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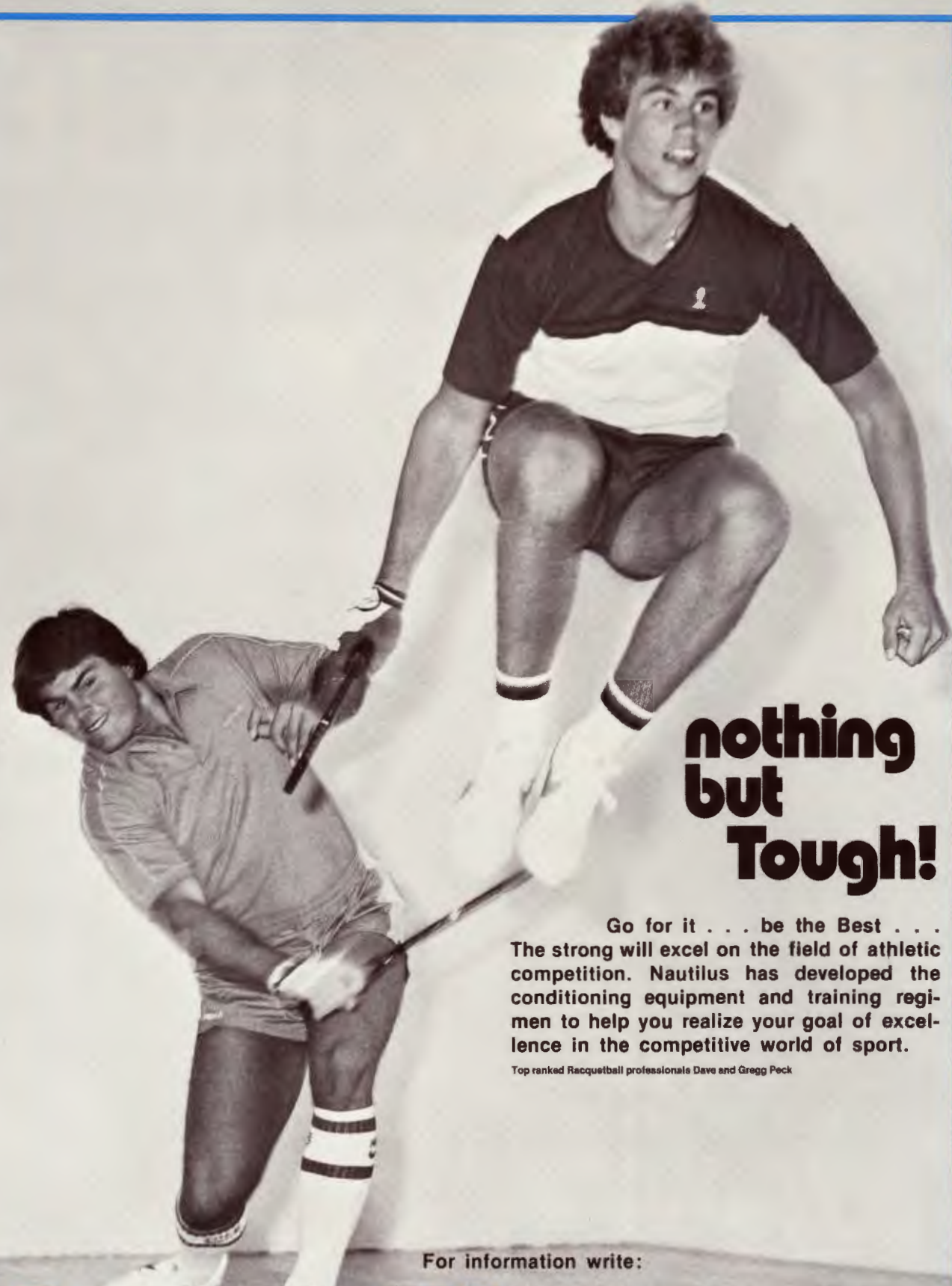
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On the cover . . .

Dave Peck, the 24-year-old smiling Texan, has powered his way to the number one ranking in professional racquetball. Only an injury can stop him from ending the season as the world's best racquetball player. For the full story on how this El Paso native reached the top, turn to page 40. -Photo by Milo Muslin

Next issue . . .

August will bring a variety of topics including "The 15 Best Spectator Courts," and the "National Racquetball Racquet Review." Look for your favorite court or racquet. In addition, we'll have complete coverage of the AARA and DP/Leach Nationals as well as a full 16 pages of instruction featuring a new series by Kathy Williams.

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From The Editor . . .

Take Not The Responsibility Lightly

News of the bankruptcy of the USRA/NRC (page 16) causes all eyes to shift to Memphis, where the American Amateur Racquetball Association (AARA) finds itself in the enviable position of being the only horse in a one-horse race.

The AARA must now live up to what it believes has been its role all along—representing the amateur racquetball player and promoting participation in racquetball. The many eyes watching AARA include club owners, manufacturers and players.

So many people and companies have so much invested in racquetball that their judgment of the AARA's performance will be stern. For the AARA to succeed, it must not take its responsibility lightly.

Managing the affairs of amateur racquetball will not be an easy task. The AARA must represent the amateur players in a sensible and sensitive way. It has the structure and the leadership ability to do the job. With the support of the other segments of the industry, the AARA stands a good chance of achieving its goals.

To do so it must be responsive to the needs of the players and react positively to the realities of today's racquetball world. Only then will it be able to lead racquetball to the bigger and better things the sport deserves.

Some of the issues that AARA needs to contemplate:

● **Definition of Amateurism.** It appears that due to its recently won recognition by the U.S. Olympic Committee, the AARA is prepared to embrace the strictest definition of amateurism—that any player accepting any reward worth any money is a professional.

Such a decision would put the majority of today's top amateur players in a real bind. While not good enough to play the pro game, but better than most on the amateur scene, these players will be without an organization.

Relatively small purses and attractive prizes are the lure that brings low-end pros and top amateurs into competition. Clubs and manufacturers need the tournaments this competition represents as their primary promotional tool.



I suggest a special category be developed for these players within the AARA. Their role in racquetball is as important as that of the "pure" amateur or the "pure" professional, and they must be recognized.

The definition of a professional racquetball player should be "any person whose primary source of income is prize money."

● **Rules Unification.** Although the USRA/NRC is out of business, a significant segment of the racquetball world still plays by its rules. Before issuing an edict making AARA rules mandatory, the AARA should sit down with representatives of all remaining racquetball organizations to determine once and for all the official rules of racquetball.

AARA should then canvass its members, as well as the subscribers to the various racquetball publications, and club owners, to determine what the players really want the rules to be. Although the highly technical rules would not be a part of this survey, certainly the more basic concepts such as the number of points in a game, games in a match, five-foot rules, etc., should be considered.

● **Solid and Sound Promotion.** The AARA has made great progress in the junior and intercollegiate areas, but much more needs to be done with the general promotion of racquetball and the specific promotion within age and skill-level categories.

Without having to constantly sneak a peek out of the corner of its eye to see what the USRA/NRC is doing, the AARA is now in a position to truly serve racquetball players.

We wish them well and will do everything we can to help. ●

Chuck Lane

National Racquetball Magazine
1800 Pickwick Ave.,
Glenview, Illinois 60025.

Telltale

Dear Editor:

What in the blue blazes is going on! In the May issue you're calling for a greater consistency in rule interpretation (which I couldn't agree with more). Then I come across an article condemning the zaniness in scoring (again I agree), but in your April issue you're suggesting the use of a telltale for racquetball. Nothing like throwing a monkey wrench into the middle of things.

Why the preoccupation with making our sport a threat to soap operas? A sport doesn't have to be a television success in order to be "just a success."

Softball, bowling, and golf are biggies that were, and are, three of our most popular participant sports, and, I'm sure you would agree, are not dependent upon television for revenue or continued popularity.

Let's face facts. Racquetball is played in a small area with a small dark rubber ball that moves so swiftly (even the mushy ones), that the players themselves often can't agree with what happened in a rally.

That's racquetball!

You want a telltale? Play squash. You want a mass TV audience? Have the "Foxy Frenchmen" play Penthouse's "Pets" in the nude, with scoring after every rally.

Daniel John Veith
Mt. Clemens, MI

Dear Editor:

With your April issue, you have lost a great deal of credibility. Specifically, your proposal to use a telltale for racquetball is absurd.

The reason for the existence of the telltale in squash is that at the time of the development of the sport, it was found that the most acceptable ball was so dead that any shot under a foot or so on the front wall would be a winner. The telltale was a must.

In the case of handball and racquetball, the ball is lively enough so that most shots come up enough to be playable. We have many excellent players in our club, and believe me a telltale is not necessary to lengthen the points.

Now, on to the more important point, that is, the need for stability of rules, and the standardization of the sport.

Believe me, the absolute *last* thing we need now is some major change in the game. We have a great sport; we need to promote its growth in positive ways.

A major change in the sport, such as you suggest, would be the worst thing that could happen to racquetball.

You may have guessed by now that I oppose you on this.

John F. Brinson
Allentown, PA

No (?) Bounce

Dear Editor:

The Article on "No Bounce" racquetball (March issue) was super. We are already working on incorporating the No Bounce program into our Summer Juniors Instruction Program. With one phone call to Dwayne Grimes I was able to get some great tips on how to organize the kids and get the best use out of the court time.

Now, I don't want to appear a nitpicker, but the term "No Bounce" seems really confusing from a marketing standpoint. Just for fun, I ran off some copies of the rules and gave them to some friends who are not that familiar with racquetball (yes, Martha, they still exist) along with some program titles among which "No Bounce" was one of five choices. Surprise! Out of the 20 or so people I asked, "No Bounce" didn't get one lousy vote, but the phrase "Any Bounce" got the majority of the votes. And what does this tell us? Only that a program title should *describe* what you're doing. Most people felt that "No Bounce" implied that you had to hit the ball before it hit the floor. Does that sound easy to learn and fun to play?

Regardless of the name, though, a program for kids under the age of nine has been a long time coming and I tip my hat to Grimes, St. Onge, Martin, et al., for taking the time to pave the way.

Wes Kelley
Ventura, CA

Scoring Systems

Dear Editor:

I refer to your editorial in the May issue of *National Racquetball* and a feature article on various scoring methods in use.

Pro players perform before a paying public. Consequently, matches are played on only one or two "championship" courts at the host facility. In order for the highest number of matches to be played on only one or two courts, it is quite necessary for the pro scoring format to be what it is. The complaint of "winning by only one point" is really not quite accurate as under all scoring systems in use, a player must win by at least two rallies, although only one may be a point (a side out and a point in 21 point games or tie-breakers—or by two points, if all rallies score points, such as WPRA).

The major problem today of the rule making bodies is that their mentality seems geared only to tournaments, pro or amateur. Consequently, the rules tend to overlook the club players, 90% of whom never play tournaments. Scoring is one example. The pro scoring method is fine for pro tournaments. It is no good for club players. Why?

Club players, like most racquetball players, want competition. They also want the competition to last nearly an hour because that's the way most clubs measure court time. A 21, 21, 15 match will take almost an hour in most cases, giving the player what he wants and using the court time he paid for. The pro format, unless the players are very evenly matched, would fall far short of the hour.

Most players want to play by the rules. Ninety percent of all racquetball players will never play in tournaments. Please keep the club players, the league player and the just-for-fun player in mind and give them rules that can be properly used to fill an hour of court time with competition.

V. McDaniel, Jr.
Jacksonville, FL

Hogan's Screen

Dear Editor:

I agree completely with Ms. Myers ("Letters," May 1982) who finds "Ask The Champ" difficult to read. On the occasions when I have tried to read that page, I too found it bothersome to have to weave in and out of the "screen."

Drop the screen—we know what Hogan looks like.

Bill Williamson
Champaign, IL

We've tried a 5% screen instead of the 10% we've used in the past. What do you think? — Ed.

Some "Darling" Characters Play Racquetball



—Courtesy of Field Newspaper Syndicate



Tom Armstrong

It figures that the cast of "John Darling," the Field syndicated comic strip that appears in over 150 newspapers every day, would eventually invade the world of racquetball. Not only are the Darling characters the well-heeled, successful, sometimes cocky folks that show up at racquetball clubs, but the world of racquetball is filled with foibles and eccentricities that anyone with a gift for comedy can spot. Just like life, in fact.

To the insanities of everyday life the creators of "John Darling," Tom Batiuk and Tom Armstrong, bring the sane and cheerful vision of comic artists, laying bare the minor horrors that beset us all and sharing with us the tonic gift of their laughter.

One of the chief horrors we racquetball players endure is the fear that we will get pulverized by an opponent who is not only bigger and stronger and better and wiser than we are, but is also smug and unforgiving about our shortcomings. In the series of strips reprinted here, Darling character Mike Majors gets pulverized—not in the way we fear, but literally flattened against the back wall by the gargantuan, macho Blitz Krieger. And we laugh because the sheer extremity of the situation makes our own fears look petty in comparison.

Batiuk and Armstrong habitually find the material for their humor in the common stuff of life. "John Darling" is a spin-off from another widely loved strip, "Funky Winkerbean," which Batiuk began creating during his years as a junior high school art teacher. Surrounded by adolescents, he found material galore for his ready pen.

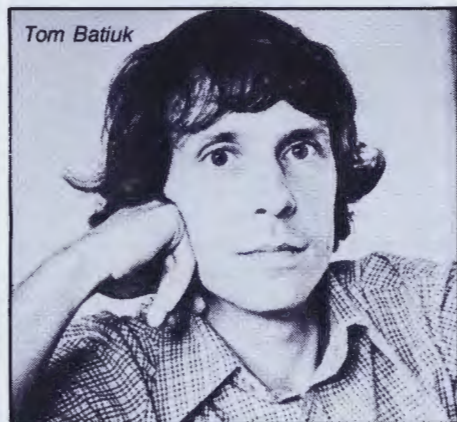
"I kept a sketchbook the whole time I was teaching," he says. "The drawings were of what I saw around me that struck me as funny in one way or another. After a while I started to put captions on them and a local newspaper (The Elyria Chronicle Telegraph) published them. That was how 'Funky Winkerbean' got started, then it really took off and was syndicated."

The character of John Darling was peripheral in the Winkerbean strip, and didn't achieve prominence until he got a strip of his own. That strip involved the input of Tom Armstrong, whose wit was stimulated by the inanities and excesses of the famous in our midst. He had begun putting together a strip called "Heads and Tales" poking satirical fun at various celebrities, and submitted it to the Field Syndicate.

"They liked the visual look of the strip," Armstrong recalls, "but they felt that the format was too limiting. One of the most important things in a successful strip is a group of characters that readers can identify with, and that can develop. My forte is caricature rather than continuity. It looked like the strip, with a different celebrity every day, wouldn't build the rapport with the readers."

Field approached Batiuk with Armstrong's work to see if he had any ideas to contribute that might make "Heads and Tales" into a developing, ongoing strip.

"With brilliant foresight, I said I wasn't interested," Batiuk recalls. "But they also sent me a whole bunch of Tom's drawings, caricatures of people like Howard Cosell. I liked his stuff, but I was busy with my own work and didn't think too much about it."



Tom Batiuk

JOHN DARLING



"Then one day I was out jogging, and a light bulb went on in my head. I'd just taken John Darling and made him a talk show host. I suddenly saw that his talk show was the perfect vehicle for Tom's celebrity caricatures."

So the spin-off was born, with Batiuk writing the premises, and Armstrong contributing the visual expression of each idea through his laconic, whimsical line drawings.

Their collaboration is an odd one, since they live nearly 400 miles apart. In the past four years, since the inception of "John Darling," they have met only three times. The work goes forward via mail and telephone, yet the end product is a seamless, integrated version of reality in which the sentiments uttered by the characters are perfectly reflected in the emotional content of the drawings. Armstrong calls their working relationship "bizarre," and says it's unique in the business.

"It's awfully easy working with Tom," each says of the other. "We think a lot alike."

"I basically do the writing," Tom Batiuk adds, "although Tom (Armstrong) will often suggest premises. Once I've worked out the idea verbally, I rough in a cartoon—maybe just stick figures—and send it off. Then we talk on the phone. I tell him what kind of expressions I had in mind, he makes suggestions, and all the time the idea keeps developing and being refined."

"Our relationship is purely a working one," Armstrong observes. "I think it works best that way—nothing but work enters into it. In spite of our both having enormous egos, we never clash. Our contact with one another is focused on strictly professional stuff, and I don't know if it would work so well if we were together."

The inspiration for the strips you see here came from something Batiuk overheard in the locker room of the club where he plays tennis.

by Armstrong & Batiuk

JOHN DARLING



by Armstrong & Batiuk



by Armstrong & Batiuk

JOHN DARLING



played a lot of sandlot baseball. In school the sports were too regimented—that took the fun out of it,” he says.

Armstrong's steady racquetball partner is his wife Glenda, with whom he's played since they were dating.

“Actually we started by playing tennis,” Armstrong says. “But it didn't work very well. First I'd hit the ball, and if it got over the net Glenda would run back to the fence and get it. Then she'd hit it to me and I'd run to the fence and get it, and so on.

“We spent the whole time chasing the ball. It seemed like there had to be a better game for us. Racquetball was perfect—the ball eventually comes back to you.”

Batiuk takes a similarly relaxed attitude to athletics, playing tennis and jogging purely for enjoyment. In fact for two guys who hardly know each other outside of their collaboration on “John Darling,”

they have a surprising number of attitudes in common and their lifestyles run parallel in more than one respect.

Both have classical, academic training in art, rather than commercial backgrounds. Armstrong with a BFA from Evansville (IN) University where he majored in oil painting, Batiuk as a general art major out of Kent State (OH). Their humanistic formal training doubtless helps them to achieve more than just technical virtuosity in their work—it contributes a depth of comic feeling and expression that is not commonplace among cartoons.

In their different ways, each enjoys working at home, being his own boss. Armstrong put in seven years in advertising—and endured seven years of rejection slips for his cartoons—before he arrived.

“The freedom of working at home is wonderful,” he says, “though I miss the camaraderie of having colleagues at the office. But I get to have all my meals with my wife and kids, so that's a bonus.

“My studio is the fourth bedroom of my house, and I've had to really discipline myself to stop my work spilling into every corner of my life. I was getting buried in work, living at the drawing board, working much harder than I'd work for someone else!

“I was really getting crazily obsessive and perfectionistic. Now I'm better at closing the door and putting it out of my head.”

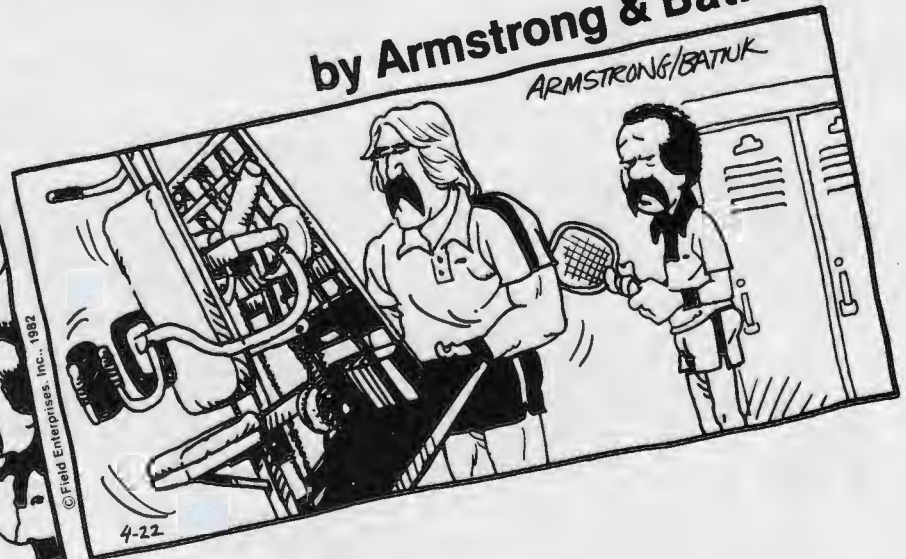
Batiuk, on the other hand, lets his work follow him everywhere, although his studio is physically separate from his house.

“I keep notepads all over the house and in the car,” he says. “I never know when a premise will come to me, so I want to be able to jot it down when it does.

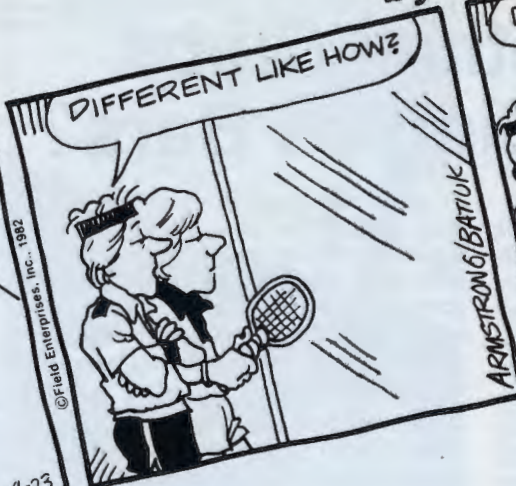
“I work six days a week, sometimes seven. To me it's heaven to be able to go into my studio and cartoon all day. There's a bit of formal discipline about my work, in that I set aside an hour

by Armstrong & Batiuk

JOHN DARLING



JOHN DARLING



every day when I just think up ideas for 'John Darling,' sort of free-associating, brainstorming on my own."

They're both small town boys, living lives of quiet hilarity with very ordinary ways of spending their non-cartooning hours. Armstrong tries to get his grass to grow and reads murder mysteries. Batiuk substitute teaches at the local junior high, partly to get out of the house but more to keep in touch with the particular brand of adolescent looniness that gives him his material for "Funky Winkerbean."

But in both, comic vision is always at work. Armstrong feels that humor derives from maintaining a childlike attitude to life, seeing the absurdity of things. As if to prove his point, the recent birth of his daughter—or rather his wife's pregnancy—got him thinking about how babies perceive the world, and thus was born Marvin, the cartoon six-month-old whose intellect is vastly superior to his parents' and who's always a jump ahead of them.

Batiuk finds humor everywhere, and claims that all he does is tap into the natural funniness that people have.

"I've never tried to write funny ideas," he says. "But if you get a group of friends together, they laugh and joke and some very funny things get said. You get better at spotting funny remarks and situations after looking out for them for a while, but I've always just found a lot of things funny."

"I read some other humorists to stimulate my own perceptions—these days I'm reading Woody Allen, whose wit is sort of cerebral and verbal rather than physical. But of course a comic strip is a visual form, so we make use of physical humor too."

It's just that combination of physical, slapstick violence with the deadpan, low-key expressions of the bystanders that gives the strips here their comic strength.

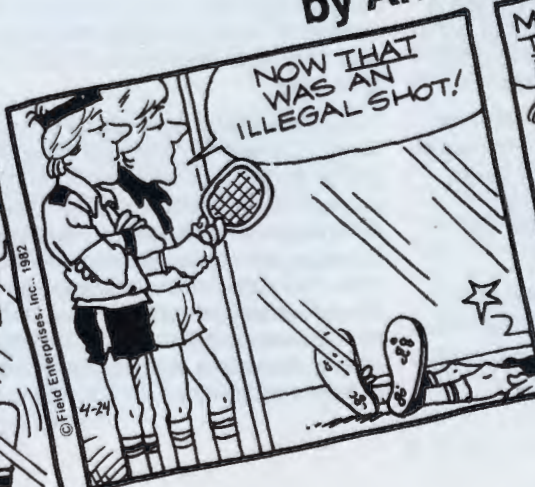
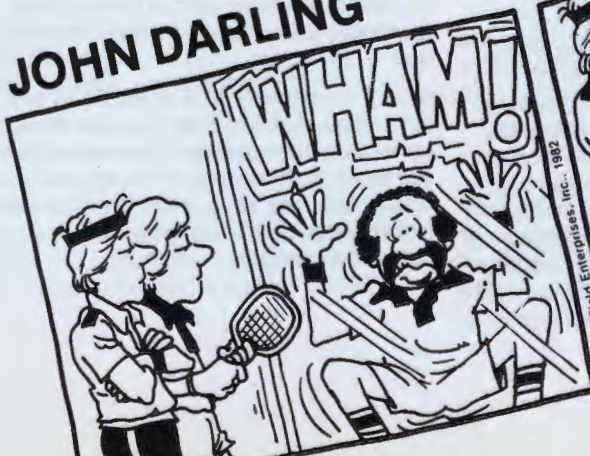
All humor depends for its existence on disparity, on the unfittingness of things, but it takes a team like Batiuk and Armstrong to distill that disproportion into three line-drawings and 25 words or less.

Racquetball players everywhere will surely find it gratifying to see their favorite sport attract the attention of two such gifted humorists. We all know that racquetball provides many moments of hilarity, and it gets us right where we live to see some of those moments captured in cartoon form.

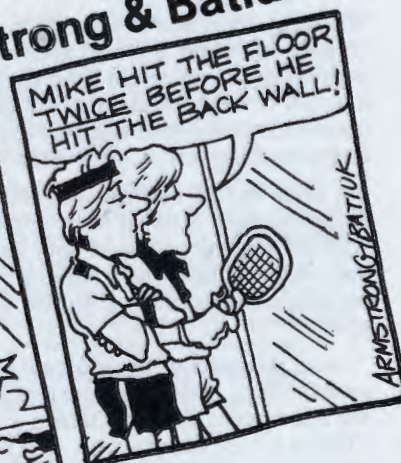
It looks as if they'll get us laughing over racquetball in the future, too. These days Batiuk is cooking up a talk show situation where a guest on the show will try to show Darling how racquetball is played, and expatiate on the virtues of the sport generally. One of these virtues (the main one?) is that "You never lose a ball."

Watch for it. If it's half as good as what we have here, it'll be terrific. ●

JOHN DARLING



by Armstrong & Batiuk



Are Racquetball Clubs Replacing Singles Bars?

A lot of racquetball clubs these days are providing more than the 10 (or six, or 20) courts, men's and women's locker rooms, and a waiting area in the lobby where you can sit until your partner shows up.

Besides the enormous range of fitness and athletic facilities that the big, full-service clubs boast, from Chicago to Las Vegas and points east and west of there, bars and restaurants are becoming a big draw for members, offering a place to enjoy a light meal, a drink or two, and above all a setting to relax and hang out in with friends before and after your racquetball game.

In light of this new phenomenon *National Racquetball* felt compelled to ask the crucial question: Are racquetball clubs replacing singles bars? And herewith is our earth-shattering answer: Yes and no.

The people who hang out at racquetball clubs would not necessarily hang out at singles' bars, anyway, so the clubs aren't replacing the bars in that sense. Mike T., a member of the Lake Shore Center in Chicago, put the racquetballers' outlook very succinctly: "Anyone I'd want to meet wouldn't go to a singles' bar," he said.

There's a widespread feeling among the racquetball set that singles' bars are sleazy places that cater to the kind of encounters that nice people don't want. While we have not tested that hypothesis fully, it has undoubtedly achieved the status of folk wisdom: singles' bars, everyone knows, are places where shallow, anonymous contacts between lonely strangers who have little or nothing going for them are relentlessly pursued in an atmosphere of desperation.

The racquetball and athletic clubs, on the other hand, attract a crowd whose moving principle is *not* to get fixed up with a member of the opposite sex, but to get a good hour of vigorous exercise and fun—and everything else is secondary.

But since the full-service clubs are lively places socially, drawing large numbers of youthful, healthy people of both sexes, they very naturally see a number of romances among the friendships that form.

"Sure I've dated other club members," said Cindy G., who plays racquetball at the Sportrooms in Coral Gables, FL. "This is a very friendly club, and plenty of informal socializing goes on.

"I spend a lot of my free time here, so I don't really know about the bar scene around town. I've got a lot of friends among the members, so there's always someone to share a drink or a few laughs with. But it's not specifically a singles, dating kind of situation—it's just friendly and relaxing."

Dave G. at the Lake Shore Center also commented on the hassle-free social atmosphere that occurs in clubs.

"When you meet someone here, you're both here for similar reasons, so you've got something to talk about—how did your game go, or how many laps did you swim," he explained. "The area of common interest gives you a natural conversation opener."

"Even though the athletic activities are the basic reason people come here, there's also an element of social contact that they get out of it. I mean, if there wasn't that, then people could just work out at home on their own."

Dave confessed that he personally has not dated anyone he's met at Lake Shore, "but I'm not very outgoing," he added with a smile. "If you want to get dates at the club, though, it's easy to do. There are plenty of girls around here that don't seem to be attached to anyone in particular."

In Denver, the Cherry Creek Sporting Club basically caters to singles—or perhaps more precisely—to adults. Although children's programs are offered, the kids can't become full-fledged members and their presence in the club is restricted to the nursery or to those events specifically scheduled for them. Because of Cherry Creek's location between downtown Denver and city residential neighborhoods, it attracts a large number of young professional people who stop in for their workout and to relax after work.

"There's a pretty lively social scene here," Carmen B., a regular racquetball player at Cherry Creek said. "So of course you get people dating—I know a few people who've started steady relationships with someone they met at the club. I've dated a few of the guys myself—often not really what you'd call formal dates but just getting together after a game or a workout for a couple of drinks right here."



"It's very easy, once you've gotten into conversation with someone, to suggest that you get together for a drink the next time you're both at the club. That sort of situation involves no commitments or expectations, and it allows you to get to know the other person gradually. If it turns out that you don't really have much in common, nobody's out anything."

Clubs typically go out of their way to provide this relaxed, social atmosphere for their members. They tend to be spacious, open in layout, with large bars, restaurants and other common areas. Architecturally, they are practical and innovative spaces—from the dramatic hi-tech of Lake Shore Center, with its intelligent use of every square inch, to the restored Coliseum that houses the Sportrooms of Coral Gables in 20's grandeur. The design of common areas is airy and invigorating, encouraging involvement, functional without sacrificing comfort.

Most of the bars overlook glass-walled racquetball courts, reflecting the clubs' focus on the athletic interests of the members. Nobody looks at you funny if you order fruit juice or club soda in these bars—there's no pressure to drink alcohol, although many people do imbibe a few beers once they're through working out.

In fact there's very little pressure of any kind—you certainly don't have to dress up and impress people. The racquetball set tends to be casual in the way they dress, and they show up in the club bars in everything from business attire to jeans to sweatsuits.



Your presence in the bar isn't interpreted as a signal of availability, so there's no pressure to "score." You can pass a pleasant evening, with congenial company and delicious food (places like Jock's at Lake Shore and Sporting's at Cherry Creek even help you watch your calories!) and go home knowing you've done what you set out to do.

Besides, a sort of screening process has already taken place on the singles who come to clubs. In singles' bars, you never know what types you're going to run into, nor what they want of you—although you have a fair idea of the latter. The clubs provide the opportunity to meet people who share your commitment to health—people who care about their bodies and minds, and are consequently less likely than the population at large to want to mess you around.

Not that there are any guarantees—we've yet to see an application form for membership at a club that asked you to prove you're not a weirdo. But a large proportion of racquetball players are educated, successful types, who have their lives under some sort of control.

Because you're both members of the same club, in a sense you're not total strangers—the club has provided an "introduction" so Aunt Ethel can hardly be shocked if you present your new girl/boyfriend as someone you met at your club.

With the enormous range of facilities they offer, and the large memberships they attract, the full-service places also offer a range of human types to pick your friends from. Lou S., a lawyer who runs his own practice and plays racquetball at Lake Shore to slough the tensions of his rather hectic professional life, compares the composition of the club to a layer cake.

"People of all ages and a wide range of economic backgrounds belong to this club," he said. *"What they have in common is their love of physical activity."*

The emphasis on fitness and athletic activities—racquetball, swimming, running, weight-training—does not preclude the more frivolous activities, however. Most of the clubs we talked to have a heavy partying schedule, celebrating almost anything from St. Patrick's day to Sunday afternoon.

In the warmer parts of the country, there's a tendency to move the social life outdoors. At the Arizona Athletic Club in Tempe, a lot of hilarity and doubtless some romance take place around the outdoor pool.

"We organize a lot of pool parties for our members," said Denny Porr, general manager at the club. *"But even when there's nothing organized going on they tend to congregate there anyway in free-wheeling groups with people meeting new friends all the time."*

The pool is a popular—and populous—hangout at Cherry Creek also, and is the site of any large parties that the club throws. Among these is a yearly luau, a particular favorite among the members, according to Tamara Carter, athletic director at the club.

"We party at this club all year round," she added. *"Halloween, St. Pat's—you name it, our members will celebrate."*

Many of the clubs have small dance floors or a section of the bar that can be cleared for dancing, and they bring in live bands from time to time. But even something so simple as Sunday brunch can help to get people together.

"A lot of people plan their sports on Sunday morning and stay for lunch," said Linda White, a liaison staffer at Lake Shore. *"On Sunday afternoon, many singles stick around—it's a chance to get to know others and share a little companionship."*

"People just gather around the fireplace in winter—it's very low-key and informal. The lobby (which is dominated by the imposing, free-standing fireplace) was designed with a cosy, clubby atmosphere in mind—and it sure seems to work."

So while the primary focus of the clubs, and the primary goal of the members, remain athletic activity, they are providing a wide variety of social opportunities, from the simple fact of bringing people with similar interests together to the events they organize specifically with socializing in mind.

If you want your privacy, you certainly don't have to join in the whirl of activities off the courts, but members all over the country seem to be using their clubs as a base for their leisure time, interacting with other members, making new friends and, when the timing is right and the right person happens along, forming attachments that aren't any of our business.

Are the clubs replacing singles' bars? We still don't know—but they sure sound like a lot more fun. ●

The Ideal Racquetball Teacher

by Chuck Sheftel

Some people are searching for the ideal husband or wife, the ideal job, or the ideal marriage. Racquetball players are looking for the ideal teacher.

This person is difficult to find because he or she is a rare commodity at sports facilities. There are many pseudo-racquetball teachers teaching these days, so the consumer should "beware." It takes years of experience and learning to become a professional. When players compare teachers they definitely will be able to see differences.

Therefore, I will try to give the prospective student a guide to finding a good racquetball teacher and what qualities he or she should have. These evaluations should be of great help for the player as well as the teacher.

First, the player should see where racquetball lessons are being taught. After preparing a list of teachers, see if you have to be a member of those clubs in order to take lessons. Because clubs try to promote lessons and memberships, they usually allow non-members to take lessons at no extra charge or for a nominal fee.

Now the difficult part begins. Inquire at the sports facility about the teacher. Never be embarrassed to ask about the credentials of the teacher. If he is American Professional Racquetball Organization (APRO) certified, that would be a good start because you would know he has already passed a rigorous testing procedure. But if he is not yet certified for some reason, then you have to start questioning the teacher.

Some pertinent questions to ask would be: *How long have you been teaching? What makes you a teacher? Where have you taught before? Do you teach many players at my level?* You should interview the teacher as you would a doctor. You are spending *your* money so you have a right to find out about his qualifications. It does not take much time to find these answers.

From this short interview you should be able to extract something about the teacher's personality. This is crucial to see if you will enjoy his or her presence on the court.

Chuck Sheftel is president of APRO, author and veteran teacher in tennis and racquetball.



Then watch the teacher teach. Certain styles fit certain people. If the teacher does not have the style you think you will enjoy, then look somewhere else. The only problem with this quick decision is that the best professionals disguise their real personalities. This means that the teacher acts differently with each pupil.

Of course, if you know someone who is already happy with a particular teacher, then by all means start there. But do not overlook the first two steps. Your friend's teacher might appeal to your friend, but not be right for you or your playing level.

After you've followed these procedures, you might be interested in taking one lesson to see how the teacher relates to you. Then you should look at his lesson format.

The teacher should be well-organized. If he just walks into the court and starts drilling then the organizational part of the lesson is lacking. The teacher should enter the court and present an introduction to the lesson. This period of time relaxes the student-players and is very important.

The teacher should explain the theme of the day. If he stammers and stutters then you can be sure it is an impromptu lesson. A lesson should be smooth and

flowing for the entire time. The explanation should be adequate enough to allow the players to start hitting during the drill period.

The drills should be vigorous with instruction mixed in. The instruction and the drills should be well-balanced. The action should be sufficient to make all pupils feel they had a good hour of exercise. You do not want the "talker" who sermonizes the whole drill time nor do you want the "silent" type who keeps hitting the ball and once every 15 hits blurts in a tidbit of information. Look for the ideal. The teacher who can balance the two types is best.

After the drill session the teacher should *allow the players to play the game.* All lessons should be fun!

Then at the end of the lesson the teacher should *conclude with comments upon the strokes* and say what will occur next week. Too many times the bell rings for the end of the hour and the pupils just leave.

This is generally how a good lesson *should* be structured. Teaching styles now will be analyzed in order for you to choose the ideal teacher for you.

The teacher should be able to communicate expertly. Someone who looks at his shoes while talking, or is not able to explain himself just demonstrates the need for more practice in teaching. The terms and analogies used by a teacher should relate to you. If the teacher just keeps saying "Bend your knees, bend your knees, bend your knees," then he or she lacks ingenuity. A professional teacher would use other terms to stress his point—sweep the floor, swing parallel with one foot off the floor, crouch down to hit the ball, get low, swing your racquet under the low imaginary table, swing your racquet under my arm. So it's possible for a teacher to have a great lesson plan but poor communicative skills.

The teacher should not cram the whole game of racquetball into one lesson. He or she might think it's a good lesson for the money but the pupil cannot comprehend all those instructional hints. The

teacher should try to segment the game into parts and then present them in an orderly fashion.

The teacher has an extremely difficult task to *present the material in an ingenious way* and not dryly. In fact acting classes should be a pre-requisite for teaching racquetball. Acting helps one express the point with finesse and variety. If the teacher has the gestures, intonations, and "savoir-faire," these qualities can emphasize the instruction much better. The court is the stage. The pupil is the audience and the teacher is the actor. If you as a pupil are not being entertained and learning at the same time, then think twice about continuing your lessons.

Next and very importantly is whether the teacher *gives adequate instructional ideas in a positive fashion*. The teacher should first emphasize the positive so that you don't get dejected, then criticize the negative aspects of your game.

The instruction need not always be racquetball-related if the teacher is professional. Interjecting hints about the cardiovascular system, aerobic benefits, stretching and exercise techniques, nutritional aids and other topics make the lesson and learning experience more full. The instruction should be presented so that you can get the full scope of racquetball and its effects on your body.

Be discerning and look around for your teacher. Below is a summary checklist for finding the ideal racquetball teacher:

- Thorough knowledge of subject
- Clear explanations
- Organized lesson plans
- Interesting and ingenious presentations
- All four teaching methods are used: tell, show, do, check
- Pleasant personality
- Positive attitude
- Good communicator

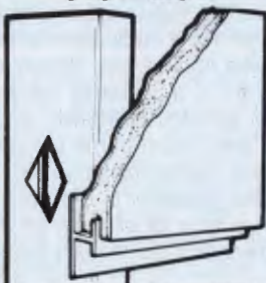
Good luck in your search. Although few racquetball teachers are perfect—one may be ideal for you. ●



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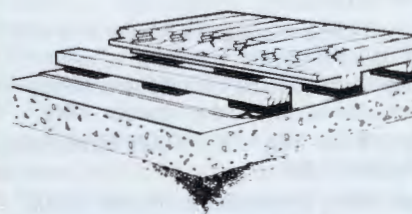
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Chicago's 'Top Cop' Still Finds The Time

by Marilyn R. Abbey



He likes to hang out on Saturdays, after his regular 8 a.m. racquetball game at the neighborhood firehouse, in jeans and gym shoes, blow-dry hair untamed by any workaday hair plaster.

"That's my way of relaxing," says Richard J. Brzeczek, 39, of Chicago. Doesn't sound like such a big deal, maybe, except that Brzeczek (say Bree-zek) is superintendent of the 15,000-member Chicago Police Department, and a man who, you feel, would put the starch back in shirts if he were the law in a laundry.

"I used to sit around the house in a suit and tie," he smiles, admitting to a formality which seems intrinsic to a sense of mission about his own career. "My wife used to say I mowed the lawn in a three-piece suit."

Since being appointed to the job of superintendent by Mayor Jane Byrne on January 11, 1980, Brzeczek has brought a stabilizing business executive's eye to the sprawling, often unwieldy department. He is the best-educated superintendent the city has ever had, with a bachelor's degree from Loyola University (1965), a master's degree in public administration

from the Illinois Institute of Technology (1968), and a law degree from John Marshall Law School (1972), all in Chicago. (Now, his forays into the classroom are as a frequent guest lecturer in law at Harvard and Northwestern, and the Universities of Texas and Louisville.)

He's also a former street cop, who has been with the department since 1964 and worked his way through the ranks, placing first on the sergeants' civil service exam list, and first on the captains' list, a double whammy never duplicated within the force. He wasn't first on the lieutenants' list, he explains, because he was attending law school at the time—where, incidentally, he was president of his second-year class.

One of Brzeczek's major accomplishments since assuming the superintendent's post, he feels, has been the development of a well-defined executive level within the department. (As one aspect of this managerial emphasis, he introduced the button-down, striped-tie, three-piece suit look to the executive offices of police headquarters at 11th and State Streets. Businesslike attire, he feels, is important in building public trust and backing up professional competence, especially in a city where political appointments are often the subjects of snickers or scorn.)

Brzeczek also reorganized the detective division, by consolidating the work of such formerly specialized units as robbery and homicide, to achieve greater responsiveness to crimes, and the results have been statistically impressive.

In 1981, the department's internal emphasis was on the employee, and a chaplain's unit, plus self-help programs to assist in financial planning and combating alcohol and drug abuse, were set up. This year, the focus is on community awareness and cooperation. Brzeczek has inaugurated a three-day program of intensified training for police officers, and established programs affecting senior citizens, public housing, and mass transit (the whole mass transit security force was replaced).

The superintendent keeps a three-ring notebook which travels with him and which contains such information as

names, addresses, home phones, and wives' names of key officers; a detailed map of O'Hare Airport, for quick reference in case of an emergency such as a bomb threat; and handwritten entries of daily activities.

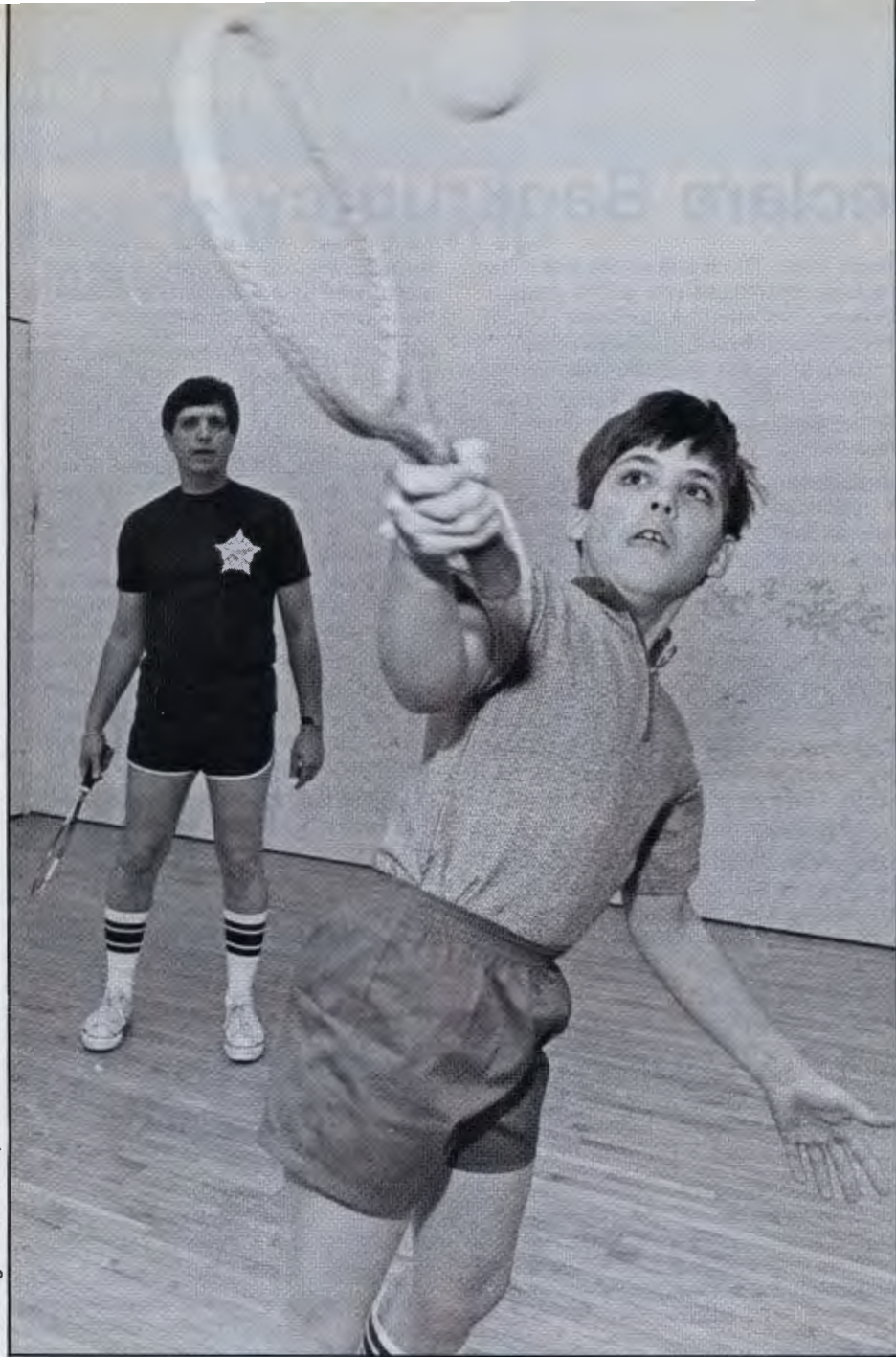
With all this emphasis on precision and excellence, it's a little surprising to hear Brzeczek's evaluation of his racquetball game: "My opinion of myself playing racquetball is that I'm not very good," he says disarmingly. However, with his strong competitive sense, he does like to work out with players he feels are better than he.

Basically, Brzeczek plays a head game—and that is not surprising in a man for whom psychology is a key factor in public administration. "Some people play a very physical game," he says. "Others are real finesse players." The challenge for him is to psych them out and play accordingly.

Also, Brzeczek has done what amounts to a cost-benefit analysis of his game. "When you talk about being competitive, you have to look at the benefits and detriments of any endeavor," he says. "The detriments in sports are the risks involved. For instance, I often play with someone who plays a very physical game. I've seen him take the skin off his stomach sliding along the floor for a return. I did that once and split my eyebrow. Now, I weigh the risks."

He takes relish in his choice of opponents. As a dedicated Chicago Blackhawks hockey fan, Brzeczek was looking forward to a Saturday racquetball match with former Blackhawk Reggie Fleming. He also had a game coming up with Illinois Governor James R. Thompson. ("The governor is big physically; he takes up a lot of room on the court," is Brzeczek's preliminary assessment.)

He enjoys telling a story about a game with Blackhawk all-star defenseman Doug Wilson. "Doug is 24 years old, and I'm 39," says Brzeczek. "He got hit in the jaw with a hockey puck last year and lost about 15 pounds because of the enforced change in his eating habits while his jaw was wired. He wanted me to give him one point for every pound he'd lost. I said fine, but I wanted one point for every year of age difference. It evened out," he smiles.



Chicago Police Superintendent Richard J. Brzeczek watches his son Kevin return a forehand.

The friendship of former Cubs sportscaster Jack Brickhouse, plus a high school career as a baseball catcher, have given Brzeczek, the Chicago sports superfan, the opportunity to catch batting practice for the Cubs from time to time. (The Chicago White Sox have demanded, and received, equal time.) While he claims that catching is like bicycle riding in that you don't forget how to do it, Brzeczek notes that catching for batting practice is quite a workout: "You have to squat for longer periods of time than in an actual game, you don't call the pitches so you don't know what's coming, and you can't see the ball as well since the pitcher throws from behind a protective screen."

Brzeczek has always been actively involved with his family. The whole crew, including wife Liz, and children Natalie, Mark, Kevin, and Holly, turns out for the Blackhawks' season. He and Liz enjoy trying out gourmet Chinese recipes since taking a cooking class a few years ago. He sometimes plays racquetball with his children. He is a former grammar school football coach, and former catechism instructor, parochial school board member, Boy Scout volunteer, and intramural basketball tournament official.

Since he became superintendent his time is more limited, but sports, whether as player or spectator, still are a major leisure-time activity. Their purpose, however, is pleasure, not some therapeutic relief from the stresses and strains of a job which many people would label one of the toughest in the country.

"I don't feel I have that much pressure in this job," says Brzeczek. "At first, I was caught up in the euphoria of being appointed; then I got caught up in goals and plans."

The goals may change as they are reached, but Brzeczek's job will never be "done," and there will always be critics. Chicago is a big, volatile city. You can't make all the problems go away. But you can do some things, Brzeczek feels, and he wants to be on record as a doer.

He's guided by three quotes, which are mounted on a wall of his office:

—The quality of a man's life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor. (Vince Lombardi, professional football coach)

—You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. (anonymous)

—Some men see things as they are and ask why. . . . I dream of things that never were and ask, why not? (Senator Robert Kennedy)

He also remembers a slogan which he adopted in high school: "Nothing is impossible, even though people tell you otherwise." Whatever the challenge, "I just make up my mind and do it," says Brzeczek.

Racquetball may be fun now, but if Superintendent Brzeczek ever starts wearing a three-piece suit to the court, watch out. ●

Marilyn Abbey is a Chicago-based free lance writer whose articles have appeared in Advertising Age, Discovery, Success, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times and Milwaukee Sentinel.

USRA/NRC Declare Bankruptcy

In a move that was threatened, but which was stunning nevertheless, the U.S. Racquetball Association and National Racquetball Club (USRA/NRC) have declared bankruptcy, thereby officially ending president Bob Kendler's 14-year involvement in racquetball.

Plagued by a combination of tremendous legal fees, loss of royalties, and Kendler's failing health, the USRA/NRC filed for protection under Chapter 13 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code on May 21, 1982.

"Without question this is the bitterest moment in my life," the 78-year-old Kendler said. "Anybody who knows me knows that bankruptcy is as distasteful to me as anything could be. But the cost of defending ourselves in litigation has taken its toll."

Last September (1981), in an effort to decrease overhead, the USRA/NRC fired the core of its staff, leaving only longtime Kendler associate Joe Ardito remaining with the organization.

A month later Kendler sold *National Racquetball* to Publication Management, Inc., in an attempt to raise the capital necessary to continue operating, even on a skeletal basis. But with little income and no implementation staff, the task proved impossible.

The door is now open for the American Amateur Racquetball Association (AARA) to rightfully claim the role of governing body of amateur racquetball, while Charlie Drake and the Governing Council of Pro/Am Racquetball are effectively unchallenged in the men's professional ranks.

"We had all hoped for unity within the sport," said one racquetball insider, "but we never expected to move toward the goal through the demise of the USRA/NRC. It is truly an unfortunate end to what was at one time the dominant force in racquetball."

That the USRA/NRC dominated and led racquetball through its boom years cannot be denied. Kendler's role predates the USRA/NRC with his founding of the International Racquetball Association (IRA) in 1968, the forerunner of the AARA.

Chronologically, here are some of the major developments in racquetball involving Kendler or the USRA/NRC:

November, 1968. Kendler forms the IRA, pledging to promote racquetball, build the association and publish news of the sport.

April, 1969. The IRA runs the first "International Championships" at the Jewish Community Centers Association (JCCA) in St. Louis, with Dr. Bud Muehleisen capturing the first open title over Charlie Brumfield. This annual tournament becomes the most prestigious of each season.

September, 1969. Kendler negotiates a \$1 per dozen royalty arrangement with Seamless Rubber Company (later to become Seamco) for a 10-year period for IRA. No other ball company is even interested and Kendler guarantees that at least 20,000 dozen balls will be sold annually by the third year of the agreement. He pledges to make up the difference if the goal is not reached.

September, 1972. The IRA publishes the first issue of *Racquetball*, its official voice. The magazine becomes the bi-monthly "bible" of the sport.

December, 1972. At a meeting in Minneapolis, the IRA Board of Directors challenges Kendler's authority, suggesting sweeping changes in IRA by-laws to limit the power and length of service of the president.

April, 1973. At the 5th Annual International Championships (ironically, again at the JCCA in St. Louis), the Board and Kendler battle it out, and the by-law changes are approved, resulting in Kendler's resignation.

June, 1973. Kendler establishes the NRC and announces the formation of a pro racquetball tour, the first step into professionalism for racquetball. NRC begins signing the top 12 players to pro contracts. A 16-city tour is announced.

September, 1973. NRC publishes the inaugural issue of *National Racquetball*, official voice of pro/am racquetball.

April, 1974. Plagued by inability to obtain corporate sponsorship and by the rising costs of "picking up the tab" for the pros, NRC, unable to achieve the 16 announced tournaments, holds only four: from September, 1973, through March, 1974. NRC then releases the pros from their contracts.

June, 1974. The IRA announces its intent to compete with NRC by holding a series of pro tournaments during the '74-'75 season. The IRA attempts to sign the top 12 to pro contracts by guaranteeing them prize money; only six sign.

July, 1974. Kendler incorporates the USRA, claiming that if IRA is going to compete with NRC on the pro level, he'll compete with IRA on the amateur level.

August, 1974. IRA proclaims that any player who enters an NRC event will be banned from IRA competition.

January, 1975. IRA bows to public pressure and lifts the ban.

February, 1975. Kendler convinces Seamco to sponsor the last three NRC pro stops including the National Championships in Las Vegas, giving that event the biggest purse in racquetball's history.

December, 1975. USRA hosts its first National Juniors tournament, picking up the tab for 85 kids in Orlando, FL, including two days at Disney World.

June, 1976. NRC completes its first fully-sponsored pro tour season, culminating with 400+ entries in the Nationals at San Diego. Leach and Seamco double their prize money commitment.

December, 1977. Kendler underwrites the first national television broadcast of a pro racquetball tournament (PBS), held at King's Court in Westminster, CA.

January, 1978. *National Racquetball* becomes the first racquetball magazine to go on a monthly publication schedule. USRA announces affiliate organizations in all 50 states.

June, 1978. Colgate-Palmolive becomes the first company outside racquetball to sponsor a major event, putting up \$50,000 for the NRC/USRA Nationals.

July, 1978. Catalina, Coors and Jack-in-the-Box become sponsors of individual NRC events. Colgate adds \$75,000 Bonus Pool to the '79 NRC Nationals.

July, 1979. Kendler, USRA/NRC, Drake, Leach, Seamco, and others are hit with an anti-trust lawsuit, filed by Muehleisen and Point West Industries.

September, 1980. Seamco's racquetball/handball division is sold to The West Company and renegotiation of the USRA/NRC royalty begins. No conclusion is reached, and ball royalties, the primary USRA/NRC revenue source, cease.

July, 1981. Drake severs his relationship with USRA/NRC and goes his own way with the Catalina pro series.

September, 1981. Kendler fires his USRA/NRC staff.

October, 1981. Kendler sells *National Racquetball*.

May, 1982. Bankruptcy. ●

Ask the Champ

by Marty Hogan

Four time and current National Champion Marty Hogan answers questions about improving your game as this exclusive series returns to *National Racquetball*. Readers are encouraged to submit questions about their game to Marty Hogan, c/o *Ask The Champ, National Racquetball*, 1800 Pickwick Ave., Glenview, IL 60025

Question: My opponent and I are high B—low A club players and we're constantly arguing about hinders. She is considerably bigger than I and after she takes her shot she returns to center court, forcing me to shoot around her if I can see the ball at all. She says this is her "game" and that it is perfectly legal. Is it?

Hogan: The key to winning racquetball games is controlling center court. It appears that your opponent has learned this lesson well, if not too well. The reasons to control center court are 1) it's the shortest distance to any point on the court for coverage purposes; and 2) you always have a greater variety of shots to select for winners.

Your opponent has the right idea—go for kills and maintain center court position. That's a winning combination. Since she is a lot bigger than you are, you need to move her around the court. Don't let her control the play so she can plant herself in center court.

I suggest you start using a lot of ceiling shots against her. This should effectively move her to the back court, allowing you to be in front of her. But don't think an occasional ceiling shot will do the trick. It is important to hit four, five or six consecutive ceiling balls. The more shots you hit into the deep court, the more your opponent will tend to lag back in anticipation of those shots. But it won't do any good to hit one ceiling ball and then go for a kill. Keep the pressure on by keeping her deep.

As for hinders and the hinder rules, it's all judgment on the part of the referee, and since you probably don't have a referee, you'll have to work it out between you. Remember, that sometimes those hinders just might not really be hinders. There is some allowance in the rules for court positioning.

On the other hand, don't be shy about calling a hinder in your friendly matches, when one occurs. Nobody wants to feel

cheated. If your opponent argues your call, then the two of you will have to talk it over.

Question: I am the program coordinator at our club and we recently made eyeguards mandatory for everybody using our courts. There has been much objection raised to this rule, with the most vocal players claiming that eyeguards obstruct their vision. What is your opinion?

Hogan: Rubbish! The only serious injury that you can have in racquetball is to be hit in the eye with the ball (or racquet). I have been wearing eyeguards for over five years and frankly, I wouldn't get out on the court without them.

In pro racquetball I'm dealing with the best-conditioned players, the players who know the game best and who have best control of their shots. Yet I absolutely believe it's not safe enough on the court with them to play a game without eyeguards.

Nine out of 10 times an eye injury occurs, it occurs on a freak play. Either one player thinks the rally is over and he turns around only to find the ball is half-way to his eye because his opponent dug out the shot, or sometimes the rally is over, but one player's frustration causes him to hit the ball in anger, while the other player's defenses are down. I've even seen players hit in the eye by a shot off their own racquet! So it happens.

No racquetball match, not even the national championship, is worth the loss of an eye—not to me, anyhow.

Many eyeguards on the market do not obstruct vision at all. The DP/Leach eyeguard I've been using for over three years now has not only given me injury-free play, it's also given me a little more confidence on the court, by allowing me to follow the ball longer than I would without eyeguards.

If I were a club manager or parent, I wouldn't let my members or kids play

without eyeguards, especially the juniors, who tend to play a bit more out of control than the rest of us.

No sir, I'll never take mine off. At least not while I'm playing.

Question: I'm a retired 57-year-old with gray hair, but with a body that looks like a 25-year-old athlete in prime condition. My problem is recovery time from my matches. At best I can manage three hour-long matches a week—if I get a full two nights' rest between. I want to go after the Golden Masters championship, but the match a day schedule would just be too demanding. Shouldn't I be able to play more without getting so tired?

Hogan: The old grey mare, she ain't what she used to be! In all seriousness, I don't think your "problem" is insurmountable. We all know that racquetball is a very physically demanding sport. A certain demand is put on your body no matter what your age or skill level. I can work out for six hours a day for a month prior to a tournament, and if I have a tough second round match I'm tired the next day.

If your tiredness is muscular, I suggest some light weight training to strengthen the specific areas of your body that are slow to come around. If it's a wind problem, jogging will help.

But if you've really got a 25-year-old body living in a 57-year-old skin you can't be that bad off. You're probably in better shape than you think. I suggest you go ahead and enter those tournaments. Remember, your competition is of the same age and has the same physical problems.

And I don't think you have to worry that much about being tired after your matches. One look at your body and they'll probably forfeit. ●

Adaptable Form And Cutting The Ball Off

by Steve Strandemo with Bill Bruns

At every level of play, racquetball technique goes on as a struggle somewhere between the real and the ideal. Stepping into the ball and having good "textbook" form may be in the back of your mind as you cover the court, but when the ball is screeching straight at you off the front wall 22 feet away, or caroming past you down a side wall, or heading into a back corner, what counts is how well you can return the ball with what I call "adaptable form." Basically, you still want to try to score from these positions, but if that's not possible, then at least you want to minimize the setups you give your opponent—by having an efficient upper-body swing from different footwork positions.

Mastering An Upper-Body Swing

To make adaptable form work, you can't take an attitude that "anything goes" with your technique. Even though you'll often get caught in different stances, unable to step into the ball, you'll nearly always have time to execute a quick upper-body stroke.

So learn how to position yourself in such a way that your upper body and hips can move freely through the shot, however your feet are positioned. Then instead of

simply "arming" the ball in desperation, you'll be utilizing the whipping action that results when you get your shoulders into the shot, a wrist snap in the contact zone, and ideally some hip rotation. When you have a quick stroke like this, you'll find that you don't need to step into the ball in fast-action exchanges in order to hit with good direction and velocity.

Hitting From An "Open" Stance

In almost any extended rally, you'll be forced to hit from variations of an open stance, where you're either facing the front wall with both feet as the ball approaches or your feet are widened out toward a front corner. Although your feet are basically planted, generally you only have time to react to a shot that is heading into your body or threatening to get past you. What counts, therefore, is your ability to quickly set your racquet and swing through the best you can.

Work at expanding the area you can cover out of your open stance without having to take a step, for this is critical in a low-zone exchange with your opponent. In recent years I've widened my hitting base by spreading my legs a little further apart when I see the ball coming

and I know I'm not going to have time for any extra body positioning. I now have a stronger swing in a wider area that I can stretch out and hit with a clean, forceful stroke by pulling or driving through with good shoulder action.

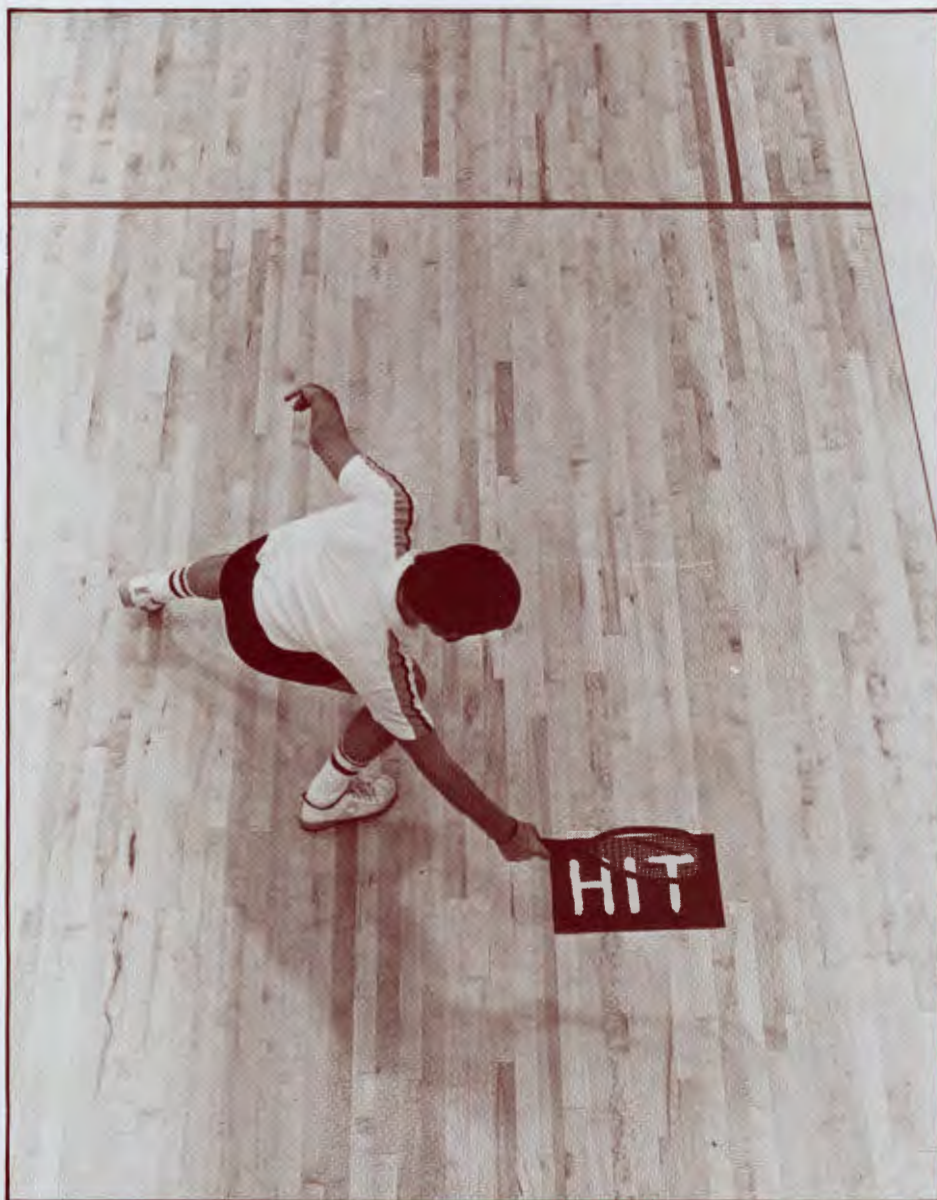
Knee bend is also crucial here, along with the ability to dip your hitting shoulder to get the racquet low for those potential winners that come to you only six inches off the floor.



Notice how the hitter stretches for the ball by taking a long cross-over step with his left leg and then extends his racquet arm while using shoulder rotation and a wrist snap to hit the ball offensively. His opponent is in a good coverage position, watching the ball and ready to cover the shot if it's left up.



Many times you'll be forced to hit from an open stance, with your feet planted and pointed toward the front wall or into the front corner. From here, you must swing with a compact stroke that relies on your upper body and as much hip rotation as time and your positioning allow.



Hitting When Stretched Out Or On The Run

When the ball is out away from your body, forcing you to stretch wide or to hit while on the move, your form is not going to look picturesque, but no matter: *you must learn to be efficient with these shots.* Either try to score if the situation dictates, try to drive the ball if you can't go for an all-out winner, or flip the ball to the ceiling if you're totally on the defensive.

If you're digging the ball up in the service box area or thrusting over to a side wall, there's a technique you can work on: stretching out with your legs, then reaching with your hitting arm, and then a snapping action with your wrist.

There's a tendency for players to think that anything hit while on the run should just be flipped back to the front wall to keep the rally going, but you'll find yourself capitalizing on scoring opportunities if you've worked on hitting with the free-flowing, upper-body swing described above. Many top players can't hit winners while on the run, but they have the ability to hit excellent passing shots—and the sense to flip the ball smartly to the ceiling to get a better foothold in the rally when they're on the defensive.

Although we're forced to hit while on the run throughout a match, I've found that few players ever actually practice this technique. Yet this is something you can do easily by yourself. Just throw the ball out away from you and then go after it,

When you're caught in an open stance, a hard, well-angled passing shot will occasionally force you to contact the ball behind your back foot. The left arm will sometimes be held against your body for balance when you're reaching out to hit like this.



In this sequence, the defender is studying his opponent's stroke, then moving forward quickly to cover his left-up kill attempt. Notice how much court he can cover by taking two long strides and then stretching forward with his racquet extended to either re-kill the ball or dig it up and keep it in play.

hitting with a whipping shoulder rotation as you're moving. You can also have a partner bounce or drive the ball deep into areas that force you to scramble for the ball.

Cutting The Ball Off

When your opponent's offensive attempt has been left up and is coming hard through the heart of the action zone, you must know how and when to cut this shot off, in the air or after one bounce. Even though the ball will come off the back wall if you let it go by, there are going to be many times in a match when you should capitalize on the situation by intercepting the ball and taking it back down low to score. You can't back off, for this aggressiveness—just like volleying at the net in tennis—will give your game a boost in several important ways.

First, you'll score more easy points as you take advantage of your positioning in the center-court area. Instead of moving back to play the ball off the back wall—and giving your opponent a chance to move forward into a prime coverage position—you can end the point quickly with a straight-in kill, a tight pinch, or a pass. Even if you leave the ball up,

When cutting the ball off, you're often forced to hit from an open stance, with your body virtually facing the front wall, and without stepping into the ball. Here's where you need a sound upper-body swing and hip rotation.

Top players learn to strike the ball when it's only a foot off the floor.

All advanced players must be able to hit the ball offensively when it's coming in at around knee height.

This is a crucial area that needs regular attention in practice. Instead of always letting a shot like this carry off the back wall, work on cutting it off efficiently at about waist level, especially when your opponent is out of position, or on your left hip and you want to kill it or drive it away from him for an immediate winner.

Bringing the ball down low from around chest level takes a high degree of skill, but this offensive approach can put great pressure on an opponent who's out of position and trying to scramble back into play. Remember, however, that this shot will easily carom off the back wall, so use discretion when cutting a ball off this way.



When cutting the ball off in center court, the hitter wants to be thinking "low zone"—the entire area from the corners across the front wall—but he can actually score with five types of shots: pinches into either corner, kill-pass attempts, or the straight-in kill.

you're still in good court position to cover your opponent's next shot.

Second, by holding your position and forcing the action, you'll keep a toehold in the center court—where you want to be. You'll also reduce your opponent's offensive potential and draw many weak returns by keeping him constantly on the move and under considerable pressure.

Third, if your opponent is off-balance or out of position after hitting, you'll have a variety of scoring options and it will be easier for you to angle the ball away from him—as a pinch or a pass—before he can recover.

When you shy away from cut-off opportunities by letting every possible ball carry into the back wall, you must fight uphill against an aggressive opponent who understands the importance of controlling center court. Every time you go back to set up in deep court, he'll be moving forward into a prime coverage position and the pressure will now be on you to hit a perfect kill or pass to score points. You may be ripping for winners, but if you miss just a little he's going to be able to cover nearly all of these shots—and most of them from up ahead of you. In short, he's going to control the match.

Strategy Decisions

Through experience and practice, you'll gain the instincts needed to quickly judge whether you should cut the ball off or let it go through to the back wall. A useful guideline has always been: hold your ground against all balls that are coming to you at *waist level or below*. True, this is the kind of decision that must be made at advanced levels, but it's not always hard-and-fast. For example:

- If the ball is scorching through the center court at about waist level and you know that you're going to be forcing an offensive shot by trying to cut it off, it will be wiser to let the ball rebound off the back wall, enabling you to set up for a higher-percentage kill attempt.
- If your opponent is already well-positioned—and you're scrambling or off-balance—instinct may tell you to take your chances by letting the ball go past.



- If you realize that you're simply keeping the ball in play or giving your opponent setups, then be less aggressive here as you play important matches—but work hard on your technique in practice so that you can begin hitting the ball really low and accurately into the corners and the front wall.

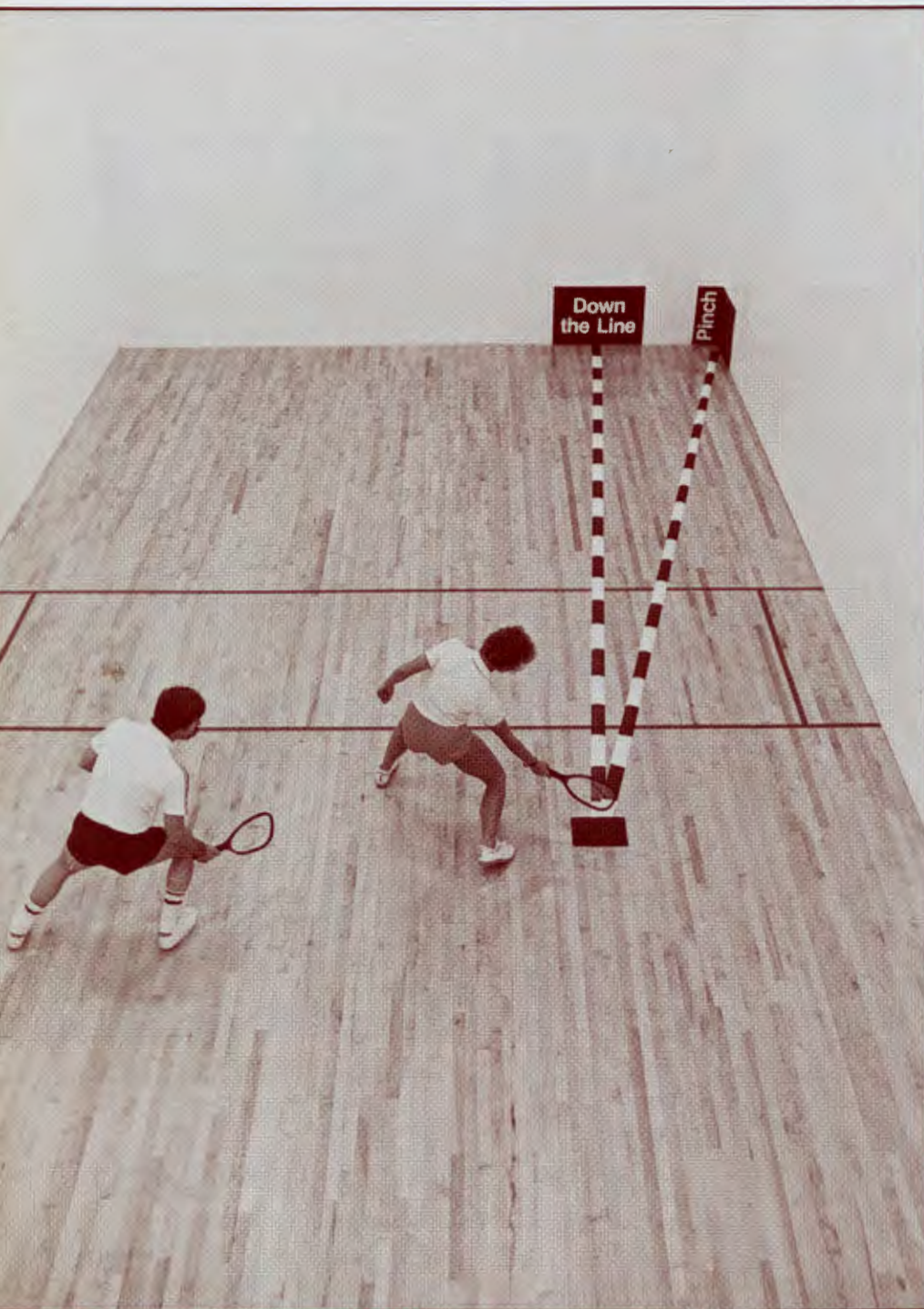
When cutting the ball off, maintaining your position is not enough; you must be thinking low zone, going for outright winners or shots that at least keep pressure on your opponent by forcing him forward or to the side. If you fail to really do anything with the ball except rehit it, then eventually you're going to give your opponent a shot he can put away. (I see this problem occurring with players who try to play too close to the service box. Although they may cut many balls off, very often they only have time to punch a

shot harmlessly into the front wall. By moving back three or four feet as their opponent sets up to hit, they would gain enough reaction time to put away a few balls and end some rallies in their favor.)

Technique And Improvement

Cutting the ball off properly is a difficult skill to acquire and one that demands constant attention in terms of your reactions, movements to the ball, racquet control, and execution.

Since you're contacting the ball at different angles as it comes to you, usually waist high or below, you must rely on adaptable form. As stressed there, concentrate on giving yourself as much time as possible to get your body into a solid but efficient hitting position—ideally, with your feet planted firmly, since you'll not have time to actually step into the ball.



The hitter is positioned for a definite scoring opportunity. Although her opponent is already moving to the right in anticipation, her best shot is a down-the-wall kill or pass. However, she should also mix in tight pinch shots to keep her opponent "honest."

will enable you to work on all the basic principles, alone or with a friend. Stand about 25 to 27 feet from the front wall in the middle of the court and start rallying by yourself (or with your friend), holding your position and cutting off as many balls as you can that come to you around waist high or below. At first, simply concentrate on hitting off your forehand side, driving the ball low into the front wall; if it comes back to you on two bounces, still try to make a play. Eventually, however, cover both sides of the court and consciously try for pinches, passes, and straight-in kills.

The Low-Zone Rally

Your ability to cut the ball off is going to prove crucial in low-zone rallies, where you and your opponent are suddenly caught up trying to put the ball away while scrambling to hold your ground in center court.

In these intense, close-quarter exchanges, where there's little time to swing with picture-perfect form, you'll both be hitting the ball low—but not low enough or accurately enough to win the point outright. Thus, you'll be hitting from an open stance one moment—reacting to a ball coming straight at you—and an instant later you may be stretching out and digging up your opponent's potential winner.

Here's where you must have the ability to adjust quickly and move into a position to take a quick, solid stroke as often as possible, so that you can make that difficult volley or the "reflex" shot where you don't have time to think. By hanging in the rally like this and keeping your opponent moving and off-balance, you'll find yourself winning more than your share of points.

Here again, rally against yourself from around 23 to 30 feet, trying to return every ball that comes to you about waist high or below. This will probably exhaust you in five minutes, but you'll be forced to take all the different strokes that come up in a quick-reaction rally—against balls that rebound directly off the front wall or carom off a side wall. ●

Carry your racket around midhigh so you're ready to set up quickly and you're free to rotate your upper body into the shot, pulling through with a full but compact follow-through.

Use your legs and hips as much as time allows and strive for solid contact with the ball, putting direction and accuracy ahead of power. Racquet control is also important because sometimes you'll want

to drive a passing shot down-the-wall when your opponent is out of position, sometimes you'll try to take off a little speed as you block the ball into the corner, and other times you'll want to pinch the ball hard.

Learning to do all this confidently, under pressure, requires concentrated practice sessions. Yet here's a simple drill that

APRO Teaches:

Theory And Drills For Every Level

by Mike Keel

This article is one in a continuing series of instruction in three tiers, for beginner, intermediate and advanced players. Authored by APRO-certified teachers, this series highlights one racquetball shot or situation in each issue.

In the early boom of our industry we were loaded with spokesmen who proclaimed racquetball as a simple game that was easy to learn. This person was usually a top player who was hired by an area club to serve as the "teaching pro."

That same club, in five years, will have gone through several teachers and many hundreds of members. As many of the members find that their abilities have not reached a satisfactory level they have pressured the club to expand into other areas of recreation, or they have simply dropped their memberships.

Hold on there! We cannot let a superficial analysis nor misinformed "teachers" spread the wrong information about the "simplicity" of racquetball.

It is true that the *rules* of racquetball are fairly basic as well as being non-restrictive. That is one of the reasons that people can experience some satisfaction on their first trial. Even beyond the rules, the short racquet is so easily controlled that it makes ball *contact* fairly easy.

After the first few outings, the new racquetballer continues to play without direction or instruction because everyone "knows" how simple racquetball is. Without the direction that is so essential to success, the player stagnates or gets hurt, and experiences frustration and dissatisfaction. These feelings and experiences keep the member from becoming involved in the club's activities, and eventually contribute to membership attrition.

Racquetball is not a simple game. Only the introduction is simple. After the initial experience, it is very important that a person spend time practicing in order to develop his game. To play the game well and safely one must possess certain skills, such as racquet/body control. Racquetball, at a B level or higher, is really a fast moving chess game. (Have you ever heard anyone refer to chess as simple?)

To ensure enjoyment of the game, we must view racquetball as the multi-faceted game that it is. We need to develop the right skills as well as an understanding of the finer strategic points of the game. Only then will we play a safe game that gives us an enjoyable and stimulating challenge. At first inspection that may sound like a worthy goal, but one that will be very difficult to attain. It is really not that difficult if you are willing to spend some time practicing in order to develop your own abilities.

What do we need to learn, and how do we accomplish it?

To really ensure a lifetime of fun racquetball it is very important that you develop these areas of your game:

- 1) Body control for stroke production/consistency
- 2) Shot selection and consistent execution from a variety of situations
- 3) Strategic understanding and implementation of game plans

In order to learn these concepts we cannot bombard ourselves with theory. We need an actual method that will increase our ability while building on a strong foundation.

Most people have a very limited sports background. In other words, they will not possess a great deal of skill, and appear for the most part to be "uncoordinated." They simply have not developed their athletic skills. Yet the same learning methods work well with people who have a very athletic background.

In my early years of playing, I quickly reached my own level of incompetency. I ventured out on the court out of frustration and began developing drills that eventually honed my abilities to a sharper level. The real satisfaction was learning later that these drills also helped other people develop to a point where they could play the game well enough to be satisfied.

Each of the drills that we will discuss is designed to develop at least one of the three main concepts. We will discuss the stages of development that you need to take yourself through, as well as several drills that will help form your skills.

Note that we will not take much time to discuss stroke mechanics. I believe it is very important that a player develop his stroke into one that works, not the "correct stroke." Check yourself: if what you are doing is not working, examine what you are trying. You might need to simplify the stroke instead of working on a more complicated method. Develop basics first and experiment later.

Beginners: Fun and improvement

When it comes to racquetball, the beginner wants to have fun and get better at the same time. Believing that the game is simple, he may choose to wait before taking lessons. Yet there are growing numbers of beginners who feel the need for instruction when they first start playing. Regardless of what you may have been told, lessons are no cure-all. But obtaining instruction that you can understand and practicing what you learn are the only guaranteed ways to improve your game.

With that in mind, group clinics for beginners offer several good points. You can obtain basic information regarding rules, clothing and safety. Good clinics should also *touch* on stroke mechanics, footwork and proper court positioning with time set aside for some playing with other clinic attendees.

Private lessons can provide the same information, but they devote more time to

Intermediates: Think your way to the next level

drill with the professional so that you can develop your stroke. Many people prefer the group approach because it offers the opportunity to meet other beginners, while private lessons are good for more serious or self-conscious players.

The more you play, the more you will learn about your expectations. If you expect yourself to improve you need to look for direction (instruction) and you need to be willing to practice. Even if you are a recreational player, you will begin to notice certain difficulties while playing. You may feel rushed most of the time, with ball judgment a problem. Time on the court alone should help you overcome these problems if you drill with a purpose.

Passing Shot Down-the-Line

This drill in the early stages looks like a service drill, and it does a good job of starting the technique of service placement. Stand in the middle of the service box. Work on dropping the ball and placing it into the back corner of the court. Placement and speed are very important because we want the ball to die in the back court before reaching the back wall.

After achieving basic execution, get a partner to drill with you in order to work on service return placement. While one person is in the back court, the other should hit serves fairly high at medium speed so the result will be a "plum" off the back wall. The receiver should let the ball come off the back wall and attempt to place it down the side of the court so that it dies in the back court. If placement is difficult, try letting the ball bounce after coming off the back wall. Move with the ball until you are in position to hit it down-the-line. This forces the receiver to wait for the ball and overcome his natural urge to rush. When placement is more successful, play the ball after it comes off the back wall without letting it hit the floor.

After achieving basic proficiency with this portion of the drill, try the same return

from a different set-up. Hit ceiling balls that will drop into the back one-third of the court and try to place the ball down the side of the court. This drill is the most challenging of the three, because the judgment required is so different from that of the other shots. With some patience and perseverance, you can really progress through this drill.

In the different phases of this drill, there are certain key points that can help ensure your success.

While serving, consciously cock your wrist and set up the racquet in a back-swing position. This will aid development of good swing mechanics early in your play. Do not forget to reach out for the ball, and stay down as you follow through.

In the return portions of the drill it is very important that you remind yourself to get the racquet up before moving to the ball. Generally, beginners can get to the ball, yet they are not always ready to hit it. If your racquet is up it is much easier to get a good swing into the ball. Move with the ball by taking small shuffle steps so that you can maintain your balance. The key here is to move while prepared to hit the ball, but wait until you are in position before swinging. *Don't rush the shot, wait for it!*

Last but not least we must stress *placement over power*. Power is simply good timing added to a good swing, but placement is not as simple. Once you can place the ball where you want it, you can always add power.

This is just one example of a drill with a purpose. You can design more of your own by being creative and keeping it simple. The major point is to develop a drill that will simulate game situations, but make sure that it is challenging. Start off slowly so that you can develop your ability to think through the drill. As your proficiency improves, you will want to speed up the drill in order to develop your reactions.

How many C players do you know? Well, that's too many.

It seems that most C players feel destined to play out their lives in the lower ranks. The C player is usually full of energy, has time to practice, but never seems to move up. Since a B player is really a "Thinking C," all you need is to learn how to think while you move, or drill with a purpose.

Most of the intermediate player's game is based on subconscious reactions, so their games tend to be hot or cold. If you ask, most can't tell you why they had a great game. All this player needs are some drills that will make him think while he moves.

Shot Selection

This drill includes a series of shots hit from several locations. Concentrate on looking at the ball through impact, as well as keeping your head down after contact. The emphasis is on slowing down and feeling what your body is doing. In time, you will develop your feel for certain shots, and become more aware of mistakes in stroke-production.

The objectives for shots used (refer to *Diagram 1*):

Passing Shot—must contact front wall between the 18" line and the 4' line; must die within the 5' square in the rear corner before contacting the back wall (down-the-line); must die in the back court after passing the reach of a player in center court (cross-court).

Kill Shot—must hit the front wall under the 18" line.

Pinch Shot—must hit the side wall on the stroke side and hit the front wall under the 18" line.

Reverse Pinch—must hit the side wall on the side opposite the stroke and hit the front wall under the 18" line.

Serves—hit in the general target area of the front wall; begin from the center court position; ball should die in the back court without setting up off the back wall.

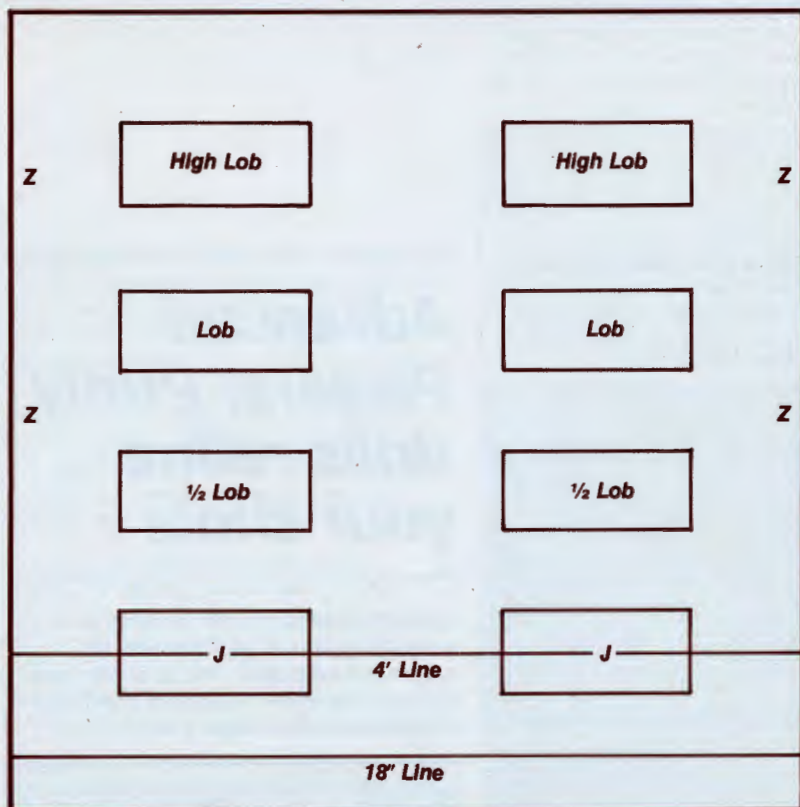


Diagram 1 - Front Wall Practice Court. Service targets are placed for center court delivery. They help illustrate that ball placement on the front wall will put the ball where you want it in the back court.

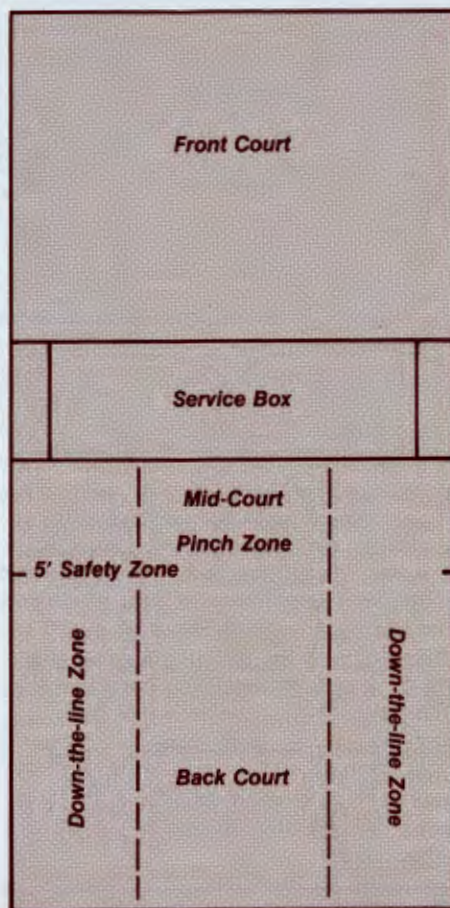
Diagram 2 - Floor Positions on the Practice Court. "Zone" is the area from which to practice that particular shot. "S" is the location from which to serve.

These are the shots, positions and order of execution you should follow (refer to Diagram 2 for court position areas):

- Down-the-line pass from mid-court and back court.
- Cross-court pass from mid-court and back court.
- Pinch from the front, middle and back court.
- Reverse pinch from the front, middle and back court.
- Kill shot from the middle and back court.
- Z ball from the front and mid-court.
- Down-the-line ceiling shot, cross-court ceiling shot.

Serves:

- Junk - waist high
- Half lob - 8' to 12'
- Lob - 12' to 16'
- Lob Z - 12' to 16'
- Drive Z - knee to waist high
- Drive - knee high



You should initially attempt four of each shot per session. Go all the way through with your forehand stroke, then repeat the entire sequence with your backhand stroke, serves included. Stress technique and placement over power. These drills will help even more if you concentrate on your swing and on looking at the ball. Try to keep your head down even after contacting the ball. Backhand serves will really help your overall control and balance. Remember, if you pick out your weaknesses and drill them more, they will become your strengths. After some time, you can devote entire practice sessions to one segment or one stroke.

Pinch and Pass

This drill teaches safe front-court positioning and eye contact while developing a good passing/percentage shot.

With player 1 in the front court, player 2 takes the back court position that will counter player 1's position (Diagram 3). Hit a high (8') side wall pinch shot that

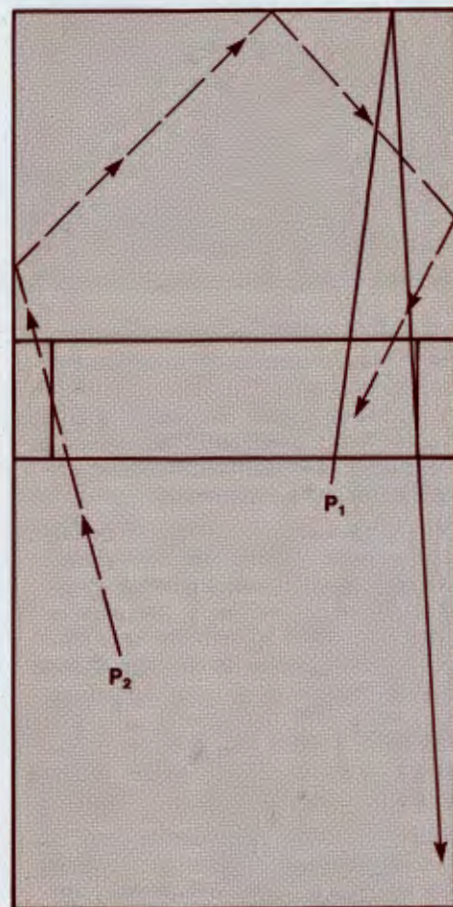
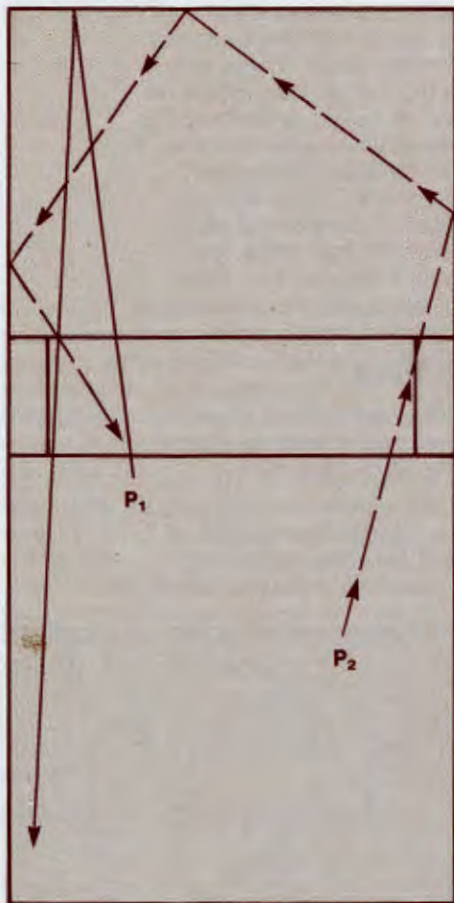


Diagram 3 - Pinch & Pass Drill (Forehand). Player 1 watches Player 2 as Player 2 "mis-hits" a left wall-front wall pinch. As the ball caroms to the right side wall, Player 1 hits the appropriate forehand, down-the-line pass.

Diagram 4 - Pinch & Pass Drill (Backhand).
The same drill as to the forehand, this time on the backhand side.

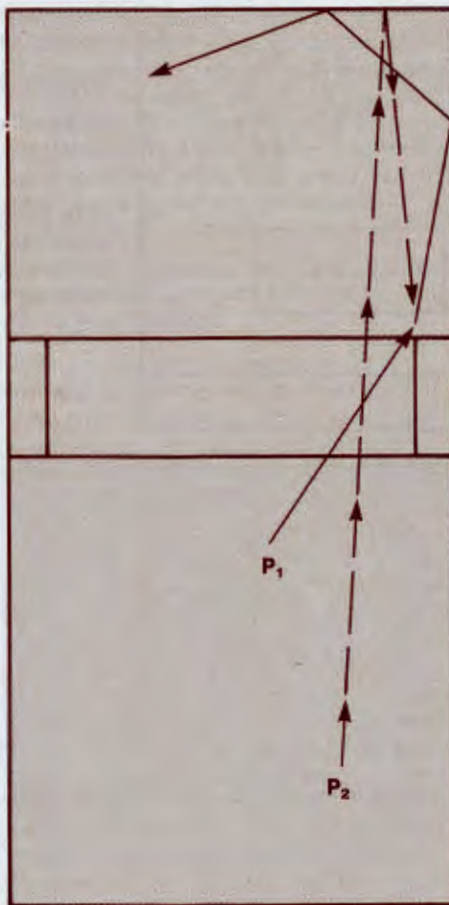


bounces erratically in the front court. Have player 1 set up and move to the ball, returning this "mis-hit" pinch with a down-the-line pass. You should alternate the shot from one side to the other, and player 1 should alternate forehand and backhand shots (Diagram 4).

There are several key points since this can be a fast-moving drill: First, pace yourself. Play the shots fairly slowly at first, and if you are player 1 remember to position yourself so you may observe player 2 set up and hit his shot. Second, remind yourself to get your racquet up and ready, and to follow through the shot smoothly. Third, it may even be necessary to split the drill into halves. Drill the forehand down the line first (Diagram 3).

After some practice, try the backhand stroke (Diagram 4). Then try alternating the two in a non-stop drill. Move your feet, and keep the ball going. The ball should be played no matter how many times it has bounced. As your proficiency improves, you should then attempt to play the ball on one bounce.

Diagram 5 - Pass & Pinch Drill (Forehand).
Player 1 watches Player 2 as Player 2 hits a forehand down-the-line pass. Player 1 then steps over and hits the appropriate forehand right side wall-front wall pinch kill.



Phase two of this drill is a little different. Player 1 should position himself in mid-court while player 2 plays a down-the-line pass from a back wall set-up (Diagram 5). Player 1 should step into the shot as it comes away from the front wall and attempt to play the ball off the same side wall for a pinch return. Diagram 6 is the identical drill on the backhand side.

This drill will add several points to your game. Junior players should try these drills too. I've found that when juniors drill with a purpose they become B players rather quickly.

Advanced Players: Purity drills refine your shots

Every racquetball fanatic dreams of developing from a beginner into an accomplished player. This is a very challenging task and it requires a great deal of dedication. You need a source of

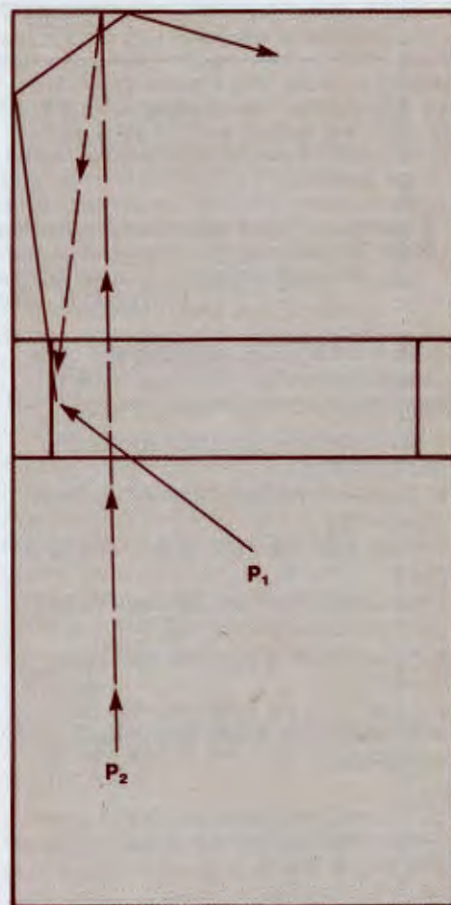


Diagram 6 - Pass & Pinch Drill (Backhand).
The same drill as to the forehand, this time on the backhand side.

encouragement as well as a sparring partner. Approach a better player at the club who seems to be smart on the court. Ask him or her to drill with you to help you improve. If you don't feel comfortable asking someone to help, you can always talk with your club teaching professional. He or she may know someone you could practice with or you may wind up buying a series of playing lessons from the pro.

Since it is important to cover many angles, try adding a new twist to your playing lessons. If you have problems with a particular game style, have the club pro adopt that style of play at the next lesson. If you come up with the strategy to beat it, Mission Accomplished.

However, if you go down in defeat, take the time afterwards to question what you were doing and why you lost. Your club pro can point out problem spots that need to be drilled. Whenever problem areas are drilled, they generally become strengths. However, a strong foundation is essential. Since you drilled basics to strengthen your game, you need to continue along those lines but with a greater challenge.

To come up with that challenge, try a "purity" drill. Take the Shot Selection drill one step further. Instead of simply trying four shots, continue to hit the same shot until you hit four that meet the criteria for a "perfect" shot.

For an even greater challenge, try a "super purity" drill. In this one you continue to hit the same shot until you hit four correct shots in a row. This is a supreme test of control and concentration that will tremendously enhance your "feel" for your strokes. It does wonders for your confidence when you finish one.

The last drill is to perfect your high service game. Place a towel in each back corner (Diagram 7) of the court. Serve any type of lob or Z you wish, attempting to put the ball in the corner with the second bounce. If it hits the towel, you get one point. If it hits the floor behind the towel, you get three points. The game is played to 21.

Diagram 7 - Corner Service Drill (Hit the Towel). Towels are placed in the back corners with 1 point awarded for every serve that hits the towel and three points awarded if the ball hits between the towel and back corner.



That is not all. You can make the last one even harder by adding a height rule. You can hit a serve of any height for the first five points, after which each serve must be over 8' high (when it hits the front wall). At 10 points, move the contact point up to 12' and at 15 points move it up to 16'. The game is to 21.

Well, there you have it. A series of drills and a game plan to develop your abilities. Add your own personal touches to make it enjoyable, and to create variety. If you practice with a purpose you can experience maximum enjoyment through reaching your potential. ●

Mike Keel is best known for his activity programming and teaching/coaching expertise. He has authored many instructional articles and his junior students have won two state and one regional championship. Mike is an APRO certified teacher.

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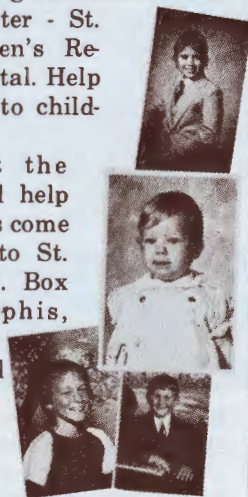
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Upper Body Weight Training for Racquetball

by Steve Mondry

The use of weights to improve one's ability at various sports is now a largely accepted fact. It wasn't always so; until a few years ago, there was a marked refusal to recognize the value of resistance exercises for this purpose, the opinion being that weight training tended to develop slowness of movement and awkwardness.

The truth is, weight training is one of the reasons the achievements of great athletes of the past are being surpassed by

so many athletes today. Skill and technical perfection with only moderate strength just aren't enough these days because the standards of athletics and sporting achievement are so high.

No matter how hard and how diligently an athlete trains, there comes a time when the practice of the event alone ceases to provide the workout necessary to create any additional gain in strength; that's where specialized methods like weight training come in.

The athlete needs to be strong so he can use his learned technique with a greater amount of efficiency. Weight-trained muscles are stronger so they respond more readily to sudden exertion and all-out effort. As a result, when properly done, weight training helps in any athletic endeavor, but for our purposes, we will concentrate on improvement of racquetball skills.

Before describing the weight training program I have designed for racquetball, let's go over some basic rules, some safety precautions, and some common questions on weight training. We'll deal with the questions first:

1) *Will weight training make me bulky or muscle-bound?* "Bulky" or "muscle-bound" are expressions used to describe a limitation in one's normal range of motion due to enlarged muscles. This can be brought about through intense weight training by lifting extremely heavy weights but with a lower number of repetitions. The racquetball training program uses light to medium weights combined with a greater number of repetitions. The result is added strength and definition to the muscles involved but no reduction in one's normal range of motion.

Upper Body



1. Wrist roll

- a) Place your forearm on a bench, palm facing upwards and let your wrist hang over the side. Let the dumbbell roll to the end of your fingers, then grip it and curl it upwards towards yourself.



- b) This is a reverse wrist roll. It is performed in the same manner as the regular wrist roll in part "a", except your palm is turned down instead of up.



- c) This is a side wrist roll. Place the side of your arm on the bench with the top of your thumb facing up. Grasp the weight and let it pull your hand down; then curl it back to the starting position.

2) *Is it true that once people start weight training, they can't stop or their muscles will turn to fat?* This is a loaded question, and the answer lies in some common sense. No, if a person stops weight training, his/her muscles will not turn to fat because of it. However, if a person gives up weight training and at the same time completely gives up all other exercise in order to stay home and eat—you'd better believe that muscle is going to turn to fat; as a matter of fact, the fat will also turn to fat.

But, if the person who stops weight training uses common sense and takes up another physical activity in its place, such as swimming, aerobics, etc., the muscle will remain in shape and will not turn to fat. On the contrary, the person's performance in the new activity will be enhanced because of the previous weight training.

3) *Will weight training slow down my reflexes?* There is no evidence that a proper weight training program slows down a person's reflexes; as a matter of fact, the opposite seems to be true.

Each person is born with two types of

muscle fiber—fast twitch and slow twitch. The "fast twitch" fibers come into play during quick, short, explosive movements; the "slow twitch" fibers come into play during longer, more gradual movements.

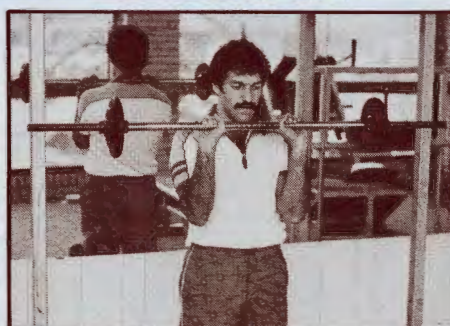
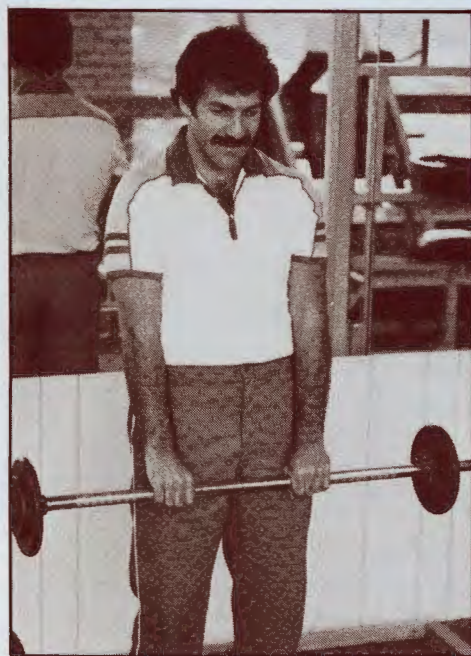
There are two schools of thought concerning these muscle fibers. One school believes that the ratio between the muscle fibers is hereditary and cannot be altered through any type of training—in other words, that athletes are born, not made. The other school believes the relationship between fast twitch and slow twitch muscle fibers can be altered in favor of one to the other with proper weight training.

Through my own experience, I've found that lifting weights properly *does* bring about a quicker reaction and helps me play the best I can. At the present time, scientists are doing extensive research in this field in the hopes of finding out the real truth in the debate on fast and slow twitch muscle fibers. (This would be a major breakthrough for athletes everywhere.)

In addition to these questions, some

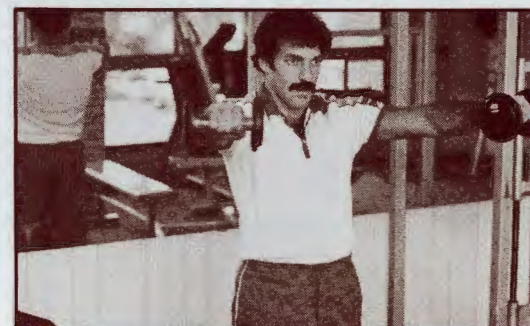
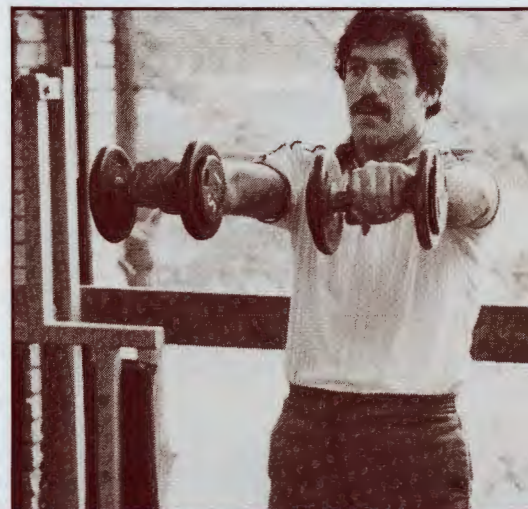
other useful information should be mentioned before a weight training program is started:

1) *Train regularly, but let your body rest between workouts.* Strength and muscle mass increase while resting, so allow at least one full day off between training sessions. A typical training schedule, therefore, should be done three times a week: a Monday-Wednesday-Friday or a Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday schedule is used by many people.



2. Reverse forearm curl

Hold the bar against the front of your thighs, keeping your arms approximately shoulder-width apart and the palms turned in toward your body. The weight is alternately brought up to your chest and lowered to the starting position. Keep your elbows close to your sides at all times, and avoid swaying your back to help lift the weight. Stay in full control of the weight during the entire exercise.



3. Two-way lateral raise

Stand straight with the dumbbells resting against the front of your thighs, palms in. Keeping your arms straight, raise the dumbbells to shoulder height directly in front of you. Next, open your arms to the side until they are parallel to your shoulders. Bring your arms back to the front, and return to the starting position.

2) *Work out at a particular time of day.* Setting up a regular time for workouts each exercise day is a better practice than training at irregular hours. The reason for this is that if demand is consistently put on the body at, say, 3:30 in the afternoon, the body will soon adjust its

natural energy cycle for optimum performance at that time.

3) *Use proper form.* In order to develop the muscles in the most complete way, it is necessary to use proper form on the exercises. Move the weights through the full range of motion; this means going from complete extension to complete contraction during each repetition.

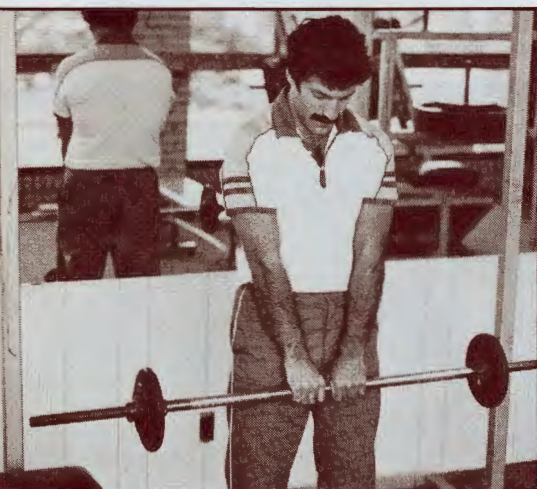
4) *Develop proper breathing techniques.* It is a bad habit and it can be dangerous to hold your breath when attempting to lift weights, so breathe normally! Some people like to exhale during the lift and inhale on the release.

5) *Intense weight training should be done AFTER racquetball.* There are two reasons for this: One is the "pump" one feels after lifting, which is due to an increased blood supply to the muscles used. This causes a temporary slowing of muscular movement and a feeling of tightness in the muscles, but it only lasts

a couple of hours. The second reason is that weight training is a *supplement* to racquetball and should be treated accordingly; don't use up energy on weight training that could be put to better use in a racquetball workout. It is better to be sluggish and tired while lifting weights than while playing racquetball. Remember, the sport comes first; the weight training comes after.

6) *Learn the lingo of weight training.* Become familiar with the words exercise, repetition, and set, because these words are basic terminology used in weight lifting. An *exercise* is the particular movement that is performed. For example, a leg extension is an exercise. When one does a series of leg extensions, each singular effort is called a *repetition*, more often referred to as a "*rep*". The entire series done, whether it involves 10 or 15 reps, is called a *set*.

7) *Take a short rest between sets.* A 60



4. *High pull-up*

The bar is held against the front of your thighs, palms in and hands close together. Keeping the bar close to your body and your elbows raised as high as possible, pull the weight up to your chin and lower again to the starting position, resisting the weight on the way down.



5. *Forehand pulley*

Grasp the handle at the end of the cable and step away from the wall so the weights are off the rest of the stack. Place your arm in the ready position for a forehand racquetball swing, then step into an imaginary shot and swing as you would a racquetball shot (but slowly) complete with the follow-through.

EXAMPLE WORKOUT SCHEDULE

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Suggested starting wt. (% of your body weight)	
			Men	Women
Upper Body				
1. Wrist roll	2	10-12	25%	15%
2. Reverse forearm curl	3	8-10	30%	20%
3. Two-way lateral raise	2	8-10	20%	10%
4. High pull-up	2	10-12	35%	25%
5. Forehand pulley	3	10-12	30%	20%
6. Backhand swing	3	10-12	15%	5%

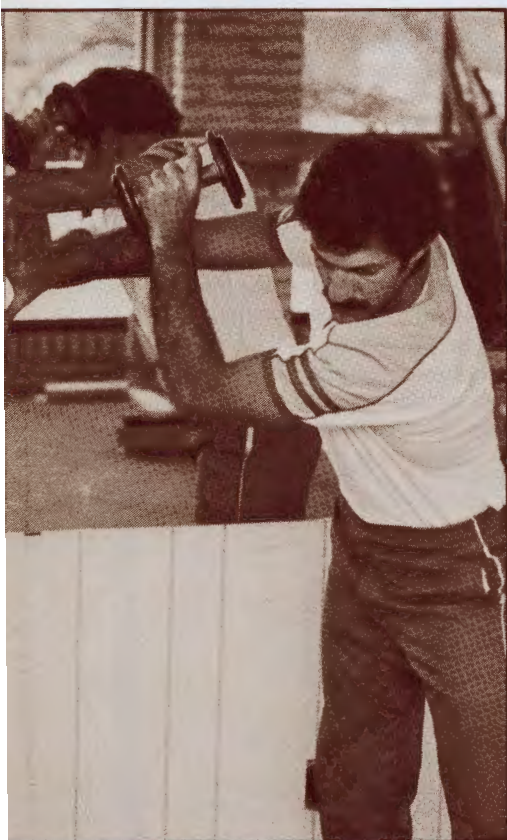
second rest between sets should be adequate. If you take much longer your muscles may cool off too much and you could risk pulling a muscle. You should also guard against muscle pulls by warming up properly before you begin your workout. A sample warm-up of stretches can be found in last month's issue.

8) *Listen to your body; if something hurts, check with an experienced trainer to make sure you're doing the exercise correctly.* You're the only one who knows what your body is feeling. If you are scared of pulling a muscle—either because you're too tired or because you're not sure how to do the exercise correctly, *don't do it.*

One may experience muscle soreness when starting the weight training program. This soreness is due primarily to decreased body efficiency in disposing of the lactic acid from the muscles. Fortunately, the soreness will leave rather quickly.

This exercise program is suitable and beneficial for both men and women. The approximate starting poundage for each exercise has been determined based on a percentage of a person's body weight. These percentages should only be used as rough guidelines for individuals starting out; the actual amount of weight one ends up using may differ somewhat depending on the exercise history of each individual.

On this page are some of the exercises used in my Racquetball Training Program for the "upper body." The program of exercises for the "lower body" will be in next month's issue. Each one is illustrated by photos and includes a written description. ●



6. Backhand swing

Grasp a dumbbell in your racquet hand, and use your opposite hand for support. Bring your arm into the ready position for a backhand swing. Step into an imaginary shot and swing as you would a normal shot (but slowly), completing with the follow-through.

What's The Call?

Appealing The Referee's Call

by Dan Bertolucci

The appeal system came about six years ago with the realization that all referees were not infallible. Although most referees would dispute that statement, few if any players would disagree. Thus the appeal system was developed to give a player the opportunity to have an incorrect call reversed.

Obviously, not every call could be appealable for that would create countless time-consuming delays in a match, with the possibility of players appealing every shot. If fatigue should enter into a match, all the tired player would have to do is appeal everything in sight until he got his second wind.

In addition, pure judgment calls which help control a match (avoidable hindrances, technical fouls, etc.) are not allowed to be appealed because such appeals would usurp the authority of the referee. The powers that be decided on three primary appeal situations, two of which deal with crucial rally-ending situations, and the third with the rally-starting serve.

Therefore, you can appeal a situation or shot if it falls into one of these three categories:

- 1) **Skip Balls.** If you think your shot did not skip when the referee called it a skip; or if you think your opponent's shot did skip and the referee rules it good.
- 2) **Double Bounces.** If you think you legally retrieved a shot that the referee ruled you did not get; or if you think your opponent did not retrieve a shot that the referee rules he did (no call was made).
- 3) **Fault Serves.** If you think your serve was good, but the referee ruled it a fault (short, long, three walls, etc.); or if you think your opponent's serve was not good but the referee ruled it legal (no call was made).

It should be emphasized again that no hindrances of any kind are appealable.

The "how to" when appealing is not that difficult but it does take some concentration. If the referee calls a skip on your shot that you believe was good, the referee's skip call has stopped the play and awarded the rally to your opponent. A simple "*I appeal that call,*" kicks in the appeal process.

The referee then requests a ruling from the two linesmen—either they agree with him, disagree with him, or cannot make a ruling (didn't see it, are not sure, etc.). If the linesmen overrule the referee, making your shot good, then you are awarded the point or serve, whichever is appropriate. If at least one of the two linesmen agrees with the referee, you lose your appeal and the call (or non-call) stands. If one linesman disagrees with the ref and the other issues a no-call, then the rally is replayed, somewhat of a victory for you.

The same procedure is followed if your opponent's shot is ruled good when you think it skipped. If you win this appeal, you win the rally because your opponent's shot is now ruled a skip.

Appeal situations on fault serves are a bit trickier because they can involve aces, getting into a touchy, judgment call. If the referee calls your serve short and the linesmen uphold your appeal, you get to re-hit the serve. If, however, the referee rules that your serve (originally called short, but now good through the appeal) was a clear ace (could not have been returned under any circumstance), you win a point. If there is any doubt as to the "purity" of the ace, you get two serves.

If your opponent serves what you think is a short serve and no call is made by the referee (which implies that the serve was good) you must wait until after the rally ends before appealing. If you win the rally, you have no need to appeal. Don't forget, though, that your opponent can appeal his own serve even if ruled good by the referee. If you lose the rally and you win the appeal, your opponent must serve again with one fault.

Double bounce calls probably result in the majority of upheld appeals because of the viewing angle of the linesmen, who normally have a far superior view of close retrieves than the referee does. The other side of the coin is the fact that double bounces are the most difficult to appeal, both physically and mentally. In long, drawn-out rallies, you have the problem of making sure the linesmen and

referee understand which pick-up you're appealing, and in some cases more than one double bounce appeal can take place, even by opposing players.

If you think you retrieved a shot on one bounce but the referee rules two, the rally ends with his call. If you win your appeal, the rally is re-played. If you think your opponent's retrieve was on two or more bounces, but no call was made, you must continue to play, while raising your off hand with two fingers raised (rather like a V for victory signal).

This gesture alerts the referee and linesmen that you will be appealing this particular shot when the rally ends. Make sure to keep your hand up long enough for it to be seen. Of course, while you're doing this, you'll be scurrying about the court retrieving the next shot.

If you win the rally, your appeal is moot. If you win the appeal, you win the rally, no matter what occurred after the appealed retrieve.

One of the more humorous situations in racquetball is a multiple double-bounce appealed rally. With the poor communications systems that often plague glass courts, it is fun to watch the players, referee and linesmen all gesturing and questioning as they try to determine which player is appealing which shot. For this reason, do not be satisfied with an instant ruling. You owe it to yourself to be certain that all parties involved understand what you are appealing.

Frankly, I find it a lot easier to just argue it out with my racquetball opponent in recreational play. But if anybody can suggest a better system of ensuring fair play, I'd like to hear it. ●



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Alternative Stress And Tension Relief:

How Racquetball Works For Me

by John Norris

My daily hour on the racquetball court is an occasion of sport—to compete against my opponent, to compete against myself and to leave in some way better than I arrived. The spiritualist seeks to be in the world but not of it, and so it is with the athlete, who through some vigorous physical activity, leaves the sports arena with body and mind finely tuned and more capable of responding to a complex world, less apt to react to it.

This reality is most apparent to me immediately after an hour of good racquetball, during the peaceful warm-down occurring in the sauna and whirlpool afterwards. I have left behind the history and geography of my previous eight-hour day at the front door of the club for my game or solo practice session.

In the locker room a ritual of emptying out my insides begins prior to the court experience. I change into a jock strap, a pair of gym shorts, a loose knit shirt, and double pairs of white tube socks to protect my feet from blistering. I have to take that kind of precaution because pain is elusive and hidden, sometimes for hours after a couple of games. It isn't my intention to hide from pain but rather to face up to the challenges of preventing it. I certainly don't want any negligence on my part to prevent my hour on the court the following day.

The racquetball player, perhaps unknowingly, is seeking stress. The game strategy is complete with opponent, a set of rules, and goals. In a singles match, more than skill is measured. Physical fitness must be proportionate on the part of each player toward the other and very often, in a heated game, we approach our fitness capabilities and sometimes surpass them. This is alternative stress in its most diluted form: the body activated beyond its normal calling.

Semantically, stress as most Americans today know it isn't a four letter word, but the connotations with all of their infamous negative underpinnings certainly are. Stress-causing tension headaches and further mental sluggishness are the capital marks of the over-the-counter drug advertising industry. One fact not revealed by the "tension-ridden" model in the 60-second television spot is that there is a desirable stress counterproductive to tension and rendering a peaceful, relaxed body and mind. This is alternative stress.

It is athletic stress, game stress, the stress we seek on the racquetball court and my intention when I say "*a ritual of emptying my insides begins.*" My work clothes are exchanged for play clothes in the locker room as I leave behind my nine-to-five, too often debilitating life and spend an hour in movement with a little blue ball against a white background on five sides. A fine, almost misty sweat soon develops and I am not "dealing" with stress at that moment, but living it and using it as the vehicle it is towards relaxation at the end of the game.

This is the conscious, sought-out stress that, rather than stiffening and cramping muscles, uses them and empties them of the psychological impurities we call tension. This stress is not a prelude to headaches and their counteractive aspirin and martinis, but a releasing, soothing relaxation leading to pleasant dreams and good bowel movements.

The racquetball game is rather simple play and should be left uncomplicated by the player. A coach once told my baseball team to think *angry* and slam at the ball as we would our enemy with the bat. I think this is bad advice in any sport, and particularly in racquetball. There are tricky, difficult shots in this game and I know I improve by playing someone better than me. I cannot divide my attention between scoring and learning and pretending to slam my human nemesis with the racquet. I don't wish to bring any unpleasantness to the court and can't imagine a decent game or practice session if I did.

This kind of psychological transference isn't necessary. A good game played and played well, complete with sweat and conscious, fluid movement, has a built-in zone where magic uncramps our claustrophobic and angry encounters of the preceding day. Here I know my insides come out glistening, my tensions of the day seep out saltily. I have sought and deserve my fatigue at game's end; it has not settled unbearably with a barrage of telephone calls and procedural differences of opinion at work.

My mind and body have been consciously activated. I am the initiator of this stress and not the unwilling, bush-whacked recipient. I have chosen this hour of athletic competition or solo flight. My mind and body are at one, cruising together in fifth gear. It is the inactivity of one or the other during the day that my existence revolts against with tension and confusion. Holistic stress challenging the entire person is health *sans* antidepressants, pain relievers, caffeine, and laxatives.

Everything but athletic concentration is relieved while I contact this blue ball in a world of whiteness and hollow, vibrating sounds receding, ceasing, and reoccurring with each shot or serve. This is the game of linear movement and ricocheting balls in which stress and fun are my reasons, health and relaxation my glorious pay-off.

Racquetball is not an escape. It is simply a means of rationally laying aside the inquietude and neurotic tensions of a day until a time an hour or so later when I can respond to them as workable, understandable facts and problems. These I can reassume as I exit the club and better remember this is only one day in an entire lifetime. ●

John Norris is a free-lance writer and racquetball enthusiast (obviously) from Eunice, Louisiana.

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August 27-29, 1982

Davison Racquet Club

G-2140 Fairway Drive

Davison, MI 48423

Tournament Director: Jim Hiser

Nike, WPRA Bring Summer Fitness Camp To Sacramento's El Rancho Racquet Resort

Nike Athletic Shoes will bring three of the world's finest women pro racquetball players to Sacramento's El Rancho Racquet Resort to conduct an adult and junior fitness and racquetball camp, July 15-22. The proceeds of this camp will

benefit the Women's Pro Racquetball Association (WPRA), which is dedicated to promoting racquetball participation.

Lynn Adams, of Costa Mesa, CA, currently the world's top woman pro, will be joined by top-10-ranked Terri Gilreath of Mission Viejo, CA, and Vicki Panzeri of Seattle, WA.

The Nike Fitness For Fun Camp is broken down into three separate four-day sessions. The first session for adults concentrates on overall fitness, while the second specializes in children's fitness through racquetball conditioning. Top racquetball enthusiasts will appreciate the third session which will include video analysis, sessions on strategy, psychology and conditioning.

For more information on the camp, please call Mary Newton at (916) 371-6731. Four-day sessions start July 15 and range in price from \$90.00 - \$115.00 (not including room).

7th Annual Northbrook Women's Open

July 30-August 1

Northbrook Court House

1901 Raymond Drive

Northbrook, IL 60062

Tournament Directors: Sandy Robson, Diane Arquilla (312) 498-3626

National Masters Doubles Invitational

The Sports Barn

301 Market St.

Chattanooga, TN 37402

Tournament Director: Ellen Jayne

Age brackets 45+, 50+, and 55+;

Round robin format; \$60 entry fee

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Tournament Results

Peck, McKay Take Ektelon/Pony Pro Titles

Peck (r.) follows through with a blistering backhand against Yellen in the finals. Too much firepower for Mike to handle.



—All photos of Ektelon/PONY championships by Milo Muslin

Above all, this year's Ektelon/PONY Racquetball Championships will be seen as a tournament of firsts.

It was the first time this year the men's and women's pro tours played coinciding tournaments, and it was the first time a major "open" format championships tournament was held—with \$40,000 in prize money the reward.

When the dust settled at the Sports Gallery in Anaheim, CA, after four days (May 5-9) of intense action, the names Dave Peck and Heather McKay were the first words off everybody's lips—Peck particularly, because by virtue of his 11-3, 11-2, 11-10 dusting of Mike Yellen, he gained the most important first of all—the No. 1 ranking in men's pro racquetball.

Another first belongs to Ms. Sportsmanship herself, Heather McKay. After semi-final losses the past two years, McKay finally captured the Ektelon/PONY (previously Ektelon-Perrier) title by defeating a familiar foe in No. 1 ranked Lynn Adams, 3-1, 3-2.

It was the fifth straight time Adams and McKay had met in the finals of a Women's Professional Racquetball Association (WPRA) pro stop starting February 21 of this year in Federal Way, WA. After three straight defeats—and the loss of her No. 1 ranking to Adams—McKay closed the points gap between the two top-ranked pros and served notice to Adams who will have to be at her best to take the WPRA Nationals, June 24-27, in Denver.

Meanwhile, Peck was able to secure the No. 1 men's ranking thanks to another first: Ed Andrews' first tournament win ever against four-time national champion Marty Hogan in a wild, free-swinging quarter-final match. Andrews' upset was the latest in a long line of tournament shockers supplied by the likes of teenagers Jim Cascio and Gerry Price.

Cascio and Price, ringleaders of what might be called racquetball's "Young Turks," wasted little time showing they belong with the big boys. Cascio's 3-1 best-of-five-to-11 set victory over red-hot John Egerman (semi-final appearances

in his last two pro stops) and Price's easy 3-1 pasting of Kyle Kamalu served notice that the young boys were ready to play.

So were some of the old ones for that matter, particularly veterans Mark Morrow and Gary Berberet. Morrow started slow but held on to upset Steve Strandemo (3-2) while Berberet, club pro at the Sports Gallery, gave the home folks something to shout about with an easy 3-1 victory over seventh-ranked Don Thomas.

Day two of the tournament was a test of skill and stamina for both the men and women. The round of 16 and quarter-final action were both played on that day, triggering a rash of upsets, the biggest, of course, being Andrews' 11-8, 11-7, 10-11, 5-11, 11-8 victory over Hogan. Hogan had barely survived a five-set thriller with Gregg Peck earlier in the day, and faced with a rowdy, pro-Andrews crowd and the five-time national amateur champion's arsenal of shots, not even the King of the Court could survive.

After staving off match point with three unbelievable gets, Hogan finally succumbed to an Andrews rollout.

McKay readies one of her patented down-the-line passes against Adams in the finals.



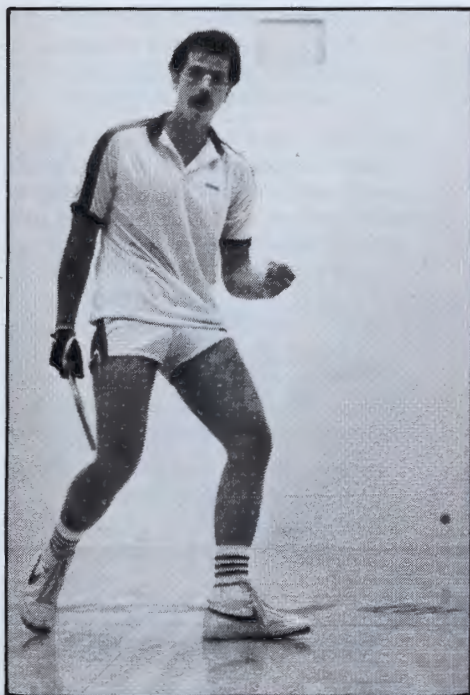
"It's funny," said Andrews, who recently signed with Ektelon and was playing in only his second pro tournament, "I beat Marty all the time in practice. But I had to keep telling myself, 'That's only practice. It doesn't mean anything unless you do it in a game.' I thought I played real well, kept the pressure on and missed very few shots—about the only way you can stay with Marty."

A few other pros were finding it tough to stay with anybody, particularly in the 16's where qualifier Price pulled off a big upset, dumping fifth-seeded Rich Wagner three games to two. The rest of the quarter-final matches made fairly common reading with Yellen pulling a mild surprise over Bret Harnett (3-2); Hilecher 3-0 over Price; and Peck, rolling along without a game loss, a 3-0 victory over old nemesis Lindsey Myers.

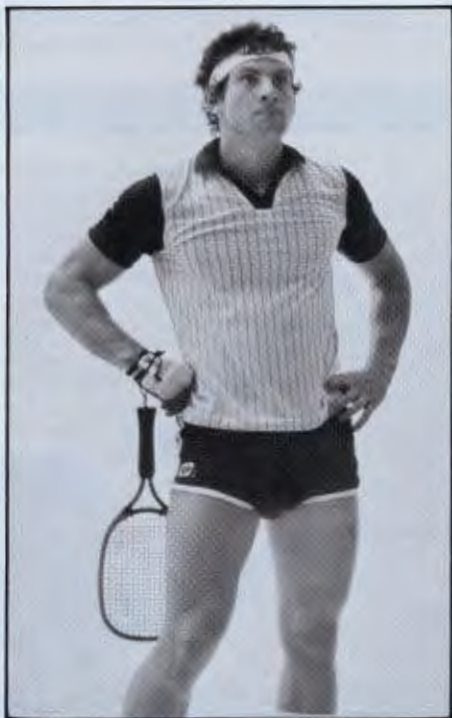
In the women's brackets, it was between three old standbys in Adams, Shannon Wright and McKay and one newcomer, upstart Terri Gilreath, in the semis.

Adams, Wright and McKay all took predictable paths in reaching the final four. Adams removed Martha McDonald (3-0, 3-0), Stacey Fletcher (3-0, 3-1) and Laura Martino (3-0, 3-0). Wright, meantime, lost only two games, those to Beth Crawley in the 16's, on her way to defeating Vicki Panzeri, who had pulled off an upset of Rita Hoff, 3-2, 2-3, 15-10 in the quarters. The Hoff-Panzeri match set a WPRA record for length. Three men's pro matches were completed while the two women played on for more than three hours.

Gilreath, ranked 15th, did a number (3-1, 3-1 to be exact) on fourth-seeded Marci Greer in the 16's, then played beautifully



Andrews gives it the victory holler against Hogan in the quarters...



... but is it a win? Hogan appeals...



... Yes! Victory for Andrews!

to bounce former squash champ Barb Maltby in the quarters. The *real* squash champ, McKay, barely broke a sweat in blowing by Diane Green, Joyce Jackson and Jennifer Harding by identical 3-0, 3-0 scores.

The Adams-Wright semi-final showdown figured to go pretty much according to script. Adams had whipped the two-time national champion the last six times they'd played, was 26-1 on the year and going into the match had lost only one of 18 games in the tournament.

Wright, however, had different ideas. Playing her brand of bulldog racquetball, fighting for every point, the Las Vegas resident breezed to a 3-0 first set victory and had the homecourt Sports Gallery crowd wondering what was happening to the local favorite. Trailing 2-1 in the second set, Adams finally found her rhythm and held on for a hard-fought 0-3, 3-2, 15-8 victory. Her finals opponent—for the fifth straight tournament—would be McKay, who trimmed Gilreath's sails 3-1, 3-1 with her inimitable passing style.

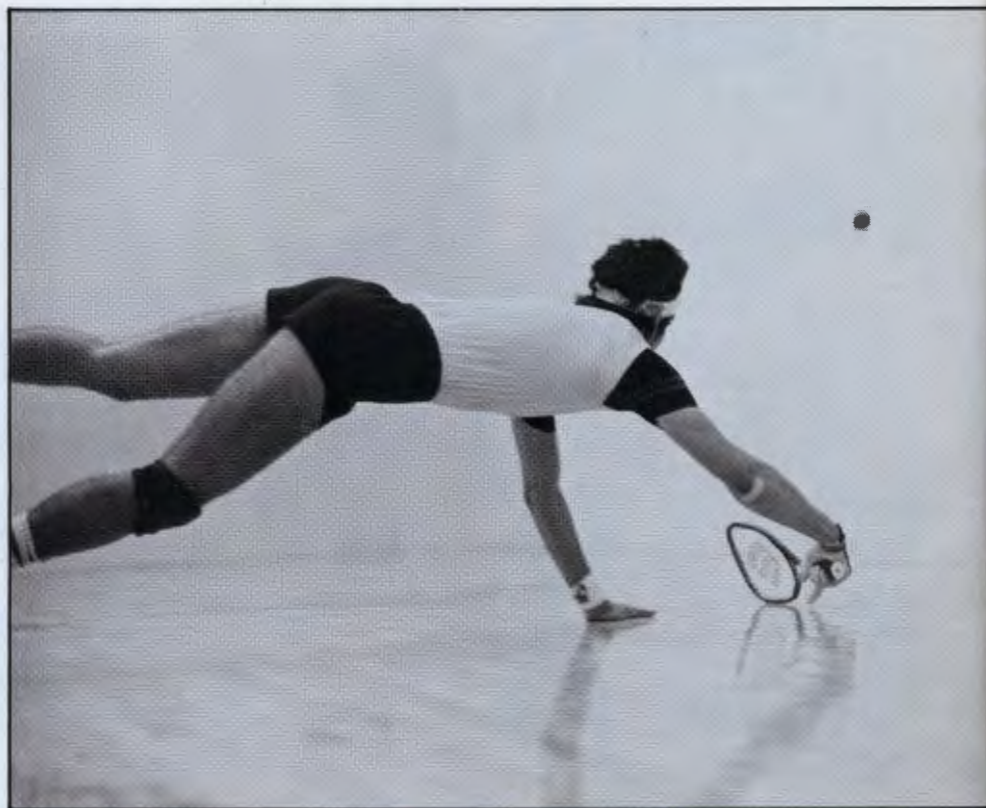
The women's final match was everything Lynn Adams hoped it wouldn't be. Playing before her mother, father and grandmother, the 24-year-old pro admittedly let the pressure play too great a role in the story. McKay easily took the first set 3-1.

"I just couldn't hit a backhand," said Adams. "I was pushing everything and really had no rhythm to my game at all."

McKay did, however, and after trailing 2-1 in the second set the 16-time national squash champion began playing the game that belies her 42nd birthday in July. Two aces, one to each side of the court, moved the third game score to 6-0 and greased an easy 11-5 win. Game five was close (7-5 McKay) before the champion cranked up her patented passing shots and turned away Adams' attempt at securing the No. 1 spot for good in 1982, which a win at Ektelon-/PONY would have accomplished.

"I really believe this is the shortest match Lynn and I have played all year," said McKay after accepting her \$7,000 purse. "I think Lynn was a little nervous playing in front of the home folks; she really didn't play that well at all. For me it was nice to finally win this event after three straight tries."

Hilecher shows his uncanny diving/kill style as he barely retrieves a shot in the semi-finals and watches the ball roll out as he hits the floor.



For the men, the semi-final scenarios were as different as oil and water. Peck and Hilecher had mixed it up plenty in the past, but once again Peck's power game proved too much for Hilecher who said he was playing his best racquetball of the season. The scores: 11-7, 11-10, 9-11, 11-9, close but all Peck when it counted.

"I knew I couldn't let Jerry get rolling," said the winner. *"Playing the 16's and eights in one day and having to come back the very next afternoon and play again was tough. I was sluggish. Fortunately, I played well when it counted."*

The same could be said for Yellen. Winless in tournament play since October 1980 and a finalist only once since September 1981 (10 tournaments), the 22-year-old former "boy wonder" entered the tournament ranked sixth and wondering what was wrong.

Yellen's renewed interest in training paid off handsomely in the quarters when he "upset" third-seeded Bret Harnett, a winner the week before in Austin, TX, and it absolutely saved him in his five-set thriller with Andrews.

Trailing 2-1 following 7-11, 11-3, and 5-11 game scores, Yellen began showcasing one of the most potent passing shots in the sport: his blistering backhand service return. It left Andrews in an 11-6, 11-5 wake and set up a rematch of a May 1 charity match with Peck.

In that encounter Peck had come away with \$5,000 in winner-take-all money. This time around it wasn't even close. With cameras rolling for an Entertainment Sports Programming Network (ESPN) broadcast this July, Peck went on an even bigger roll—sprinting to an 8-0 first-game lead before finishing off Yellen 11-2. The second game wasn't much better—11-3—with Yellen virtually helpless against Peck's onslaught of backhand power passes and forehand kills.

"I couldn't keep up with him at that point," said Yellen. *"When Dave's rolling, hitting his shots that solid, there's not much you can do."*

The third game was a seesaw affair with Yellen pulling ahead 8-6 on a nice variety

PONY's Roy Schuman awards McKay the \$7,000 first place prize. Heather didn't mind that she couldn't fit the check into her purse.



of passes and pinches. But Peck never let up and finally—after a rather short rally—put away a passing shot that earned him \$10,000 and the No. 1 ranking in racquetball.

"I've trained hard and will continue to train," said Peck, after winning his fourth tour event in nine tries. *"I have mental goals I've set for this year and even though I achieved one of them by winning the Ektelon/PONY tournament, there's still a few more to go."*

Peck said he hoped the win in Anaheim will increase the racquetball world's respect for his ability.

"In a lot of ways I'm like Rodney Dangerfield," he smiled. *"Marty is the big name in the sport, but really, I don't spend a lot of time worrying about recognition. If the players respect me, if they get a little nervous every time they have to play me, that's what's important. I want the respect of my peers first and, hopefully, the fans will follow."* ●

Results: Men's Pro Singles

Round of 32: Marty Hogan d. Scott Oliver 3-1; Gregg Peck d. Kevin Watson 3-0; Ed Andrews d. Bobby Stocker 3-0; Craig McCoy d. Guy Tuxeria 3-2; Mike Yellen d. Craig Davidson 3-0; Mark Morrow d. Steve Strandemo 3-2; Steve Lerner d. Mike Levine 3-2; Bret Harnett d. Jack Nolan 3-0

Jerry Hilecher d. Rich Benavides 3-0; Jim Cascio d. John Egernan 3-1; Gerry Price d. Kyle Kamalu 3-1; Rich Wagner d. Jay Schwartz 3-0; Gary Berberet d. Don Thomas 3-2; Lindsey Myers d. Peter Britos 3-0; Doug Cohen d. Mike Ray 3-1; Dave Peck d. Kelvin Vantrease 3-0.

Round of 16: Hogan d. G. Peck 7-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-6; Andrews d. McCoy 11-2, 11-0, 11-8; Yellen d. Morrow 11-1, 11-9, 11-3; Harnett d. Lerner 11-5, 11-5, 11-10; Hilecher d. Cascio 4-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-1; Price d. Wagner 11-6, 11-6, 10-11, 10-11, 11-6; Myers d. Berberet 11-9, 11-1, 11-4; D. Peck d. Cohen 11-10, 11-1, 11-9.

Quarter-finals: Andrews d. Hogan 11-8, 11-7, 10-11, 5-11, 11-8; Yellen d. Harnett 9-11, 11-0, 11-7, 9-11, 11-5; Hilecher d. Price 11-8, 11-4, 11-3; Peck d. Myers 11-3, 11-8, 11-7.

Semi-finals: Yellen d. Andrews 7-11, 11-3, 5-11, 11-6, 11-5; Peck d. Hilecher 11-7, 11-10, 9-11, 11-9.

Finals: Peck d. Yellen 11-2, 11-3, 11-10.

Women's Pro Singles

Round of 32: Lynn Adams d. Martha McDonald 3-0, 3-0; Stacey Fletcher d. Marci Drexler 3-0, 2-3, 15-11; Caryn McKinney d. Pam Clark 3-0, 3-0; Laura Martino d. Kay Kuhfeld 3-1, 3-0; Shannon Wright d. Tammy Hajjar 3-0, 3-0; Beth Crawley d. Betsy Koza 3-2, 3-2; Vicki Panzeri d. Jean Sausser 3-0, 3-1; Rita Hoff d. Bonnie Stoll 3-1, 3-1

Fran Davis d. Peggy Gardner 3-1, 3-1; Barb Maltby d. Brenda Poe 0-3, 3-2, 15-11; Terri Gilreath d. Carol Pranka 3-0, 3-0; Marci Greer d. Cindy Baxter 3-1, 3-2; Jennifer Harding d. Brenda Young 3-0, 3-0; Linda Forcade d. Janell Marriott 1-3, 3-1, 15-14; Joyce Jackson d. Peggy Steding 3-1, 3-1; Heather McKay d. Diane Green 3-0, 3-0.

Round of 16: Adams d. Fletcher 3-0, 3-1; Martino d. McKinney 3-1, 3-2; Wright d. Crawley 3-0, 3-2; Panzeri d. Hoff 3-2, 2-3, 15-10; Maltby d. Davis 3-0, 3-0; Gilreath d. Greer 3-1, 3-1; Harding d. Forcade 3-2, 3-1; McKay d. Jackson 3-0, 3-0.

Quarter-finals: Adams d. Martino 3-0, 3-0; Wright d. Panzeri 3-0, 3-0; Gilreath d. Maltby 3-0, 3-2; McKay d. Harding 3-0, 3-0.

Semi-finals: Adams d. Wright 0-3, 3-2, 15-8; McKay d. Gilreath 3-1, 3-1.

Finals: McKay d. Adams 3-1, 3-2.

Tournament Results

Peck Wins Catalina Nationals; Sews Up Number 1 Spot

by Thomas J. Morrow

For the first time since 1977, it appears that someone other than Marty Hogan will be national men's professional racquetball champion.

Dave Peck, the hefty Texan from El Paso, upended the four-time defending national champion for the second time this season to win the \$40,000 Catalina Pro National Championship at the Fort Worth Athletic Club, May 23. Peck picked

up \$10,000 more in prize money and virtually clinched the number one position and the national crown for the 1981-82 season.

Traditionally, the national championship tournament has been the \$70,000 DP Leach Nationals, to be played this year at the Charlie Club in Palatine (Chicago), IL, June 20-26. But with the demise of the National Racquetball Club (page 16), the new pro racquetball governing board

established a 10-tournament point system for determining national ranking. After nine events, Peck leads Hogan 830 points to 740 points.

With 120 points awarded to the winner of a sanctioned event, Hogan would have to win the DP Leach Nationals and Peck would have to lose the opening round for the two to end the season in a tie (90 points for runner-up, 70 points for semi-finalist, 50 points for quarter-finalist and 30 points for opening round).

The 10 tournaments sanctioned by the governing board are the \$200,000 Catalina Classic Series (seven tournaments), the Lone Star Pro-Am Classic, The Ektelon-Pony Championship and the DP Leach National Championship. In the event of a tie, which is next to impossible now that Hogan has lost in Fort Worth, the two players would be judged on their head-to-head season record. Hogan would have won if he had defeated Peck in both Fort Worth and Chicago, but that is moot now.

For Hogan, that brash youngster from St. Louis who in the mid-1970s completely and single-handedly changed the complexion and style of the sport to his own brand of power racquetball, the Fort Worth defeat was a numbing indication that the "king of swing" would have to relinquish his cherished crown.

For Peck, the Texas victory in Cowtown, U.S.A., was at a fitting site to assume the exalted position of being the number one racquetball player in the world—the eyes of Texas were certainly upon this favorite son from El Paso.

It is ironic that Hogan should lose his only two games of the entire tournament to Peck. Hogan, who was seeded number two in the event, defeated all previous opponents starting with Mark Morrison in the round of 32, in three straight games. He met Gerry Price of Castro Valley, CA, in the 16's, Craig McCoy of Riverside, CA, in the quarter-finals and old hometown nemesis Jerry Hilecher in the semi-finals. Price scored the best against him with nine points in the third game; no one else was able to get more than seven.

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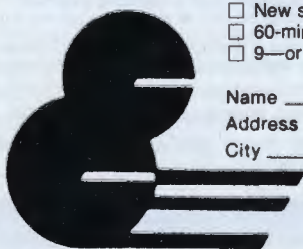
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For Peck, however, it was a different story. It appeared he wouldn't escape past the second round as Doug Cohen of St. Louis took the tournament's top seed through all five games before Peck won. After handily beating Randy Lau of Honolulu in the first round, Peck lost the first two games to Cohen before he was able to win the last three 6-11, 10-11, 11-6, 11-5, 11-4. The Texan had little trouble in the quarter-finals defeating Don Thomas of Mesa, AZ, in three games, but ran into another buzzsaw when he met the strong, lanky Bret Harnett of Las Vegas in the semi-finals. Peck again needed five games before being able to put the 17-year-old high-school senior out. After winning the first two games, Peck lost the next two. He finally turned out the lights in the fifth game 11-6, 11-7, 5-11, 2-11, 11-6.

There were a number of forfeits during the first round of 32 in Fort Worth, most noteworthy the injury default by Mike Yellen, the number six seed from Southfield, MI. Yellen suffered a sprained ankle against Ken Kaihlanen of Houston. Mark Martino was unable to show due to a back injury, thus advancing Jim Casio to the round of 16; also, Steve Strandemo advanced to the 16's when Steve Mondry was forced to default due to a shoulder injury.

Other than the Peck-Cohen match and the Peck-Hogan finals, the only match which drew any real excitement during the tournament was between Ed Andrews of San Diego and Harnett. Andrews, last year's U.S. amateur champion, and Harnett, the 1980 Junior Nationals champion, dueled for more than two hours in a see-saw match. Harnett survived, but barely, in the five-game match 1-11, 11-8, 11-9, 8-11, 11-9.

In the final round, Hogan clobbered Peck 11-5 in the first, while the second and third games went to Peck 11-8, 11-9. Hogan came slamming right back nearly shutting Peck out in the fourth game 11-1. Peck returned the favor in the fifth game 11-1, to take the \$10,000 top prize and apparently the national crown. Hogan took home \$5,000 and a long face.

It is not, however, the end of an era. Anyone who thinks Marty Hogan is over the hill doesn't know him or the game of racquetball very well—Dave Peck would be the last person to think that.

With the season's finale coming up, Hogan has a chance to prove to everyone that he can still dominate the game, especially when big bucks are at stake. If the purse breakdown remains as it did last year, it means \$25,000 in the pocket of the winner—Hogan has claimed racquetball's largest money tournament for the past four years and isn't anxious to let anyone else, especially Dave Peck, take it away from him.

The National Pro Racquetball Point Leaders After 9 Events: (June 1, 1982)

DAVE PECK, El Paso, TX	830 (Won 4 events)
MARTY HOGAN, San Diego, CA	740 (Won 3 events)
BRET HARNETT, Las Vegas, NV	600 (Won 1 event)
JERRY HILECHER, Encinitas, CA	580 (Won 1 event)
MIKE YELLEN, Southfield, MI	530
RICH WAGNER, San Diego, CA	480
CRAIG MCCOY, Riverside, CA	380
DON THOMAS, Mesa, AZ	370
JOHN EGERMAN, Boise, ID	320
GREGG PECK, El Paso, TX	270
DOUG COHEN, St. Louis, MO	260
SCOTT HAWKINS, Santa Clara, CA	260
ED ANDREWS, San Diego, CA	180
STEVE STRANDEMO, San Diego, CA	170
GERRY PRICE, Castro Valley, CA	110
JIM CASIO, Newark, NJ	90
PETER BRITOS, Honolulu, HI	80
RUBEN GONZALES, New York, NY	80
SERGIO GONZALES, Miami, FL	80
LINDSAY MYERS, Vancouver, BC	80

Points are awarded for the purpose of determining national ranking at the end of 10 events sanctioned by the governing board for the 1981-82 season. The events sanctioned this season were:

- The seven tournaments of the Catalina Classic Series
- The Lone Star Pro-Am Classic, Austin, TX
- The Ektelon-PONY Championships, Anaheim, CA
- The DP Leach National Championships, Palatine (Chicago), IL

Winner of an event	awarded 120 points
Runner-up of an event	awarded 90 points
Semi-finalist	awarded 70 points
Quarter-finalist	awarded 50 points
Opening round (32's & 16's)	awarded 30 points

Tournament Results

Ektelon/Pony Amateur Championships To Gonzales, Hajjar

Ruben Gonzales scored his second national championship title in sweeping the Men's Open amateur rounds of the 1982 Ektelon/PONY National Championship Finals (May 5-9, the Sports Gallery, Anaheim, CA.)

Gonzales, of Staten Island, NY, nipped California's Gerry Price in the finals to claim the national title and a Club Med trip after eliminating Los Angeles' No. 3 ranked Corey Brysman in the semi-finals.

A lucky streak came for the defending champ in the quarter-finals when Jim Cascio of New Jersey took an unexpected loss at the hands of Florida's Matt Mathews who was playing in his second Ektelon finals tournament. In February, Cascio had scored a major upset in ousting Gonzales in the New York qualifying tournament, forcing Gonzales to play again in the Columbus regional for a chance at the finals (last year Cascio lost to Gonzales in the finals at Anaheim 15-5, 15-9). Cascio might have burned himself out playing in the pro event this year after upsetting ninth-ranked John Egerman early on and then giving his best against fourth-seeded Jerry Hilecher in the 16's (Hilecher took the match 4-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-1).

Meanwhile, Price was stepping past Kyle Kamalu and No. 5 ranked Rich Wagner in the pro rounds, and taking out Mathews in the semi's of the amateur open draw. Price finally met his match with Gonzales losing 15-10, 15-4 in the finals of the amateur open, and losing to

Hilecher in the pro quarter-finals, 11-8, 11-4, 11-3.

The Women's Open division saw 10 players floating between the amateur and pro ranks. New York's Tammy Hajjar, who had inched her way into the pro division 16's where she lost to Shannon Wright, came out on top in the amateur open draw. Hajjar sideswiped Beth Crawley of Atlanta and Ohio's Becky Callahan along the way before meeting up with Diane Bullard of Florida. Bullard gave Hajjar a run for her money in the first game of the championship match losing 15-13, but slipped in the second game 15-6 to give Hajjar the national title.

In earlier action Bullard had defeated tough Cindy Baxter playing in the Ektelon championship event for the third year in a row before eliminating Sally Boyer of Oregon in the semi's. In the quarter-finals, Boyer upset three-time regional winner Stacey Fletcher.

With a full draw of 16, the Men's Veteran matches found Mark Hegg of Stillwater, OK, coming out on top after downing Florida's Jay Schwartz 15-5, 15-10 in the finals. Hegg took his first win from Joe Wirkus, who along with Schwartz was the only veteran player to venture into the pro ranks (Wirkus lost to Bill Sell in the prelims; Schwartz gave straight sets to Wagner in the 32's). Ed Remen of Virginia and Stan Wright obliged with the second and third wins, advancing Hegg to his finals match with Schwartz and the Men's Veteran championship.

Amateur men's champ Ruben Gonzales accepts congrats from Bob Smith (l.) and Bobby Stocker (r.).

In the Women's Veteran divisions, a limited draw of seven made easy taking for Lucy Zarfos of Pennsylvania who won her first Ektelon/PONY championship and Club Med trip after three tries at the national finals. Zarfos disappointed Donna Henry of Michigan 8-15, 15-14, 15-9 in the finals, leaving behind Gerri Stoffregen and Pat McCarrick in the semi's.

In all, 54 amateurs competed in the national amateur finals after qualifying to play in this tournament from among the ranks of thousands of players throughout the United States. ●

Results: Men's Open Singles

Round of 16: Ruben Gonzales d. Gary Sanchez; Dave Negrete d. Steve Ginsburg; Corey Brysman d. Mike Almerico; Kevin Vantrease d. Hank Marcus; Jim Cascio d. Evan Terry; Matt Mathews d. Steve Mondry; George Vierra d. Mike Ray; Gerry Price d. Dan Mohr.

Quarter-finals: Gonzales d. Negrete; Brysman d. Vantrease; Mathews d. Cascio; Price d. Vierra.

Semi-finals: Gonzales d. Brysman; Price d. Mathews.

Finals: Gonzales d. Price 15-10, 15-4.

Women's Open Singles

Round of 16: Stacey Fletcher (Bye); Sally Boyer d. Debbie Swenson; Diane Bullard d. Lynn Wojcik; Cindy Baxter d. Sheryl Kraus; Linda Forcade d. Sharon Fanning; Becky Callahan d. Donna Myer; Tammy Hajjar d. Eileen Ehrlich; Beth Crawley d. Kay Kuhfeld.

Quarter-finals: Boyer d. Fletcher; Bullard d. Baxter; Callahan d. Forcade; Hajjar d. Crawley.

Semi-finals: Bullard d. Boyer; Hajjar d. Callahan.

Finals: Hajjar d. Bullard 15-13, 15-6.

Men's Veterans Singles

Round of 16: Remen d. Grigg; Hegg d. Wirkus; Radford d. DuBolsky; Wright d. Jakinovich; Guinter d. Aguglia; Dunn d. Luciw; Schwartz d. Garfinkel; Kessing d. Montague.

Quarter-finals: Hegg d. Remen; Wright d. Radford; Guinter d. Dunn; Schwartz d. Kessing.

Semi-finals: Hegg d. Wright; Schwartz d. Guinter.

Finals: Hegg d. Schwartz 15-5, 15-10.

Women's Veterans Singles

Quarter-finals: Stoffregen (Bye); Zarfos d. Jew; Henry d. Hebert; McCarrick d. Mitchell.

Semi-finals: Zarfos d. Stoffregen; Henry d. McCarrick.

Finals: Zarfos d. Henry 8-15, 15-14, 15-9.



Tournament Results

New Mexico

1982 New Mexico State Singles
Championships
Supreme Courts
Albuquerque, NM
March 25-28

Men's Open

Semi-finals: Marzoff d. G. Sanchez 16-21, 21-12, 11-6; Neill d. Wright 21-18, 21-5

Finals: Mazaroff d. Neill 21-18, 9-21, 11-2; **Third:** Wright d. G. Sanchez (default)

Men's A Finals: E. Sanchez d. Linton 21-14, 21-20; **Third:** Nevarez d. Jim Garcia 9-21, 21-19, 11-9

Men's B Finals: O'Brien d. Linder 1-21, 21-13, 11-9; **Third:** Keeran d. Usselman 21-15, 21-16

Men's C Finals: Jorge Garcia d. Seegmiller 21-9, 21-15; **Third:** York d. Harris (default)

Men's D Finals: Laughlin d. Rhodes 17-21, 21-11, 11-10; **Third:** Collis d. Short 21-12, 21-10

Men's Novice Finals: Rose d. Juarez 18-21, 21-3, 11-4; **Third:** Kennedy d. Crites

Men's 30+ Finals: Wright d. Sanford 21-7, 21-0; **Third:** Williams d. Shul (default)

Men's 35+ Finals: Nello d. Sanford 21-14, 21-18; **Third:** T. Young d. Frank (default)

Men's 45+ Finals: Lauritsen d. Nelms 21-16, 15-21, 11-2; **Third:** Koch d. Coor 21-9, 21-14

Men's 55+ : 1st—Koller; 2nd—Sample; 3rd—Patterson
Juniors 10 & Under: 1st—Saunders; 2nd—Aragon; 3rd—Tanner

Juniors 14 & Under Finals: Shoemate d. Jelso 21-12, 21-2; **Third:** Howell d. Beebe 21-2; 21-11

Juniors 17 & Under Finals: Waddington d. Howley 15-21, 21-9, 11-3; **Third:** C. Young d. Cangialosi (default)

Women's Open Finals: Lowden d. Corsie 21-20, 21-14; **Third:** Tenorio d. Furaus 21-13, 21-14

Women's A Finals: Saavedra d. Aron 21-19, 21-14; **Third:** Harrington d. Davis 12-21, 21-18, 11-3

Women's B Finals: Sullivan d. S. Young 21-13, 21-6; **Third:** Schneider

Women's C Finals: Kliebenstein d. Doll 21-15, 21-16; **Third:** Taylor

Women's D Finals: Maestas d. McConaghy 21-16, 21-5; **Third:** Burch d. Paraskevas 21-17, 21-9

Women's Novice Finals: Juarez d. Becker 21-8, 21-8

Women's 30+ Finals: Repp d. Furaus 21-12, 19-21, 11-8; **Third:** Barnitz d. Barrack 19-21, 21-4, 11-2

New Mexico

1982 New Mexico State Doubles
Championships
Tom Young's Athletic Club
Albuquerque, NM
March 11-14

Men's Open Finals: Mazaroff/Childs d. Sanford/Wolfenbarger 15-11, 15-11; **Third:** R. Barnitz/Williams

Men's B Finals: Jelso/Twohig d. Ramirez/Danzeiser 6-15, 15-14, 11-10; **Third:** Ochoa/Linder

Men's C Finals: B. Baca/Armijo d. C. Young/Alongi 15-8, 15-3; **Third:** Lauritsen/Seegmiller

Men's D Finals: Howley/Pfister d. Lacy/G. Baca 15-10, 15-2; **Third:** Munson/Hughes

Men's 30+ Finals: Mazaroff/Sanford d. Wright/Frank 15-10, 14-15, 11-10; **Third:** Williams/Cornfield

Men's 40+ Finals: R. Barnitz/Burch d. Jelso/Twohig 15-9, 15-10; **Third:** Nelms/Gares

Juniors Finals: Howley/Pfister d. Shoemate/Cangialosi

Women's Open Finals: Corsie/Repp d. Chirigos/Furaus 15-12, 15-5; **Third:** Lowden/C. Barnitz

Women's B Finals: Sullivan/S. Young d. Moya/Sena 15-4, 15-8; **Third:** Ross/Ishimaru

Women's C Finals: Lucero/Gutierrez d. Martinez/Aragon 15-13, 15-12; **Third:** Espitia/Sena

Women's D Finals: DelFrate/Hommert d. Gower/Kandlbinder 15-8, 11-15, 11-6; **Third:** Bandoni/Chabai

Women's 30+ Finals: C. Barnitz/Repp d. Wright/Aron

California

3rd Annual Spring Sacramento Open
Sponsor: Markstein Beverage Company
Center Court South
Sacramento, CA
April 2-4, 1982

Open Singles

Semi-finals: Meyers d. Wolcott; Sullivan d. Skinner

Finals: Sullivan d. Meyers

Men's B Singles

Semi-finals: Hallowell d. Bronfield; Gann d. Greunke

Finals: Hallowell d. Gann

Men's C Singles

Semi-finals: Kreitzman d. Baca; Sotelo d. Anderson

Finals: Sotelo d. Kreitzman

Men's D Singles

Semi-finals: Jones d. Flores; Powers d. Matsubu

Finals: Powers d. Jones

Men's Beginners Singles

Semi-finals: Marion d. Contreras; Michel d. Mischke

Finals: Michel d. Marion

Men's Senior Singles

Semi-finals: DeLuca d. Dorn; Yoder d. Hvistendahl

Finals: DeLuca d. Yoder

Men's B Senior Singles

Semi-finals: Garner d. Flynn; Hayes d. Bruns

Finals: Hayes d. Garner

Women's Open Singles

Semi-finals: Ghilarducci d. Nutial; Gong d. Smith

Finals: Ghilarducci d. Gong

Women's B Singles

Semi-finals: Funes d. Bond; Clarke d. Van Maren

Finals: Funes d. Clarke

Women's C Singles

Finals: Pulis d. Winton

Women's D Singles

Semi-finals: Cox d. Benninghoven; Pacheco d. McDonald

Finals: Pacheco d. Cox

Women's Beginners Singles

Semi-finals: Bennett d. Wyman; Jackson d. Cox

Finals: Jackson d. Bennett

Open Doubles

Semi-finals: Meyer/O'Donoghue d. Sparks/Gruenke; Skinner/Almeida d. Sullivan/Wolcott

Finals: Skinner/Almeida d. Meyer/O'Donoghue

B Doubles

Semi-finals: Early/Miller d. Baca/Petrie; Bartell/Shelton d. Morrison/Kennedy

Finals: Bartell/Shelton d. Early/Miller

C Doubles

Semi-finals: Millhollin/Tonneson d. Holderfield/Blasquez; Brannan/Campbell d. Chellev/Kreitzman

Finals: Millhollin/Tonneson d. Brannan/Campbell

Women's C Doubles

Semi-finals: Reali/Linde d. O'Brien/Wilson; Sansone/Winton d. DeMences/Koch

Finals: Sansone/Winton d. Reali/Linde

Florida

Sunshine City Open
Sponsored by the Park Bank, Seamco, Burger
Chef, and Abertsons
Tyrone Racquetball Club
St. Petersburg, April 2, 3 and 4
Directors: Jim De Ladesmo, Carl Nicks, Mike
Londrigan.

Men's Open

Quarter-finals: Shawn Brown d. Curtis Winter 21-19, 21-17; Charlie Nichols d. Ken Anderson 21-12, 21-14; Randy Godwin d. Gary Biederman 21-16, 21-17; Bill Cottrill d. Jon Zucker-
man 21-5, 21-6

Semi-finals: Brown d. Nichols 21-11, 21-11; Godwin d. Cottrill 21-19, 21-13

Finals: Brown d. Godwin; **3rd—Cottrill**

Men's A

Quarter-finals: C. Nichols d. M. Hodgkinson; Ed Volck d. John Schneider 21-15, 21-19; Chris Leyshock d. Mark New-
ruhr (forfeit); Bob Newcomb d. Stu Bandell 21-17, 21-13

Semi-finals: C. Nichols d. E. Volck 21-13; 20-21, 11-2; C. Leyshock d. M. Stauderman 15-21, 21-13, 11-1

Finals: C. Nichols d. C. Leyshock 21-18, 21-10

Men's 18-24

Quarter-finals: B. Cottrill d. D. Dalabakis 21-3, 21-4; M. Hodgkinson d. M. Newruhr 21-8, 21-13; S. Bandell d. R. Lin 21-10, 21-17; S. Brown d. F. Sarabia (forfeit)

Semi-finals: B. Cottrill d. M. Hodgkinson 21-7, 14-21, 11-5; S. Brown d. S. Bandell

Finals: B. Cottrill d. S. Brown; **3rd—M. Hodgkinson**

Men's 25-29

Finals: Ken Borkaw d. James Dale 21-9, 21-5

Men's 30-34

Quarter-finals: C. Leyshock d. D. Jordan 21-13, 19-21, 11-4; S. Johnson d. J. Seba 21-14, 21-16; R. Triplett d. B. Beil 21-17, 21-19; G. Biederman d. J. Mims 21-4, 21-5

Semi-finals: C. Leyshock d. S. Johnson 21-18, 21-13; G. Biederman d. R. Triplett 21-2, 21-10

Finals: G. Biederman d. C. Leyshock 12-21, 21-11, 11-1; **3rd—R. Triplett**

Men's 35-39

Quarter-finals: Murry Atkinson d. Mariano Cibran 21-4, 21-11; Joe La Fasso d. Rich Stacey 21-20, 21-19; E. Volck d. Paul St. John 21-11, 21-4; M. Londrigan d. J. Mims 21-7, 21-2

Semi-finals: J. La Fasso d. M. Atkinson; E. Volck d. M. Londrigan 21-17, 21-18

Finals: E. Volck d. J. La Fasso; **3rd—M. Londrigan**

Men's B

Quarter-finals: M. Stauderman d. J. Heffner 10-21, 21-5, 11-9; T. Giorgio d. D. Jordan 20-21, 21-17, 11-8; J. Seba d. G. Clinton 21-15, 13-21, 11-3; J. Privett d. J. McDonald (forfeit)

Semi-finals: M. Stauderman d. T. Giorgio 21-9, 21-4; J. Privett d. J. Seba 21-5, 21-7

Finals: M. Stauderman d. J. Privett 18-21, 21-10, 11-0; **3rd—J. Seba**

Men's C

Quarter-finals: Terry Nelson d. Fitzgerald (forfeit); Donald Kerr d. M. Lee 21-20, 17-21, 11-5; B. Dixon d. Bret Bergland 21-16, 21-14; Keith Glasgow d. J. Burke 21-19, 14-21, 11-5

Semi-finals: d. Kerr d. T. Nelson 18-21, 21-19, 11-5; B. Bergland d. K. Glasgow 21-11, 21-0

Finals: B. Bergland d. D. Kerr 21-6, 21-19; **3rd—T. Nelson**

Women's A

Quarter-finals: P. Atkinson d. D. Jackson 21-11, 21-13, J. Crist d. H. Sherburne 15-21, 21-20, 11-2; B. Nist d. L. Demick 21-10, 15-21, 11-4; R. Fish d. L. Dourner 21-6, 21-9

Semi-finals: J. Crist d. P. Atkinson 21-6, 21-11; R. Fish d. B. Nist 19-21, 21-6, 11-1

Finals: R. Fish d. J. Crist 21-11, 21-17; **3rd**—Nist

Women's B

Quarter-finals: B. Nist d. D. Jackson 11-21, 21-18, 11-5; V. Cooper d. L. Derrick 21-13, 21-16; C. Feeny d. P. Carr 21-3, 21-12; H. Sherburne d. M. Hickox 21-5, 21-7

Semi-finals: B. Nist d. V. Cooper 21-16, 21-8; C. Feeny d. H. Sherburne 21-18, 21-17

Finals: C. Feeny d. B. Nist 21-17, 21-12; **3rd**—V. Cooper

Women's C

Quarter-finals: C. Smith d. J. Everett 9-21, 21-11, 11-10; J. Berranson d. G. Spiegel 21-11, 21-15; A. Marnie d. J. Warden 21-19, 21-17; D. Forsyth d. R. Holder 21-5, 21-1

Semi-finals: D. Forsyth d. A. Marnie 21-17, 21-4; J. Berranson d. C. Smith 21-15, 21-10

Finals: J. Berranson d. D. Forsyth 22-14, 17-21, 11-0; **3rd**—A. Marnie

South Dakota

1982 West River Playoffs, South Dakota State Racquetball Championships
Sponsored by Penn
The Supreme Courts Racquetball and Fitness Club
Rapid City, April 2-4

Directors: Pat Branaugh and Harvey Magee

Men's A

Quarter-finals: Bob Hastings d. Rob Hammerquist 21-11, 21-13; Terry Hill d. Larry Simonson 21-11, 21-15; Todd Thielen d. Clint Koble 21-7, 21-10; Jim Synhorst d. Todd Johnson 21-10, 21-5

Semi-finals: Bob Hastings d. Terry Hill 21-7, 21-9; Todd Thielen d. Jim Synhorst 21-15, 21-16

Finals: Todd Thielen d. Bob Hastings 21-17, 8-21, 15-9

Men's 30+

Quarter-finals: Pat Branaugh d. Harvey Magee 14-21, 21-13, 15-10

Semi-finals: Pat Branaugh d. John Haeder 6-21, 21-13, 15-4; Ron Bender d. Chuck Vail 21-13, 21-15

Finals: Ron Bender d. Pat Branaugh 21-16, 21-18

Men's 40+

Quarter-finals: Chet Andrews d. Larry Lytle 21-10, 21-12; Dick Shilvock d. Ron Baillie 11-21, 21-11, 15-8; Jim Oswald d. John Sterner 21-14, 21-18

Semi-finals: Jim Oswald d. Dick Shilvock 21-12, 20-21, 15-9; Bill Stork d. Chet Andrews 16-21, 21-20, 15-4

Finals: Jim Oswald d. Bill Stork

Men's B

Quarter-finals: Jim Oswald d. Bill Schulz 21-13, 18-21, 15-8; Steve Finger d. Mark Pforr 21-16, 21-10; Kip Lytle d. Bob Baringer 21-11, 15-21, 15-11; Mike Morrie d. Tom Trewick 21-10, 21-19

Semi-finals: Steve Finger d. Jim Oswald 21-15, 20-21, 15-11; Kip Lytle d. Mike Morrie 21-12, 21-20

Finals: Kip Lytle d. Steve Finger 21-16, 21-18

Men's C

Quarter-finals: Craig Timm d. Greg Rowe 21-15, 20-21, 15-8; Phil Hoffsten d. Dan St. Pierce 21-14, 21-10; Mark Kvemum d. Mark Nefzger 21-18, 15-21, 15-9; Rob Johnson d. Les Dvorak 21-4, 21-5

Semi-finals: Phil Hoffsten d. Craig Timm 21-19, 21-3; Rob Johnson d. Mark Kvemum 21-16, 21-6

Finals: Rob Johnson d. Phil Hoffsten 21-17, 21-10

Men's C/D

Quarter-finals: George Sunday d. Rick Clegg 21-10, 11-21, 15-8; Ron Beebe d. Terry Charlton 21-18, 21-13; Joe Tischler d. Scott Ladenburger 21-13, 21-7; Mark Nefzger d. Pat Durrett 21-14, 21-5

Semi-finals: Ron Beebe d. George Sunday 21-14, 21-12; Mark Nefzger d. Joe Tischler 21-11, 21-12

Finals: Mark Nefzger d. Ron Beebe 21-19, 21-10

Men's Novice

Quarter-finals: Keith White d. Randy Erikson 21-14, 21-5; Jeff Rinehart d. Bruce Peterson 21-8, 21-3; R.D. Arnold d. Craig Ladenburger 19-21, 21-11, 15-12; Steve Emery d. Dave Lynde 21-15, 21-18

Semi-finals: R.D. Arnold d. Steve Emery 21-10, 20-21, 15-14; Keith White d. Jeff Rinehart 21-12, 21-14

Finals: Keith White d. R.D. Arnold 21-10, 21-18

Men's A Doubles

Quarter-finals: Greff/Hammerquist d. Steffen/Nelson 21-15, 9-21, 15-13

Semi-finals: Simonson/Thielen d. Greff/Hammerquist 21-5, 21-14; Hastings/Bender d. Johnson/Synhorst 21-20, 21-9

Finals: Hastings/Bender d. Simonson/Thielen 21-14, 21-19

Men's C Doubles

Quarter-finals: Poppe/Pforr d. Dvorak/Simonson 21-17, 21-10; Hoffsten/Moyer d. Didier/Kvemum 21-10, 15-6

Semi-finals: Timm/Dean d. Hoffsten/Moyer 21-15, 14-21, 15-12; Rowe/Hericks d. Poppe/Pforr 17-21, 21-15, 15-14

Finals: Rowe/Hericks d. Timm/Dean 21-10, 21-9

Men's Novice Doubles

Quarter-finals: Ravert/Ravert d. Mittan/Arnold 21-14, 21-8

Semi-finals: Ravert/Ravert d. Flores/Bunkowske 13-21, 21-7, 15-13; Timmerman/Sears d. Anderson/Fricke

Finals: Ravert/Ravert d. Timmerman/Sears 21-19, 14-21, 15-1

Women's B

Quarter-finals: Marge Stork d. Denn Paulson 21-18, 21-4; Arlene Atterbury d. Mary Jane Nelson 21-16, 21-6; Judy Johnson d. Sue Schulz 13-21, 21-4, 15-7; Cyd Durrett d. Michells Rounds 21-6, 21-17

Semi-finals: Marge Stork d. Arlene Atterbury 21-10, 21-15; Judy Johnson d. Cyd Durrett 21-17, 21-18

Finals: Judy Johnson d. Marge Stork 11-21, 21-17, 15-13

Women's C

Quarter-finals: Sue Schulz d. Curti Morgan 18-21, 21-12, 15-13; Lori Coble d. Jeanne Jacobson 21-11, 21-9; Marsha Schuh d. Peggy Kvemum 21-17, 21-12; Mary Peterson d. Julie Patterson 21-14, 21-7

Semi-finals: Mary Peterson d. Marsha Schuh 21-14, 21-17; Sue Schulz d. Lori Coble 21-20, 6-21, 15-4

Finals: Sue Schulz d. Mary Peterson 21-13, 21-9

Women's C/D

Quarter-finals: Mary Branaugh d. Jeanne Galbraith 21-7, 21-10; Lynn Georgas d. Myrna Durrett 21-19, 12-21, 15-10; Paula Russler d. Anita Adel 21-11, 21-5; Mikal Kulesza d. Mary Ann Jallo 21-14, 21-6

Semi-finals: Lynn Georgas d. Mary Branaugh 21-12, 14-21, 15-0; Paula Russler d. Mikal Kulesza 21-8, 21-19

Finals: Paula Russler d. Lynn Georgas 21-14, 21-15

Women's Novice

Quarter-finals: Aida Roig-Compton d. Fern Paulson 21-6, 21-8

Semi-finals: Becci Flanders d. Aida Roig-Compton 21-9, 21-8; Melissa Young d. Lora Hrnir 19-21, 21-19, 15-9

Finals: Melissa Young d. Becci Flanders 21-15, 21-15

North Dakota

North Dakota YMCA State Tournament
Grand Forks, April 4, 1982

Men's Open: Chip Lien d. Dan Gordon 21-7, 21-5

Men's A: Mark Kosin d. Jeff Cahill 21-14, 21-14

Men's B: Kurt Schmidt d. Mike Olson

Men's C: Devin Mogck d. Jay Waters

Men's Open Doubles: Jay McGurran/Dan Gordon d. Terry Fowler/Chip Lien

Men's B Doubles: Brent Jenkins/Neil Bosch d. Ken Hager/Tom Kozlowski 8-21, 21-9, 11-4

Women's A: Carol Rudesill d. Donna Hutchins

Women's B: Cheryl Zitzow d. Dawn Highness 19-21, 21-20, 11-9

Women's C: Janet Klinke d. Sandy Rehling

Women's Open Doubles: 1st—Carol Rudesill/Cheryl Zitzow

Wisconsin

1982 Wisconsin YMCA Singles
Madison, April 16, 17 and 18

Men's Open: Rick Baumgart d. Pete Kerswill 11-7, 11-3, 11-10; **3rd**—Tom Mantz

Men's Masters (45+): Robert Rector d. Les Kirchen 11-8, 11-8, 11-8; **3rd**—Coby Stanelle

Men's B: Jeff Semanas d. Tom Kennedy 11-6, 11-5, 11-0; **3rd**—Todd Schoenfeldt

Men's C: Tom Bowers d. Gregg Anderson 11-4, 11-3, 10-11, 11-7; **3rd**—Bob Leonard

Women's B: Fran Deuster d. Shelly Lusk 11-3, 11-6, 11-0; **3rd**—Mary Peterson

Women's C: Terri Moen d. Karen Diringer 11-1, 11-2, 11-2; **3rd**—Bitsy Kirsweil

Team Champion: Woodsen YMCA, Wasau, WI

North Carolina

Nancy Baker Moore Memorial Tournament
Regency Courts
Wilson, April 16, 17 and 18, 1982
Proceeds used to establish a Scholastic-athletic scholarship in the name of Nancy Baker Moore at East Carolina University Greenville, NC, and to benefit the Special Olympics.

Men's Open: W. Vincent d. S. Martin 15-8, 15-13; **3rd**—J. Bailey

Men's Seniors: 1st—C. Wiles; 2nd—D. Cartee; **3rd**—L. Johnson

Men's B: J. Saylor d. N. Green 15-1, 15-11; **3rd**—K. Zaytown

Men's C: E. Fulford Sr. d. B. Cohick 15-3, 15-6; **3rd**—J. Valvao

Men's D: D. Johnson d. H. Sullivan 15-8, 15-8; **3rd**—E. Fulford, Jr.

Men's Novice: J.P. Hunt d. P. Blisesi 15-10, 5-15, 11-5; 3rd—L. Graham

Men's Open Doubles: J. Slate/L. Johnson d. G. Troupe/D. McAllister 15-12, 15-14; 3rd—R. Watkins/M. Monfre

Men's B Doubles: D. Johnson/D. Chester d. C. Wiles/Ciezko

Women's Open: C. Frenck d. M. Kumahoahoa 15-13, 6-15, 11-10; 3rd—L. Baumler

Women's B: S. Parrish d. J. McVeigh 15-11, 14-15, 11-5; 3rd—C. Manthel

Women's C: J. McVeigh d. N. Mize 15-4, 15-6; 3rd—C. Palmer

Women's D: P. Hardin d. L. Thorne 15-10, 15-9; 3rd—P. Roth

Women's Novice: M. Mangum d. T. Ruffin 15-7, 15-4; 3rd—B. Eaton

Women's Open Doubles: C. Frenck/L. Baumler d. M. Newbold/H. Moore 15-9, 15-6; 3rd—C. Woods/G. Moran

South Dakota

South Dakota State Racquetball Championships
The Supreme Courts Racquetball and Fitness Club
Rapid City, April 16-18, 1982

Men's A: 1st—Bob Hastings; 2nd—Dave Gross; 3rd—Jim Synhorst

Men's 30+: 1st—John Haider; 2nd—Pat Branaugh; 3rd—Randy Kouri

Men's 40+: 1st—Dale Margesen; 2nd—Chet Andrews; 3rd—Larry Lytle

Men's 50+: 1st—Bob Buche, Sr.; 2nd—Mac McDougall; 3rd—Mick Evans

Men's B: 1st—Jeff Muehl; 2nd—Jeff Buche; 3rd—Steve Finger

Men's C: 1st—Craig Timm; 2nd—Denny Fokken; 3rd—Don Kettering

Men's C/D: 1st—Lori Kjergaard; 2nd—Mark Nefzger; 3rd—Ron Beebe

Men's Novice: 1st—Steve Slowey; 2nd—Mark Clement; 3rd—Keith White

Men's A Doubles: 1st—Todd Johnson/Jim Synhorst; 2nd—Todd Thielen/Larry Simonson; 3rd—Bob Hastings/Ron Bender

Men's B Doubles: 1st—Joe Edelen/Greg Stahl; 2nd—Bob Buchel/Jeff Buche; 3rd—Jeff Muehl/Dan Case

Men's C Doubles: 1st—Denny Fokken/Don Kettering; 2nd—Greg Rowe/Jim Hericks; 3rd—Mitch Martens/Jim Funke

Men's Novice Doubles: 1st—Lori Kjergaard/Ron Benjamin; 2nd—Craig Ravert/Tim Ravert; 3rd—Fred Flores

Women's A: 1st—Wendy Gunderson; 2nd—Cheryl Williams; 3rd—Sandy Hill

Women's 30+: 1st—Vickie Finger; 2nd—Linda Magee; 3rd—Mary K. Kelly

Women's B: 1st—Sandy Gross; 2nd—Cyd Durrett; 3rd—Judy Johnson

Women's C: 1st—Janelle Brookman; 2nd—Lori Coble; 3rd—Julie Patterson

Women's C/D: 1st—Paula Russler; 2nd—Linda Rosand; 3rd—Anita Adel

Women's Novice: 1st—Midge Stengle; 2nd—Julie Schmitz; 3rd—Melissa Young

California

6th Annual Women's Racquetball Classic
Sacramento Handball-Racquetball Club
Sacramento, April 30-May 2, 1982
Director: Jose Phillips

Open Singles

Quarter-finals: Michelle Morrow d. Carmel Connick 21-9, 21-3; Monica Sharts d. Sharon Farmer (forfeit); Debbie Sloan d. Debby Ghilarducci 21-9, 21-14; Mo Nard d. Alida Hull 21-4, 21-7

Semi-finals: Morrow d. Sharts 21-13, 21-6; Sloan d. Nard 13-21, 21-9, 21-4

Finals: Morrow d. Sloan 21-12, 21-6

B Singles

Quarter-finals: Rosie Chiu d. Nancy McDonald 10-21, 21-6, 21-9; Melody Shields d. Geneva Johnigan 21-3, 21-4; Linda Smith d. Lynne Ayers (forfeit); Laurel King d. Laurie Pilonin 21-10, 21-9

Semi-finals: Shields d. Chiu 21-9, 21-8; Smith d. King 21-11, 21-5

Finals: Smith d. Shields 21-6, 21-11

B Doubles

Quarter-finals: Coyne/Pierce (bye); Chiu/Hull d. Crets/Smith

21-10, 21-13; Johnigan/Shields d. Greunke/Maxwell 9-21, 21-10, 21-3; Thompson/Rinker d. Herzoff/Perez (forfeit)

Semi-finals: Chiu/Hull d. Coyne/Pierce 21-6, 21-9; Johnigan/Shields d. Thompson/Rinker 21-9, 21-12

Finals: Johnigan/Shields d. Chiu/Hull 21-10, 4-21, 21-5

C Doubles

Quarter-finals: Cracchiolo/Vereschagin d. Fry/Hernandez 21-7, 21-4; Miller/Sansone d. Brownfield/Sample 21-8, 5-21, 21-5; Pocquette/Scott d. Padilla/Wilson 11-21, 21-11, 21-8; Pulis/Pulis d. Flores/Rakela 21-4, 21-11

Semi-finals: Miller/Sansone d. Cracchiolo/Vereschagin 6-21, 21-11, 21-7; Pulis/Pulis d. Pocquette/Scott 21-10, 21-8

Finals: Pulis/Pulis d. Miller/Sansone 14-21, 21-10, 21-7

C Singles

Quarter-finals: Kris Jones d. Carol Vereschagin 12-21, 21-13, 21-10; Linda Ward d. Carol Rakela 21-5, 21-6; Sandra Maxwell d. Cherisse Sansone 21-11, 21-3; Shirley Thompson d. Tonnie Miller 21-6, 21-7

Semi-finals: Ward d. Jones 21-14, 21-0; Thompson d. Maxwell, 21-11, 21-11

Finals: Ward d. Thompson 8-21, 21-8, 21-5

Open Doubles (Round Robin—Order of Finish): 1st—Monica Sharts/Dana Miller; 2nd—Margaret McEntee/Michelle Morrow; 3rd—Debbie Sloan/Rikki Field



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Neiderhoffer Shocks Hogan At 1975 National Championships

Date: April 25, 1975

Tournament: Seamco/NRC National Championships

Site: Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas

Division: Men's Professional Singles

Round: Round of 32, lower bracket

Victor Neiderhoffer was on a roll. In the space of five months he had won everything there was to win in the world of squash, including big victories over nearly every member of the world-famous Khan family. There were no new squash worlds to conquer, so Vic looked elsewhere for his challenge. He decided to challenge the racquetball world.

"I'm the greatest, but in a limited sphere," he told the *New York Times* in February of 1975. "To prove it, I'm entering the nationals of racquetball in Las Vegas, a game I've never played before. But I'm going to win it."

That boast, and subsequent comments, caused the neck hairs of every top racquetball player to bristle. Why should this Vic Nieder—whoever-he-is think he can walk into our sport and in the space of less than three months wrest the national title from the likes of Brumfield, Schmidtke, Keeley, Serot or Strandemo? That's craziness, lunacy.

Neiderhoffer prefaced his entry in Las Vegas by playing in the Milwaukee Pro/Am a month prior to the Nationals. He lost to Schmidtke 10 and 13 and looked awkward doing it. That match eased the minds of many top racquetballers ("he'll never improve enough to threaten us in another month" they thought).

At the same time, it also eased Neiderhoffer's mind ("10 and 13 against a solid top four guy like Schmidtke isn't bad for playing less than two months—all I have to do is work harder and more specifically, now that I have a taste of the real game").

Like Neiderhoffer, young Marty Hogan was also on a roll, although it was nothing like Vic's amazing string of victories and continental squash titles. Hogan, then 17 years old, was beginning to make waves in the racquetball world, although still six months away from his first pro win. He had been making routine chopped liver out of all amateur brackets and was destined to become a major force in the game.

In fact, the only thing standing between Hogan and the eventual greatness that he attained was his on-court antics, the ranting and raving, belittling, baiting and general ugliness that was his style. Yet nobody doubted for a second his shot-making ability. He could hit every shot, with power and control.

Hogan's streak was not of victories but of solid performances by virtue of which he reached the round of 16 in every pro tourney he'd played to this date. Most of his "wins" were taking the form of close defeats, going three games with many of the game's top players.

As odd as it seemed, this pimply punk of a kid represented the world of racquetball against New York's Neiderhoffer, the invader. With thousands of illegally bet dollars being held in the fully-packed gallery on court 5 at the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas, one of the greatest matches of all time began.

* * *



Victor Neiderhoffer

Vic Neiderhoffer was used to galleries being against him. As the usual favorite in most of his squash matches, he was accustomed to the crowds reacting in favor of the underdog. In Las Vegas, Vic was the obvious technical underdog, but it was Hogan who entered the match as the "sentimental" choice.

As is still the case today, a great majority of spectators at the national championships were players in that event, and Las Vegas was no exception. Perhaps they wanted to see Neiderhoffer "get his," or perhaps they just wanted to cheer on the diminutive Hogan. Whatever the reason, Neiderhoffer found few of the racquetball players in his corner. He was backed only by his boastful uncle, Howie Eisenberg, and his wife.

Eisenberg, a championship-caliber handball and paddleball player, was on hand an hour early securing bets on Neiderhoffer. As game time neared, the dollar volume gained. It was another dramatic touch to this strange encounter.

"I wasn't unusually confident," said Neiderhoffer. "My great year in squash coupled with my paddle experience and racquetball learning led me to believe I had a chance. Once I saw Brumfield and Keeley play I knew I wasn't that good."

"I didn't know anything about Hogan. I had heard him screaming and yelling in an earlier match, but that was about it."

Hogan, whose primary claim to fame in those days was precisely that screaming and yelling, began it from point one. Neiderhoffer reacted stoically, allowing the youngster to be seen for what he was—grossly unsportsmanlike.

"Frankly, it was the worst sportsmanship display I had ever seen in my life," said Neiderhoffer. "Eventually, I think it led to Marty's demise. In squash no talking is allowed—you never say a word. Whenever Marty scored a point he'd shout and rub it in. It was shocking to me. Plus, his booming, high-pitched shriek scared the daylights out of me."

"I didn't want to lose to this guy. I would have done nearly anything to win."

Hogan mounted his points early in game one, taking a quick 3-0 advantage and building it chunks at a time. But it wasn't

Neiderhoffer participates in an odd racquets vs. paddles, outdoor doubles game. Although successful in paddleball, squash, tennis, handball and table tennis, Vic never quite made it in racquetball.



good enough for Marty to score points and take a big lead. He was obviously trying to humiliate Neiderhoffer.

"Hold him under 10! Hold him under 10!" Hogan bellowed as the score mounted to 8-0, 10-0. And the crowd loved it, chanting *"Marty! Marty!"* at the end of a successful Hogan rally. At the end of each point Hogan refused to give Neiderhoffer the ball, another bad habit that would haunt Marty later in the match.

"What amazed me most about the gallery," said Neiderhoffer, *"was their lack of disguise. In squash, or even tennis, rarely do the spectators applaud a poor shot, or a double fault. In racquetball, or at least during this match, they were in a frenzy. It was pandemonium. The fans didn't even try to hide their true emotions."*

Those emotions were all encouraging Hogan to keep the pressure on. But as Neiderhoffer became more adjusted to the quicker pace of Hogan's game, he began to score a few points of his own, although never seriously challenging in game one, which ended 21-14.

"At least he didn't hold me under 10," said Neiderhoffer. *"I really didn't try all that hard when he got the big lead. I wanted to learn on the court and apply it to the second, and hopefully, third games."*

Neiderhoffer's strategy was based on his squash experience—drive the ball down the lines. In the best shape of his life, Vic felt he could handle a long, drawn-out match, but the problem was making the match long and drawn-out.

While his passing shots were effective, Neiderhoffer was the first to admit his frustration at not being able to kill the ball.

"I really was having a hard time of it," he said. *"I couldn't win points because I couldn't kill the ball. My entire game in squash was geared to hitting the ball 18 inches high (the telltale). And I was having a difficult time preventing points because my running game was out of synch. In squash I was known as a good retriever. I did not cover well against Hogan."*

What Neiderhoffer did do was hang in there.

Game two was tight and as it got tighter, the gallery seemed to become a bit more sympathetic to Neiderhoffer's cause. The fact that this 31-year-old neophyte had shown such great ability through pure hard work, dedication and guts seemed to impress the racquetball crowd.

And for Neiderhoffer, it was amazing that he was even competitive, given the facts that he could hardly get a court at his home club (*"the handball players would beat me up if I didn't give up the court when I practiced"*) and that he had no top caliber players to practice with.

"After I lost to Schmidtke in Milwaukee," said Vic, *"I figured all I needed to do was work harder. I wasn't able to analyze the drastic weaknesses in my game. It would have helped if the court I practiced on had a ceiling."*

Despite it all Neiderhoffer won the second game 21-19, setting the stage for the incredible third game (played to 21 in those days).

Hogan continued to try his psyching antics, being too inexperienced in life to recognize that they were having no effect on Neiderhoffer, and a negative effect on

himself. Vic had been playing competitively for 27 years in paddleball, tennis, squash, handball and table tennis. He was famous for his ability to withstand pressure and nothing Hogan did had any effect.

"Hogan was in a frenzy of his own," said Neiderhoffer. *"I think the weight of carrying the racquetball world on his shoulders, plus the pressure of so much money riding on the outcome, helped create a fever pitch."*

By the middle of game two Neiderhoffer's serves were becoming more effective and he achieved some semblance of a kill shot now and then. But his basic strategy remained the same: to keep the ball in play and allow Hogan to make the mistakes. He had no other choice.

Vic took a slight lead early in game three, but Hogan roared back, shooting from deep court, killing the ball and showing flashes of the brilliance that later marked his reign. Neiderhoffer plodded along, looking somewhat awkward, but retrieving well, passing down the lines and effectively using a strange, over-head, Z drive serve. But it was the passing game that bothered Hogan.

"I learned much later that when you play Vic you really have to be hitting your shots well," said Hogan. *"At the time I didn't think there was anyone who could*



stay with him on the passing game. His passes were more than exceptional, they were perfect."

Two hours and 15 minutes after they started it was 19-all in the third game, with Neiderhoffer staying with Hogan shot for shot. As Vic won the rally, earning himself the serve, for the zillionth time Hogan wouldn't relinquish the ball. Now it was time for Neiderhoffer to turn the tables.

He grabbed the ball out of Marty's hand and looking straight at the kid pressed the ball between Marty's eyes.

"This is my ball," he said, and walked to the service zone.

Hogan was shaken, but managed to maintain most of his cool. The encounter was not lost on the gallery, nor to Neiderhoffer.

"I think it led to my win," said Vic. "It gave me a slight physical edge in the sense that he finally accepted that he was dealing with an equal in competitive instincts."

Neiderhoffer, scrambling, managed a point to take a 20-19 lead, but a Hogan kill shot regained the serve and a back-hand pinch kill by Hogan brought the gallery to its feet, at 20-20.

Hogan's next serve was a blistering hard Z to Neiderhoffer's forehand, a shot that had given Vic trouble all day. This time the gods were with Neiderhoffer.

"By some luck I hit a perfect kill shot," said Vic. It was still 20-20, with Neiderhoffer serving for the match.

"I hit Marty my hard, overhead Z serve," said Vic, "and he blasted it right past me. I didn't think I could possibly retrieve it. I lunged at the ball after it was literally by me."

The next thing he knew, the gallery gasped, then screamed and finally cheered. Somehow, he had retrieved the shot, and by some miracle, the ball reached the front wall.

"I couldn't believe it," said Neiderhoffer. "The ref said 'match' and I was never so stunned in my life. I was just lucky to get my racquet on the ball, let alone hit a winner."

What Vic actually hit was a Z ball to the front wall. His lunging, forehand retrieve hit the deep side wall, caromed cross court toward the front left corner, hit far forward on the left side wall, and as it lazily allowed itself to become a pawn to the laws of gravity, grazed the front wall for the final, incredible point—a 21-20 victory.

Hogan, believing his shot to be a winning pass to the right, never moved.

Neiderhoffer went out to collect his money and begin preparing for his next match. Hogan reflected on his bad luck and his first, big-time lesson in humility.

"That loss hurt a lot," he said. "But it made me more determined to get my head on straight and quit all the junk. Vic came up to me later in the week and talked to me. He said that if I got rid of all the baloney I'd be a much better player."

"I took his advice to heart. I saw the way he beat me. He sure didn't beat me on sheer racquetball skills. He beat me because he was much smarter than I was."

Both players look back on the match as one of those interesting occurrences where two people's paths cross at exactly the right time to produce an unusual event. As Hogan outgrew his on-the-court ugliness, he gained the confidence and concentration necessary to become a champion. He also gained the respect of his peers, including Neiderhoffer.

As for Neiderhoffer, he regrets that the racquetball players didn't view his participation as the pure competition it represented.

"I wasn't trying to humiliate anybody," he said. "I thought I'd bring attention to the sport. I thought I could win when I announced my intent to do so; however, I mistakenly assumed more of my other racquet sports experience would translate to racquetball. In truth much of it hurt, especially my squash experience."

Marty Hogan, of course, went on to scores of professional victories including four national titles. His record will probably never be equalled in terms of pure domination of a sport.

Neiderhoffer, who lost his next match in the '75 Nationals to number six ranked Ron Rubenstein 21-19, 21-18, gave racquetball a brief comeback attempt in 1978. But after a severe ankle sprain he concluded that the combination of age and business considerations would make it impossible to reach his racquetball goal.

"I was never able to put it all together in racquetball," said Vic. "But I don't regret my participation at all. All those invigorating moments, the true nature of the players and spectators, people trying to make something out of a great sport—that's what life is all about."

"I wanted to do as well as I could. I wanted to win when my opponent was at the top of his game. That's all that mattered." ●

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