

National Racquetball®

February 1986

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No. 2

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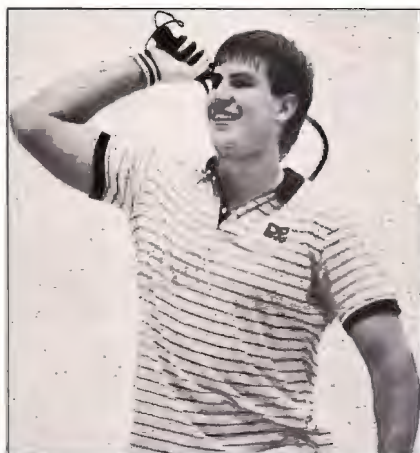
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On the Cover: The photo of Scott Musgrove wearing Leader Eyeguards was taken by Jim Sauser. Special thanks to Craig Blietz Last Minute Talent for getting Scott for us. Art direction—Jason Holloman.

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FIRST SERVE

By Chuck Leve



How Many Times Does It Have To Be Said

For over 15 years I've been sitting behind a typewriter preaching this point of view or that to the racquetball world. Sometimes I like to think that some of what I say makes sense and might eventually have a positive affect on our sport.

However, after 15 years of spouting off about one particular subject, it has finally become obvious to me that nothing I say about this topic has any bearing on what happens on the court. I speak, of course, of the use of eyeguards.

The only consoling fact to finally realizing that nobody listens to what you say (as my critics have long contended) is that racquetball players who don't wear eyeguards don't listen to what anybody says. Such players are stupid, selfish and a detriment to the sport.

Such players who are professionals and/or top amateurs should not be allowed on the court at any time without eyeguards. We should add a rule similar to most other sports for "conduct detrimental to the sport." Not wearing eyeguards is exactly that.

I've got to admit that I'm one of the most fortunate of all racquetball players—I've never been hit in the eye. Oh, I've been hit in the head; I've had my glasses knocked off; and I've been hit in nearly every other part of my anatomy, front and back, at one time or another.

But never the eyes.

And just as important, despite being just an average player with average control, I've never hit anybody in the head or eye. Sure, I've drilled my share of rear

'The truth is that racquetball is damaged a great deal more by eye injuries than by those few morons who would by-pass a tournament because eyeguards were mandatory.'

ends (and been likewise drilled), but never have I come even close to the eyes.

I truly can't imagine how terrible it must feel to have a blistering racquetball rip into your eye. The excruciating pain, the emotional trauma and the fear of never seeing again must be nearly unbearable.

Almost as bad would be the guilt I would feel having struck the shot that resulted in the lost or damaged sight of my opponent, who, as in most cases, is a close friend, relative or even a member of your immediate family.

The bottom line to participation in racquetball (or any activity for that matter) is fun. If you have fun doing it, you'll most likely keep doing it. It's fun to run around the court, whacking the blue ball this way and that. It's fun to stagger into a kill shot now and then. It's fun to once in a while play over your head and beat that better player.

It's not fun to get hit in the eye. Or to do the hitting.

Every eye injury that occurs causes racquetball to lose much more than a single player—that injury touches scores of players, probably hundreds, as word travels through the club and other networks.

Did you hear what happened to Skip Shots? Yeah, he got hit in the eye—lost his sight. How? Playing racquetball. Oh, dangerous sport. You won't catch me doing that.

And all Skip had to do was wear eyeguards.

And I still don't understand why the men's pro tour, women's pro tour and the major amateur tournaments don't just make eyeguards mandatory and end this controversy. These are the leaders in the sport; they are supposed to help expand the game by setting the examples. Why don't these people step forward?

I guarantee you that within the next few weeks I'll get the usual assortment of letters from people telling me that this is still primarily a free country and who am I to tell them what they can or can't wear. And I'll get a phone call or two from the various powers that be explaining that there are liability problems to mandatory eyeguards and therefore their hands are tied.

As usual these arguments are merely a smokescreen to cover fears of losing players in tournaments or losing matches ("because I can't see as well with eyeguards"). But the truth is that racquetball is damaged a great deal more by eye injuries than by those few morons who would by-pass a tournament because eyeguards were mandatory.

And besides that, if there was \$20,000 in prize money at some tournament that made eyeguards mandatory, how many players do you think would *not* be there?

I rest my case. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

December Racquet Guide Appreciated

We receive National Racquetball at the Winning Walls Club, in Port Chester, NY, and we appreciate your "reviews" of various kinds of equipment such as racquets in the December issue. May I be bold and suggest that more comments by actual "users" at various levels of skill (such as computer magazines feature) would make these reviews more valuable to people contemplating purchases?

Carole Spearin McCauley
Greenwich, CT

Comments by actual users at various levels of skill would indeed be valuable to our readers and it is something that has been tried to some extent in the past. Subscribers found the comments valuable but some of the manufacturers of the various racquets felt uncomfortable with the responses because they felt that users tend to be biased toward the products they currently use and are unaware of the advantages (or disadvantages) of other racquets they have never used. To be completely fair to all manufacturers, every person who commented would have to play with every racquet being reviewed. And, as you may have experienced yourself, sometimes a racquet's true performance is only attained after several weeks of use because the balance and "feel" of each racquet is different, therefore, the test would have to take place over an extended period of time. Hopefully, National Racquetball will have the resources to do this kind of testing in the future and we welcome any comments or ideas on how we could test racquets and other equipment without bias.—Ed.

Praise For Gonzales' Efforts For The Mexican Disaster Fund

I had the opportunity of playing Mr. Ruben Gonzalez in a game to 11 on November 14th at the Tournament House Racquet Club in Riverside, California, where he was appearing in an effort to raise money for the Mexican Disaster Fund. The experience is

one that I will long remember, not only because I was able (graciously allowed) to score seven points, but also because of the way Mr. Gonzales conducted himself throughout the course of the evening.

The evening began with Ruben playing a doubles exhibition match with Steve Lerner, Craig McCoy and Rich Wagner, and then playing an exhibition singles game with Rich Wagner. After the pros had their shot, the time came for Ruben's real challenge—to raise \$\$\$ for the Mexican Disaster Fund by playing club level players such as myself.

After each game the laughter grew louder as Ruben kindly put each of us out of our misery and gave us the proverbial "Tour of the Court". At one point during my game I was tempted to take an equipment time out just to let the soles of my shoes resolidify into a semisolid state!

Without a doubt this was an evening to remember and as a result of Ruben's efforts, sportmanship, and just out and out good nature, many people were affected in a positive way. Ruben himself gained many new fans, the club provided its members with an evening of entertainment, the challengers now boast that they have played one of the best players in the world, and money was raised to support people who are truly in need. He's an asset to the game!

John Wright
Riverside, CA

Where Are My Favorite Eyeguards?

I wear "Pacer" eyeguards and they are my favorite. However, I haven't been able to buy more—no one around sells this brand. I believe I saw them in one of your eyeguard features. Could you tell me where I can get them?

Tom Connelly
Chicago, IL

I've looked through our eyeguard issues for 1984 and 1985 and no "Pacer" eyeguards were listed. With the technological advances made in eyeguards over the past two years, though, I would

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strongly recommend looking at some of the new eyeguards that are out now. See our eyeguard layout which begins on page 23. —Ed.

Let's Change The Officiating

The rejuvenation of the pro tour is wonderful! The quality of play is unparalleled and player conduct has improved by leaps and bounds. The professional upgrading has occurred in every area except officiating. I believe the solution to the problem is to initiate a professional referee program. These referees could be trained and utilized on a regional basis and paid professionally. It would not be unreasonable to persuade a corporate sponsor to begin a referee development program with a "pot-o-money" to train and pay professional referees.

This change would allow for further officiating refinements. I have never been comfortable with the way the linesman function is performed. First, there are no real firm standards on linesman placement and second, the public "thumb" is too subject to influence by participants and other linesman.

I have some ideas for consideration. First, perhaps linesmen should be differentiated by function rather than by position. Since the lion's share of appeals are short-serves and skip balls, perhaps one linesman could call the "short line" with the other calling skip balls or some combination of calls. The referee then could be allowed to overrule what the linesmen say not unlike the umpire in tennis. This would alter

the current appeal process and drastically change the game. I suggest extensive experimentation in satellite tournaments before it would be implemented permanently throughout the sport.

Secondly, the thumb signal has got to be changed. The linesman's call should be evident only to the referee. A simple electronic, push-button device could signal the referee with lights. For example, three lights which would show Agree, Disagree, and No Call. This would go far towards reducing influence on the linesman. Perhaps a portable device could be developed and actually taken to the pro stops. Maybe Radio Shack could be interested in becoming a corporate sponsor?

James E. Woolcock
Flint, MI

Surprisingly, many of the things you have discussed in your letter have been brought up in staff conversations. The electronic device you mentioned has been one of our "pipe dreams"; too. The reason I say "pipe dream" is because of the one aspect of making changes that is the most important. Money. If the RMA, WPRA or AARA had the money to implement professionally paid referees, it would have been done by now. Your suggestion for a corporate sponsor is an excellent way to start the ball rolling, though, and Radio Shack would be a good place to start. Do you have any influence with the powers that be at Radio Shack? —Ed.

Short Lines Quiz Winner!

Geoff Peters of Evanston, Illinois, was the first one in with all the right answers for the pros pictured in the photo below. He won an Omega Starfight racquet. From left to right the pros are: Jerry Zuckerman, Dave Fleetwood, Rich Wagner, Steve Chase, Janell Marriott, Steve Serot, Don Thomas, Karen Walton (Trent), Lindsay Myers, Larry Myers, Jan Matthews, Sarah Green, Beaver Wickham, Ben Kolton, Charlie Brumfield, Mike Yellen, Doug Cohen, Jeff Larson, Peggy Stedling, Craig McCoy, Marty Hogan, Bobby Bolin, Rick Dern and Dave Peck. Thanks to all our subscribers who sent their entries in. Many also had the right answers, but Geoff's was here first.



EXTRA

Important industry news that you should know about in the world of racquetball.



Left to right: Keith Mahaney, president Holiday Health & Racquetball Club, Ruben Gonzalez, Dave Peck and Bob Dion, Bud Light representative.

Gonzalez Beats Peck In Bud Light Pro/Am by Barry Lord

Ruben Gonzalez of Staten Island, New York, left the Seventh Annual Bud Light Pro/Am \$4,000.00 richer after he defeated Dave Peck on December 8th in a three game final. With over 300 amateur players attending the competition from New England and Canada plus a pro draw featuring seven of the top ten men pros, the tournament was a great success. Gonzalez had to overcome Cliff Swain (#4), Marty Hogan (#1) and Dave Peck (#11) to win.

Pro play on Friday went as expected with all the top seeds winning. On Saturday things started to get serious. The match between Jerry Hilecher and Bret Harnett was the best game of the quarter finals.

Dave Peck had no problem with little brother Greg who was as cold as the whether outside. Dave won three games straight.

Marty Hogan dispatched qualifier Martin Gervais of Canada three games to one.

Crowd favorite Ruben Gonzalez took out Cliff Swain with relative ease in three straight games.

In the semis Dave Peck really looked impressive as he never let Jerry Hilecher get started.

The big game Saturday night between Hogan and Gonzalez drew over 400 screaming fans. The crowd got their money's worth as Marty and Ruben shot, rekilld, and retrieved every ball. Marty started out fast to win the first two games with scores of 11-7 and 11-1. Hogan was up 10-8 in game three and served twice but Ruben fought back with two great gets and won 11-10. Building confidence with every shot, Ruben over powered Hogan to win game four 11-4. Game five was a war. Two of the fastest players in the game retrieved shot after shot. Ruben finally prevailed 11-10 ending with a front wall roll out in the right corner.

The championship match was almost anti-climatic. Ruben could smell his first major tournament win. The game was not as close as the score indicated.

He was all over the court with blazing speed, unbelievable at times to the crowd. He appropriately ended the match with a diving rekill of Peck's passing shot to end the third and final game 11-4. The tournament had a new champion.

This is the seventh year that Bob Flynn of Maine Distributors and Bud Light has sponsored the tournament.

On behalf of all the people that played or had an anything to do with the tournament... Thank You.

Special thanks to club president Keith Mahaney. See you all next year! □



Success In Texas!

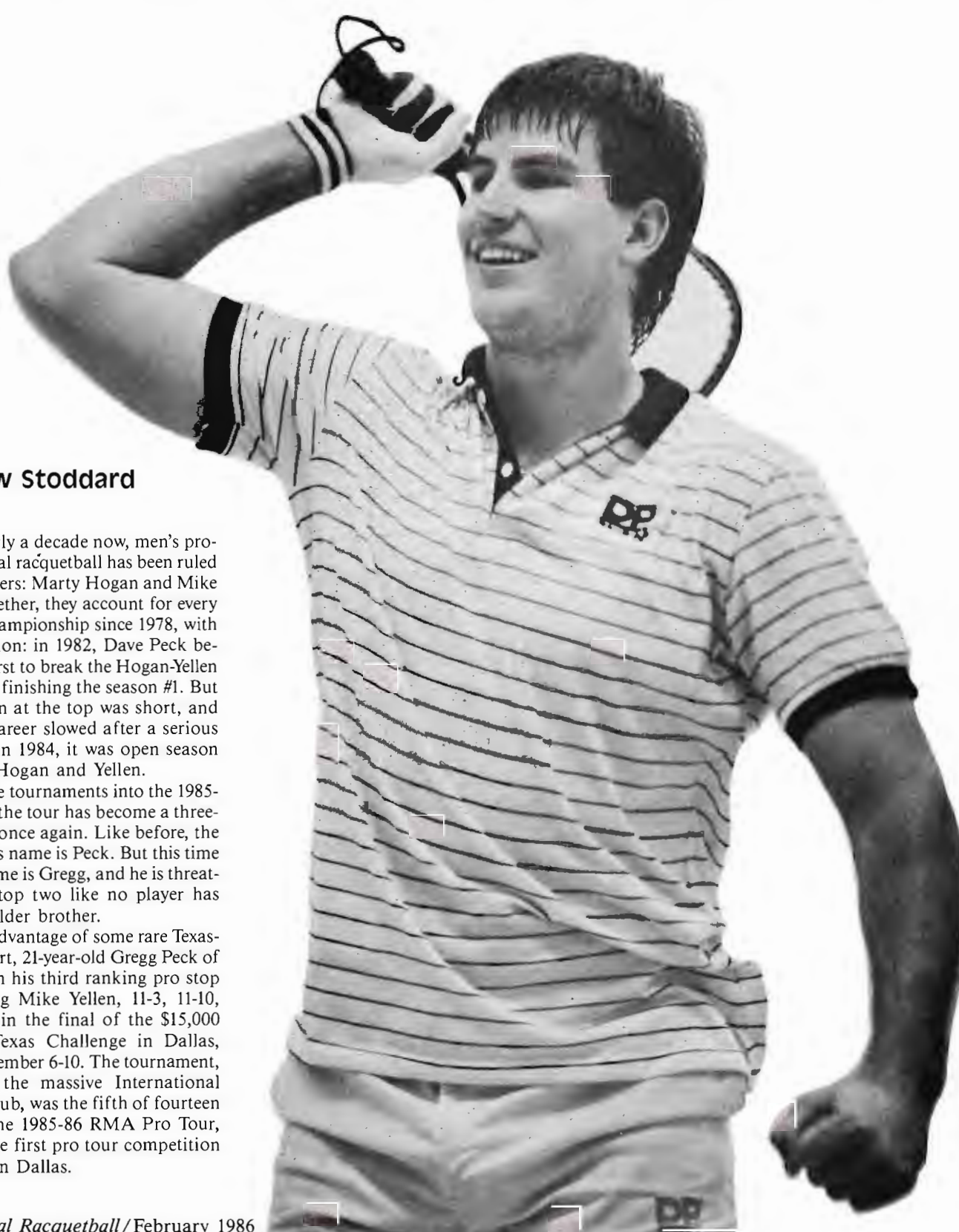
Gregg Peck Defeats Mike Yellen In The MPACT Texas Challenge

by Drew Stoddard

For nearly a decade now, men's professional racquetball has been ruled by two players: Marty Hogan and Mike Yellen. Together, they account for every national championship since 1978, with one exception: in 1982, Dave Peck became the first to break the Hogan-Yellen dynasty by finishing the season #1. But Peck's reign at the top was short, and when his career slowed after a serious leg injury in 1984, it was open season again for Hogan and Yellen.

Now, five tournaments into the 1985-86 season, the tour has become a three-horse race once again. Like before, the challenger's name is Peck. But this time his first name is Gregg, and he is threatening the top two like no player has since his older brother.

Taking advantage of some rare Texas-style support, 21-year-old Gregg Peck of Austin won his third ranking pro stop by downing Mike Yellen, 11-3, 11-10, 8-11, 11-4, in the final of the \$15,000 MPACT Texas Challenge in Dallas, Texas, November 6-10. The tournament, staged at the massive International Athletic Club, was the fifth of fourteen stops on the 1985-86 RMA Pro Tour, and was the first pro tour competition ever held in Dallas.



It was Peck's first tour victory since his DP Nationals crown in June, and was perhaps his most convincing to date. He dropped only two games in five rounds of play as he rolled easily past Ben Koltun, John Egerman, Gerry Price, and Jerry Hilecher before dispatching Yellen in the championship match. Only Egerman and Yellen were able to score single game victories against the powerful right-hander.

Gregg's move toward the top of the men's game was given a further boost by the astonishing elimination of top-ranked Marty Hogan in the first round of play by Bill Sell of Newport Beach, California. Sell, who came into the competition in Dallas ranked #33 despite some good showings against top players in the past, fought his way through the Wednesday night qualifying rounds and then blasted an unprepared Hogan before the stunned Dallas crowd, 11-7, 11-8, 11-6.

Sell was eliminated in the second round by Jim Cascio, but by almost any standards his upset of Hogan has to go down as one of the biggest in years. Only once previously in eleven years had Hogan lost in the round-of-32, and that was in his legendary match with Victor Niederhoffer at the 1975 Las Vegas nationals.

But more importantly, Hogan's loss opened a big door for Mike Yellen and Gregg Peck. After his two early-season wins, Hogan was so far ahead in the rankings that he looked untouchable, but the results in Dallas changed everything. Hogan, Yellen and Peck are still ranked 1-2-3, but now they are so close in point totals that either Yellen or Peck could move to #1 with a win in Sacramento in December.

Few matchups on the men's tour these days are as competitive as Peck and Yellen. Prior to the Dallas final their head-to-head record over the last two seasons stood at 3-3, with Yellen taking the most recent contest in Omaha.

Peck knows that the only way to control Yellen is to overpower him with offense—to end the rallies quickly, but avoid making mistakes like the plague. On a good day Gregg does that better than any other player, and on Sunday afternoon in Dallas he had a very good day.

Despite playing solid, steady racquetball throughout the match, Yellen had difficulty clearing the short-line with his drive serves, and he was simply unable to counter the heat that Peck was putting on his returns. When Mike was able to initiate a rally, Peck was content to fire backhands from deep-



Gregg Peck used the home-town crowd to his advantage against Yellen in the finals

court, and connected on nearly everything he tried. As always, it was Peck's vicious backhand splat that did the most damage.

Yellen threatened late in the second game and won the third, but overall Peck was clearly in command. Using his speed and enormous reach to neutralize Yellen's methodical passing game, Gregg defeated the defending national champion in four games, 11-3, 11-10, 8-11, 11-4.

"I couldn't think of a better place to win," said Peck, relishing his victory in front of a near-hometown crowd. "I felt good out there, I felt loose. The last time I played him in Omaha, he was serving really well. Today he came out serving hard, but he wasn't getting it in and he had to change his game. That made the tempo different. In Omaha I was just getting the ball back. Today I was able to get something on the returns."

Part of what makes the Yellen-Peck matches so enjoyable is their obvious respect for each other—respect which translates into superb sportsmanship every time they play.

"Mike is always tough to play," said Peck, "and our game styles blend well so we always seem to have a good match. When we play, whoever is hitting the ball better that day is going to win—one doesn't dominate the other."

Yellen was equally gracious in defeat: "Gregg was just playing really well today. I thought I played well, but the

difference was that he was just a little sharper than me. He played a great match. Of course, having the home crowd with him didn't hurt either."

Peck's control over Yellen in the final was impressive, but equally as significant were the margins of his earlier round wins over Gerry Price in the quarterfinals, and Jerry Hilecher in the semis.

While eighth-ranked Price of Castro Valley, California, has never beaten the younger Peck in a ranking stop, he has been one of the strongest players on the tour this season. Those who beat Price rarely do it easily, but Peck seemed barely pushed at all as he rolled quickly over Price in three games, 11-4, 11-6, 11-10.

Historically, Hilecher has given Peck more trouble than any other player except his brother Dave. Prior to their Dallas semifinal Peck was 2-5 against the tour veteran, with both of his victories coming in the last nine months—neither easily. This time, however, Peck dominated Hilecher from start to finish, 11-5, 11-9, 11-0.

Yellen came into Dallas competition on the heels of his first season win in Omaha, unquestionably his strongest performance in months. And had it not been for Peck's hot hand in the final, Dallas could easily have become Mike's second victory in a row.

As expected, Yellen moved past Byron Williams and David Gross in the first two rounds with ease. But the first



Jerry Hilecher's airborne performance didn't rattle Gregg in the semis

real indication of just how well Mike was playing came in the quarterfinals against seventh-ranked Bret Harnett of Las Vegas.

For some strange reason, Yellen and Harnett had not played in a ranking tournament since 1982. The last time they drew into each other—the Beaverton final in February—Bret was forced to withdraw because of a broken thumb.

Their quarterfinal match in Dallas was one many expected to go the distance. But Yellen's passing game was

perfect, and he sprayed balls in so many directions that Harnett simply couldn't stop running long enough to plant his feet. It was the ultimate contrast in gamestyles, and the master of control won it easily, 11-5, 11-1, 11-7.

Had all of the seeds held, Yellen's opponent in the semifinals should have been either Cliff Swain or Ruben Gonzalez, but they found themselves in the middle of upset alley. In the round-of-16, Swain was clobbered by Ed Andrews, 6-11, 11-5, 11-10, 11-6, and Dave Peck put together one of his best outings of the year by taking out Ruben

Gonzalez, 4-11, 4-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-3. Andrews earned his first semifinal in over a year with an 11-7, 11-5, 11-5 win over Peck in the quarters.

Despite coming into the tournament ranked only sixteenth, Andrews is known on the tour as one of the consistently toughest players around, and Yellen did not have an easy time controlling him in their Saturday afternoon semifinal. Andrews took the first game 11-10, and then appeared to slowly tire as Yellen took the next three, 11-6, 11-8, 11-7.

The MPACT Texas Challenge was staged at the International Athletic Club in north Dallas, and the club itself was as much a topic of conversation among touring pros as the competition itself. IAC is a gargantuan four-story facility, three floors of which open into a palace-like central core which runs the length of the building. The club is so large that the professional competition, crowds included, occupied only about 25% of the total area. During the early evening hours, upwards to 1500 club members utilized the various IAC facilities, many of whom seemed completely unaware that the competition was even taking place.

The Dallas event was organized and run by Racquetball Promotions Inc., a promotional firm based in Tulsa, OK, which is also responsible for two other RMA events this season. The tournament was directed by Mark Fairbairn of RPI, and was sponsored by MPACT, a Dallas-based network of automated-teller machines, Head Racquet Sports, Dr. Pepper, American Airlines, and Penn Racquetball. (Continued on page 10)



Ed Andrews (right) played brilliantly to reach the semis but Yellen ended his hopes of a tournament win.

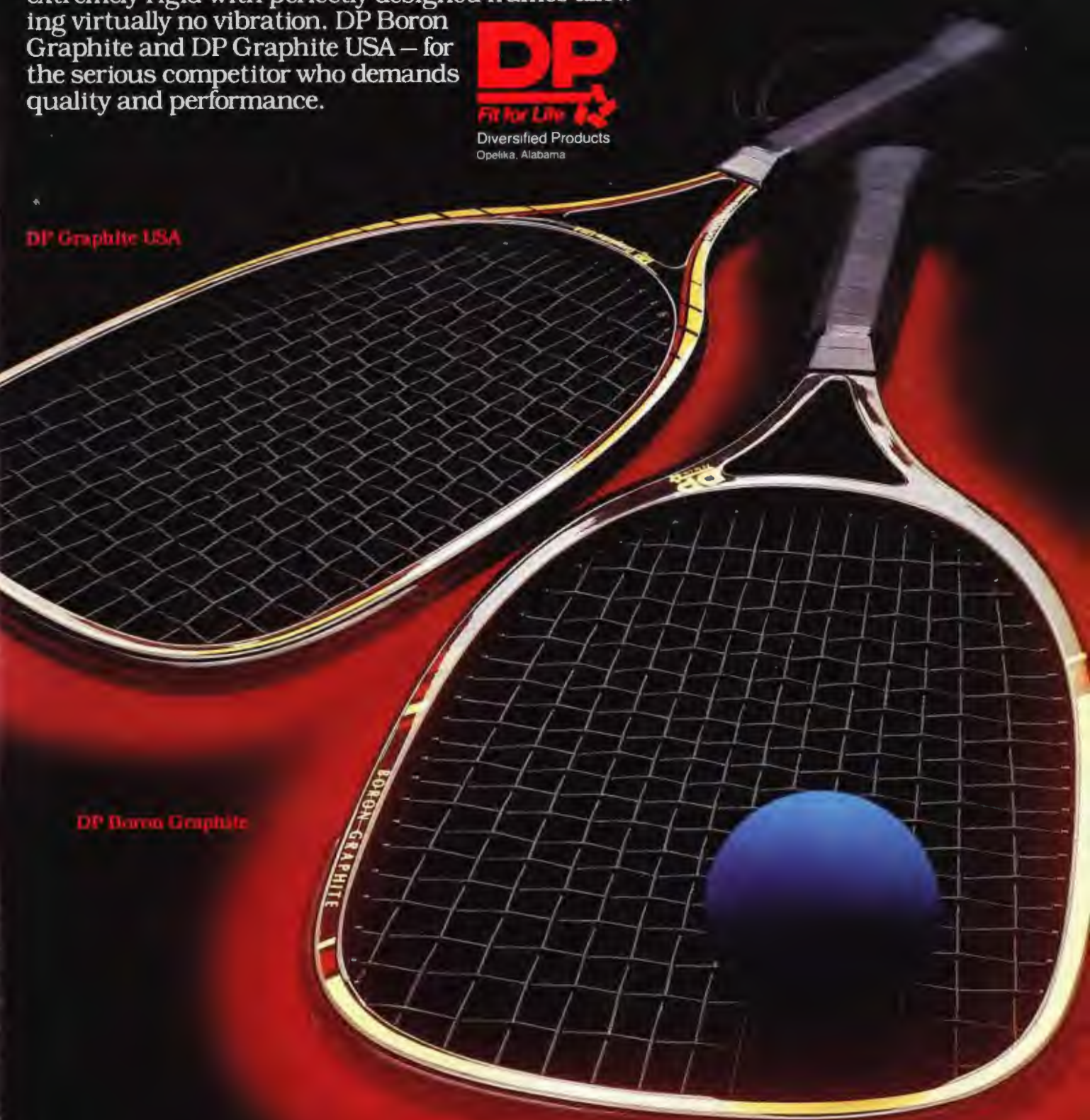
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The only game Yellen (right) dropped before the final was to Ed Andrews.

IMPACT TEXAS CHALLENGE INTERNATION ATHLETIC CLUB DALLAS, TX NOVEMBER 6-10, 1985

Qualifying Rounds:

Williford d. Cooper; Roberts d. Williford; Embry d. Quortrop; Nichols d. Cole; Koltun d. Merrill; Navarro d. Woodfin; Champagne d. Wempa; Kachtick d. Hammock; Williams d. Plotkin; Sell d. White; Atwell d. Kukendall; Fairbairn d. Navarte; Griffith d. Kerr; Plazak d. Katz; Clark d. Kirkpatrick; Meyers d. Chapa; Negrete d. Romo; Roberts d. Embry; Koltun d. Nichols; Navarro d. Champagne; Williams d. Kachtick; Sell d. Atwell; Griffith d. Fairbairn; Clark d. Plazak; Meyers d. Negrete.

Round of 32:

B.Sell d. M.Hogan; 7,8,6
J.Cascio d. R.Wagner; 6,5,4

S.Oliver d. R.Navarro; (6),2,9,5
J.Hilecher d. M.Griffith; 10,5,(7),(8),7
G.Price d. J.Nolan; 10,5,6
D.Cohen d. E.Inoue; 1,(9),0,4
J.Egerman d. C.Bryman; 7,(4),2,3
G.Peck d. B.Koltun; 10,0,3
C.Swain d. D.Green; 5,5,2
E.Andrews d. L.Meyers; 1,4,10
D.Peck d. A.Roberts; 5,3,7
R.Gonzalez d. A.Gross; 5,6,(6),7
B.Harnett d. Clark; 2,1,10
M.Ray d. D.Obremski; 10,9,(8),4
D.Gross d. J.Newman; 10,(8),9,(8),4
M.Yellen d. B.Williams; 1,2,7

Round of 16:

Cascio d. Sell; 5,8,9
Hilecher d. Oliver; (9),5,(6),8,6
Price d. Cohen; 9,9,9
G.Peck d. Egerman; 9,(9),5,7
Andrews d. Swain; (6),5,10,6
D.Peck d. Gonzalez; (4),(4),7,7,3
Harnett d. Ray; 7,5,10
Yellen d. D.Gross; 2,2,5

Quarterfinals:

Hilecher d. Cascio; 10,6,8
G.Peck d. Price; 4,6,10
Andrews d. D.Peck; 7,5,5
Yellen d. Harnett; 5,1,7

Semifinals:

G.Peck d. Hilecher; 5,9,0
Yellen d. Andrews; (10),6,8,7

Finals:

G.Peck d. Yellen; 3,10,(8),4

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Meet The Chicken! He's No Turkey!

Who has his own racquetball court, a swimming pool and more than a 100 stuffed animals all with a common characteristic? It's The Chicken!

by Charlie Garfinkel

The Chicken is 41-year-old Long Island, NY businessman, Fred Gruber, whose avocation is racquetball. He leads a four-man entourage throughout the Long Island, New York and New Jersey areas, playing in tournaments all year long. The group is well known at all the major events—Eastern Regionals, Ektelon Regionals, and Long Island Open as well as numerous other tournaments.

Gruber was given the nickname, "The Chicken" because of the ridiculous form he has when executing his backhand.

"My wife Bonnee videotaped me playing one day," he said, "and I was totally enbarassed at how awful my form looked. Bonnee said I resembled a chicken standing on one leg when I hit my backhand!"

Not long after, Gruber had some friends over to the house, and as a form of entertainment, he showed them the video. The result was convulsive laughter followed by near-cardiac arrest. The Chicken was born.

"After many 'fowl' remarks by my so-called friends, I realized I was going to be called 'The Chicken' for the remainder of my racquetball-playing days," said Gruber.

It didn't take Gruber long to embrace The Chicken moniker. He began collecting chicken potpourri, including over 100 stuffed chickens. He also has

ceramic chickens, pens shaped like chickens, a gold chicken with a racquet which he wears around his neck, and even pictures of chickens on his racquetball shoes.

Gruber also carries rubber chickens in his racquetball bag—just in case he is an early round tournament loser. And while it's a rare occurrence, when he does go out early, he'll throw two or three chickens on the court to congratulate his opponent on "plucking The Chicken."

Another of his rubber chickens actually chirps. Gruber derives a great deal of pleasure out of squeezing his rubber chicken—especially in the locker room.

"One time I got the whole locker room in such an uproar," he said, "that they complained to the club management that there were birds in the ceiling."

Perhaps the *coup de grace*, however, is a costume that is a replica of that worn by the famous San Diego chicken.

"I've always liked being the center of attention," Gruber admitted. "I attribute this to being the only chicken—er, child—in my family. Really, I was an average teenager. I had a lot of friends, played and loved all sports, and did well scholastically. I played varsity basketball at Queens College and that was a thrill. Nobody seemed to mind the bird seed in my locker."

Shortly after college, Gruber took up paddleball and then first became expos-



Fred Gruber, the chicken

experience does not necessarily make a good four wall racquetballer.

By 1975 Gruber had forsaken paddleball and in 1980 he began entering tournaments, first one here—one there. It didn't take long for him to become hooked and as his on-court devotion

'After many 'fowl' remarks by my so-called friends, I realized I was going to be called 'The Chicken' for the remainder of my racquetball-playing days.'

ed to racquetball on a Miami Beach vacation in 1967. Flamingo Park, a well-known hotbed of outdoor four-wall handball and racquetball, lured The Chicken to the courts, where he rapidly found that one wall paddleball

kept him away from his family for more and more time, well, the next move was inevitable.

"I knew Fred was playing seriously and that he loved the game," said Bonnee. "We discussed building a court





'I love the game. Win or lose, I get a great workout and I love the feeling of being in shape.'

in our house, but we knew absolutely nothing about building a court. Fortunately, we contacted a company advertising in *National Racquetball* and got the job done. It only took two months.

"The court has an imported floor from Denmark, is fully air-conditioned and even has a viewing area."

(Having played on the court myself, I can vouch for the fact that it is the equal of any court, quality-wise, that I've ever played on—The Gar.) Immediately outside the court are exercise machines, a complete free weights set-up and a stationary cycle.

"After the court was built, I was ecstatic," said The Chicken. We were proud to be the first family on our block with our own court, and I could then play anytime I wanted?"

Son B.J., the youngest Gruber (sister Amy is a part-time model, freshman in college and brother Robert a high school honor student) picked up racquetball with a passion. He plays everyday, enters scores of tournaments and is rapidly becoming one of the better east coast junior players.

It was indirectly through B.J. that Gruber met Don Costleigh, Sr., who was (unknowingly) destined to become one of the four members of The Chicken's entourage. B.J. joined a local club and started taking lessons and The Chicken began playing there as well. He and Costleigh struck up a friendship; and eventually a doubles partnership which they have improved to become one of the best righty-lefty doubles combinations in the northeast.

"Although we're both in our 40's,

we've won many doubles tournaments," said Gruber (including the 1984 New York State Seniors). "Our present problem is that we've got to either play Open or age categories."

Gruber and friends (Costleigh's son, Don, Jr. is the fourth member of the group) love traveling and playing tournaments. They're nicknamed the "Fowl Play" team with those words emblazoned on the back of their warm-up suits.

They travel the eastern tournament circuit, rooming and eating together as well as cheering each other on, regardless of which of the group is still in the event.

"Fortunately, at least one of us is usually still in the semi-finals on Sunday," said Gruber.

And while they love racquetball for racquetball's sake, they love well-run tournaments even more.

"One of the reasons I travel and play in so many events in the New York, Long Island and New Jersey area is due to the superb running of tournaments by Bob Supple and Ernie Fraas," said Gruber. "They're in charge of most of the events out here and they do an outstanding job."

How good, really, is The Chicken? "I'm realistic," he says. "Although I'm a fierce competitor and have a good forehand, there are better players than me in my division."

"But I love the game. Win or lose, I get a great workout and I love the feeling of being in shape. As for doubles. I'm extremely proud that Don and I have done so well. We've defeated some very good teams."

Not often heard is Gruber's quiet, sentimental side. He has been instrumental in helping a few of the more advanced young players with their travel and playing expenses and he also ran a benefit tournament in honor of his

close friend, Michael Hecht, who died tragically.

"I don't expect anything in return," said Gruber. "Knowing that I may have contributed to a player's success or helped a friend's family, is satisfaction enough."

An exceptionally strong family man, Gruber readily admits that he is indeed fortunate to have such a supportive wife.

"During one stretch I played 22 tournaments in a 40 week period," he said. "Thank goodness Bonnee is an understanding woman."

Although Bonnee will admit that the racquetball scene occasionally does get a little tiring, she too took to racquetball. She's an ardent fan, supporter, a great spectator and loves the people involved. She's also thankful that the game has helped keep her kids on the straight and narrow.

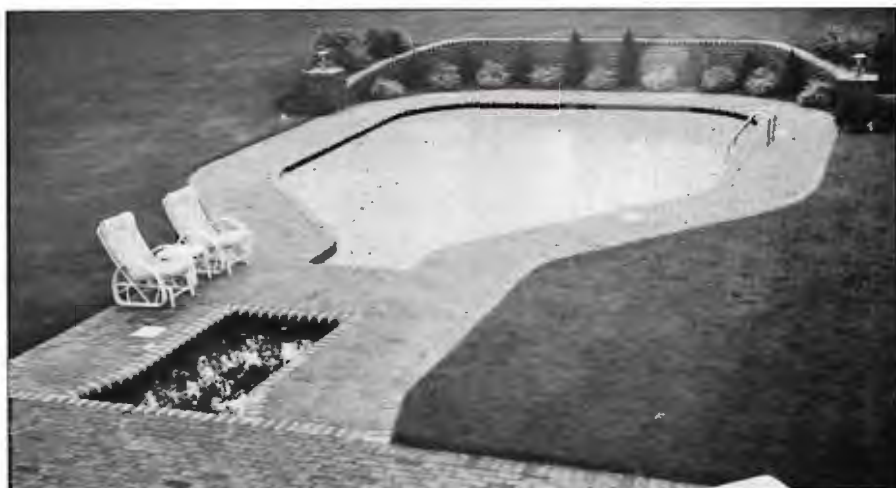
And if it wasn't for racquetball, none of them would have a CBK swimming pool. It may be the only one in existence.

"We decided to have a pool put into the backyard," said Bonnee, and it was supposed to be shaped like a lake. But we got to talking about the shape and decided we'd rather have something unique. When I looked up at Fred, he already had that twinkle in his eye and I knew we were thinking the same thing."

"The pool is dimensionally in synch with the CBK. It's 23 x 36 feet and 7½ feet deep. The 8 x 4 whirlpool at the base represents the racquet handle. We chose the CBK because that's Fred's favorite racquet."

Friends are constantly over at the Gruber's house, as you might imagine, playing racquetball or swimming. The Chicken is a tremendous host and a great supporter of racquetball.

Definitely, no Turkey. □



Fred's racquet shaped pool gives you an idea how much he likes racquetball

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'Many young people with hearing losses feel stigmatized; they withdraw and lose the ability to communicate; their words become monosyllables. Not only has Burdo maintained his speaking ability, he has excelled in a demanding profession.'

Deaf— But Not Defeated

How One Man's Terrible Loss Has Given Other Racquetball Players A Tremendous Gain

by Fred Stetson

You might say the clock is ticking for Ron Burdo. The 43-year old racquetball professional has a serious physical disability—a 95 percent hearing loss—and he expects to lose all ability to hear within five to ten years.

“When you lose your hearing, your speech starts to go with it,” says Burdo, who teaches racquetball at the Olympiad, an 1,800-member club in South Burlington, Vermont. “If you can’t hear the words you’re speaking, your speech starts to get sloppy. . .”

Burdo already has a slight speech impediment and he wears a hearing aid at all times, except while playing in a tournament. When you talk with him, you can see the strain in his eyes, as he reads your lips, deciphers your words and puts your sentences together. Telephone calls, where visual cues are absent, are difficult.

But his disability seldom slows him down. Burdo competes on the Open level. And, during the peak season, he teaches an average of 30 lessons a week to racquetball players of all levels. “As far as we’re concerned, we feel very lucky to have Ron work for us,” says Bob Tourney, manager of the Olympiad. “He’s probably one of the best instructors in the Northeast!”

Obstacles Overcome

To reach that level of accomplishment, Burdo has overcome difficult hurdles that others have found forbidding. Many young people with hearing losses feel stigmatized; they withdraw

and lose the ability to communicate; their words become monosyllables. Not only has Burdo maintained his speaking ability, he has excelled in a demanding profession.

Like many others with hearing disabilities, Burdo has tried, from the time he began losing his hearing at age six, to prove himself with visually-oriented skills. While a student in Glens Falls, New York elementary and secondary schools, he earned As and high Bs in math and geometry.

In the eighth grade, he began to expand his vocabulary by pouring over library books, studying frogs and their life cycles, a favorite childhood interest. “I remember spending a lot of time with wet feet and a frog in my hand,” he laughs. Similarly, sports such as baseball, handball and, later, racquetball, became more than a recreation. Through them, he began his own self education.

At the same time, he learned lip reading, the tedious process of creating sentences by watching a speaker’s mouth. Sometimes, when people fail to enunciate, or when they look the other way, or when they say words—such as bat, mat and pat—that cause them to form identical mouth configurations, the task of figuring out what they’re saying is nearly impossible.

The only way to do it, Burdo says, is by deduction, by guessing the missing words based on their context. To do all this and carry on a normal conversation

‘After being forced to visualize things for more than 37 years, his eyesight and perception are acute. He spots awkward swings and other faults in seconds.’





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is not easy. Burdo says his mind often races, trying to fill in the missing blanks. Compared to those with normal hearing, people with partial hearing losses spend up to three times more brain energy, just trying to deduce what's being said.

Burdo perfected his communication and analytical skills well enough to earn a bachelor's degree in math from Plattsburgh (New York) State University, and then he worked as a computer systems analyst, in consecutive jobs at the New York Vehicles Department, International Paper Company, and Blue Cross-Blue Shield. Later, he also was a computer software consultant for Dynex, Inc.

'As his remaining time for teaching runs out, he is perfecting a plan for a sophisticated model for racquetball instruction.'

While enrolled in a master's degree program at Western Maryland College in Westminster, Burdo hoped to play handball, a game he enjoyed for 10 years. But, handball courts were unavailable, so he picked up racquetball instead. And, five years ago, while playing near Burlington, he helped another

player with his game. "The guy told the owner of the club," Burdo says, "and the owner turned around and asked if I would like to teach racquetball."

In some ways, this all adds up to perfect preparation. Burdo's education and training—with the emphasis upon math and geometry, the practical experience with computers, the increasing ability to envision in a logical sequence and to quickly fill in the blanks—gave him skills ideally suited for racquetball and racquetball instruction.

A Hardly Disabling Disability

As a teaching pro, Burdo successfully offsets his hearing loss in several ways. After being forced to visualize things

for more than 37 years, his eyesight and perception are acute. He spots awkward swings and other faults in seconds. "My eyes are like a camera," he says. "I can pick up things very quickly. One of the first things I ask players to do is drop the ball and swing. All they have to do is do it once and I get it (their problem)



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Burdo adds, "I use my eyes for everything. . . The more you use something, the better you get. That's why I've got that acuity. You can't take a blind person and put him on the court, but you can put a deaf person in there and that person can play racquetball!"

Burdo is especially quick to see how one action relates to another. "When I see things, I make sequential connections," he says. When a novice player holds a racquet incorrectly, Burdo senses immediately how that will affect the player's arm, what kind of a swing will result, and the effect on the body and flight path of the ball.

Emphasis On The Visual

Just as he quickly breaks apart a sentence and fills in the missing blanks, Burdo can break down a racquetball player's swing to find a fault. Similarly, he can build up or improve a person's swing by isolating a problem, then correcting it with the help of easy-to-grasp visual illustrations.

For example, a common error among novice racquetball players is to swing too soon, or overreach for the ball as it comes toward them. Players mistakenly think they should start swinging when the ball is about the same distance from them as the length of their swing. Burdo has a simple way of convincing players they can start their swings much later.

He holds a ball over the player's head, drops it, and asks the player to begin swinging as soon as he thinks it's time. The player might assume that he must swing immediately after Burdo releases the ball. But, in fact, the player doesn't react that fast, and he actually begins his swing only after the ball has dropped just below waist level.

Even though the swing begins seemingly late, the player still makes contact with the ball. The ball falls only another



'We feel very lucky to have Ron work for us. He's probably one of the best instructors in the Northeast.'

six inches before it is hit, thus demonstrating that the ball must travel only a short distance before a swing must be initiated.

"If you're swinging early, think late, and you'll hit on time," Burdo advises.

The demonstration interests him because it clearly shows when to begin a swing, and, furthermore, it demonstrates why. "There are a lot of things people take for granted. A lot of people do not take the time to figure out why something works. I always look for the why."

While Burdo examines complex facts of the game, he also looks for simple tricks and devices that give players immediate pictures or quick visual solutions to their problems. Keeping the correct grip on the racket is a common concern. If the racquet turns or drops to the floor, the player is likely to mishit the next time he strokes the ball.

Burdo suggests the beginning player hold the racquet with the correct grip, then, using typewriter "white out" or something similar, paint an outline of

the thumb and index finger on the racquet handle. With the outline in place, the player can always unmistakably return his hand to the correct grip.

Burdo is a dedicated racquetball student and he constantly looks for ways to improve and simplify the game. As his remaining time for teaching runs out, he is perfecting a plan for a sophisticated model for racquetball instruction. He tests and refines his system, while consulting and teaching racquetball in Vermont and other New England states.

Lessons From The Sports Pages

In the meantime, he seeks any piece of information that reinforces or causes him to reexamine his teaching approach. He reads sports pages avidly, clipping articles, picking up words of wisdom from professional athletes about their strengths and weaknesses.

Racquetball players can learn from athletes such as Jim Rice of the Boston Red Sox, who explains his batting slump, saying, "when you're trying too hard you don't see the ball, and when you don't see the ball, you're going to struggle."

Freeman McNeil of the New York Jets is a star running back because, "he's able to see the whole picture. He always seems to know where the pursuit is coming from."

And, perhaps no one reaffirms Burdo's approach to racquetball more than Larry Bird of the Boston Celtics, who says:

"You know it takes time to learn this game. It's like scientists. They don't just go into their labs with a lot of formulas and drugs and cure the common cold in a day. It takes 'em years and years, every day putting together new pieces of information and gaining new experience. It's the same way in basketball. You've gotta take all those pieces and put them together." □



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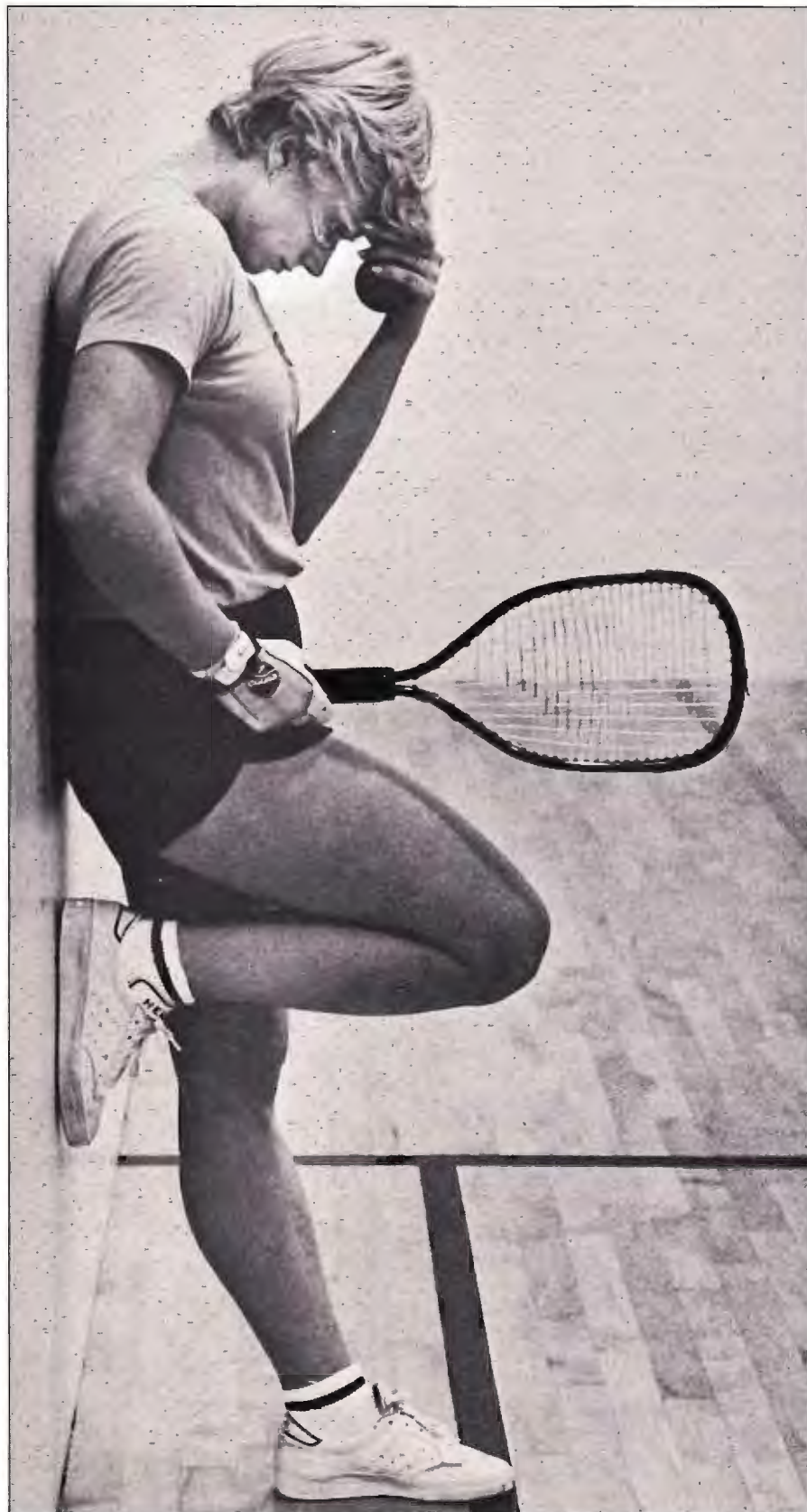
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The Psychology Of Competition

Part One: Stress & Performance

by Dr. Jerry May and
Drew Stoddard



It's tournament time! For six weeks you've been training every day to get your game in top form—drilling forehands, doing sprints, suffering through Nautilus workouts, and destroying everyone you play in practice. A smile comes across your face as you check out the draw sheet and discover that your first round opponent is one of your favorite practice-match destroyees. You've got four racquets in your bag—all newly strung—some brand new gloves, and enough clothes to last you through the finals. All your friends are coming to watch. Everything is ready. "This," you say to yourself, "is going to be cake."

But as match time gets closer, things start getting a little weird. Your pulse is pounding, your mind is racing, you're starting to sweat, and your lungs just can't seem to get enough air—and so far all you've done is put on your socks.

Those nice little butterflies are now staging full-scale war games in your stomach. What's going on here? When you finally walk into the court (why are

'On a given day in competition the difference between one athlete's performance and another's frequently depends on how well each is prepared mentally.'

all those people staring at you?) your only hope is that everything will change after you start playing.

It does. It gets worse. Your feet seem nailed to the floor, your arms and legs have turned into cement, and simply getting the ball to the front wall has become a major challenge. Your forehand—which only an hour ago was ripping like a cannon—is now moving the ball with all the power of a dripping faucet. In what seems like moments the match is over; you've scored a total of six points—all on shots where you accidentally hit the strings of your racquet.

Bewildered and angry, you walk off the court and swear to yourself that you

will never play this stupid game again!

What happened?

There is not a serious racquetball player alive—or athlete for that matter—who has not experienced something like the scenario above at some time in his or her career. Indeed, some of us are doomed to experience it over and over again because we never learn that physical preparation alone is only part of the formula for athletic success. A highly-trained body can be rendered utterly useless in an instant when it is controlled by the unpredictable reactions of an untrained mind.

Every athlete knows the importance of physical training for athletic performance. Because sports is a process of measuring one's ability to execute specific skills, most training programs are designed solely to increase the level of physical performance. However, on a given day in competition the difference between one athlete's performance and another's frequently depends on how well each is prepared mentally.

This is particularly true of racquetball, because it is played at such high speeds. Although the basics of the sport are easy to master, at higher levels, racquetball combines the precise timing of a perfect golf swing with reaction times that are measured in micro-seconds. The slightest loss of concentration under the intense stress of tournament play can devastate and otherwise perfect game in seconds.

Fortunately, our minds can be trained in much the same way we condition our bodies. The purpose of this series of articles is to present a basic overview of the psychological aspects of athletic performance. We will explore why our mental processes break down under certain conditions, and how we can learn to condition our minds to function predictably under stress.

Stress

It is perhaps the greatest challenge for every athlete, regardless of his or her sport, to understand that executing a given skill in the relaxed atmosphere of practice can be quite different from performing the same task under the pressure of competition. In racquetball, for example, hitting a perfect forehand kill in a practice match might be quite simple while hitting the same shot in the semifinals of an important tournament can seem nearly impossible. Why? Logically, the act of killing a forehand would seem to be the same in either case.

The explanation is actually quite simple. The ability of the mind to re-implement a learned skill is altered—for bet-

ter or worse—by the presence of stress.

So much attention has been given recently to the negative effects of it in our lives that we tend to think of stress as always destructive, but this is not true. Stress cannot, and should not, be totally avoided. To eliminate it would be to destroy life itself.

Hans Selye (M.D., Ph.D.) was the first person to systematically study stress; he defined it as *the non-specific response of the body to any demand upon it*. Stress is a very general concept, and includes almost any thought, feeling, or event that occurs in one's life. Stress is a vital, creative force that energizes the body. Yet, like all powerful forces, it can also throw the body off course.

Although, all types of stress make



'Some of the more common signals of over-arousal are rapid breathing, tense muscles, anger toward yourself, and rambling thoughts that distract and ruin your concentration.'

certain demands on the body, it is important to learn which stressors are beneficial and which are detrimental to your own mental and emotional state, and will thus affect your performance. We all react to stress differently. For one player the stress of a tournament may act as a strong motivator, while another might view it as highly threatening. Each of us must learn to recognize overstress, and when the limits of our own adaptability have been exceeded.

There are many factors that can cause stress for an athlete, some external and others, internal.

External factors are those that are beyond your control. They might include parental pressure, boisterous spectators, a crowding opponent, or the extreme physical demands of playing round after round in a large tournament. The higher in a sport an athlete goes, the more of these factors seem to develop.

Internal stress is that which we bring on ourselves, and is therefore possible to control. This type of stress can come from unrealistic expectations and goals, worrying about mistakes, self-consciousness, or a strong fear of failure. When an athlete learns to control these internal stress factors, it is often easier to limit the effect of the external stressors.

Regardless of its source, once the level of stress exceeds your own ability to adapt, your performance level will drop. It is when thoughts are difficult

to control, feelings too intense, and situations seem overwhelming, that a good psychological training program can be most beneficial.

General Adaptation Syndrome

Whenever the mind and body are subjected to stress over a long period of time, no matter what the particular irritant may be, a reaction occurs which is called the General Adaptation Syndrome. This reaction takes place in three parts: 1) the alarm phase, during which the body is put on alert and summons its defensive forces to combat the stressor; 2) the resistance phase, where the body maintains and fights against the irritant; 3) the stage of exhaustion, when unable to resist and attack any longer, the body finally gives in and experiences a breakdown in performance, the onset of disease, or ultimately, death.

For an athlete, the alarm phase can be triggered by stress of a specific event on the day of competition. For the serious racquetball player this takes place most often during tournament play. When this happens, the body and mind go into action to cope with the stress and normally do quite well. If, however, the competitive events continue at close enough intervals over an extended period of time, the mind and body are kept in the totally ready state and the response of the resistance state are triggered. This is why it can be so difficult to play round after round in an important tournament. Not only



'Your pulse is pounding, your mind is racing, you're starting to sweat, and your lungs just can't seem to get enough air—and so far all you've done is put on your socks.'

does the body become physically tired, but the mind begins to break down as well.

Unfortunately, the real situation does not have to be present for the alarm-resistance-exhaustion sequence to occur, because the mind has the capability to store in memory an event, and then worry over it. Most of us have the capacity to endure this exposure for a while, but with extensive stress, the mind and body break down. During this resistance phase, the illness and injury rate goes up, and performance level is reduced.

Arousal And Performance

There is a specific relationship between arousal (stress) and athletic performance. **TABLE 1** depicts this relationship. It is vital for every athlete to understand this principle, and to learn how to apply it to his or her own situation.

If you look at the curved line that represents performance, you'll see that when you're not aroused, your performance level will be low. (Since competition is usually viewed as stressful, low arousal levels are seldom a problem for the athlete.) As arousal increases, performance increases until an optimal level is reached. Beyond that point, however, further increases in arousal begin to have a detrimental effect, and performance diminishes.

This, of course, explains what happened in the scenario at the beginning

of the article. Most of us would like to think that the anxiety we feel prior to playing in a tournament will drive us to play our best, but in fact, we often become so anxious during competition that we are unable to play at all.

The balance between arousal and performance is very delicate. And, it is possible to move from low to high arousal levels in seconds. For example, during competition you might think about a feared opponent, a past failure, a crowd of spectators, or a bad referee's call and immediately find yourself in an over-aroused state. If you are unable to detect that change and bring your arousal level back to an optimum level, your performance will quickly deteriorate.

Since we all react to stress different-

ly, each of us must learn to recognize the signs of our own optimum performance level. Most top athletes agree that when you're performing well, everything you do is automatic. There is very little conscious thought. For some, there is a feeling of confidence, calm or peacefulness. For other, there may be a feeling of pleasurable excitement. Although you are alert, your body may feel relaxed and your movements fluid. Many athletes report that their minds become almost blank, with total concentration on the moment and the task at hand.

It is also crucial to learn to detect when your own state of arousal has gone beyond the optimum level. Some of the more common signals of over-arousal are rapid breathing, tense muscles, anger toward yourself, and rambling thoughts that distract and ruin your concentration.

One of the most common mistakes made by athletes is to fight the symptoms of over-arousal by trying harder. Remember, over-arousal causes a decrease in performance level, so trying harder may actually produce worse results. Once your performance has started down the curve on the performance efficiency graph, the only solution is to reduce your level of arousal. There is no such thing as a quick fix.

It is often observed, with some degree of amazement, that the top competitors in most sports are seldom the most

physically gifted, and this is true. Most highly successful athletes have learned to control their own state of arousal, often using the pressure of competition as a motivator. In fact, some top athletes, like national racquetball champion Mike Yellen, seem to only play their game best under great pressure. The principle behind mental preparation is really simple mathematics—you can give up a lot of physical talent if, under the pressure of competition, you are able to perform at 100% while your opponent is at 50%.

Learning to control arousal and to reduce stress takes time, effort, and practice. You must train your mind to adjust in the same way you once trained your body to hit a forehand kill. There are three basic methods that have been proven to be effective for helping athletes perform at their best under stress; 1) cognitive restructuring, 2) mental imaging, and 3) relaxation training.

Next month we will begin exploring these three techniques. □



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Drew Stoddard is the Commissioner for the RMA men's pro tour and an editor for National Racquetball Magazine.

Why I Wear Eyeguards

National Champ Lynn Adams Can't See Eye-To-Eye With Those Who Won't Put On Their Eyeguards

by Lynn Adams

The very first day I ever played racquetball, I put on eyeguards—well, not exactly regulation eyeguards, but a pair of sunglasses with the lenses popped out. It was pretty makeshift, but I figured it was better than nothing. Ever since that first day I've worn some type of eye protection, and I would never walk on the court without them even if I was practicing alone.

I recall one afternoon of practicing alone. I was into the workout and concentrating hard. The drill I was doing involved fast reactions and before I could blink, a ball I had retrieved and hit into the back wall was suddenly in my face. It knocked my glasses off. It was slightly painful, but it shook me up more than anything else. I was very glad I had my eyeguards on!

A lot of pros who don't wear eyeguards feel that they are good enough and quick enough to get out of harms way. Unfortunately, most of the eye accidents I have personally seen involved some sort of fluke incident that no one saw coming. You are susceptible no matter what skill level you play.

Once I was just warming up to play a pro match in Tempe, Arizona, with Laura Martino. I wasn't wearing eyeguards knowing I would put them on once the match started. I was walking towards the back wall to pick up my ball and as I leaned over to get my ball, Laura's ball bounced off the back wall and into my eye. I wasn't hit hard, it was just bouncing around after a warm up hit, but it knocked me off my feet. My eye watered for a long time and it took a while for the pain to subside. I was lucky that it wasn't anything serious, but you can be sure that I never walked onto a court without my eyeguards on my face ever again.

The most frightening accident I ever saw involved my husband Jim and one of his close friends. The two of them were playing doubles one afternoon and everyone was having a great time. At one point, Jim was in a ceiling ball rally



'Eye injuries happen on weird and fluke shots and strike at all skill levels.'

and getting ready to hit the next shot. His friend thought that Jim was going to hit a ceiling ball and he was looking right at Jim's racquet. Jim, watching the ball, hit a Z-ball that hit his friend square in the eye. This guy was one of the fastest players I had ever seen with his hands, his feet and his reactions, yet he ended up in the hospital over Christmas with patches on both of his eyes. He permanently lost part of his vision in one eye.

That's the scary thing about eye injuries. They seem to happen on weird and fluke shots and they strike at all skill levels. Not only do they hurt those that receive them, but they hurt those that accidentally caused them. No one likes to cause another person pain.

It makes me a little angry when I walk on the court and my opponent isn't wearing eyeguards. Not only is he or she vulnerable to the possibility of a horrible eye injury, but they are putting me in the position of making that possibility a little more probable. I don't want to have the burden of knowing my racquet or shot caused someone the loss of their eyesight. Eye injuries can be

prevented and each person should take that responsibility for themselves and their opponents.

Before I give my views on the eyeguard situation, I want to share one last experience that happened to me recently. I was able to participate in the AARA Junior Camp this past summer. It was a lot of fun and very informative. One of the lectures was on eye injuries. During the lecture, slides were shown of various eye injuries that had occurred from racquetball. Some of them happened when a player was wearing eyeguards with no lenses. The pictures were scary and gross and it left a lasting impression on me. I had been wearing eyeguards without lenses for a long time, making convenient excuses such as vision, distortion, sweat, glass walls, etc. After seeing those slides, I decided nothing was worth taking that risk.

I immediately contacted my sponsor and had them send me one of every type of their eyeguards to try out. I now wear a pair of eyeguards that are light, attractive, distortion free and they really protect my eyes. No more excuses for me. I'm just glad that I made that choice before something could happen.

As you might have guessed by now, I would vote to make eyeguards mandatory. I would want to see all eyeguards with lenses, and some sort of fine system among the pros who either refuse to wear them or take them off during a match. I realize that takes away their freedom of choice, but it seems pretty hypocritical for us to make them mandatory for juniors to protect them and not require it for all players, pro and amateur.

It's time that the top players in the game become the role models for mandatory eyeguard use and not the exceptions to the rule. □

Lynn Adams is the #1 ranked women's pro in the world and holds five national indoor titles and five national outdoor titles.

MANDATORY



EYEGUARDS

Is It Wishful Thinking? With All The Advocates Of Mandatory Eyeguards Pushing For Safety, It's A Wish That Will Come True.

by Jason Holloman

One of the guys I work with came in the other day snooping around my box full of eyeguards I had for this month's eyeguard guide. He looked up at me and asked, "Got any extras in there I could have?" It was apparent why the question was asked. He had quite a shiner around one eye and a gash on his nose—the result of an unguarded moment on the racquetball court the previous night. Of course, I took a minute out and helped him pick out a pair of eyeguards. I was glad I wasn't helping him pick out a cane.

That man will always wear eyeguards. He had a close call and it wised him up. Others have not been as fortunate. In racquetball alone, there are about 70,000 eye injuries a year. One is too many, but 70,000 is something to get riled up about! The purpose of this article is to show you that others have finally had enough of people not looking out for themselves, so, they are going to make eyeguards mandatory. It's just a matter of time.

The Way Things Stand

Sports are fun and big business. Even in racquetball, there are million dollar players who push their bodies to the maximum to win and it doesn't make sense to the companies who employ these athletes to see them injured. In football, the game has gone from leather helmets to crash helmets with protective face bars and now, plastic face shields to keep grubbing little fingers out of valuable eyes. Basketball players are seen frequently with protective eyeguards to keep thrashing elbows from popping an eye out under the basket. In hockey, the facemask of the goalie has become almost symbolic as a

defense against the ferocity of the players and the puck. Meanwhile, racquet sports continue to linger in the dark ages of sports protection because, after all, as one player put it, "It's not very cosmetic to wear eyeguards." Neither is an eyepatch.

There have been some efforts by certain racquet sports associations to correct the problem of eye injuries: the USSRA (United States Squash Racquet Association) in squash, the CRA (Canadian), IARF (International) and AARA (American) racquetball associations in racquetball.

The CRA was the first one to take the plunge. I called up John Hamilton, who is the executive director for the Canadian Racquetball Association to ask him about his rule.

"Our rule for mandatory eyeguards went into effect in 1978," stated Mr. Hamilton. "There was some initial resistance when it first came out because the prevailing attitude was that a player might be at a disadvantage if he wore eyeguards. It's a moot point now. Everyone is wearing them."

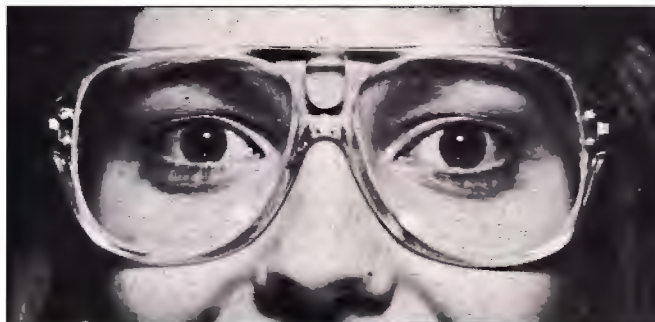
The Canadian ruling has some teeth in it, too. "If a player tries to come out on the court and play without eyeguards," explained Hamilton, "they are assessed technicals until they wear them. Three technicals and they forfeit the match."

The AARA doesn't require its adult players to wear eyeguards, but the junior players must in all AARA sanctioned tournaments. The rule reads: *Eye protection is required for any participant under the age of 19 in all AARA sanctioned events.*

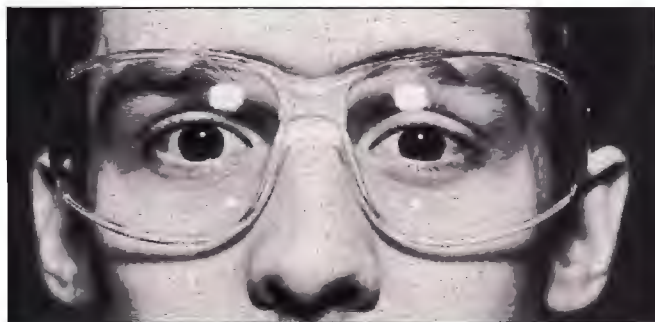
AARA executive director, Luke St. Onge, gave his views on the ruling.

"We have felt that one of the reasons the older players have

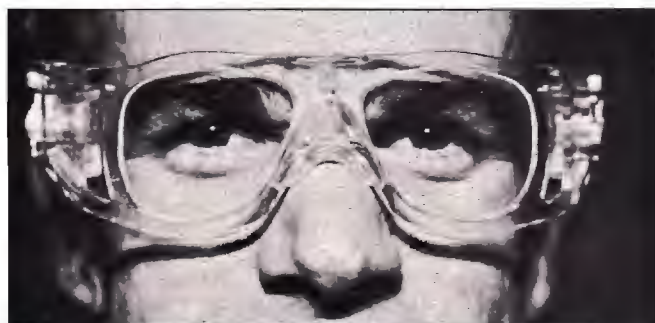
Pictured above: Ektelon's Regent eyeguards priced at \$16.95



Action Eyes eyeguards distributed by Viking Sports - \$29.95



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not been using eyeguards is because they started playing racquetball without them and are having a hard time switching over. They feel uncomfortable with them and it isn't a natural part of their equipment for racquetball."

"We made eye protection mandatory for juniors because we felt we had to create a situation where the kids were exposed to eyeguards at an early age and under competitive conditions. We hoped that as they grew older, they would then continue to use them."

Apparently, that is the case. Both the CRA and the AARA have seen a high percentage of young players continue with the use of eyeguards after their junior playing years. In Canada, there is even a sign of a "trickle-down" effect and Hamilton stated, "You don't see many people now in Canada playing without eyeguards."

Squash is making eyeguards mandatory with a new ruling that will go into effect on May 1, 1986. Their new rule reads: *Effective May 1, 1986, lensed eye protection certified by manufacturers as meeting specifications set up by ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) for racquet sports, must be worn at all sanctioned USSRA tournaments.*

The RMA and WPRA do not have a ruling about mandatory use of eyeguards. Why is that? As Luke St. Onge of the AARA stated, to have a rule about mandatory eyeguards at this date, associations are "sticking their necks" out legally.

The Legal Issue

Americans love to sue and lawyers in this country love to win big for their clients who have had injuries that were caused by the lack of the proper equipment or the failure of equipment to protect the injured party. Drew Stoddard, the commissioner for the RMA men's pro tour, explained what the trouble is with mandating eyeguards at this time.

"I'm certainly not a legal expert, but those who are have made it very clear that as soon as we require eyeguards to be worn in pro tournament competition, we leave ourselves wide open to be sued by the first player who suffers an eye injury while playing with eyeguards in one of our events. At this point, pro racquetball doesn't have the financial strength to even fight a law suit like that."

"Before any of us can safely mandate the use of eyeguards, some independent research lab is going to have to give us something to go on, some standards or specifications we can use to define what constitutes reliable eye protection."

"I know that sounds like a cop-out. Of course, eye injuries are a serious problem in this sport—probably the most serious—and we want to do our part to encourage everyone to wear "good" eye protection. But at this point we just don't have enough information to be able to safely define what "good" means."

The crux of the matter is, there are no standards at present that decide what is and isn't good eye protection. Darwin P. Kinsley III of the USSRA (squash) told me how they look at the legal aspect of eyeguards.

"In regards to where our mandatory rule stands legally, we have been advised that the USSRA would be more liable for not requiring some sort of minimal eye protection than they would be if they required it, perhaps due to the statistics that indicate even minimal eye protection drastically reduces the chance of eye injuries."

In Canada, John Hamilton stated a similar situation. "Our lawyer figured that if someone playing in one of our tournaments was injured because he was not wearing eyeguards, then that person might have grounds for a suit. But since we do have a ruling on eyeguards, at least we have shown that we have done a reasonable job of trying to protect the players. However, we do not list any approved eye protection. We leave what would be considered "good eye protection" up to the

referee. That gives the referee a bit of subjectivity. We've had cases where players have walked out on the court with eyeguards that have been changed from the manufacturers specifications, such as lenses being popped out. Obviously, if the eyeguards have been tampered with or are not deemed effective by the referee, then the player must change his eyeguards before he can play."

In America, though, there must be more stringent guidelines for mandatory eyeguards to protect against law suits.

"Our biggest concern now with making eyeguards mandatory is the lack of standards," commented the AARA'S Luke St. Onge. "We feel that if the manufacturer warranted his products and had them certified by a testing lab, then that would take the heat off of the association if suits arose out of an eye injury case. The AARA does not have the financial capability or expert knowledge to do the testing, so, until someone else does it, we can only recommend their use."

All of the associations agree that if there were properly certified eyeguards on the market today that they would look favorably at a ruling that would make eyeguards mandatory in all events. So, how do we go about getting these standards?

The Push For Certified Eye Protection

Fortunately for all of us, there are many groups and individuals who are actively seeking out the use of eye protection. One of these people is Dr. Paul F. Vinger who is the Assistant Clinical Professor in Ophthalmology at the Harvard Medical School and Chairman of the ASTM Eye Safety Committee.

Working with organizations such as the Society to Prevent Blindness and other non-profit safety organizations, Dr. Vinger has had many tests done on eye safety products. The results of the testing would make an interesting article in itself, but a few basic facts will point out their findings.

'Take into consideration that Marty Hogan hits the ball at 140 mph. There may be nothing on the market right now that could hold up to impacts at that speed.'

ASTM tests have shown that the balls used in racquet sports move faster than was thought, even in the hands of amateur players. Squash balls moved at speeds up to 140 mph, racquetball and tennis balls at 110 mph and badminton shuttlecocks clocked in at 145 mph! (Badminton is a leading cause of eye injuries in Malaysia where the game is widely played.)

When eyeguards are tested by firing the balls with a pneumatic device toward a dummy wearing eyeguards, a little glob of white gel is smeared on the eye. If the eyeguard touches any part of the eye during impact, then the eyeguard has failed to protect the eye. It was found that when testing lensless eyeguards at impacts of 70 mph, the ball changed shape upon impact and squished through the open lens, touching the eye. As a result of that test Dr. Vinger recommended the following:

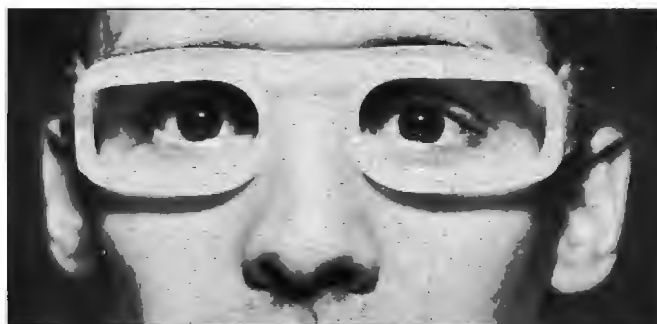
"No open, lensless eyeguard presently available can pass the racquet sports/eye-protector standards. I urge racquet players using lensless eyeguards to throw them out and switch to closed polycarbonate protectors."

Pretty strong language, but to the point. I asked Dr. Vinger if these findings could be considered certified findings. For official certification of eyeguards, the process is a little more formal. Dr. Vinger explained the procedures involved.

"We are currently in the process of setting up a Certification Council that will be a corporate entity. As a corporation, the individual members of the council would have protection



Optivue's Safetylites (with headstrap) - \$21.95



Ektelon's Court Specs (lensless) - \$8.49



Ektelon's Junior Court Specs (lensless) - \$8.49



Leader's New Yorker (tints available) - \$24.95



Leader's Essex eyeguards - \$11.95



Ektelon's Deflector eyeguard - \$14.95



Ektelon's Eye Sentry - \$27.95



Leader's Wesport Sport eyeguards - \$8.50



Leader's Troy for prescription lenses (frame only) - \$22.95



against liability and if a suit were to come about, the whole council would have to be involved. It would make it very hard for a lawyer to win his case if he has to go up against the best experts in the field!"

"The Certification Council would in turn hire a validator which would be an independent testing laboratory like the Detroit Testing Labs. It probably will be the Detroit Testing Labs because they have shown an interest and they already have the apparatus. What they will do is take products that

'Racquet sports continue to linger in the dark ages of sports protection because, after all, as one player put it, "It's not very cosmetic to wear eyeguards." Neither is an eyepatch.'

the manufacturers want tested for certification and run a series of standardized impact tests. If a product passes the tests, then they will be awarded some sort of sticker that can be placed on the package or the product itself that states that it has passed the certification test for protective eyewear."

"Once the Certification Council has been set up, the associations could, at that point, pass a ruling for mandatory eyeguards that would be effective at some future date. It would certainly be an incentive for manufacturers to get the testing done because only certified eyewear could be used."

Dr. Vinger informed me that the Certification Council could be in place as soon as the spring of this year. Would this new council have an effect on the manufacturers?

The Manufacturers

I decided to call up Sabe Abell who owns the Leader Eyeguard company to find out how he felt about all of these recent happenings in regards to Certification Councils, Validator Labs. etc. He was all for it. Sabe had a lot of things to tell about eyeguards, as you can imagine, but what follows is some of the more important things he wished for me to repeat.

"There are products on the market now that provide protection, that is, they may provide protection for certain sports, or certain features of certain sports, but maybe not for all features in all sports that need eye protection. If you look at it that way, there are products on the market now that do provide eye protection, but whether or not it is the eye protection needed in racquetball is the point in question. Only by certifying each individual eye protection product will you know for sure whether it is the proper eye protection for your sport."

"For racquetball, the speed at impact is currently tested at 90 mph. Then, take into consideration that Marty Hogan hits the ball at 140 mph. There may be nothing on the market right now that could hold up to impacts at that speed. Practical guidelines for eye protection must be set up by a certification organization, not only for the safety of the public, but so the manufacturers will know what they have to provide."

In Conclusion

What surprised me about this article after I had done the research was the fact that everybody wants the same thing—mandatory eyeguards for racquet sports. The associations want it as a protective service to their members, the eye doctors want it to prevent serious eye injuries from occurring in the first place and the manufacturers want it so they can better service the consumers.

Now, the only ones who don't want it are those who would rather play without eyeguards. Seems like a selfish thing to want, and I think in this case, those people are eventually going to be overruled. Like I said, it's only a matter of time. □

Four Drive Shots

Drive Your Opponent Bonkers With These Proven Variations On The Drive Shot

by Dave Peck

One of the major offensive weapons in the arsenal of today's racquetball player is the drive shot. This shot can be categorized into four types. The ball can be driven cross-court, down the side wall, at your opponent, or down the middle of the court.

If in the process of hitting one of these four shots you can force your opponent to cough up a weak return, then you have accomplished your main objective. Most players feel that the drive should be a rally-ending shot where the ball is blown by your opponent and he is unable to return it. In theory this is the optimum result, but in practice your objective more often will be simply to throw your opponent off balance.

Your drive shot should enable you to anticipate a weak return, setting you up with a kill shot or another opportunity to rip the ball past your opponent. At any rate, it should allow you to stay on the attack. Sometimes your opponent can't return your shot at all—an added bonus of the drive shot.

But think about it: How many times have you seen the ball driven past a player where he can't get his racquet on it? Five or 10 percent of the time? Maybe you have had the wrong outlook in believing that a drive shot is supposed to be a passing shot which allows no return. But this is only rarely the case. A new outlook regarding the drive shot can't help but improve your offensive game.

Let's analyze the different types of drive shots.

Cross-Court (Diagram 1)

The most important aspect of the cross-court drive is the angle. Your primary objective with this shot is to get the ball by your opponent. You must not let him cut the ball off and maintain center court or you'll find yourself badly out of position. Ideally, the ball



Dave Peck, 1982 National Champion

'Your drive shot should enable you to anticipate a weak return, setting you up with a kill shot or another opportunity to rip the ball past your opponent. It should allow you to stay on the attack.'

should strike the side wall about two feet above the floor near the back service line. Once the ball is past your opponent, he has to chase it down, which takes him out of center court and allows you to gain this coveted position. He is also forced to return your shot while on the move. Simply by getting the ball by your opponent, you have gained three strategic advantages:

1. You have center court position.
2. Your opponent is in deep court.

3. He is hitting the ball while on the move.

You really have the problem solved if the ball not only gets by your opponent, but also doesn't reach the back wall. If the ball does come off the back wall, your opponent has an opportunity to set up for an easy return. Keeping it off the back wall will depend upon the height and speed of the drive shot. The harder the ball is hit, the closer to the floor it must travel in order not to reach

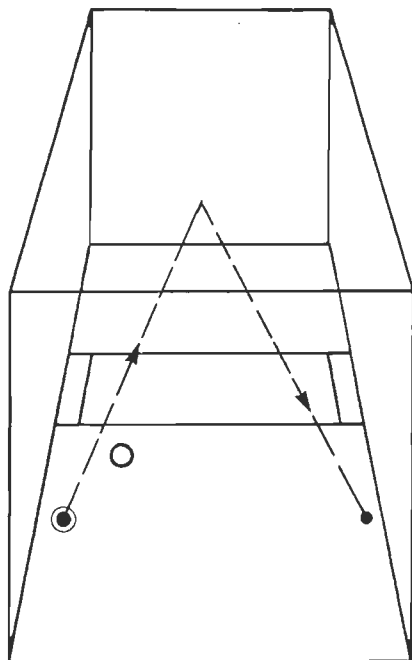


Diagram 1

the back wall.

Down The Side Wall (Diagram 2)

This shot has the same two objectives as the cross-court drive: to force a weak return or no return at all. But this is a more difficult shot to control than the cross-court. Two things can happen, each of which will result in a poor shot:

1. The ball comes off the back wall.
2. The ball starts down the side wall, but hops into the wall (usually around the service line) and comes out into the middle of the court leaving you out of position and giving your opponent an easy shot.

It is more difficult to keep the ball off the back wall when you're hitting down the side wall because it usually doesn't strike the wall and slow down as it does in the cross-court drive. There is less margin of error, therefore the ball has to be hit at just the right speed and height.

The second problem, where the ball hits the side wall too soon, is the result of either a poor angle or improper spin. It is very easy to hit across the ball with the racquet when trying to bring it down the wall, and this imparts a side-spin to it, causing it to angle toward the side wall.

Back-spin, top-spin, or even no spin at all will allow you to keep the ball from jumping into the side wall if you have the ball at the proper angle. But look out for top-spin as this gives the ball a tendency to carry, causing it to come off the back wall more often.

While driving the ball down the side wall is a very effective shot, then, it is

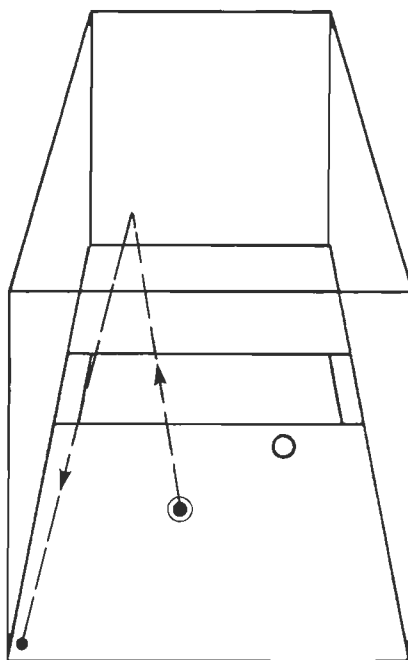


Diagram 2

'You will often find the ball coming back toward you when you hit it down the wall, which is very unsettling. What does the player usually do when he finds himself in this position?'

difficult to control because of the speed, height, and spin of the ball. However, being able to control this shot is one of the most important differences between a good amateur and a professional player.

At Your Opponent (Diagram 3)

This drive is seldom used, even in doubles where it is most effective. The ball should reach your opponent approximately waist high and slightly to the forehand side. If the ball is too high, he can duck out of the way and take it off the back wall. Likewise, if it is too slow, then it gives him an easy kill attempt. If the shot is hit correctly, your opponent will probably try a backhand return. This should result in a very weak shot setting you up for an easy offensive opportunity.

This shot is very effective in doubles. Unless you hit an absolutely perfect passing shot, it seldom does much good to drive the ball past one of your opponents since his partner can usually come around from behind to make an easy return. You want to drive the ball

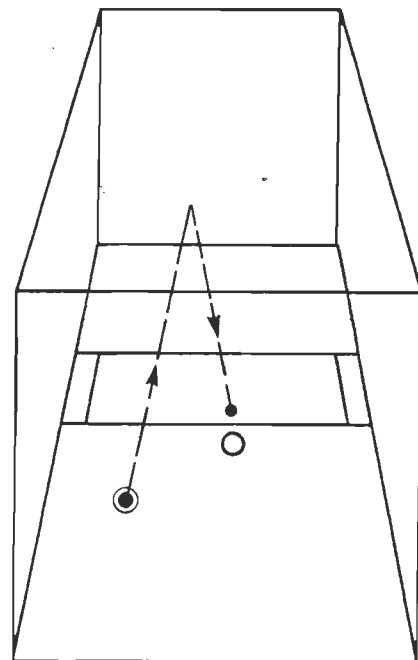


Diagram 3

directly at your opponent, forcing him to try to hit it before it gets by. This should lead to a weak return, setting your team up for an easy shot. And in doubles you need all the easy shots you can get.

Down The Middle (Diagram 4)

The drive down the middle is used exclusively in doubles against a left-handed/right-handed team. Both backhands are to the center of the court, so you drive the ball down the middle, hoping to get a weak return from your opponents. If the ball gets through they will still have to try a backhand return even if it reaches the back wall. You are attacking their weakness.

The last point I want to make regarding shot selection pertains to the cross-court and the down-the-wall drive shot. Most players will hit the cross-court drive 80 percent of the time—this is something worth remembering. Knowing that your opponent will probably go for the cross-court drive gives you a distinct advantage in court position.

It's worthwhile to analyze why a player tends to hit the cross-court drive more often. It is an easier shot to hit with less chance of making an error, and it is easier to regain center court position since you force your opponent toward the opposite side of the court. The player generally feels more comfortable hitting the ball cross-court. He can usually see his opponent more quickly and he is hitting the ball away from himself.



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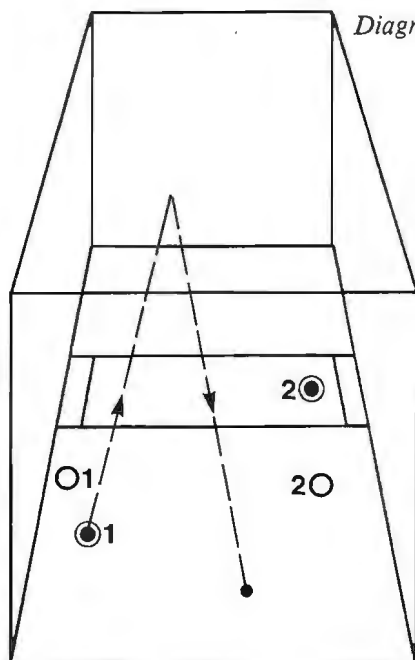


Diagram 4

You will often find the ball coming back toward you when you hit it down the wall, which is very unsettling. You feel as though you are in the way, especially if your opponent is behind you and you aren't able to spot him quickly. What does a player usually do when he finds himself in this position? You

'Back-spin, top-spin, or even no spin at all will allow you to keep the ball from jumping into the side wall if you have the ball at the proper angle. But look out for top-spin as this gives the ball a tendency to carry, causing it to come off the back wall more often.'

guessed it! He drives the shot cross-court. It is easier to hit, he feels more comfortable and it is easier to move to center court.

Summary

1. The main objective of a drive shot is to force a weak return which either does not make it to the front wall, or, if it does, gives you an easy shot.
2. If the ball gets past your opponent, then it should not reach the back wall in order to constitute a perfect passing shot.
3. Be aware of the side effects that will result from imparting spin to the ball, especially as it pertains to the down-the-wall drive shot.

4. The harder the ball is hit, the lower it must travel in order *not* to reach the back wall.

5. Try to take advantage of driving the ball at your opponent, especially as it relates to doubles.

6. Try to be more aware of driving the ball cross-court too often. Let your opponent make the mistakes with the drive shot—you concentrate on using this shot as the big gun of your game. □

1982 National Champion Dave Peck is currently ranked 10th on the RMA pro tour. He is a valued member of the Ektelon advisory staff.



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The Basic Z-Serve

Invented in 1971 By Charlie Garfinkel To Defeat Charlie Brumfield, This Serve Has Become A Standard Weapon

by Lou Fabian

The purposes of the Z-serve are to keep the receiver in back court, neutralize power by preventing a full arm swing, and limit effective returns by forcing the receiver to play the ball waist high in a corner. The advantages of accurate Z-serves include: a few aces, more weak returns, preventing the receiver from getting into a groove, and the ability to use it safely both as a first and second serve. The disadvantages of poor Z-serves include: creating a plum for the receiver if the ball shoots straight out from the side wall or caroms off the back wall, and the fact that it can be effectively diffused by moving up to cut it off down-the-line or cross-court.

Before the starting position is described, the reader should be aware of three important factors. First, the article is written with the understanding that the server is right handed (left handed players should do the opposite).

Second, there are subtle differences in every racquetball environment (court, ball, etc.), each person's body type, and each person's athletic ability. Thus the reader should use the material as a general guideline with which to experiment and which he may alter when necessary.

The basics of the Z-serve

The server should take a position within the shaded area of the service zone (**Diagram 1**) I prefer to start with

the right foot on the corner formed by the short line and doubles service box. Beginning at the same point *each time* is critical. Notice, too, that the shaded area flares out from the starting point. This becomes important when the server begins changing angles to hit different serves.

The further to the left of center from which the player serves, the easier the Z-serve becomes to execute. However,

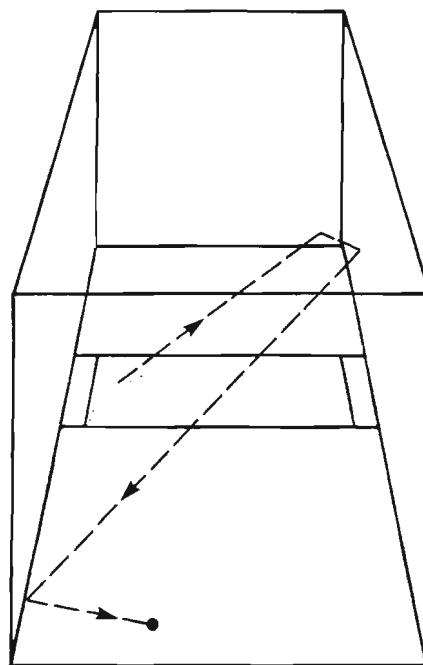


Diagram 1

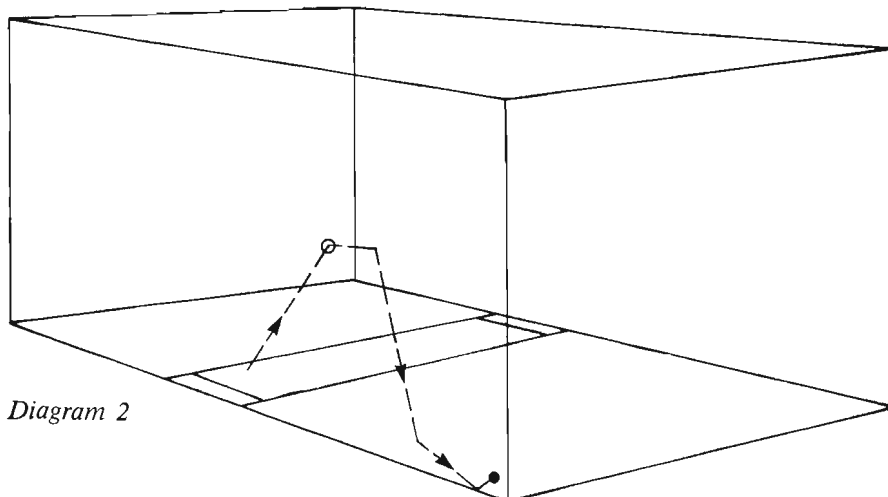


Diagram 2

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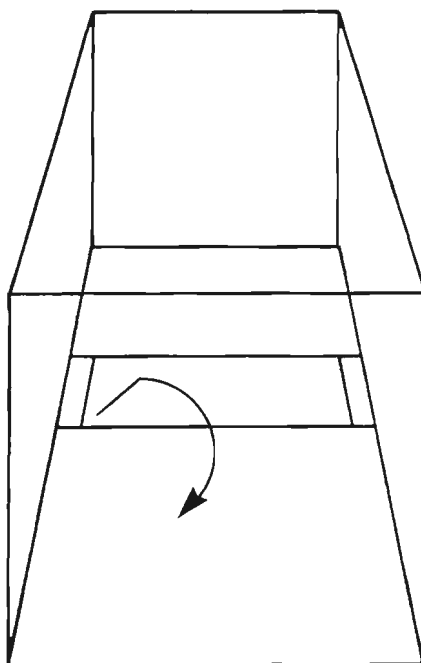


Diagram 3

the further to the left of center you move, the more your intentions are telegraphed so you must make extra effort to return to center court position after the serve. Each player must experiment with different starting points on the short line to determine the exact position for best results.

The stroking pattern for the Z-serve is similar to the drive serve, the major difference being that the body position is angled 45 degrees toward the right front corner of the court rather than perpendicular to the front wall. Step with your left foot toward the spot on the front wall where you want the ball to go. Using the forehand grip, make contact with the ball somewhere between ankle to knee height with 80% power. Once you begin your stroke, watch the ball at all times, following it into the back court. *Warning! You Must Wear Eye Protection!*

Diagram 2, marks the server's target, approximately four feet above the floor and four feet away from the right side wall. Aim for the target, strike the ball, and follow it as it caroms quickly off the front right side wall and angles cross-court deep into the left corner. The ball must bounce on the floor prior to hitting the left side wall and then shoot off the side wall into the receiver's body.

Ideally the serve will hit the left side wall one to four feet away from the back wall and three feet high. The bounce off the left side wall should be unpredictable. Sometimes the ball will drop, rise, shoot straight out, or angle toward the back wall. Be careful! If you

'Be careful! If you do not hit your target, the ball will set-up off the back wall or hit shallow and shoot straight out for a plum.'

do not hit your target, the ball will set-up off the back wall or hit shallow and shoot straight out for a plum. This is the reason why starting from the same point and perfecting the target angle are vital.

Setting up in the proper center court position after serving the ball is the next step toward perfection, and failure to do so is why most beginners lose the game. First, follow the ball past the short line (turning in the direction of the ball, approximately 270 degrees) to a position four to seven feet behind the short line shading left of center court, as in Diagram 3. Watch the path of the ball constantly in order to determine whether the receiver will use a ceiling or offensive return. Depending upon style, switch the racquet to a backhand grip while turning and set up with the racquet back.

Once in the center court position the server must be ready for various returns of the serve. As described earlier, the server is in position to cover the down-the-line pass, straight kill, and straight ceiling ball. At the beginning level, these returns are all the server needs to be concerned with. Any other returns will be in error and could set up for an easy forehand shot. However, should the receiver attempt to cut the ball off *before* it hits the side wall, the server must cover the pinch shot and cross-court pass.

Because the receiver is making contact with the ball far out in front of the body, adjustments must be made to move your center court position more toward the middle of the court or hit the Z-serve harder so the receiver cannot cut it off before it reaches the side wall. The beginning player must be able to hit the Z-serve accurately and set up in the proper center court position 90% of the time before feeling confident enough to move to the intermediate level. □



HYDRATION!

This New Buzz Word For Replacing Lost Body Fluids During Exercise Is A Result Of Some Surprising Findings—

by Gigi Horn

Sweat. Your shirt is soaked, your headband is soaked and your wristband is soaked. Even the towel you mop up the floor with after someone has fallen on the court is soaked. You know where all that sweat came from—it came from you. You've been playing racquetball hard and you've lost a lot of body fluids. You know it. You feel it. You're thirsty. Time out.

Time for a little Hydration—that is, replacing your body fluids.

Up until the 1960's, an athlete just drank some water when he was thirsty. He sweat hard and he drank a lot of water, but then along came the "sports performance" drinks and thirst began to get technical. The sports drinks offered more than just water, but also large amounts of carbohydrates (or sugar) and electrolytes (dissolved chemical solutions) such as salt and potassium.

However, studies have shown that some sports drinks such as Gatorade leave the stomach up to 35 percent slower than water. Gatorade is better than soft drinks, fruit drinks, or juices at replenishing fluid loss because it has less sugar, but drinking a highly concentrated sports performance fluid can actually dehydrate muscle tissue and defeat the purpose of using it as a quick fluid replacement. Why is this?

Some sports drinks are so concentrated in sugar and salt they actually stay in the stomach drawing water from other parts of the body to dilute themselves. Ideally, a sports performance drink should leave the stomach, enter the bloodstream and be available to the working muscles. The higher the concentration of ingredients in the drink, the slower your body absorbs them.

Muscle tissue needs water more than any other tissue (except the brain)

during exercise. If the stomach needs to draw water from the muscle cells to dilute the concentrated solutions found in some sports drinks, muscles become drained, fatigued and perform inefficiently.

The New Sports Drinks

The newer sports performance drinks contain less electrolytes and have a "secret" way of getting sugar into the bloodstream where it can be used (as needed) by the muscles. Sugar molecules, linked together in chains called glucose polymers, are thought to be metabolized faster without slowing down the stomach emptying rate.

Polymers are named according to their size and length. One popular glucose polymer is maltodextrin. Using polymers in a drink provides enough carbohydrates to replenish energy without increasing its concentration.

These molecules are larger, longer, and weigh more, and therefore can be emptied from the stomach faster than several individual sugar molecules. Sports drinks with glucose polymers advertise they replenish your fluid loss and your energy loss.

Studies by David Costill (Ball State University's Human Performance Laboratory) have shown that simple sugars (glucose and sucrose) used in quantities greater than 2.5 grams per 100 milliliters of water, would reduce the gastric emptying rate. However, other studies conducted by Dr. Costill indicate that glucose polymers do not slow the stomach's emptying rate when consumed in quantities up to 7 grams per 100 milliliters of water.

Sugar in the sports drink is supposed to replenish the carbohydrate stores in the muscle so that the muscles can use the glycogen for energy. Most endurance



events don't last long enough to deplete muscle glycogen stores completely. Consuming energy producing foods on a regular basis is a better way to make sure you don't run out of energy during endurance events lasting under 2 hours.

Exceed Energy Drink/Fluid Replacement (produced by Ross Laboratories of Columbus, Ohio) contains 7 percent glucose polymers with electrolytes. *Gatorade* has been replaced by *Exceed* as the official thirst quenching drink at Hawaii's Ironman Triathlon. *Exceed* has been promoted as a quick fluid, electrolyte, mineral, and energy replacement drink.

Vitrex Foods (in Los Angeles) has produced two glucose polymer type sports drinks. *Bodyfuel 450* has 4 percent glucose polymers and fructose with electrolytes. *Bodyfuel 450* is for long duration events (3 or more hours) when it is possible electrolytes would need to be replaced. *Bodyfuel 450* is available across the country in bicycle stores.

Bodyfuel 100 has less than 1 percent glucose polymers; sodium is the only electrolyte. Designed for short endurance events (20 minutes to 2 hours), *Bodyfuel 100* is not meant to be an electrolyte or carbohydrate replacement. It is mainly designed as fluid replacement. *Bodyfuel 100* is distributed through health clubs and sports stores.

Another of the glucose polymer sports performance drinks is *Pripps Pluss*. Developed by researchers in Sweden, *Pripps Pluss* is a sports drink

that uses a 7 percent glucose polymer solution with a small amount of electrolytes. Studies have shown that *Pripps Pluss* is absorbed by the bloodstream faster than *Gatorade* and also provides more blood sugar. *Pripps Pluss* is not

'Some sports drinks are so concentrated in sugar and salt they actually stay in the stomach drawing water from other parts of the body to dilute themselves.'

as readily available in the U.S. as other sports performance drinks. More information on *Pripps Pluss* can be obtained by contacting: Pripps International, 10 East 40 Street, New York, NY 10016.

The Coca-Cola Company has developed a 5 percent glucose polymer solution called *Max*. *Max* is very similar to water because it is hypotonic. Hypotonic fluids are lighter than body fluids and hydrate the body faster than most sports drinks.

Max is an all-natural fluid and energy replacement drink with no added salts or electrolytes. It has 50 calories per 8 ounce serving and 12.5 grams of carbohydrate. *Max* has a light elderberry taste which helps prevent "flavor fatigue" resulting in insufficient rehydration. It is the result of several

years of research, including field testing with athletes, conducted by Dr. David Costill and Dr. Barry Mink (Medical Director of the Aspen Fitness and Sports Medicine Institute). *Max* was tried and received enthusiastically at the Denver City Fall Squash Classic.

Endurance Quick Fix (by Twinsport Incorporated in Ronkonkoma, New York) is being promoted by Dr. Robert Haas, author of *Eat To Win*. *Endurance Quick Fix* is also a glucose polymer solution. It replaces the electrolytes potassium and magnesium, and vitamins C and the B-complex. Maltodextrin is used as the glucose polymer with aspartame as the sweetener.

This "quick fix" may not have added sugars or sodium to delay gastric emptying, but it does contain enough vitamins and electrolytes to slow down the hydrating process. During a 1-3 hour intense work-out only a small amount of vitamins and electrolytes are lost. The amount lost can easily be replaced at the next meal.

Some sports performance drinks are advertised as being made from "all natural ingredients". *Wet Energy* is an "all natural", energy, electrolyte, and fluid replacement drink. This means it contains 100 percent fructose (a natural sugar in fruits and vegetables). This product does not contain any artificial flavors, preservatives, or other additives.

Wet Energy also contains a small amount of protein, iron and vitamin supplements which may increase the

delay in absorption: The package says *Wet Energy* is designed to prevent muscle cramping and other heat disorders. This product is offered by *Wet Energy* in Dallas, Texas.

Complex carbohydrates are the body's main source of glycogen. A diet high in complex carbohydrates (such as whole grains, brown rice, potatoes, raw fruits and vegetables) helps maintain hydration by holding onto three molecules of water for each molecule of glycogen. As glycogen energy is used during performance, water is released into the body. Protein, however, uses up the body's supply of water to aid in digestion.

Energy replacement (such as sports performance drinks) can be beneficial during long, intense sporting events. According to Dr. Barry Mink (*Max's* developer) the brain can be affected by drops in blood sugar level. Mink states, "Finer drops in blood sugar level may affect muscular or hand-eye coordination". Playing racquetball for 90 minutes or more at 80 percent of maximum effort, would be the level of intensity which could require energy replacement.

Developing the winning edge requires extra effort. Another way to develop your peak performance level is to remember the importance of constantly supplying your body with the miracle drink—WATER.

Dehydration, Hydratin and Water

Excessive loss of water from the body is called dehydration. This condition inhibits the circulatory system, increases body temperature, causes fatigue, nerv-

ousness and makes the blood thicker. Because much of the fluid lost during sweating comes from the blood plasma, profuse sweating without fluid replacement decreases blood volume.

During a long match dehydration puts an extra strain on the system as the body tries to transport fuel to and carry waste products from the muscle. Poor performance and heat disorders (such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps) may be a result of dehydration. Competitive and casual racquetball players alike need to know how to survive more than one match and maintain maximum energy for optimum performance.

Dehydration compromises an athlete's ability to perform at peak levels. If your second or third games feel more difficult, maybe fluid loss is affecting your performance. When you need peak physical performance for training

'It is possible to lose as much as 1 percent of your body weight before feeling thirsty.'

or tournaments, be aware of your body's fluid level and strive to remain fully hydrated. Water is necessary for the body's production of energy; it is vital for proper functioning of the blood, muscles and organs.

It is possible to lose as much as 1 percent of your body weight before feel-

ing thirsty. Weighing before and after your match can help determine water loss. If you lose 2 pounds you need to drink 2 pints, or 4 cups of water (loss of 2 pounds = 32 ounces; replace with 4 cups x 8 ounces per cup = 32 ounces).

Consuming several cups of water a day is a healthy practice whether exercising strenuously or not. It is mandatory when physically active, especially during summer. Athletes should start hydrating the day before an event by drinking 6-8 glasses of water. This should be followed by drinking 1-2 cups two hours before the event, and another cup prior to performance.

Racquetball players should sip water during time outs and in between games. Each match should be followed by at least 2 cups of water, even when you don't feel thirsty.

Concentrating on staying hydrated or ahead of the body's need for fluid replacement helps maintain the stamina and endurance necessary for your body to operate at peak efficiency. Thirst does not adequately reflect the amount of water the body has lost. Athletes in particular should be concerned about staying ahead of the water game.

Maintaining hydration can help protect you from the debilitating, sluggish, fatigued feeling once too much body water is lost. Dehydration is dangerous to your health. The body absorbs about 2 to 4 cups of water from the intestine every hour; however, it can sweat as much as three times that amount, especially in hot weather.



The message here is WATER, WATER, WATER! Water before, during and after an event. Then at the end of the day, more water (at least 2 cups beyond thirst). One can never overdose on water. Most people don't drink enough!

Although a well-trained athlete adjusts to heat better than someone in poor physical condition, training in the heat is better than heat adaptation. Heat acclimation should begin early in training, and always be accompanied by drinking lots of water.

'Maintaining hydration can help protect you from the debilitating, sluggish, fatigued feeling once too much body water is lost.'

As you sweat, body heat is dissipated. Sweat cools the body. When sweating continues without replacement of body fluids, it magnifies a racquetball player's chances for dehydration. If your clothing is soaked as you walk off the racquetball court, it is a good indication



that your body tissues need water.

As a rule of thumb, when exercising vigorously in hot weather try to consume 24 to 32 ounces of water per hour, or 3-4 cups. It may be easier to think of it as one or more cups each 20 minutes. A large volume of fluid in the stomach can be absorbed faster than a

small volume.

Drink cooler water if possible, especially when the racquetball court is not air-conditioned. Cold water is the best choice in hot weather because it is absorbed faster, and helps lower the body's temperature.

Racquetball players who train outside or play on outdoor courts lose water faster than if they were training in an air-conditioned room. Being aware of

'The message here is WATER, WATER, WATER! Water before, during and after an event.'

the body's need for water is the first step in staying ahead of the water game.

It is important to drink-up after tough competition or a practice session. A little water may quench your thirst, but not adequately replace fluid loss. Fluid replacement could take several days if you rely on thirst alone.

Water Or Sports Drinks?

The emphasis of this article is not what to use for hydration but that a player becomes aware that hydration is very important to performance. Water can be used and so can the various sport drinks if they are used for the purpose for which they were intended. Examining the energy and fluid needs that your body demands and then choosing a drink that will correspond to that need is what is desirable.

Whatever your decision, remember—drink up! Promote your winning edge by staying ahead of the fluid game. □

QUICK COMPARISON CHART

Product	Calories (8 oz)	Cho (g)	Sodium (mg)	Potassium (mg)	Magnesium (mg)	Other
Water	0	0	0	0	0	
*MAX	50	12.5	0	0	0	
*Bodyfuel 100	5	.5	25	0	0	
*Pripps Pluss	70	17	65	0	0	
*Bodyfuel 450	40	10	77.5	0	0	Chloride
*Exceed	68	17	66.25	56.25	6.25	Chloride
*Endurance Quick Fix	23	6	0	100	50	Vitamin B1 Vitamin B2 Vitamin B6 Vitamin B12 Vitamin C
Wet Energy	45	13	44	74	7	Calcium Iron Vitamin A Thiamin B1 Niacin Vitamin C Protein
Gatorade	39	10.5	123	23	0	Calcium
*contains glucose polymers						



Gigi Horn holds a master's degree in exercise physiology and nutrition. She is the owner of Gigi Horn Enterprises, a firm which does computerized nutritional analysis and custom fitness programs for individuals as well as corporations. She is the author of The Dallas Guide to Real Food.

OFF COURT FITNESS

By Jean Sauser



Those Kamikaze Years

I am a graduate of the school of hard knocks in a number of areas but my graduate degree comes from the years I spent using the wrong equipment for my sports. Learning to have the right equipment and take care of it the way I do my body has added a quality to my racquetball and fitness program that I never knew existed. As for what went on before, I call them my kamikaze years.

The day I discovered racquetball was the day I should have discovered the importance of playing a sport with the right equipment, but that didn't happen. Instead, I spent my first two months playing my new sport barefoot. I was working as a lifeguard at the YMCA at the time. In an effort to do round trips between the pool and the courts on lunch breaks in record time, I saw no real use for shoes.

After a while, the blisters on my feet were breaking and the chlorine in the pool was stinging them so badly that I started avoiding the water. Not a good thing for a lifeguard to do, especially in the case of someone drowning. Finally, I broke down and bought a pair of shoes the day after I found myself trying to talk a drowning member into trying to swim to the side of the pool.

Even after I bought racquetball shoes, I used them for every other activity I could find. It's amazing that I didn't go to my high school prom in them. One wet day, after cutting my parents lawn, I arrived on the court and slid head first into one of my shots leaving grass stains on the floor and a little blood on the wall. That was enough to retire those shoes to yard work. And, I bought my first pair of "racquetball only" shoes that stayed tucked away from temptation in my locker—a practice I follow to this day.

As much as I hate to confess it, I

didn't wear eyeguards in those days either. In fact, I didn't start wearing them until another hard knock hit me and this time it cost me even more than not wearing or taking care of my shoes.

In the finals of the Illinois State Tournament, while leading the tie-breaker to what I thought would give me my first state title, I got smashed in the forehead with my opponent's racquet. I was split open right between the eyes. Instead of winning the title, I went to the hospital for some plastic surgery.

It was a few weeks before I got over the concussion that resulted from the blow. One month later my two black

'I was split open right between the eyes. Instead of winning the title, I went to the hospital for some plastic surgery.'

eyes went away. Today, I still have a slight scar from the incident and worse still, my trophy from that event will always say "second place". To add insult to injury, the player who hit me said, "Don't feel so bad, it could have been your teeth!"

After a few years of playing amateur tournaments, I decided to go pro. In an effort to get in shape, I took up running, "Jean style". "Jean style" is when I decide to try something without researching it, asking an expert or investing in the equipment required. Immediately I made the stupid and ridiculous decision not to buy running

shoes. Instead, I just began running after my racquetball games in my racquetball shoes.

I soon found out that if racquetball shoes were meant for running, there would be no such things as shin splints. Upon visiting my doctor to see what was wrong with my legs and telling him how I was training for racquetball, he asked point blank if I was a masochist. I got the hint and bought my first pair of running shoes.

As a professional player I secured a sponsor, but still continued to learn the hard way where equipment was concerned, because now, it was free and to be honest, some of it was dangerously cheap. In an effort to be cooperative with one sponsor, I gave myself a case of tendonitis trying to compete with a racquet that vibrated like a tuning fork.

Another time, at the height of my career, I was approached by a racquet company about having my name on their racquet. My overinflated ego was abruptly shattered when I took my plastic "autograph model" onto the court for a test run and it broke apart in my hand. Not wanting to be known as the pro with the exploding plastic racquet, I signed with a quality company and my arm problems disappeared.

In light of my past experiences, most of them physically painful, you can find me nowadays operating with foresight, not hindsight. I replace my racquetball shoes when the tread gets too worn (my formerly sprained ankles thank me every night). I play only with racquets that are technologically sound (my arms actually work again). My eyeguards are safety tested (one scar is enough on a face that isn't exactly Christie Brinkley). I'm proud to be a part of the "quality" generation. No more hard knocks for this yuppie. □

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

3rd Annual Belgium Open

by Rene' Hehemann, ERF General-Secretary / Treasurer

The 3rd Annual Belgium Open was held in Antwerp, Belgium, on November 8-10. There were 128 entries in six divisions. Because of the large number of entrants and the fact that a new club scheduled to hold the tournament wasn't finished, the tournament had to be played in two separate facilities, the Centrecourt and Indoor clubs. Transportation was arranged between the two clubs which are only three miles apart.

Doubles play had to be cancelled because the number of entrants made it impossible to run both the singles and

the doubles concurrently. At 18.00 hours, the Men's C division started and they played until 01.00 hours. A lot of new faces in the Men's C bracket were there from Belgium, Holland, Switzerland along with the Americans from Belgium and Germany.

The next morning at 08.30 hours, the tournament continued and more players arrived from surrounding countries. It was a happy reunion for many players who had competed against each other in the Autumn Open in Zoetermeer, Holland, and the Swiss Open in Zurich, Switzerland, were there.

3RD ANNUAL BELGIAN OPEN ANTWERP, BELGIUM NOVEMBER 18, 1985

Men's Open

Semifinals:

Frank Toney (USA) d. Frank Pruitt (USA) 15-12, 11-15, 10-11. Mick Barreras (USA) d. Jim Davis (USA) 15-8, 15-12.

Final:

Toney d. Barreras 15-12, 15-2

Women's Open

Semifinals:

Brigitte Corsius (HOL) d. Angela Pierson (USA) 15-7, 15-2. Laurie Potter (USA) d. Marijke Hillen (BEL) 15-8, 15-14.

Final:

Corsius d. Potter 15-4, 15-12.

Men's B

Semifinals:

Ken Loree (USA) d. Ivan Devos (BEL) 15-10, 15-8. K.W. Pierre (USA) d. Skip Francisco (USA) 14-15, 15-4, 11-7.

Final:

Lorre d. Peirre 15-7, 15-14.

Women's B

Semifinals:

Cindy Case (USA) d. Fanny Sellesagh (BEL) 15-7, 14-15, 11-8. Joy Rose (USA) d. van Osta (BEL) 15-8, 15-11.

Final:

Case d. Rose 15-11, 12-15, 11-7.

Seeding the tournaments has been difficult in Europe because the Americans of the Army and Airforce only stay in Europe for a couple of months or years and then return to the U.S. Frank Pruitt and Lou Souther had been top American players here before they were transferred. Fortunately, about 10 other top U.S. players transferred in about three months ago and it has been heard that Lou Souther will return to Germany in February. This will make for tough competition and it will be good for the top European players.

Already, some of the new players performed very well. Frank Toney (USA), stationed at Ramstein, Germany, surprised everybody and beat Mick Barreras (USA) in the final. Barreras in turn had surprised the number two seed, George Haegerty (USA), in the semis. Only in the Women's Open did the number one and two seeds hold with Brigitte Corsius, Holland, and Laurie Potter, USA, reaching the finals.

This was an important tournament for Europe because it will help the top players prepare for the 3rd Annual World Championships that will be held in Montreal in 1986. □

WORLD CALENDAR

For information regarding European events, contact: Han van der Heijden, International Amateur Racquetball Association, Laan van N.O. Indie 287, 2593 BS The Hague, The Netherlands—Phone 070-83 83 00.

For information regarding Canadian events, contact: John Hamilton, Canadian Racquetball Association, 333 River Road, Vanier City, Ontario, Canada, K1L 8H9—Phone 613-748-5653.

January 24-26
Open Tour Eiffel
SRC de France
Paris, France

January 24-26
Munster Open
Tralee, Ireland

February 6-9
Quebec Open du Carnival
Quebec City, Quebec, Canada

February 2nd week
Copade las Americas
Bogota, Colombia

February 21-23
6th Annual German Open
Jenfeld Center
Humburg, Germany

February 21-24
The Keystone
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

February 21-23
4th Irish Open
Tralee, Ireland

March 14-16
8th Dutch Open
T en R Centrum
Zwijndrecht, Netherlands

March 28-30
3rd French Open
Paris, France

May 8-11
1st European Master (30+)
TBA

May 16-18
Arklow Open
Arklow, Ireland

May 19-24
Canadian National
Singles Championships
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

May 23-25
5th Bavarian Open
McGraw Kaserne Center
Munich, Germany

May 30-June 1
Templederry Open
Tipperary, Ireland

June 7-9
3rd Annual Belgium/Holland Open
Brussels, Belgium

June 6-8
3rd British Open
London, England

June 14-16
2nd Annual Belgium/France Open
Brussels, Belgium

July 2-5
Canadian National
Junior Championships
Lebongneuf Club
Quebec City, Quebec, Canada

July 4-6
Hamburg Open
Jenfeld Center
Hamburg, Germany

July 15-20
15th Annual Canadian Open
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

August 2-10
3rd World Championships
Montreal, Canada

September 19-21
6th Annual Swiss Open
Aesch Center
Zurich, Switzerland

October 3-5
4th Annual Belgium Open
Brussels, Belgium

October 5-10
Torneo de la Raza
San Jose, Costa Rica

October 17-19
Zwijndrecht Open
T en R Centrum
Zwijndrecht, Netherlands

3rd Annual Molson/AMF Voit Grey Cup Pro-Am

by Arni May

The 3rd Annual Grey Cup Pro-Am is now history and we are happy to realize a resurgence of Racquetball here in Vancouver, and hopefully in Canada.

With just under 300 entries, it was one of the most exciting tournaments I've been involved with, mainly due to the National flavor, and the attitude of everyone involved. It was a very laid back feeling by the player's and volunteer's that gave the tournament the flair of a fun week of both playing and socializing. Friday was Coors and Pizza Nite, and a dance followed. Saturday was Banquet Nite with Sirloin Bar B Que Steaks for everyone and the *real* partying took place. With Sunday being semi and finals day, you would have thought everyone was partied out, but no, Sunday turned out to be another fun party till almost 2:00 AM.

With 26 player's in the C-Pro Division, it proved to be one of the most competitive in a while with powerful #4 seed Haydn Jones of Toronto defeating both #1 and #2 seeds, Sherman Greenfield and Roger Harripersad respectively, in the semi's and finals.

The general feeling with regards to the scoring format of best 3 of 5 games

to 11 points proved to be very popular, with all consolation matches at best 2 of 3 to 11 points. Almost all matches were on or ahead of time, with one hour and fifteen minutes allowed per match.

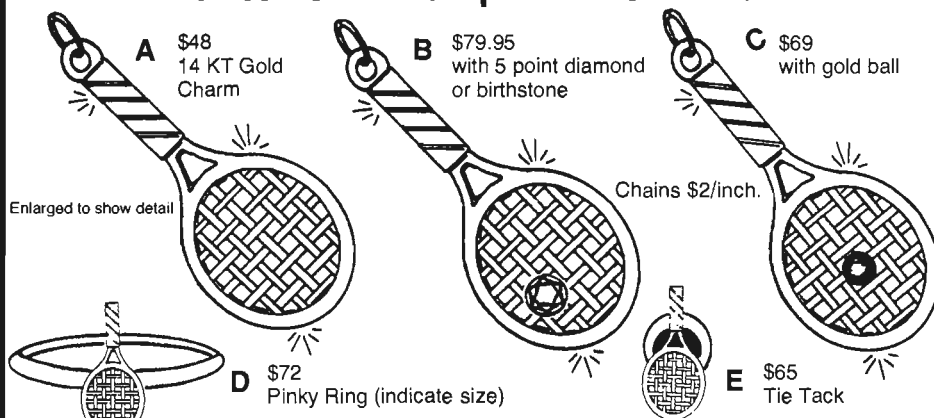
Player's participating came from Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British

Columbia and Washington State.

We are once again indebted to the many volunteers who dedicated themselves not only to this tournament, but to Racquetball in general. They are the reason we enjoy success, and they are very special individuals, from the Floor managers, drawmaster, hospitality, referee's and as well, the total staff from both Cambridge Racquets Club and Supreme Court Racquetball Club. Our sport is richer, due to these people.

Thank you, the player's, volunteers and staff, and we look forward to the forth-coming "EXPO OPEN PRO-AM", in the Fall, and the 4th Annual "GREY CUP PRO-AM", 1986. ▢

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DIVISION	1st	2nd
C-PRO	H.Jones	R.Harripersad
Mens A	M.Henshaw	J.Leckman
Mens B	A.Katz	B.Cosgrove
Mens C	L.Lee	G.Werbowski
Mens D	M.Layne	D.Slater
Mens Novice	T.Paley	D.Kay
Mens Senior A	R.Rischuk	R.Berg
Mens Senior C	F.Barky	W.Coughlan
Womens A	V.Brown	S.Tompkins
Womens B	M.Osellame	J.Siy
Womens C	M.Lozyński	L.Kirk
Womens D	J.Shupe	L.McGee
Womens Novice	M.Russell	B.Meyers

Mens A

1st: Hart-Shanks; 2nd: Gartel-Starodub;

Mens B

1st: Sorenson-Agassiz; 2nd: Brown-Holley

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1985-86 RMA MEN'S PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR

MASTER SEASON SCHEDULE

Aug. 24-Sept. 2, 1985
\$15,000 Open

West Lane Racquet Club
Stockton, CA
Winner: Marty Hogan
2nd: Jerry Hilecher

Sept. 18-22
\$15,000 Open

Davison Racquetball Open
Davison, MI
Winner: Bret Harnett
2nd: Gerry Price

Oct. 2-6, 1985
\$15,000 Open
Crystal Racquet & Health Club
Arlington, VA
Winner: Marty Hogan
2nd: Ruben Gonzalez

Oct. 16-20, 1985
\$15,000 Open
D'Lites Pro Racquetball Classic
Omaha, NE
Winner: Mike Yellen
2nd: Marty Hogan

Nov. 5-10
\$15,000 Open
MPACT Texas Challenge
International Athletic Club
Dallas, TX
Winners: TBA

Dec. 11-14
\$15,000 Open
Gold River Winter Classic
Gold River Racquet Club
Sacramento, CA
Ed Martin
916-282-3070

Jan. 15-19, 1986
\$15,000 Open
Arizona Athletic Club
1425 West 14th Street
Tempe, AZ 85281
Jack Nolan
602-894-2281

Feb. 12-16
\$15,000 Open
MPACT Tulsa Open
Tulsa Racquetball/Aerobics Club
2321 West Louisville
Broken Arrow, OK 74012
Mark Fairbairn
918-493-3331

Feb. 26-March 2
\$15,000 Open
Griffith Park Athletic Club
4925 S.W. Griffith Dr.
Beaverton, OR 97005
Devri Doty
503-644-3900

March 12-16
\$15,000 Open
Midtown Athletic Club
5400 Kennedy Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45213
Mike Sipes
513-532-2250

April 16-20
\$15,000 Open
Merritt Racquetball &
Fitness Center
Security, Baltimore, MD
RAMB - Dave Pivec
301-532-2250

April 30-May 4
\$22,000 Open
Ektelon National Championships
The Sports Gallery
2560 East Katella Avenue
Anaheim, CA 92806

May 14-18
\$15,000 Open
Rocky Mountain Health Club
1880 Westland Road
Cheyenne, WY 82001
Steve Galassini
307-634-8884

June 10-15
\$33,000 Open
DP National Championships
Site To Be Announced

FOR RMA TOUR INFORMATION
Drew Stoddard, Commissioner
702-826-6037

WPRA 1985-86 SEASON SCHEDULE

Oct. 24-27
\$12,000 Open
Anchorage Athletic Club
Anchorage, AK
Winner: Lynn Adams
2nd: Caryn McKinney

Jan. 31-Feb. 2
\$10,000 Open
Davidson Racquet Club
G-2140 Fairway Drive
Davison, MI 48423
Jim Hiser
313-653-9602

Mar. 13-16
\$10,000 Open
The PAC West Athletic Club
Tacoma, WA

April 10-13
\$12,000 Open
Sportsworld Athletic Club
Lawton, OK

May 1-4
\$18,500 Open
Ektelon National Championships
Anaheim, CA

June (TBA)
\$30,000 Open
WPRA Nationals
Site To Be Announced

June 10-15
D.P. Nationals
Site To Be Announced

FOR WPRA INFORMATION
Jim Carson, Commissioner
714-641-7452

AARA NATIONAL EVENTS

Oct. 24-27, 1985
National Doubles
Cheyenne, WY
Men's Open Winners:
Andy Roberts/Tim Anthony
Women's Open Winners:
Toni Bevelock/Malia Kamahoa

April 11-13, 1986
Intercollegiate Championships
Playoff Athletic Club
2191 Post Rd.
Warwick, RI 02886
Contact: 401-738-0833

May 21-26
National Singles Championships
(Qualifying required)
Downtown YMCA
Houston, TX
Contact: AARA
303-635-5396

June 28-July 2
National Juniors Championships
(Qualifying required)
Chicago, IL
Contact: AARA
303-635-5396

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

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

October 23-26
National Doubles Championships
Racquet Power
3390 Kori Road
Mandarin, FL 32217
Tom Collins,
904-268-8888

MAJOR SPORT CONVENTION CALENDAR

Feb. 19-23
IRSA National Convention
Operland Hotel
Nashville, TN
Suzanne Lentke
617-734-8000

RANKINGS

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

RMA PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR OFFICIAL PROFESSIONAL RANKINGS DECEMBER 6, 1985

Ranking	Player	Points
1	M. Hogan	450.79
2	M. Yellen	440.39
3	G. Peck	410.72
4	C. Swain	333.76
5	J. Hilecher	327.84
6	R. Gonzalez	284.69
7	B. Harnett	283.55
8	G. Price	272.27
9	S. Oliver	208.69
10	D. Peck	202.85
11	J. Cascio	194.55
12	D. Cohen	194.04
13	E. Andrews	187.05
14	M. Ray	175.30
15	D. Gross	161.17
16	C. Brysman	143.97
17	J. Egerman	138.44
18	A. Gross	109.94
19	D. Obremski	109.77
20	J. Newman	107.51
21	R. Wagner	72.37
22	E. Inoue	69.44
23	S. Lerner	68.39
24	M. Levine	62.22
25	B. Sell	61.83
26	D. Green	57.33
27	J. Nolan	51.38
28	A. Roberts	49.79
29	B. Hawkes	45.13
30	D. Johnson	41.38
31	D. Ganim	40.11
32	R. Navarro	36.88
33	S. Moskwa	34.06
34	D. Negrete	33.65
35	M. Griffith	30.11
36	B. Wilhelm	28.33
37	M. Plotkin	27.16
38	E. Terry	23.69
39	W. Snead	20.21
40	B. Kolton	19.42
40T	S. Clark	19.42
42	W. Clouse	18.62
43	J. Plazak	16.87
44	E. Remen	13.66
45	M. Martino	11.06
46	F. Calabrese	10.60
46T	D. Simonette	10.60
48	B. Williams	10.20
48T	L. Meyers	10.20
50	J. Sacco	9.61
51	M. Lowe	9.46

WPRa RANKINGS OCTOBER 28, 1985

Ranking	Player	Points
1	Lynn Adams	200.00
2	Vicki Panzeri	127.50
3	Caryn McKinney	105.00
4	Teri Gilreath	90.00
5	Marci Drexler	85.00
6	Janell Marriott	80.00
7	Liz Alvarado	63.75
8	Laura Martino	50.00
9	Fran Davis	47.50
10	Jennifer Harding	36.25

11	Joyce Jackson	35.00
12T	Linda Porter	30.00
12T	Bonni Stoll	30.00
14T	Cindy Baxter	25.00
14T	Marci Greer	25.00
14T	Marcy Lynch	25.00
17T	Martha McDonald	20.00
17T	Molly O'Brien	20.00
19T	Babette Bell	16.66
19T	Terry Latham	16.66
19T	Val Paese	16.66
22T	Chris Evon	13.33
22T	Cathy Nichols	13.33
22T	Sandy Robson	13.33
22T	Mary Pat Sklenka	13.33
26T	Toni Bevelock	10.00
26T	Dot Fischl	10.00
26T	Nan Higgins	10.00
26T	Mona Mook	10.00
26T	Heather Stupp	10.00
26T	Lynn Wojcik	10.00
32	Pam Larsen	6.66
33T	Diane Adams	3.33
33T	Tamara Anderson	3.33
33T	Judy Campbell	3.33

AARA/ARHS NATIONAL RANKING (28) WOMEN'S OPEN NOVEMBER 20, 1985

Ranking	Player	State
1	Cindy Baxter	PA
2	Terry Latham	TX
3	Chris Evon	IL
4	Cindy Doyle	NY
5	Mona Mook	CA
6	Nan Higgins	MA
7	Trina Rasmussen	CA
8	Mary Dee	VT
9	Cathy Nichols	CD
10	Dot Fischl	PA
11	Cathie Fredrickson	MI
12	Malia Kamahoa	VA
13	Diane Bullard	FL
14	Fran Davis	NJ
15	Claudia McCarthy	FL
16	Terry Singletary	OK
17	Debbie Mackell	IN
18	Cindy Overstake	OK
19	Linda Diamond	FL
20	Lynn Price	IN
21	Martha Adams	GA
22	Jan Curtis	FL
23	Kaye Kuhfeld	IN
24	Tracy Eagleson	CA
25	Diana Almeida	CO
26	Anne Calderone	NY
27	Leigh Anne Coutu	DE
28	Crystal Fried	CT
29	Sheri Anderson	MI
30	Michelle Gilman	OR
31	Marci Drexler	CA
32	Rosemary Magliano	IL
33	Linda Porter	TX
34	Crystal Fried	WA
35	Kathy Gluvna	TN
36	Joan Azeka	IL
37	Teri Gatarz	FL

38	Joetta Hastings	MI
39	Joanie Quinlan	MA
40	Sandy Robson	IL
41	Toni Benelock	TN
42	Stephanie Bullington	NC
43	Laura Fenton	NE
44	Kim Tiedeman	WA
45	Susan Aaron	IN
46	Kelly Creneans	IN
47	Diane Fields	IL
48	Mary Lyons	FL
49	Barbara Simmons	FL
50	Janet Burke	MA
51	Toni Dever	VT

AARA/ARHS NATIONAL RANKING (1) MEN'S OPEN NOVEMBER 20, 1985

Ranking	Player	State
1	Ed Andrews	CA
2	Andy Roberts	TN
3	Fred Calabrese	MA
4	Dan Obremski	PA
5	Aaron Katz	TX
6	Tom Montalbano	NY
7	Doug Ganim	OH
8	Dave Negrete	IL
9	Tim Hansen	FL
10	Charlie Nichols	FL
11	Joey Cline	NJ
12	Todd O'Neil	VT
13	Sergio Gonzalez	FL
14	Mark Morrison	FL
15	Jim Hamilton	IN
16	Don Kelly	CO
17	Ed Gartner	SC
18	Dennis Aceto	MA
19	Scott Reid	TN
20	Richard Hull	FL
21	Jim Jeffers	IL
22	Dan Ferris	MN
23	Vinnie Ganley	FL
24	Ruben Gonzalez	NY
25	Rodger Lindwall	CO
26	Fielding Snow	WA
27	Brian Valin	CD
28	Stu Hastings	MI
29	Mark Hegg	CO
30	Skip Merrill	TX
31	Steve Rubin	NY
32	Todd Thielen	SD
33	Radiation Man	MI
34	Jim Owen	NM
35	Dave Watson	OK
36	Steve Cutler	UT
37	Jamie Sumner	UT
38	Don Costleigh Jr.	NY
39	Oscar Gonzalez	FL
40	Mike Spugnardi	ME
41	Sean Moskwa	IL
42	Jack Nolan	AZ
43	Jim Adkins	SC
44	Roger Haripersad	CA
45	Lloyd Marsh	MT
46	Todd Stead	MN
47	Chuck Teets	MI
48	Hugh Klein	PA
49	Bob Little	NC
50	Mark Fairbairn	OK
51	David Garcia	CA



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

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

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

SIDE OUT

By Drew Stoddard



A Spectator Sport

Dear Editor:
I am a racquetball player who is very interested in the sport. I am only 16 years old, but I play quite often. To my knowledge, racquetball is one of the fastest growing sports. What makes me mad is that you never hear the pro's names. You never see racquetball games televised on regular TV, but you always see other sports like tennis and golf. There are definitely enough players to support it. When will this come true?

What I'm trying to say is that racquetball is a popular sport now. But if we don't get publicity, that is all it will ever be.

*Thomas Gorman
Tempe, Arizona*

Dear Thomas:

I chose to answer your letter in my column this month because your concerns are shared by so many in this sport. Your question is the one I hear more than any other: "If racquetball is so great, why don't I ever see it on TV?"

You should know that not a week goes by that the leaders of this sport don't struggle with that question. Unfortunately, the issue of television coverage is complex, and the answer is not as simple as most of us would like to believe.

Your comments about how fast racquetball has grown are correct, at least in part. Although the rate of growth has slowed dramatically in the past five years, between 1965 and 1980 the number of regular racquetball participants in the United States grew from virtually zero to somewhere around 10 million. No other sport in history has ever come close to that rate of expansion. Today, one in twenty-five of the general U.S. population play racquetball at least once a month. There are some who estimate that there are actu-

ally more people who now regularly play racquetball than tennis.

Yet tennis gets the TV spotlight while racquetball stays in the shadows. Why?

To understand, you have to look at why racquetball grew so fast in the first place. Ask most people why they play and they'll tell you that racquetball is easy to learn, fun to play, and it gives you a good workout in a short period of time. Almost no one will tell you how enjoyable it is to watch. Racquetball exploded because of its virtues as a *participant* sport; to date, it has not gained a reputation for being a good *spectator* sport, even with the vast majority of active players.

The distinction is an important one. In terms of participation, the largest sports in the United States today are cycling and swimming. Yet how many bicycles and swimmers do you see on network television? With the exception

'Every day racquetball moves a little closer to national TV exposure.'

of the Olympic games, virtually none. And can you name the top cyclists and swimmers in the world today? Probably not—I can't.

Now, how many of your friends regularly play any kind of organized football? In terms of participation, racquetball makes football look nonexistent. But 40 million people watch professional football every Sunday afternoon—it is the ultimate spectator sport.

Simply put, racquetball is not on television today because not enough people want to watch it. I can guarantee you, if they did it would be on ABC tomorrow morning.

Now don't leave me yet, my young friend, because the story isn't finished. But it's here that things get a little tricky. The sport of racquetball today has divided into two camps: one group believes the sport is participatory by nature, and is therefore destined to stay in the shadows forever; the other is convinced that racquetball has the potential to be a great spectator sport. I belong to the second camp.

What we all seem to forget is that racquetball is still very young—an infant compared to other sports. It's hard to believe now, but football, tennis, and basketball all struggled in obscurity for decades before anyone noticed. In fact, when I was your age I played tennis—racquetball wasn't around then—and I remember wondering why my sport was never on TV. In 1965 tennis was about where racquetball is right now.

Because you cared enough to ask the question, I am sure you believe that racquetball is as exciting to watch as any sport. I agree with you. I became involved with professional racquetball for that very reason. I am convinced that once a few remaining technical problems have been solved, our chance will come, and when it does, racquetball will be able to hold its own against any televised sport.

But remember this: today—right now—there are good people, whose names you do not know, in places you cannot see, who are dedicating their efforts to building a sport that will make you proud. Every day racquetball moves a little closer to national TV exposure. The goal is a big one. But with enough people like you to keep the dream alive, we are going to reach it. □

(Drew Stoddard is the commissioner for the RMA Pro Tour and Editor of National Racquetball.)



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