you hit much more accurately.

If your toes tend to splay outward, a good drill for you during warm-up is to prance up and down the court with your toes facing a side wall. Combined with knee-squatting, this simple procedure will keep you mindful of the problem and its solution.

Here's to Your Health

Mixed Drinks Minus the Hangover

Leave hot buttered rum to the skiers.
Let gin and tonic top a round of golf.
And give the bowlers their beer.

What you — a healthy racquetball player — need after some heavy competition on the courts is a natural, nutrition-filled beverage.

Before you yawn and turn the page, note that players around the country are lining up at their racquetball health bars to get their post-game kicks out of papaya juice mixed with peanut butter.

To make these drinks at home put the ingredients available at any health food store into your blender and whirl at high speed.

Al Durcovic, a health and p.e. major from Boston University, estimates that these "Weight Watchers" are worth about 250 calories each when they're made and served at the health bar at King's Racquetball Court in Westminster, CA, where Al is the manager. King's "Body Builders" can substitute for a meal.

King's Weight Watchers

The Ace

8 oz. papaya juice
Ice cream scoop of strawberries
(fresh or frozen in own syrup)
1½ oz. protein powder

The Rollout

8 oz. tropical juice (4 oz. papaya and
4 oz. pineapple-coconut juice)
½ banana
1½ oz. protein powder

King's Body Builders

The Pinch

8 oz. tropical juice
1 egg
½ banana
1 t honey
1½ oz. protein powder

Around the World

8 oz. papaya juice
½ banana
1 scoop strawberries
1 t powered milk
1 t honey
1½ oz. protein powder
1 t peanut butter

"Smoothies" are the name Marietta, GA's Courthouse I has given to its health bar drinks. Three of the Courthouse I's four owners — Rich Boggs, Norm Cates and Ray Irwin — are personally devoted to stamping out junk foods, so they asked Norm's wife, Mary, to develop recipes for sugar-free beverages made with natural ingredients. Her Kill Shot and Rollout are thirst quenchers; the others are meals in themselves.

Courthouse Smoothies

The Kill Shot

⅓ C pineapple-coconut drink mix (⅓
C honey to each 3 C
pineapple-coconut juice)
⅓ banana
12 oz. crushed ice

The Rollout

⅓ C orange juice mix (mix with
honey as in Kill Shot)
⅓ banana
⅓ C strawberries
12 oz. crushed ice

Z Ball

⅓ C milk
⅓ banana
⅓ C strawberries
1 t honey
1 t protein powder
12 oz. crushed ice

The Sweet Spot

⅓ C milk
⅓ C pineapple-coconut juice
⅓ banana
1 t honey
1 t protein powder
12 oz. crushed ice



Mary Cates mixes a Kill Shot at Courthouse I.



Who's Playing Racquetball?

Meredith Jury: Arguing in Court for a Living

If Meredith Jury is not planning to play racquetball after work, which she does at least two or three times a week, she jogs eight miles in the morning. "I hate to think what would happen to me if I lost this discipline; not only physically, but mentally I need this outlet." A 30-year-old lawyer, and the only woman at Best, Best & Krieger, a civil law firm in Riverside, CA, Meredith began playing racquetball over five years ago.

"I was in Madison (WI) and the winters are long there. A tennis friend had a racquet and we just started playing one day." Never having taken an actual lesson Meredith now plays racquetball much more than tennis. She claims it fits into her daily schedule more easily, is more physically exerting and requires 100 per cent concentration as opposed to many other forms of exercise.

Meredith finds racquetball a particularly good sport for women. Growing up in Valparaiso, IN, she found very little encouragement in anything other than "feminine" sports: golf and tennis. "There was nothing at all for women in the schools, and after age 13 I often encountered the 'women aren't supposed to' line. Even at college (University of Colorado) there were few competitive sports for women.

Now it's just incredible . . . I see women all over the place playing racquetball . . . secretaries from my office . . . so many women who never did anything athletic before get all excited over this sport."

In addition to her law degree from UCLA (1976), Meredith has also acquired graduate degrees in education and economics. Frequently wondering if she was not destined to be a professional student, Meredith realized on her first day of law school that she had finally found her place. "It's perfect for me. I'm not a specialist, and this field provides enough diversity to assure me it will always remain interesting." She is also pleased with Best, Best & Krieger where she feels the large size (31 lawyers) helps to insure this variation.

Primarily concentrating on civil litigation, she also spends time on business litigation. In addition she represents public agencies, researches growth control and studies the prevailing California issue of water law. She goes to court at least once a week for oral argument although she finds that writing is becoming a crucial element of law. "One of the main problems with this country's courts is they are so congested with criminal law there is no time for civil law."

Although Meredith is frequently approached to play competitively, she has so far avoided this route. She has played in several tournaments but doesn't enjoy the competitive aspect and is reluctant to make the time commitment. She currently plays at the Riverside Racquetball Club, often with her husband William, a soil-physics professor at UCLA, and also with other women from the club. "It's different when you're in school. You lose the luxury of free time once you're working but you gain a community which is more professional and probably more serious about the sport."

—Jennifer Alter



Working with words all day Attorney Meredith Jury welcomes the after-hours action of racquetball.



winning racquetball



Foreword by Robert W. Kendler, President, United States Racquetball Association

Arthur Shay with Chuck Leve

Winning Racquetball is intended for beginning players seeking shortcuts to racquetball competence as well as those who have achieved the competence required to enter local club tournaments and last at least a round or two.

Building on the basics, Shay and Leve cover such areas as the mental attitudes required to win tournaments; how to get into supershape for racquetball; how to use your limitations (fatigue, for example) as advantages; and how to play against someone who is trying to out-psych you. There are winning suggestions for every department of play.

Proven racquetball winners, such as Steve Keeley, Steve Serot, Sue Carow, Kathy Williams, Charlie Brumfield, Bill Schmidtke, Ron Rubenstein, and racquetball's 19-year-old superstar Marty Hogan, are photographed in action and quoted throughout to illustrate the points made in the text.

Winning Racquetball will lead the racquetball enthusiast to the level of competence and beyond into tournament excellence.

Arthur Shay is a former *Life* and *Time* writer and *Sports Illustrated* photographer. He is the author-photographer of thirty-one books. Chuck Leve is the author of *Inside Racquetball* and the National Director and editor of *National Racquetball* magazine, the official publication of the United States Racquetball Association and the National Racquetball Club, Inc.

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Keeping the Ball Warm in Vermont

by Dan Cox

There's plenty of parking at the R.A.C.

The two men waited, shivering while one fumbled with the combination lock on the door. The lock snapped open and they entered the building, running up the 25 stairs, two at a time. Avoiding cans, rags and other undefinable debris they went through two vacant rooms and then entered the main hall. They undressed, cursing the cold, and pulled on their athletic garb, which included sweat suits. Although the small space heater had been turned on an hour previously, the single court still seemed a bit nippy. Rightfully so, for the thermometer read -10° indoors.

But this was January, Vermont, and the Randolph Athletic Club. Playing with frost on the floor was nothing new to village manager, Bert Moffatt and John Kruger, former pro at the Court Club in Burlington, VT. The racquetballs were so cold that one player had to keep a reserve ball warm inside his athletic supporter, while the other ball remained in play for several volleys. The players switched balls often as they became cold and deadened.

Midway through one of the games the local train rumbled by. This was a short train, and the server only gained 3 points. The problem is that the train literally comes within 50 feet of the court and the players feel like they're on the tracks. Normally the server can get 3, 4 and sometimes as many as 6 points on an opponent while the train passes. The points are gained by the noise, vibrations and by forgetting the score throughout the ordeal. One and one-half hours later the match ended. Street clothes were snatched in arm and a hasty retreat was made down the stairs, door locked, into the car with the cold seats. Two miles later Bert unlocked the gate to the town's sewer plant, where workers graciously share their shower and cold beer with racquetball players. A great shower if ever there was one, piping hot and a hard stream of water.



Is 114 the oldest?

Construction was started on the Grant-Block building in 1864, possibly making it the oldest building in the country to house an official racquetball court. The room the court is in was originally the gym, where the local high school played basketball, thus the high ceiling. Downstairs are several stores still in operation — the hospital thrift shop, Sally's barber shop and Grant's drug store.

The history of this single, exact dimensional court in Randolph, VT. (population 4,200) begins with Bert and Billy Kevin, both avid handball players in the mid-1960's. Previously, the nearest courts were at Norwich University in nearby Northfield, VT. After being ousted from these courts one day, since neither Bert or Billy were

students or faculty/staff, a new facility became a necessity. With Billy being a contractor and Bert being your basic knows - everybody - and - where - to - get - everything - at - the - cheapest - prices the dream soon became a reality. Contributions began to trickle in. First the walls were erected, using heavily studded $\frac{3}{4}$ " Marine plywood on the side and the back walls and solid hardwood maple on the front wall. The lighting consisted of 10 300 watt recessed flood lights in a 4-3-3 pattern. The viewing balcony, with a gas heater, was the last outside item required. Finally the six inch wide original hardwood maple floor, with hand hewn nails was sanded and coated. Although the floor remains warped, it is not a noticeable factor when playing, and it is to be expected in a building 114 years old!



Randolph Athletic Club Manager Bert Moffet, right, hopes a passing train will help him win his serve against Bob Comoli.

Bert, commonly known as the "Living Legend" for his ability to consume massive amounts of junk food and beer, assumes the position of unofficial, official manager of the R.A.C. The rates are reasonable, \$25 per year dues and 50 cents per hour for court time, which includes free play from May to September. All fees collected are channeled into a fund used for maintenance and improvements. Bert has plans in the not-too-distant future for an entire glass back wall.

Hand-welded Trophy

After converting from handball to racquetball in 1960 Bert quickly rose to become one of the top senior players in the state. Somewhere between 25-50 years of age his play demonstrates the

ability and desire of a young upstart. This fact can be verified by such great moments as his marathon match with John Kruger, lasting 27 games and six hours, throwing in a few *Snickers* bar breaks. In 1974 the R.A.C. hosted its first annual invitational tournament. The two day affair pitted eight players in a Round Robin style with one game to 31 points. The winners received an extra 4 bonus points per match and the player with the most accumulative points was declared the champ. Paul Rhinehart, University of Vermont soccer coach (national coach of the year in 1975), received the hand-welded trophy, made in the town's workshop.

With success came fame, and soon players throughout the state and East were cruising into Randolph for a match or two. Hal Greg, nationally ranked masters player, commonly refers to the R.A.C. as the "Mecca of the Western Hemisphere." Regulars include Caino (Mike Cain), Foggy (Bob Patterson), Spear (Bob Comoli), Shadow (Charlie Hall) and this author.

Although no multi-million dollar athletic facility, the R.A.C. has achieved monumental success and should be preserved as a historical landmark. Many a member boasts that "you haven't played racquetball until you have played the R.A.C. in Vermont."

We welcome court club news that you send us typed double or triple (preferred) spaced with one-inch margins all around.

Lawrence, KS

The Spaulding Racquetball Clubs, Inc., St. Louis, MO, owns and operates a new racquetball-handball club at 2300 W. 6th St. in Lawrence, KS, according to Charles G. Spaulding, president of the Spaulding Clubs.

This newest Spaulding Club has six professional racquetball-handball courts. There are carpeted locker rooms with saunas and whirlpools and a modern nursery for members' children. The Club is also designed with an upper level gallery, allowing for easy viewing on all the courts.

Currently there are eight Spaulding Clubs in operation, six in the St. Louis area and one each in Springfield, MO, and Kansas City, KS. In addition there are currently five other clubs under construction in five different cities, including the Lawrence, KS club.



From left to right Dick Peters, local developer, Herb Widensol, general contractor, and Charles Spaulding, president of the Spaulding Racquetball Clubs, Inc., in front of the new Spaulding Club as it neared completion at 2300 W. 6th St. in Lawrence, KS.



Northpark, TX

Racquetball arrived in Dallas in February with the opening of the 14 court complex, Racquetball at Northpark, which is the first court club to be erected in the Metroplex of Dallas-Ft. Worth.

Located in Northpark East, the newest section of the nationally famous Northpark Mall, the club's amenities include whirlpools, steam, sauna, exercise area and attended play area for children.

"Dallas has always been and is now a sports oriented and progressive community. It's surprising that our facility is the pioneer club within the area," commented manager Norman Padgett.

A top flight activities staff featuring Pete Wright, the number one ranked player in the state, will offer free clinics for new players on a

twice-a-week basis, as well as other instructional programs and activities for members. Members and their guests will be able to participate in a wide selection of leagues, teams, challenge ladder and tournament competitions.

Norm added, "Dallas is Dallas and, accordingly, every effort is being made to insure that this club will provide the community with the finest racquetball/handball facility and activities available anywhere in the country."

Jim Augur and Associates, Dallas, was the designer of the building and interior design was provided by William H. Asher and Company of Tulsa.

The club is owned by U.S. Racquetball Courts, Inc. which also owns a 10 court club, Racquet Time of Lexington, KY.



Chicago, IL

The Lincoln Park Court Club, 220 W. North Avenue in Piper's Alley, opened to members for play during the latter part of December with a Grand Opening for the general public Jan. 21 and 22, according to Craig Whitt, managing partner of the racquetball facility.

"We have luxurious features common among Chicago's newest racquetball facilities such as twelve full-size tournament courts, individual men's and women's saunas and whirlpools, a fully equipped pro shop and a free attended nursery," explained Whitt. "However, we also offer executive conference rooms, enclosed

discount parking with access to the club and a full-service bar located near the fireplace/lounge area."

The Lincoln Park Court Club is the first private racquetball operation in the Chicagoland area to function on a limited membership basis, offering pampered service and greater court time availability for a membership roster not to exceed 1,200 persons. The Lincoln Park Court Club has a one time/lifetime membership fee with monthly dues, allowing members unlimited playing time without hourly court charges.

Tinley Park, IL

The Tinley Park Racquetball Club, one of the most complete racquetball-handball centers in the midwest, opened its doors to its charter members and their guests on Dec. 18, 1977.

Located immediately west of 17500 Street, South Harlem Avenue in Tinley Park, the club is designed by Architect William K. Olson and Associates, and appointed by Interior Designer Ginger Gambla.

The two level facility houses 10 climate controlled tournament courts, four with expansive glass side walls overlooking the playing areas from the lounge which features an arched fireplace.

In addition to separate women's and men's carpeted locker rooms the Tinley Park Racquetball Club offers health spa facilities which include separate customized private shower stalls and dressing booths, saunas, whirlpools, and conditioning rooms appointed with the latest weight training and exercise systems. The club also features a pro shop



stocked with a full selection of racquetball and handball equipment, and a supervised nursery and play area available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at no cost to members.

The Tinley Park Racquetball Club operates from 6 a.m. to midnight daily. Ample parking space is available on the south side of the building.

The club offers individual, family and corporate memberships. Courts may be reserved on a permanent court time basis for an entire playing season, or may be rented on an hourly basis by

making reservations up to six days in advance. The fees for memberships are family-\$65, individual-\$50 and corporate-\$95. Court fees are \$8 per hour prime time and \$6 non-prime.

To join one of the programs now being planned, including individual and group lessons, leagues, ladders, tournaments, and special physical fitness clinics, or to receive other information, write to the Tinley Park Racquetball Club, 17500 South Duval Drive, Tinley Park, IL 60477, or call (312) 532-7900.

Lakeshore Racquet Club, 1320 W. Fullerton Ave., as it will look once renovation is completed, with added parking facilities.



Chicago, IL

Lakeshore Racquet Club, 1320 W. Fullerton Ave., has added nine racquetball courts to its present 10-court tennis facility, making it one of the largest indoor court facilities in the Chicago area, in addition to being open 24 hours a day.

The new addition is built on stilts above the present parking lot and provides covered parking for 40 cars. The expansion enlarges the Lakeshore facility from 10,000 to 78,000 square feet.

According to Jeff Kaiser, manager of the club, one of the advantages in playing on the new racquetball courts is the playing surface itself. Instead of wood the floor is covered with a hard vinyl surface that has a cushion back. "This type of floor is the finest floor. It won't buckle or separate as wood floors, thus eliminating dead spots," Kaiser explained.

"The floor provides a uniform ball balance and reduced impact noise," Kaiser said. "In addition, this type of floor reduces the chance of injuries and muscle fatigue, making play more comfortable."

This is the only synthetic floor that has the approval of the U.S. Racquetball Association.

Sue Carow, top-ranked national racquetball player and three-time state champion has joined the staff. Carow, who ranks seventh in the country, was the state women's singles champion from 1973 to 1975. She has been giving private lessons for two years.

The club is the first facility in Chicago to stay open round the clock. Kaiser said he initiated the new hours to accommodate the tennis and racquetball players who are unable to play during the day.

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Mort Leve, Executive Director,
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360 Park Drive, Northbrook, IL 60062

Joliet, IL

Vavrus & Associates, national builders and developers of apartment communities and ranch lands, are bringing to Joliet a new concept of a fun and health center. Called "Charlie" the facility includes racquetball courts and is scheduled for a January opening.

The club portion offers adult membership to individuals, families and businesses to help them develop fitness through analysis and stress testing, exercise, figure development, nutrition, weight control and relaxation. Facilities include a glass-walled observation racquetball court with TV monitor, indoor tennis, player's lounge, plus steam rooms, saunas and whirlpools. Also included are equipment to help with specific figure control and conditioning objectives, a 12-laps-to-the-mile indoor jogging track and an exercise swim pool for aerobic conditioning.

Open to the public is a restaurant serving natural foods and a connoisseur's selection of reasonably priced table wines, and an adjoining lounge featuring disco dancing. The health club, restaurant and lounge will be part of a theme retail center with a series of shops including sports, food, and book stores.

Jim Mabbott is director of the club at 2701 Black Road.



Wall, NJ

Dave Dean, executive director of What's Your Racquet, Inc., has announced the February opening for his first club on Atlantic Avenue in Wall Township, central New Jersey, minutes south of the Garden Parkway and Route 34.

This luxuriously furnished facility includes 16 climate controlled racquetball/handball courts, four all-aluminum, heated platform tennis courts and warming hut, and a 3/4 mile jogging track with an 18 station par course. Of the 16 handball and racquetball panel system courts, seven have glass back walls. These courts are visible from the main floor lounge, reception desk and pro

shop, as well as from the mezzanine level lounge and snack bar. One tournament court with both side walls and back wall of glass is situated on the mezzanine level and has visibility from the lounge and snack bar, as well as from the viewing area surrounding the court. This glass enclosed court has both T.V. and video tape capabilities. Eight other courts also have video tape capabilities.

Other amenities include a free, professionally supervised child care center; plush, carpeted men's and women's locker rooms, which include saunas, whirlpools and steam baths and a cardio-fitness center, which will be professionally staffed and will include treadmills, bicycle ergometers, upper and lower body weight machines, rowing machines, speed punching bags and other conditioning equipment. The cardio-fitness center is coordinated with the Swedish par course. A full selection of programs is available to members.

Dean also announced the appointment of Dick Booker as the head racquetball professional and assistant manager. Instructional programs for individuals and groups, clinics for beginners, challenge ladders, leagues and tournaments for all ability levels are being arranged by Booker.

Information is available at (201) 223-2100, or by writing to Dave Dean, c/o What's Your racquet, P. O. Box 1402, Wall, NJ 07719.

South Plainfield, NJ

An exhibition court with side and back glass walls, a seating capacity of 400 and special wall openings for T.V. cameras is planned for the Ricochet Racquets Club, a 19-court racquetball, squash and health facility that will open in June on St. Nicholas Avenue in South Plainfield, NJ.

The one million dollar project will include 15 racquetball and four squash courts, saunas, whirlpool, exercise rooms, carpeted lounges and locker rooms, a meeting room and a nursery. The T.V. cameras will be used to tape lessons as an aid to the club pro, as well as tournaments for showing on commercial and public television stations.

Harold Snyder, Richard Luster and Gary Hamrah are the Ricochet's owner-operators.

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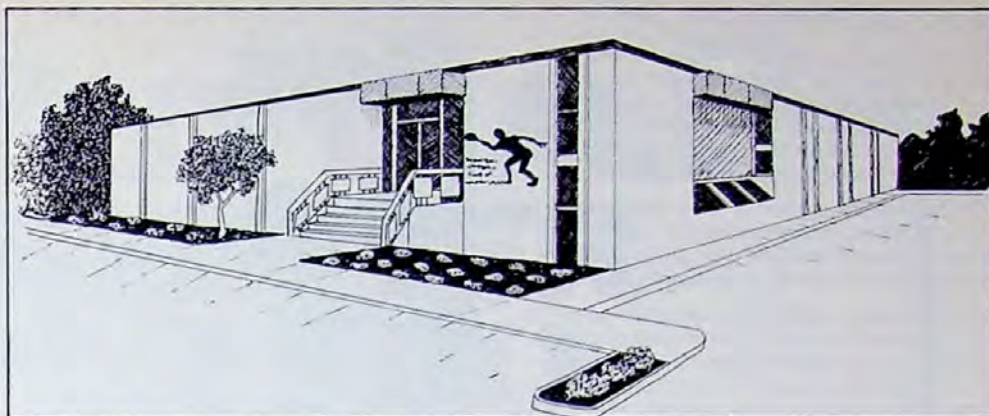
Winston-Salem, NC

The Racquetball & Handball Club of Winston-Salem, N.C. opened its doors in mid December to 500 enthusiastic members. The 14,000 square foot facility is located in Stratford Executive Park at 301 Executive Park Blvd.

The club features eight air conditioned courts, one with a glass side wall for exhibition purposes. Viewing is possible from the upper level lounge and the lower level exercise room which is adapted to house bleachers.

For the members enjoyment club facilities include:

- Carpeted locker rooms with tiled shower areas
- Sunken Jacuzzi bath and Scandinavian sauna rooms
- Spacious T.V. lounge and observing gallery
- Fully equipped exercise room featuring Universal weight and exercise machines
- Supervised child care center
- Completely equipped pro shop and snack area
- Spacious parking lot



Free instructional clinics are held regularly for beginners, while individual and group lessons are available. Tournaments and leagues for men, women, and juniors are also a part of the club activities.

The location of the club received major consideration and is easily accessible to local residents and those from neighboring communities by way of two major four lane thoroughfares.

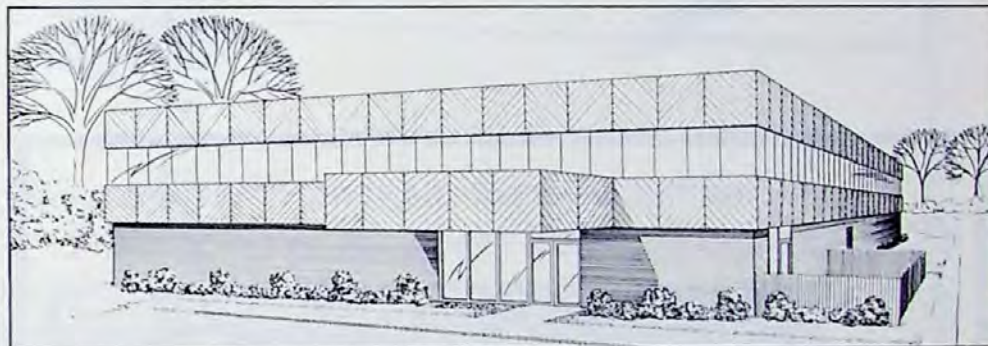
Bob Anderson a 1976 graduate of Marshall University, is the clubs' manager pro and he is assisted by Garl Wiles.

Carolina Custom Builders Inc., builder of this eight court facility, has plans for building a similar club in the Chapel Hill-Durham area beginning in March of 1978. Preliminary plans call for further expansion in the North Carolina area.

Louisville, KY

Ground breaking ceremonies took place on Nov. 17 for Louisville's Plainview Racquetball Club located at 10301 Linn Station Road in the Plainview subdivision. The General Partners are Charles A. Brown, Jr., Norman V. Noltemeyer and J. T. Sims, Jr., and limited partners include professional basketball players Dan Issel, Louie Dampier, Artis Gilmore, Wesley Cox, Allen Murphy, U of L Football Coach Vince Gibson and U of L Athletic Director Dave Hart.

The Plainview Racquetball Club contains 10 air conditioned regulation racquetball/handball courts; health food bar and lounge complete with game tables, skylights, T.V. and kitchenette; spacious, carpeted locker room with individual shower stalls, saunas, whirlpools, sunrooms and personal grooming aids; laundry and towel service for members; a large, professionally staffed, nursery including baby cribs and an outdoor play area; a pro shop with a complete



line of equipment and sportswear, and a spacious exercise and weight room complete with a Universal weight machine. Special programs, events, tournaments, and exhibitions for women and men will be a regular part of the club programming. Professional instructors and exercise experts will be part of the staff.

Family, single, junior, (age 18 and under) and corporate memberships are available.

Complete information on the club, to open in the spring, is available at the Plainview Racquetball Club, 10301 Linn Station Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40223. (502) 425-4001.

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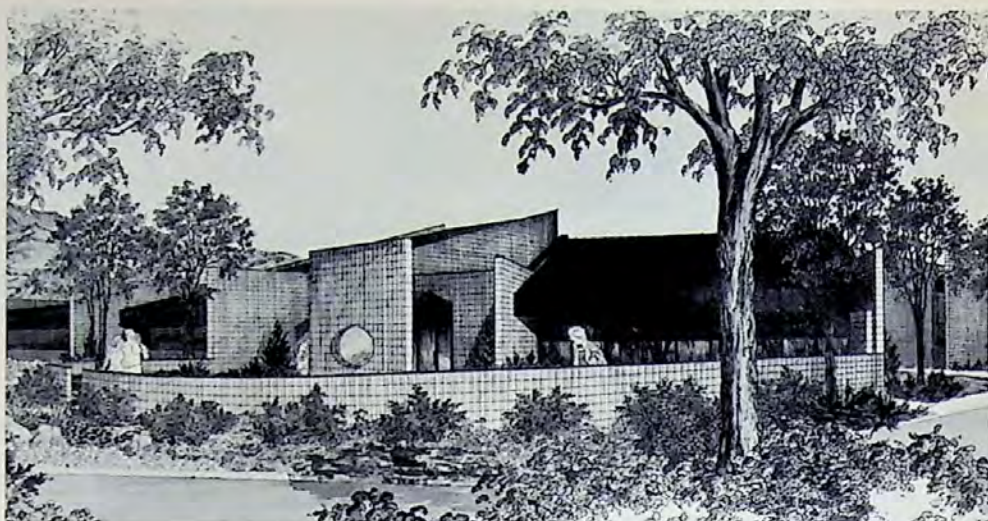
Colorado Springs, CO

Scurr Messenger Investment Company, Colorado Springs' leading community builder for 20 years, plans a March opening for the \$1.2 million Executive Park Athletic Club. The private racquetball and sports facility is situated on a 1.25 acre site at 2233 N. Academy Place.

Executive Park Athletic Club is designed as a total northeast community social center for individuals and families, with an exclusive atmosphere similar to a private country club.

A landscaped, open atrium area serves as the entrance-way into the multi-leveled physical fitness facility where members can participate in various activity programs including private and group instructions from racquetball pros, clinics, tournaments, league plays, gymnastics training provided by Zoltan Schmidt, slimnastics, dancing, indoor jogging, figure refining, aerobic conditioning, ski classes and prenatal and postnatal conditioning.

The 23,000 square foot Executive Park Athletic Club is the only sports facility in Colorado Springs featuring 10 champion, exhibition racquetball/handball courts with one full glass backwall for viewing activities. The viewing gallery seats approximately 75 spectators.



The social lounge, featuring a juice and nutritious health food bar is decorated with abstract supergraphics in earth tones, planters, vaulted ceilings and a redwood deck. Locker rooms include individual showers, grooming bars complete with supplies, solid oak lockers, hydro

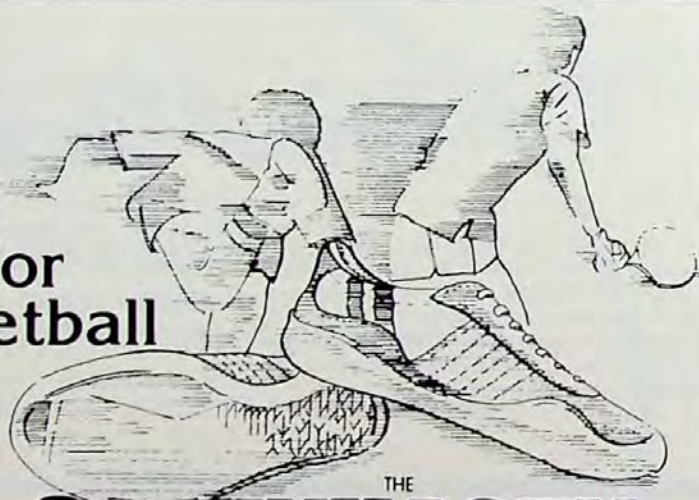
spa whirlpool baths, a Scandinavian sauna for the women, a steam room for the men, valet services and a separate color television lounge.

The modest one time membership fee at the Executive Park Athletic Club encourages frequent use of the facility and the various programs.

John Mooney, internationally known handball player and national racquetball champion, is supervising the total operation of the club as co-owner and general manager.

The Executive Park Athletic Club is open year-round from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. For further information on special reduced rates now being offered, contact John Mooney, or assistant general manager, Ron Sopata at (303) 597-7775 or (303) 597-7780.

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NRC's Qualifying System Working

The newly-implemented qualification system at NRC pro tournaments has been a huge success according to all indications.

"The system was conceived to achieve a number of goals," said NRC National Director Chuck Leve. *"And to this date, all of those goals have been met."*

The system protects the top 24 players from having to qualify and allows them direct placement into the round of 32 for each stop on the Colgate-Seamco-Leach sponsored tour.

The remaining eight spots in the round of 32 draw are

filled by survivors of qualification rounds held the day prior to the tournament.

"We can accommodate up to 32 qualifying entrants," said Leve. *"And each of them have an equal chance to reach the main draw, the round of 32."*

The players who compete in the qualification rounds do so until eight are left (quarter-finalists). Once determined, they are placed in the main draw by random selection.

"Once a player qualifies," said Leve, *"his chances are equal to any other player from rank 17 up. The ran-*

dom selection assures a qualifier that he will not necessarily be forced to play one of the top eight seeds in the round of 32."

Another reason for the qualification system was to allow non-professionals a chance to enter the pro tournaments, yet not force the ranking pros to play two or three rounds of meaningless, embarrassing matches.

The qualification draw is usually made up of highly rated amateur players, attempting to test their skills against the well known professionals. However, occasionally a player will enter a

pro tournament for a \$30 (amount of entry fee) lesson. Such players, when faced with qualification, now stick to the amateur ranks.

The end result is a better quality tournament, with all entrants still having a fair chance to reach a money round (the round of 16 in the main draw).

And the amateurs are accommodated since each pro tour stop has a minimum of five amateur brackets.

"We're real happy with the way the qualifying arrangement has worked out," said Leve. *"And the players seem to like it as much as we do."*

NCCA Holds First National Convention and Show

Racquetball's first national convention and industry trade show was held Jan. 19-24 at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA.

The convention was spon-

sored by the National Court Clubs Association (NCCA), a recently-formed organization of racquetball court club owners and operators. The trade show was conducted in conjunction with The Action

Sports Industry buying show at which manufacturers of racquetball/handball equipment, as well as suppliers of services and of products for walls, floors, lighting and accessories, were available in one area for the first time.

As a highlight of the first national meeting, ABC Sports Commentator Jim McKay was featured speaker at the Saturday evening, Jan. 21, banquet.

Californians Set 72-Hour Marathon Racquetball Record

Junk food, five-minute naps, determination and good, hard playing brought a world record to four Californians who raised \$1,500 for the Jerry Lewis fight against muscular dystrophy during a 72-hour racquetball marathon in November.

The doubles players set the record at Wall Street in Sacramento, where 1,000 people watched segments of the 72-hour match. Approximately 150 contributors pledged donations for every hour the players continued their games. Taking part in the marathon were Bill Gollnick, 20, a real estate agent who started playing at Wall Street in March of 1976 and is now ranked number three at the club; Homer Johnson, Jr., 25, a fast foods restaurant manager who's been playing since May of 1976; Ken Scott, 22, who builds swimming pools and has been playing at Wall

Players strike a pre-marathon pose: left to right Ken Scott, Bill Gollnick, Homer Johnson and Bill Southward.



Street a year, and Bill Southward, 30, real estate agent who also took up racquetball a year ago.

Wall Street staff members supplied the record-setting quartet with hamburgers, chicken and soft drinks dur-

ing five-minute breaks. Ken Scott says he learned to sleep four minutes during breaks and "wake up feeling great."

Homer Johnson reports "We played hard — I mean good racquetball 90 to 95 per cent of the time. I know I person-

ally became delirious round the 60th hour. I swore the floor wasn't level, the front board was high and someone raised the ceiling. The jubilant hours were the last ones when the crowd was great."

Esquire Reviews Racquetball

Free-lance writer, Philip Singerman, wrote a four-page story in the January issue of *Esquire* magazine featuring "Racquetball: the Hottest New Game."

Starting with a quote from a man from Tennessee who said "If I could get a racket under its wing, I could teach a one-eyed duck to play racquetball in less than half an hour," the story described the author's first experience on the court (he worked up a "three-beer sweat"), explained how to play and listed Farrah Fawcett-Majors and O.J. Simpson among racquetball's celebrity enthusiasts.

Should Women Dress Up The Courts?

Since U.S. Racquetball Association Director Chuck Leve wrote his hardhitting article about women's dress on the racquetball courts in the July '77 issue of *National Racquetball Magazine*, I have had a number of queries on the subject. Like any chicken male I tried to avoid an answer. However, after thinking it over, I believe an answer is justified. My process of reasoning is as follows:

As an older guy I have since learned that all women are beautiful - some more than

others. And as a husband paying bills, I have never objected to those for her wardrobe. I think it goes with the contract.

As a male racquetball player I admit to having seen some raunchy outfits on some of my male fellow players.

As a member of the Club's Board of Directors I suppose we should be up with the times and growth factors of the game. Many players claim that the principal reason women are attracted to the game in such astonishing numbers is the equality factor

- the freedom of play and lack of rules of dress. The fact is that they can and do meet men on equal court terms of fun, skill, mental alertness and agility. Other players however, say women should act and dress like ladies even when playing racquetball.

So there you have it. I'm taking the King Solomon solution: Look in the mirrors provided in your Club dressing area. If the image you see is what you want to project, go play, have fun, and God bless!

Danny Miller

The new Racquet Ball in Orlando, FL, ran this story in the December issue of their club newsletter.

Profile of a Racquetballer

by Mort Leve

A Chicago-based group is reported to be spending thousands of dollars on a study — "What Is The Profile Of A Racquetball Player?"

Don't waste your good cash fellows . . . we'll give you just that information, compliments of the house.

Your racquetball player is a composite of many ingredients — from the high school and college students to the many greybeards, who are prolonging their 20 X 40 court life with the extended reach and not as much strenuous bending as in handball.

In between there are the gals and guys who have discovered a fun-type route to physical well being that they can COPE with yet afford a marvelous competitive outlet. In suburbia we find the harried young housewives, getting a

block of stock in ERA by dumping off their pre-school age darlings at the Court Club nursery and then enjoying four walls and the ceiling along with their own plush locker room. In mid-town the working women get the needed relief from workaday tedium PLUS an ideal means of socializing with their male counterpart.

The men have a range contingent on club locale. High media income suburbia provides the lawyers, doctors, stock brokers and self-employed businessmen who have gone through the early 20's of establishing themselves and now have that leisure time to enjoy it all. Instead of getting spectatoritis in front of the boob tube they get on somewhat of an ego trip by becoming "sudden jocks".

They tote their equipment proudly and display the club's logo as a badge of belonging. More and more we find the air traveler taking along his racquet, looking for some action — not in the bar — but in the cozy confines of a court.

Clubs can cut across various income levels. There's not the snob appeal that is still somewhat prevalent in tennis. The racquetball age levels are a bit lower and definitely appeal to the ambitious, on-the-go populace. You will find policemen, firemen, factory workers also into racquetball. If we pinpoint age levels we're talking generally in the 20-40 range centering on the late 20's and early 30's. All categories can be found — showgirls in Las Vegas, stewardesses in Chicago, movie and TV personalities in Los Angeles . . . ex-pro athletes sprinkled about, both former perform-

ers and still active. Two baseball playing Rons, Santo and Cey . . . Santo, the ex-Cub star, finding daily antidote from his oil business in Chicago, trekking over to the Michigan Avenue club . . . Cey, the Dodger slugger, finding an off-season conditioner to keep his penguin strides in line. Five hundred pounds of Pyle brothers, Mike and Palmer, slamming balls around where they once tore apart the opponents in the rough and tough world of professional football. "Meanest Man in Football", Conrad Dobler, will switch from an off-season bistro bouncer to club entrepreneur in Laramie, WY . . . Illinois' Governor Jim Thompson issuing "I Beat the Governor" T-shirts to anyone who bests him on the court and if he doesn't improve his game he'll go broke.

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William Greengoss, one of the directors and owners of the Four Flaggs Court Club in Niles, IL, has been elected president of the Chicagoland Racquetball and Handball Association, representing 30 clubs in the Chicago area.

Greengoss, a racquetball, handball and tennis enthusiast for over 20 years, opened the Four Flaggs Court Club in 1975. Four Flaggs is the first Chicago area racquetball/handball court located in a shopping center.

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What a Racquetball Player Should Know About Sweat

by John Chelucci

John Chelucci, who wrote Weight Control and Exercise in our November issue, is working toward his masters degree in human nutrition.

If the word sweat has been apologetically pushed into the background, the fluid itself has been maligned beyond all reason. There is no surer sign of enlightened puberty than the frenzied attempt to spray, cream or soap the stuff into submission. Whereas perspiration may be politely tolerated within most circles, sweat is abhorred by all but that Cro-Magnum descendant, the athlete.

Sweating occurs on the nude person when the environmental temperature reaches 88 degrees F. Above this "set point" there is a proportional increase in sweating until a maximum rate is reached. This normally mild saline solution becomes increasingly saturated with urea, lactic acid and other metabolic wastes as the tempo of activity is quickened. The elimination of this molecular debris results in internal cleansing, and contributes to the refreshed feeling that follows vigorous activity.

During a hard bout of racquetball heat production may increase 12-fold over resting values, resulting in elevated heart rate and circulatory stress. The body's sole means of heat regulation during this increased metabolic activity is through sweating. A fact unrecognized by many, however, is that sweating does not by itself assure temperature regulation; the sweat must evaporate. On a warm, humid day when the atmosphere is already relatively saturated sweat does not evaporate readily, and body temperature may rise accordingly. Herein lies the danger of wet saunas and rubber slim suits; both produce increased sweating without the essential evaporation needed to dissipate body heat. In addition the extraordinary volume of fluid and minerals lost in this manner not only prevents temperature regulation, but also may accelerate muscular weakness, cramps and cardiovascular stress.

Much like an overheated automobile engine the human body functions less efficiently as internal temperature soars (witness the weakness accompanying fever). Although a glass of tepid water 10 minutes before showtime will enhance performance by delaying initial temperature increase, once profuse sweating begins, and for some time thereafter, the diluting effect of water on rapidly vanishing mineral salts outweighs its cooling effect. After half an hour of intense play, however, the reduction of body core temperature once again assumes top priority, and what may be most beneficial is a beverage containing electrolytes. (Electrolytes are essential substances our bodies lose when we sweat).

Judging Beverages

The sight of champion marathon runners doubled over with stomach cramps following the ingestion of some form of electrolyte beverage attests to the ignorance surrounding this important issue. Controversy reigns supreme, with a spectrum of recommendations that includes beer, Coke, Gatorade and unlabeled apothecary nightmares. Fortunately there are some guidelines we can use in deciding which drinks do us the most good while we're playing and sweating. Any solution we prepare to maintain body temperature, replace lost minerals and bolster ebbing energy should contain:

1. A cooling solvent. As a base to add both minerals and an energy source nothing can challenge water. It is quickly assimilated, is universally tolerated (unlike milk) and unlike beer, water has no side effects. (The danger of using an alcoholic beverage for electrolyte replacement was made all too clear at the 1972 Olympics when the Italian track team performed erratically while drinking wine between events.)

2. Essential salts. Here the key word is potassium. Although the sodium chloride content of sweat is initially very concentrated (a result of our national dietary salt-anything-that-doesn't-move philosophy), few athletes are aware of the large amounts of potassium excreted via sweating as activity continues. The muscular cramps experienced in the final moments of play often are the result of a potassium deficiency. Indeed taking a salt tablet (NaCl) actually induces greater potassium losses and subsequent muscular failure.

3. Energy replacement. Although glucose is the form in which quick energy is supplied to the cell, moderation is needed. It would be a real boon to chug some sweetened beverage for a renewed source of energy. Unfortunately researchers have shown the addition of greater than two per cent glucose to dramatically slow the absorption of water through the stomach mucosa with a subsequent body temperature rise and performance drop.

Test Puts Tomato Juice on Top

When *Nutrition Today* tested several electrolyte drinks (including water, Coke, Sport, Gatorade and some homemade brews) for their fluid and mineral absorption effects, the results were a bit embarrassing. Two homemade drinks and water swept their highly touted commercial counterparts 1-2-3! Third place water demonstrated the greatest cooling effect, though offering no energy or mineral replacement. Number two, orange juice with added salt, had quick absorption, glucose and fructose (a precursor of glycogen, the storage form of glucose) as readily available sources of energy and excellent potassium and salt assimilation. The gold prize was awarded to the more palatable commercial tomato juice (excellent potassium with salt already





added) diluted with equal volume water. The availability of these orange and tomato juices in convenient tab-top cans may gain them the electrolyte monopoly.

A report on sweating would be incomplete without mentioning acclimatization, the body's ability to adjust to the rigors of the environment. Whereas an individual unaccustomed to the heat can sweat only 1.5 liters-hour maximally, a few weeks of activity can raise this value to 3.5 liters. When one considers the fact that evaporation of a liter of sweat liberates 580 calories of heat from the body, this increase in ability to sweat is an obvious advantage.

Of special significance to the fairer sex is the fact that women have fewer sweat glands and consequently benefit less from acclimatization. This reduced ability to sweat, and thereby cool the body by its evaporation, may evidence itself in facial vasodilation (an overly rosy complexion) and circulatory stress, despite a relatively dry appearance. For this reason loose-fitting, porous feminine attire is especially important. The macho swinger who belittles the intensity of women's play because their clothes aren't drenching with sweat may be attesting to his physiological ignorance.

The benefits of this acclimatization also are realized at submaximal and resting states. Sweating begins at a lower body temperature and is more profuse at all temperatures once a person starts exercising vigorously at least three times a week. Because exercise itself is responsible for this increase in ability to sweat, and thereby dissipate heat, little acclimatization can be expected by exposure to heat alone.

I can think of no better way to summarize how the body maintains its temperature balance than to offer this seldom heard, heretofore never understood, Chinese proverb: "Man who want to be cool must sweat." ●



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Racquetball

In The News!



This story from the Nov. 4, 1977 issue of the San Diego Evening Tribune (and reprinted with the paper's permission) is another in our series from publications around the country that are featuring racquetball. If your newspaper prints a major racquetball story, send it to us for consideration in this section.

Racquetball King's Home Is Really His Castle

by Kay Jarvis

George C. Brown III swung open the massive double monogrammed doors of his new house wearing a bright orange terry robe and a big smile.

"Sorry, guess I overslept," he told the reporter and photographer who had just navigated their way around two Cadillacs and a black Rolls-Royce, licensed as "GEORGI I" "THMAN I" and "GCB 3."

George Brown III can afford to oversleep. He has become known, in a few short years, as "king of racquetball" in San Diego. And as befits a darkly handsome 28-year-old prince of commerce, he has built a castle high above everybody and everything in El Cajon Valley.

While Brown went to change into a dove-gray vested suit and open-throated paler gray shirt, his housekeeper and friend, Florence Shuler, who has known Brown since he was a tot, gave a tour of the 14,000 square foot house, which is now in the final stages of decoration.

"He's a wonderful, kind and generous man," she said. "I wouldn't take care of a house this size for anybody else."

She isn't too crazy about having the luxurious fawn-colored deep pile carpeting in the kitchen. Although it covers every inch of floor space in the house, including the walls of the circular stairwell, it isn't too practical in a cooking area. "It will be replaced with tile after a while," she said.

What she does especially like is the panoramic view and watching the

undulating waves of fog drift up from the valley floor, 2,000 feet below.

"It seems like you're the only person in the world then — there's nothing showing down below."

But on a clear day, everything is there to be seen. Look to the left between two hills and the emerald green of Singing Hills Golf Club shimmers far below.

Mount Helix, San Miguel Mountain and Palomar Mountain in the far distance can be seen from the curving living room windows.

The massive golden-colored concrete mansion can be seen for miles. Look to your left and up from Greenfield Drive in El Cajon and there it is, dominating a craggy, boulder-covered precipice.

Brown has so far invested nearly \$800,000 in the house, which during construction was literally raised 20 feet. It gave him a fourth level in what was to be a tri-level house and added 4,000 square feet, bringing the total living area to 14,000 square feet. At one point, the house is 60 feet high.

The structure itself is curves and difficult to explain architecturally.

Brown does that very well. "I've always admired the Health Services Building at San Diego State, with its round outlines. I went through three sets of architectural drawings before I got what I wanted. To me, a massive house needs that kind of idea to soften the impact."

Brown gauges the house to be 80 percent complete, with landscaping and splashing fountains yet to be done

and custom built 35 foot electrified gates to be installed at the foot of the driveway. There is a closed-circuit television monitor for security. Palm trees about 40 feet high have been planted, giving the house something of a desert oasis look.

In decor, the concept is strictly masculine. Brown has chosen a lot of chrome and plexiglass and plushy caramel colored sofas in the "playpen" design.

"It isn't finished yet, but I want it done to my taste before I get married, so there won't be any arguments," Brown said. He added he has no plans in the near future, although the rumors keep cropping up.

Although some of the touches are rather astonishing, such as a Rolls-Royce grill made into a clock and a carpeted garage, there is some whimsy, too, within the eight bedroom, five bath house.

Brown has, for instance, a chrome-domed aquarium inhabited by an algae eater and a racquetball racquet.

"That's my trained pet racquet," Brown explained.

Brown, who may personify the American dream and who has proved once again that the old "build - a - better - mousetrap - and - the - world - will - flock - to - your - door" theory still works, explained, when asked, how he did it.

"I'm not a real intellectual person, but I can deal with anyone because I like



George Brown, San Diego's Racquetball King

San Diego Evening Tribune photos
by Thane McIntosh



The castle that racquetball built

people and I'm interested in them. It doesn't matter if they're a lot older than me or if they've been in business for 30 or 40 years. I adapt easily."

He has adapted so easily that he is a millionaire twice over and plans to quadruple that figure within a year. Since there are some plans to go public, he does not discuss what the business itself is worth.

Talking about his background, Brown, who is a San Diego State alumnus, said it was always his dream to be in the recreation business.

But it was another thing to convince his father, Dr. George Brown Jr., a physician in El Cajon for 24 years, that racquetball could be a viable business.

"It took me two years to convince him, but finally I caught him in a good mood and seven years ago we started the first building." The bet was hedged by the fact that if the racquetball business went flat, the building could be turned into a mini-warehouse.

That hasn't been necessary. There are now four here, with a fifth opening. Brown has branched out and has six racquetball centers under construction in the San Joaquin Valley. Two more are slated for San Diego and he has financing for another 10.

Brown is thinking about moving his corporate offices into the house and about devoting more time to managing one of the facilities, which he finds more fun than flying all over the country setting up new deals.

He is pleased to see women becoming adept at the game, which evolved from handball, paddleball and has a distant relationship to squash.

"When we first started, probably 5 percent of the players were women. Now it's up to 30 percent and in a couple of years I think it will be up to half and half."

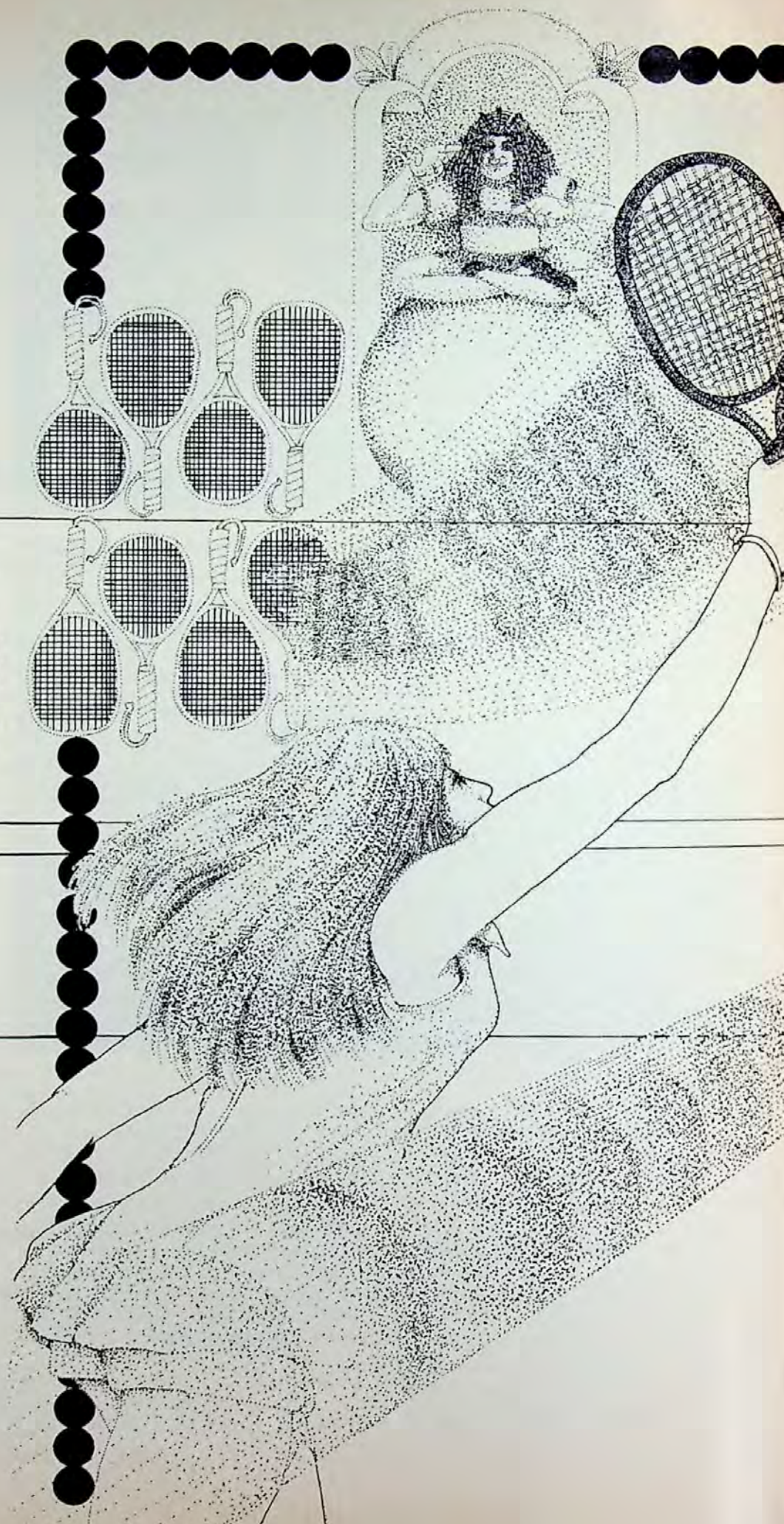
Brown says he is too busy working 10 hours a day and building up the business to muse over whether too much too soon may affect him in later years.

He is obviously having fun with the things money can buy and says he likes the relaxed feeling the house gives him, although he added, "it's a bad house to be all alone in."

Brown has already given parties for 200 and finds the first three levels, with its winding staircase connecting living quarters in the middle to recreation room below and open-air deck above "a great place for people to have a good time." ●

The core of racquetball madness is more than a practical matter. To merely "lose weight" or "get some exercise" can't explain why otherwise normal people develop an irrepressible desire to play racquetball every day of their lives. In these stories two writers find words to explain the mystical pull that racquetball has for the men and women who love our game.

Illustration by Pat Huggins



The Writing On The Walls

Moving Therapy from Couch to Court

by Tom McCown

The four walls of the racquetball court loom like the walls in a small psych ward. Echoes inside the court dart their direct angles, dissolving like lights that fade. The heavy door shouts as I enter. The echo panics, reports, and dies an impulsive, furious death. The walls sigh definitively, listening to me listen to myself listen.

I've been playing racquetball for three or four years but not with the intensity or concentration that I've acquired in this last year. Earlier in the year a friend of mine and I were a good match. We both were in respectable physical

shape. And generally I could win two out of three games. We continued to mold our physical selves to produce endurance and strength, speed and quickness: the basic body tools for racquetball. Later on, generally, my friend began to win two out of three. But while we were teaching each other the "basics," the dimensions of the game were already growing on another, more abstract level.

As our bodies changed, the game changed. Play grew from a simple power game (front wall, back wall, kill shot) to Z-wall serves, ceiling shots and

Feature

The Spiritual Side Of Racquetball

With the Aid of a Guru

by Mary Jean Pramik Holdaway

I began this quest on an outside recommendation. An old college friend of mine said she had found a perfect answer for tension release — she called it "racquetball".

But there was an immense gap between powerboat racing and rallycross in every sports encyclopedia that I consulted. No one had heard of racquetball. However some invisible force seemed to propel me onward in my search for racquetball truth.

I visited a temple of the athletic world, a sporting goods store. Down two aisles, turn left; I was mesmerized by the choice of racquets. It was almost like having to choose a religion. There were a great number of different shapes and sizes all with mysterious names, each racquet usually accompanied by a description of its essential qualities.

The longest racquet confessed to the extra reach of 19 full inches — for the player who needs all the help he can get. Another was gauged for fast forward court control and for the back court power game. Great for the Carlos Castaneda types who can be in two places in the same time. The most extraordinary one, however, claimed fast action, quick response, power house and maximum accuracy. The player need not enter the court; just send this miracle racquet out to face the opponent.

My selection had been christened the "Free Spirit". Little did I suspect that this was a sign of events to come and that my racquet choice was fated. It just felt good.

I was ready! Rumor spread and my partners multiplied. Just being inside

longer rallies. In other words, definite strategies were beginning to develop. Where is his game weak? Can I "pass" him on the right if I set him up a certain way? These new dimensions were discoveries of experience. The ball became an extension of the mind. Black, round thoughts shot out, trying the walls, trying ourselves. The play of the game became one of specific expectation caused by the specific wall angles. Eventually my opponent's answers to the angles of my shots became repetitious, even redundant. My answers to his serves — his questions — grew equally repetitious. The game had become one of shot anticipation. It developed, as it

evolved, into a game of more sophisticated questions and answers. Once we gained control of the environment, we could combine that court sense with shot anticipation. This combination brought the game out of the realm of mere physical exercise into a more complete form of play: mental exercise.

At first racquetball is necessarily strictly physical. Body and space awareness graduates the player to the shape of shots as thoughts. The better the physical shape and endurance, the larger the space created on the court for shot variety.

Serves begin with capital letters. Rallies become complete sentences.

Kill shots stop play like periods. Eventually, the declarative sentence rallies to replace the question and answer sessions of old. Long rallies like paragraphs. Side-outs, commas in run-on sentences. Kill shots that "roll-out" to end a sentence. Whole games like chapters in a story created within the limits of a language not spoken. Not that the mind has limits but that the sport limits the mind necessarily. Like language, then, sport becomes expression. And in such a tight, intense environment, racquetball speaks a language of creativity through control. As the black ball becomes an extension of the self, it becomes an expression of the self. A self that creates.

the court was exhilarating, a few bruises didn't matter. "Trophies" is what my racquetball guru calls these miscellaneous marks, these random annointings.

Yes, there are racquetball gurus. Mine appears, or does not appear, as the case may be, in assorted vestments. One day he's adorned in ace bicyclist garb complete with gloves. For his next appearance he's a rugby enthusiast.

He introduces himself as having "nothing up here", pointing to his head, and "everything down here", tapping his heart. The perfect guru. His mantra is both simple and calming — "Whap, whap, whap, whap, whap." This is chanted while hitting the ball low and hard against the wall.

With his encouragement, and recalling the words of Guru Maharaj Ji — "*You have it in your power to conquer the ego and doubts of the mind*," I set about practicing alone every morning at eight. My initial intention was to develop my game to give my friends some sort of competition. Tim "Inner Tennis" Gallway's kind of competition where a person plays his best to draw out the best in his opponent. A competition where the game becomes a joyous expression of one's potential on many different levels — physical, mental and spiritual.

But Gallway's beginning exercise for concentration, the old bounce-hit, did not work in this court. There was no time to say the words as the ball would bounce, bounce, bounce before it could be hit. Side-stepping, spinning

and turns. All the rites of racquetball. Ah, to pivot without losing balance. My main obstacle to overcome here was to stop standing still. The ball waits for no one.

At this point I began to exercise my guru's oft repeated guiding principle: "*You have to be able to hit the ball without seeing it*." At first it was impossible. I felt like Luke Skywalker of Star Wars fame, trying to feel the Force.

It was difficult to perfect any awareness, not only of muscle movement but of the delicate streaming of energy throughout one's body. The elusive spectra of achievement faded. The pursuit of inner realization became my goal and pleasure. And, amazingly, achievement happened naturally. I

But more important than creativity is the game's mental health value. Important because a player learns to control the environment of the game within a world environment that often seems chaotic and uncontrollable. In this closed-in game, one is forced to face his inabilities and abilities close-up, wall to wall. We are forced, in a way, to face the opponent in ourselves. So it is heartening then, to think of racquetball players as therapists taking care of each other. This makes a game more than just a win-lose proposition. It becomes an exercise in awareness.

That little round, black ball is more than angry, hostile thoughts shooting,

angling, dying at random off the walls of a dead mind. It is the voice of ideas, exercising their lights. Lights that fade like the ends of echoes, igniting off the one that came before, again and again. They report to the walls. And the heavy walls sigh, listening to me listen to myself listen. ●

became a better player, again evincing the ancient oriental adage that when one stops looking for something, one finds it.

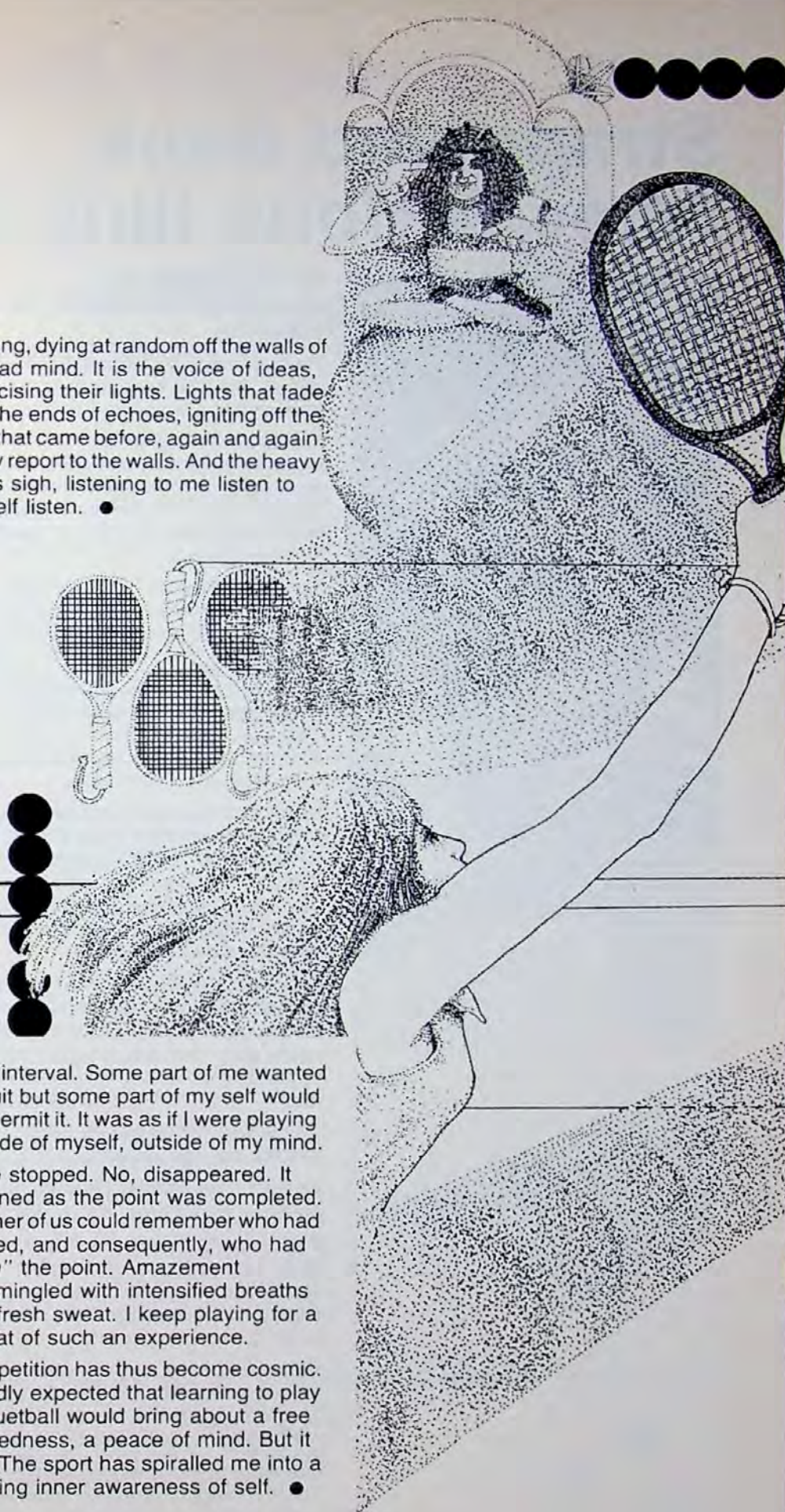
After months of this solitary discipline these sessions evolved into a sort of meditation. Thinking ceased. I became totally absorbed in the ball hitting and lost consciousness of the outside world. My breathing quickened at the onset of the exercise, then it deepened as if I were in a trance. A flow of gentle movement entered my practicing. And my vision took on a heady clearness.

This depth of experiencing infiltrated my games with my friends. The nearest I have come to the fabled nirvahna was in one memorable match where my partner and I rallied for an incredibly

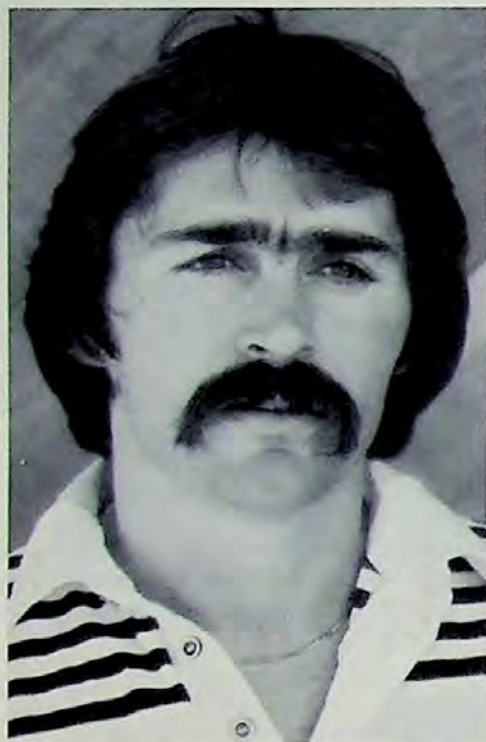
long interval. Some part of me wanted to quit but some part of my self would not permit it. It was as if I were playing outside of myself, outside of my mind.

Time stopped. No, disappeared. It returned as the point was completed. Neither of us could remember who had served, and consequently, who had "won" the point. Amazement intermingled with intensified breaths and fresh sweat. I keep playing for a repeat of such an experience.

Competition has thus become cosmic. I hardly expected that learning to play racquetball would bring about a free spiritedness, a peace of mind. But it has. The sport has spiraled me into a growing inner awareness of self. ●



Strandemo Back After Serious Illness



By Jan Thiessen

In September Steve Strandemo was critically ill.

He had been fighting a sore throat for weeks, but had continued to play and train in San Diego. He felt good.

In August he had beaten Davey Bledsoe, the newly crowned national champion, in an exhibition at Westminster, CA. The next week he was in the finals of the L.A. Open at Newport Beach.

He was excited. For the first time in six or seven months he felt ready to take on Hogan, Brumfield, Bledsoe — anybody.

But after two gruelling matches in Milwaukee (the first stop on the Colgate/Leach/Seamco pro tour) Strandemo knew he was suffering from more than a sore throat.

In the middle of the night he went to a Milwaukee hospital, where doctors rendered the verdict: A serious kidney infection. He was hospitalized for five days, then two more days at the Mayo Clinic. A specialist ordered him off the court for 60 to 70 days.

Strandemo was told the possible consequences: A danger of chronic kidney disease, the chance he would never play racquetball again, the reminder that kidney failure can be fatal.

"I could tell I'd better cool it," Strandemo said recently.

So cool it he did. No playing, no practice, no running, no weight lifting.

But racquetball had put Strandemo, one of the game's most serious conditioners, in good shape and by Dec. 1 the doctors gave him clearance to go back on the courts.

"Now, by being in good shape, my body has healed 130 percent," Strandemo said. "The conditioning prevented the disease from lingering."

He spent December in training — running, lifting weights, practicing alone and playing right through the Christmas holidays.

At age 29 Strandemo is more excited than ever about racquetball.

Always a serious student of the game, 1977 became for him a year of even more careful analysis, spurred by the writing of *The Racquetball Book*, with Bill Bruns of Pacific Palisades, CA.

"The concept for the book started long ago," Strandemo said in an interview in San Diego. "Two or three years ago."

"I thought it would be fun. But I wanted to fully understand the game before I started."

After four years on the pro tour, three of them videotaping the action for careful study, Strandemo decided he was ready to write.

"I had planned to finish the book by June 1 — before the nationals. But we didn't make it."

"I hadn't played well at the end of last season. I had been too busy meeting deadlines and creating the graphics for the book's illustrations," Strandemo said.

"When we finished, I started training really hard. I was finally playing well again. I should have had the sore throat treated, but I didn't. You know how that goes. It turned into a strep throat, then went to my kidneys."

"But I paid attention to the doctors. I quit for 70 days."

Strandemo spent the time analyzing his game.

"The book helped — it made me really study the swing. I had used lots of videotapes in doing *The Racquetball Book*. I used them even more in preparing my return to the pro tour."

Steve Strandemo is healthy again and back on tour. And he couldn't be happier about it. "Racquetball is my life," he said. "I knew if I didn't take care of myself, I might never be able to play again." ●

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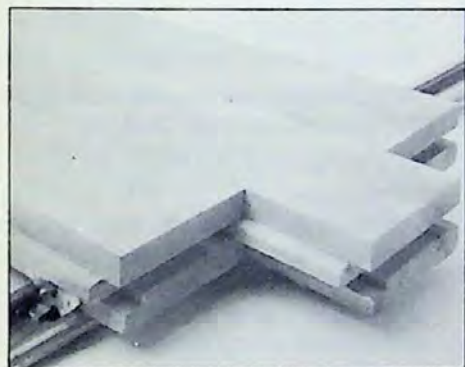
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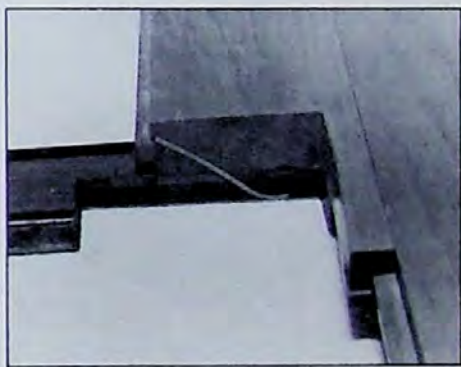
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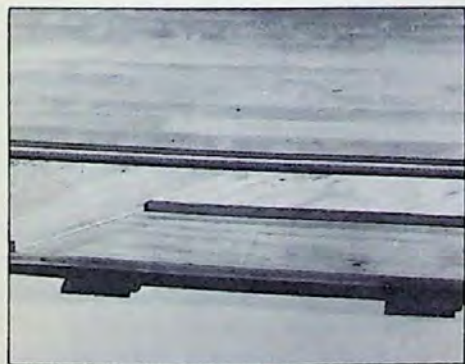
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A Chat With The National Champ



by Nick Longhurst

Last year, Davey Bledsoe drove around in a Datsun car — a company vehicle which went with his job at Leach Industries in San Diego.

This year, the "Golden Retriever" tools around the same city in a new maroon and tan Porsche — his own.

At 27 Davey can cheerfully claim to be the playboy of the pro tour, whose partying til two in the morning before a final clash with Marty Hogan, well publicized remarks that his training normally consists of bench pressing 12 ounce cans of beer, and his elitist attitudes on being a member of that extremely small pro-tour winners' circle have created just as many anti-Bledsoes as players who like the guy.

But there is no disputing that the boss of Davey Bledsoe Enterprises is enjoying an income scraping close to a six figure sum. And he now has aspirations of getting into television, via a new business manager and agent based in the movie city of Los Angeles.

Not bad considering that two years ago he was out of work in Memphis.

We know that the majority of racquetball pros work hard at their sport. It takes hours of arduous and often boring practice routines to perfect shots which will, on a good day, get them into the round of 16 — before the inevitable string of ace serves, confidence draining psyching techniques and sheer power take over to bust them out of the running.

So who can take a player whose normal training routine consists of scuba diving and riding his bicycle to the supermarket and whose opinions on his own ability as a natural athlete, expressed in that blunt Tennessee drawl, often cut as far as they carry.

But is that the real Davey Bledsoe so many love to hate?

"Marty Hogan and I are consistently in the finals because of our power. The style of game we are playing is so overwhelming the other guys can't perform or generate any offense against us."

Success in racquetball has come quickly for Davey Bledsoe, who failed in his first venture . . . to become a surgeon.

Davey was studying to be a doctor at the University of Tennessee when he tried out for the Kansas City Royals baseball team. He was accepted after the try out and offered a trip to Florida to the club's training camp but he turned that down to graduate.

He gained his undergraduate degree with honours, but at that time medical school entry was tough. Candidates were being accepted with 3.6, 3.7 averages. And Davey had only 3.35, good, but not enough for a place.

So for two years he worked as a theater technician at the East Tennessee Baptist hospital in Knoxville, TN.

"I didn't make a lot of dough but it was so very rewarding to go in and actually participate in surgery. I used to do anything from holding retractors to suturing."

After two years, Davey gave up applying for medical school and decided to play more racquetball. After a job in Memphis ended, Davey was unemployed, sitting in that town wondering what to do next.

There were several choices. One was to go to Chicago, one to go back to his home town of Kingsport, TN. and look for a job, and the third was to go to San Diego, then the mecca of racquetball.

Bledsoe chose the latter, and before long was playing racquetball and working at Leach Industries. Then after a year with Leach he quit, just after becoming National Champion. It wasn't a pleasant split, and there was a lot of acrimony on both sides.

"I had only won two tournaments before the Nationals and then at the first tour stop this season I wasn't playing at all well. There were a lot of overtones from my leaving Leach and a lot of hassles from people in the audience."

"I would like to be pretty hard core and say that audience reaction never bothers me, but I'm sensitive to what people say and think out there and it affects me, more so probably than anyone else."

"I would like to be pretty hard core and say that audience reaction never bothers me . . ."



"All of us have a little vulture in us and we hover over the winner and want to see him get beaten . . ."



There has already been plenty written about the Nationals when much to everyone's surprise, Davey grabbed the title from Hogan.

But Bledsoe has certainly not responded well to the pressure of being a winner and the champion's crown has been a heavy embarrassment at times.

"Being National Champion has been a pressure situation. You come out of the ranks of being an underdog and an occasional unsuspected winner and people start looking to you as someone who HAS to win every time to prove you're successful."

"Since I became National Champion things have not been easy for me mentally. All of us have a little of the vulture in us and we hover over the winner and want to see him get beaten."

The next time Davey met Hogan again was at Westminster, CA, in a finals which was televised nationwide on the Public Broadcasting System. It was the first time that a major television chain carried a racquetball special and the finals were intended to showcase the excitement of the game.

"The finals was a brawl, but I didn't want it that way. I wanted to come off with charisma and I wanted people to look at me and hopefully Marty and say - 'now there are a couple of top notch athletes who are out there in the heat of competition conducting themselves in a really superb manner.'"

"But that certainly didn't happen."

What did happen was very different. And Davey lost. But the failure to repeat his victory against Hogan hit hard and started a change in the way this champion was thinking.

"I approached the match with the idea that I would do everything possible to mess around with Marty's head. But now I think that was the reason I lost the tournament. I have been told that if I just play ball I can beat him but I get wound up in these head games sometimes. That was especially true in the first game at 18-17 my favor. If I had just got down to it and gone after those three points the final result could have been a different story."

"I was enjoying watching him get upset. I didn't mean to let myself get into that, but I certainly meant to upset him and break his concentration. But I didn't mean to let it affect my game or my attitude towards what I was doing."

Whoever invented the word "streaky" must have had Davey Bledsoe in mind when he applied it to racquetball's power players because there is no one in the top echelon of the game whose future performances are totally unpredictable.

And there are 10 players who, walking into a court to play him, have more than a sneaking suspicion that if Bledsoe is off . . . they have a chance of winning.

"I just haven't ever done much precision training or dieting. If I feel like going to a fast food chain I'll go, whatever people say about the junk in it. And I have been known to chase a few women. Matter of fact, a lot of players know it. They used to say 'throw a dame his way and you'll beat him the next day.'"

Davey Bledsoe still wears a gold chain round his neck with a medallion on it which says simply—"No. 1-". But no one could ever say that up to now, he has taken that position, or racquetball, very seriously. But even Davey finds it hard to identify the reasons why he just hasn't got it together and tried for total domination of his peers.

"I've chased women all night and I've drunk all night but I don't feel like I want to do that anymore because I'm not satisfied with Number Two."

"Don't get me wrong, I can do it if I am satisfied with the level of performance that I am at. I can stay right where I am and not train a day in my life. But I am not satisfied any more. I want to prove that I am best. I need to develop more consistency. What I am going to do is analyze what goes on when I'm on form and clicking and consistently do it."

"This year I have really realized that there is a one and a two and there is a big gap between them."

The Tennesseean certainly has had a flippant attitude toward the sport and

"I've chased women all night and I've drunk all night but I don't feel like I want to do that anymore . . ."



"I have a great set up and I am bored with it. It's not very challenging at this level any more . . ."



he has consistently failed to apply the discipline he needed to progress through pre-med training to racquetball. He has never done any consistent working out, preferring to spend time water skiing and scuba diving rather than running and practicing shots like most of his fellow pros.

"I have a great set up and I am bored with it. It's not very challenging at this level any more. I hate to sit around and not progress, and I'm looking for some mental challenge. I have been trained through medicine to use my mind in an analytical way and to apply my mental facilities, and I just haven't utilized them. That really bothers me."

"I have been very fortunate. Everything has come easy for me in athletics, anything that I have cared to endeavour in I have been able to reach a great level of success. But I have never pursued these things further than that and I don't really know why."

"It's probably just part of my character."

But now Bledsoe has decided that the time has come to make a few changes in his routine. The old carefree style is out, and he has been spending two hours a day working on his shots in a court.

The first shot to get attention was his backhand, a shot which used to skip in with amazing consistency.

"When I became a pro I had to do the repetitious training basics to beat the other players. Now I'm going back to those basics to beat myself and my own attitude. It takes much more discipline to be Number One than I have right now, and I know I have to go back to basics to find it. The backhand is first. I had my backhand in really good shape for the Nationals and I know that when you get away from practicing it's the weakest areas of your game which are the first to go."

Another area to get some treatment will be in his appeals. Davey probably appeals more serves and opponent retrieves than the rest of the pro tour put together.

It is a great way to break the concentration of an opponent but Bledsoe insists that he does it for a different reason . . . to maintain his own concentration.

"It's a percentage procedure. I appeal anything I'm not sure about. I never know whether the referee saw it right, or whether the linesmen will agree with him. I'm not doing it like so many people think - to get a point which is underserving. I'm doing it because I'm unsure myself. And any time there is one bit of doubt in my mind I'm going to clarify it before I go any further."

That change in attitude will only show up in the future, and only Davey will be fully aware of how much of the change in himself he has been able to accomplish and how he can get to a personal peak which he can finally be satisfied with.

There are areas of the game which could stand some change, although he is obviously not looking to anything which will detract from his winning potential using a serve and shoot style which has allowed him to serve up to 13 consecutive aces against a professional opponent.

"Right now the game is something I can do well and I'm not going to criticize it. I don't want to see anything happen because right now I'm performing well with the serve and shoot method. I don't want to sound selfish but I want to win and I want to stay at the top. But in terms of the good of the game I would have to say that something should be done to neutralize the dominant figures like Hogan and myself."

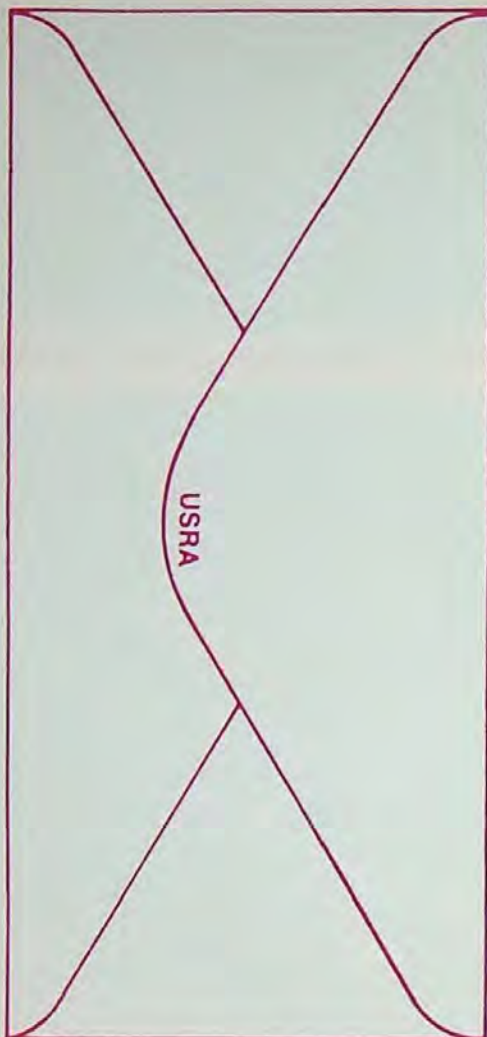
"They need to slow the ball down, limit the number of serves perhaps or bring some rule into play which would definitely create rallies."

But only the future will tell if Davey Bledsoe can beat himself the way he can beat almost anyone else on a racquetball court. So will the real Davey Bledsoe please stand up we're waiting. ●

"I don't want to sound selfish but I want to win and I want to stay at the top . . ."



Photos by Boyd Holloway



Compliments for TV Program

Dear Mr. Kendler:

This letter is intended to compliment and thank you and your very talented associates for the wonderful racquetball program that was aired on the Los Angeles PBS television station.

My partners (Wayne Rogers, Steve Lubarsky, Stuffy Singer and Peter Falk) and I own a 12-court club in Van Nuys, CA, Supreme Court.

Our club, like all the other clubs, has greatly benefited from the tremendous guidance, dedication and contribution you have made to this fantastic sport.

Thank you so much.

Lewis N. Wolff
Los Angeles, CA

Player Likes Sports Court Tournament

Dear Mr. Leve:

As a participant in Ben Simon's Pre-Holiday Racquetball Tournament, I would like to express my gratitude to Dick Kincade and Phil Stepp and others associated with the Lincoln, NE, Sports Courts for an exceptional tournament.

The quality of players was of high calibre and the three play set-up ran smoothly. I am looking forward to participating in another tournament at the Sports Courts.

Keith Halgerson
Brookings, SD

Quality Players Make Racquetball Quality Sport

Dear Chuck:

As I watch racquetball grow in my state, I am glad to see the type of people that the sport is attracting. The quality of people participating in a relatively new sport is a privilege that a lot of sports did not enjoy when they were first getting established. The quality of the participants establishes the integrity of any sport and obviously, racquetball is becoming established as a high caliber sport.

I don't mean to insinuate that just because doctors, lawyers, politicians and movie stars play, necessarily makes it a prestige sport, but from first hand experience, every avid racquetball player I have met, regardless of profession, seems to be a great person with an outstanding character and honesty. That's what makes racquetball a high caliber sport.

Maybe that helps to explain the strong fraternity and pride that exists among my athletic colleagues in our state organization. It is hard to describe except to say that even though it is young, it is very strong and proud. I, for one, am very proud to be associated with the sport, the national and state associations, and above all, the people.

With such a great sport, great participants and great people promoting it, how can the sport do anything but succeed? With all of this in mind, I have to bite my tongue to keep from laughing when people try to tell me that racquetball is a fad and is doomed as all fads are. If they only knew what we all know, maybe they would be as healthy and happy as we are.

James L. Bixler
Arkadelphia, AR

Worth Driving from Trenton to Bricktown

Dear Editor:

As a student recreation programmer at Trenton State College, I organized a racquetball party. The group consisting of 27 players engaged in a round robin tournament at the Kangaroo Courts in Bricktown, NJ. Prizes were awarded to the winner of the men's and the winner of the women's singles.

I would like to thank Jack Henry and John Farrell from the Kangaroo Courts for all their time and

interest in my project. I would also like to thank Treadway products, Seamco Sporting Goods, and Champion Glove Mfg. Co., for their contributions, which made the evening a success.

Our group is mainly from the Trenton area, which is void of racquetball courts at this time, but the hour drive to Bricktown is nothing when you look at all the enjoyment derived from the game.

Again I'd like to thank the people that made our racquetball party possible.

Jo Beiger
Trenton, NJ

Squash Player Defends His Sport

Dear Editor:

Mort Leve's article in the November issue, "What's With Squash?" unfairly demeaned the exhilarating game played all over the world. I am a primary squash lover, and a secondary racquetball admirer and have never considered the two to be in direct competition for popularity. They are played with two different techniques, squash definitely requiring more discipline and dedication to learn well, since it is played at a faster pace; and who ever said a kill has to be hit low to the ground? Has Mr. Leve ever heard of three-wall nicks, drops, lobs, etc.?

As a member of the prestigious Denver Athletic Club I would like to make three corrections in Mr. Leve's story. First Monte Huber is still our athletic director. Second the great Hashim Khan has made the sport very popular indeed in the Denver area! Third we have three, not two, singles courts and it is hard to get a court during prime hours.

I will be the first to agree that racquetball is played by more people. However I am not going to have someone deplore squash because racquetball is more predominant. I believe the two are complementary. Both will grow at their own pace. Squash is getting popular, not just in Manhattan, and not at the expense of racquetball and vice versa.

There is no need to judge popularity and make a biased comparison of the two great racquet sports. Each can stand alone in its claim for prominence.

V. A. Sridhar,
Denver, CO

Thank You-All

Dear Chuck:

As the smoke clears from the tournament, all of us at COURTHOUSE I would like to thank you, Joe, Terry, Kip and Dan for your invaluable assistance. A special thanks must go to Dan for his help in the planning stages and his prompt followups to ensure all bases were covered.

The reaction to the publicity generated by the tournament has already exceeded our expectations. The daily number of new members has doubled since the end of the tournament.

Let us know the next time you come to Atlanta so that we may demonstrate some "Southern Hospitality."

Richard Boggs
Marietta, GA

APRO's On Its Way

Dear Chuck and Terry:

Thank you very much for publishing the article about the new American Professional Racquetball organization (APRO). By publishing the article many interested racquetball teachers throughout the United States became aware of our group of professionals.

Since the article was seen in *National Racquetball* magazine, many professionals have written us requesting more information about APRO. We have responded to them rapidly because they all were very anxious to get involved. I'm very happy to see racquetball is ready for a professional racquetball teachers organization.

We have taken the first step forward, and with the additional great help from you and other influential racquetball groups and people we will make one more step toward professionalism in our sport.

I would like also to inform you that the first certification test of racquetball teachers was a huge success in Chicago. The attendance was much greater than expected. The test will soon be given in many other states across the United States.

Thank you again.

Charles L. Sheftel,
Deerfield, IL

No Team to Absorb Insult

Dear Carol:

I enjoyed your story on refereeing in your January women's section. I agree that it's good for women to referee—to get involved in the duties of a tournament. And I think it's important for women to referee men, but when they do, they should remember that players run on adrenalin rushes during a tournament. That adrenalin gets players "*hyped-up*," quick to lose their tempers.

I've also learned — after refereeing basketball and racquetball — that the racquetball player is more explosive—more sensitive to the referee's call because the call seems to be happening to him or her personally. It's harder when there's not a team around to absorb the insult.

Jean Sauser,
Northbrook, IL

That Was Nice

Dear Mr. Kendler:

I know I speak for all the women professionals in thanking you for adding the extra \$1,000 prize money yourself for the round of 16 and quarter-finals in the Marietta, Ga. tournament.

Although I was lucky enough to finish higher, I know how much I would have appreciated it had I lost in the early rounds.

Thank you for everything.

Peggy Steding
Odessa, TX

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More Activity Needed Beyond The Open

When I began my career in racquetball nearly eight years ago I felt a tinge of remorse for the many great athletes who would never reach the top simply because their ages prohibited them from doing so.

As a new and developing sport racquetball came along too late for these players, most of whose names are familiar to racquetball enthusiasts. I speak of the Ron Rubensteins, Gene Grapes, Ken Porcos and guys like Bill Schmidtke, who even with two national titles under his belt, never was able to compete in his prime.

Such is life, I suppose, as these guys and the scores of other tremendously talented seniors, masters and golden masters, watch the 18, 19 and 20-year-olds playing for thousands of dollars every month.

But should a player's career be forced to end when he graduates to the older groups? I'm sure everybody agrees that it should not.

Yet current tournament scheduling and format does not truly allow the older age categories a real chance to display their ability with pride. Most tournaments include seniors, masters, and golden masters brackets almost as an afterthought, with play relegated to back courts.

Yet often these categories are the most skillful, for these are the players who have for years survived on control,

moxie and cerebral racquetball. Watching them perform can be much more pleasurable than watching two pros bombard the front wall with cannon shots.

I think it's time to make a few necessary adjustments in this sector of racquetball.

First the seniors should be playing for money. They are well known enough to draw good crowds, the play is skillful enough to be worth paying for, and the competition would be tremendous.

The seniors tour need not be a huge prize money program, but six or eight events annually for \$5,000 or so per tournament would make an interesting tour.

In the masters and golden masters there should be six or eight open events of their own, geographically scheduled where the prizes are substantial enough to draw most of the best players, yet not push these players over the amateur awards limits.

Such "tours" would enhance the competitiveness of these "beyond the open" players, as well as give a real chance for new players in these age categories to test their skills against the aging veterans.

Additionally I think a new policy should be instituted in this year's National Championships, which will put an end to the older age categories being forced to play their championship matches on side courts with little or no recognition.

At the Nationals this year these brackets of play should be staggered so that the championship matches can be shown in prime time, on glass courts, scheduled with or between professional play.

What an interesting and refreshing change of pace it would be to watch a professional quarter-final match, then the masters finals, then another pro match. And what a deserving honor it would be for these players to be able to perform in front of a decent and admiring gallery.

I think that none of us should forget the fact that back in the early and mid-60's, when the infant racquetball was just beginning to make waves, it was these players who were making them.

All of racquetball owes the seniors, masters and golden masters a debt of gratitude, for it was their dedication in the early years that spawned the great growth in our sport.

And those who should be most indebted are those 18, 19 and 20-year-olds, for their current opportunities and future rewards are built largely on the sacrifices of those who happen to be beyond the open.

The kids should never forget it. ●

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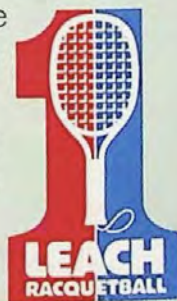
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