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Dear Members,

We are most pleased to announce to our membership and the Nation at large, that the International Amateur Racquetball Federation has been extended an invitation to participate, as an exhibition sport, in the World Games I, to be held July, 1981, in Santa Clara, California. This is the most important development in our sport since the first National Championships were held under the auspices of the International Racquetball Association. Our sport has truly arrived, as it has been accepted by the Governing Bodies of Sports throughout the world. Racquetball will participate, along with such sports as Badminton, Baseball, Body Building, Bowling, Boxing, Casting, Karate, Powerlifting, Roller-Skating, Softball, Taekwondo, Tug-of-War, and Water Skiing.

The United States team, both men and women, will be selected from the National Doubles winners (October 1980), and the winners of the National Singles, to be held in May, 1981. Other countries slated to compete will be Canada, Mexico, Holland, Ireland and Japan.

In addition to this exciting news, the AARA Board of Directors met in Boston during the 1980 National Doubles Championships. Following are highlights of that meeting.

2. Divided the present nine Regions in the country into 16 Regions, as follows:
   Region 1: Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut; Region 2: New York, New Jersey; Region 3: District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware; Region 4: Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina; Region 5: Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee; Region 6: Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma; Region 7: Texas, Louisiana; Region 8: Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin; Region 9: West Virginia, Ohio; Region 10: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky; Region 11: North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska; Region 12: Arizona, New Mexico, Utah; Region 13: Wyoming, Colorado; Region 14: Nevada, California, Hawaii; Region 15: Montana, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Alaska; Region 16: Americans in Europe.
3. Awarded to AMF Voit the Official ball status of the AARA 1981 Regionals and Nationals.
4. Voted to send a USA team for North American zone competition among Canada, United States and Mexico.
5. Adopted the Simborg Code of Conduct on Self-Refereeing.
6. Appointed Phil Panarella as the AARA’s consultant on eyeguard protection.

Of course, many other developments were discussed and dealt with, but the above were far and away the most important items on the agenda. It is important to note that Canada’s participation in the World Games and North American zone competition is subject to the Canadian Racquetball Association’s approval by its Board of Directors — who will meet this month. All of the above items mentioned will be discussed in detail in future issues of Racquetball. In closing, let me say, 1981 certainly promises to be an exciting year for the amateur player.

Regards,

Luke St. Onge
Executive Director
Letters To The Editor

Today I received the 8th place prize I won in the contest (AARA Sweepstakes). I would like to thank you for the Aftate products. With all the men in my family (which includes my husband and seven sons), as well as my four daughters, we all use at least one of each of these Aftate foot sprays or powders. And of course, for the men, the gel is great. This is the first time I ever won anything and I am just thrilled. I just wanted to say thanks with this note.

Dorris Gilbert
Westminster, California

Your July/August issue was excellent — hope you will continue with your articles on the game's developments. I appreciated the Penn Racquetball AARA official rules pamphlet.

Joseph J. Menn
Wyoming, Pennsylvania

In regard to your September 1980 issue — on page 38, Final 1980 AARA Rankings, Men's 55+, number 7. You spelled my Father's name wrong. It is spelled J. Hinkamp.

John Hinkamp, Jr.
Miami, Florida

I have just received my card for a further extension of a family membership in the AARA. Please send cards for additional members of my family. Our whole family really enjoys racquetball, the magazine, and the benefits of the AARA.

Connie Kinderman
Reading, Pennsylvania

Just a short note to update my article on racquetball in the military (Racquetball, July/August 1980). The all-services tournament (i.e., the one sponsored by the military and not the one held every year by the AARA military commissioner Dan Samek) will be held in February of 1981 and not October, as I reported in the article. The courts at Lakland are not air conditioned so it was decided to play it safe and move the tournament dates to a cooler month.

Tom Slear
Enfield, Connecticut

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Ed Martin is the National Junior Commissioner for the AARA.

The past year has been an extremely exciting one for myself and the nine regional directors of the AARA Junior Council. There seems to be a burst of enthusiasm for the junior player and what he or she means to our sport. We are riding high on the crest of that enthusiasm.

There are a number of goals which the Junior Council has set for the upcoming year. They include:

1. An educational program designed to assist court clubs in promoting local junior activities.
2. Professional instruction in the form of a summer camp in each region of the country.
3. Change the date of the Junior Nationals to earlier in the year so the maximum number of players may participate.
4. Look seriously at our current scoring system.
5. Develop a comprehensive national ranking system for the junior player.
6. Establish a circuit of junior tournaments within each region which will be sanctioned by the AARA.

We recognize that it is going to take an extreme – and united – effort by our council, parents, manufacturers, club owners and junior players to realize these goals. We all must pull together if these ideas are to become reality!

If any parents, manufacturers or juniors have any positive input, please write me at the address below or contact your regional director. We are on the move, so please join with us to ensure the continued growth of our sport!

Ed Martin
National Junior Commissioner
c/o Sun Oaks Racquet Club
3452 Argyle Rd.
Redding, CA 96002
916-221-4405

1981 Calendar
State Championships: February 27-March 1
Regional Championships: March 6-8
National Championships: April 13-16

**The Junior Nationals will be held at the Supreme Court West in Wichita, Kansas, under the able directorship of Dewane Grimes.
Courting The Japanese

The following is a special bulletin to all readers of Racquetball, from Milton L. Radmilovich, of the Japan Amateur Racquetball Federation.

The first Japanese racquetball court for the general public is scheduled to open in November (but no later than December) of this year in Tokyo. This is a historic moment for racquetball in Japan and Asia. The exact location and details as to how it is to come about will be released for publication in December.) of this year in Tokyo. This is a historic moment for racquetball in Japan and Asia. The exact location and details as to how it is to come about will be released for publication in December.

The group supporting the construction of the first Japanese court is comprised of members of the Japan Racquetball Federation and the Japan Amateur Racquetball Association (JARA), both of which are dedicated to support of the amateur player in Japan. The court will be situated in Japan's finest health center, a large, $7 million facility operated by Do Sports Plaza. The court will be opened in conjunction with the eighth anniversary of this major leader in Japanese health and fitness programs.

The court, complete with glass back wall, is being supplied by Terstep Recreation Inc. of Indiana, U.S.A., and is a completely portable court system. Do Sports Plaza is a subsidiary of the Nisshin Sugar Manufacturing Company of Tokyo, and is active in introducing new physical fitness methods to the Japanese public.

Complete plans have been drawn up to introduce the game to Japanese players, training of officials, and expand court development. JARA officials hope to see at least 100,000 Japanese players within three to four years. Rules books have already been translated into Japanese. Elaborate preparations are being made for the opening ceremonies. The first Japanese Open, featuring Japanese racquetball players will be held simultaneously with the grand opening, or at the latest, in December.

Fibersesin Goes European

One of the first commercial full-amenities racquetball health clubs patterned after successful clubs in America, opened in Hamburg, Germany last month. The Racquetball Center-Jenfeld Club in Jenfeld, (Hamburg) Germany, features 11 racquetball courts utilizing Fibersesin Recreation Court Panels, a solarium including a sauna, a cold pool and massage area, a gymnasium with exercise machines and a complete restaurant. The club is owned by a partnership of Hamburg businessmen who are involved with tennis and squash. The court wall system was installed by Hetco-AES of Hamburg - Schenefeld.

Also overseas, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army have selected Fibersesin Court Panels for 100 modular type racquetball court buildings for installation throughout Europe this year.

Fibersesin is a custom laminator and fabricator located in southeastern Wisconsin. They employ about 200 and serve a variety of markets ranging from X-ray machine tops to institutional, industrial and residential furniture components to court wall panels and door units. Today over 7,000 courts are utilizing Fibersesin Recreation Court Panels in worldwide installations. Other sports applications of this unique and versatile product are in experimental stages.

For further information, contact C.T. Hendrickson, Fibersesin Industries, Inc., P.O. Box 88, Oconomowoc, WI 53066. Phone 414-567-4427.

Winter Camping

With the cool, crisp air of winter, a lot of people will be getting out their camping gear and heading for the woods. And for those who can't stand the cold, there's a different type of winter camping. For the first time ever, there is now a winter racquetball camp. And better still—it's held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where it's not likely you'll need that down jacket.

The Terry Fancher Fort Lauderdale Winter Racquetball camp offers four sessions, running December 7-12, December 14-19, January 8-13 and January 22-27. The $345 fee includes room (double occupancy), meals, instruction (featuring the use of video tape), court time and club membership as well as transportation. The camps will be held at The Courtrooms in Fort Lauderdale, a club which not only has 20 racquetball courts, but a swimming pool, indoor gymnasium, complete bar and restaurant as well as other amenities.

For more detailed information about Terry Fancher's Winter Racquetball Camp, call 305-761-8700 between the hours of 9:00 am and 9:00 pm, eastern time, Monday through Saturday, or noon to 6:00 pm Sundays. Ask Tony Vicari or Terry Fancher about additional camp information.

Just One More

Spaulding Racquetball Clubs, Inc., the largest operator of racquetball facilities in the United States has been selected as operating agent for recreational facilities at Hamilton Lakes, a 274-acre hotel and office facility in Itasca, Ill., two miles south of the Woodfield Shopping Center.

The announcement was made by Ron Lunt, partner for The Trammell Crow Company in Chicago, the site's developer.

Under terms of the agreement, Spaulding will be responsible for operating the fitness center which includes an indoor swimming pool, 11 racquetball/handball courts, whirlpools and saunas, men's and women's locker rooms, exercise facilities, a 2.5 mile outdoor jogging path and outdoor tennis courts.

The first phase of Hamilton Lakes, currently under construction, includes a 420-room, Stouffer-operated hotel called "The Hamilton" structured about a 12-story atrium and a 14-story, 484,000 sq. ft. office tower joined by a three-story connector building.

In addition to housing the fitness center, the connector building will accommodate offices and a restaurant.

Spaulding Racquetball Clubs, Inc., headquartered in St. Louis, Mo., presently operates more than 25 facilities in six states throughout the United States.
Stocking Stuffers

V.R. Creations Court Jewels, of Redondo Beach, Calif., has come out with a couple of new items for the racquetball player. With Christmas just around the corner, either item might make a handy stocking stuffer for the racquetball fanatic in your life.

There is a racquetball keyring, available in 14 K. gold or silver plate. The company is also marketing new ceramic mugs decorated with racquets of various sports. The mugs come in off-white with brown racquets. For further information about how to obtain these items and cost, contact V.R. Creations Court Jewels, P.O. Box 7000-281, Redondo Beach, Calif. 90277; or call 213-540-5195.

Cheaters Beware

Accu-Score of Chester Springs, Penn., is now marketing a scoring unit for racquetball courts. The new panel sells for $495 (subject to volume discounts), and according to the manufacturers — is designed by racquetball enthusiasts specifically for racquetball. The score display panel, with serving lights, has three units to include scoring for the cutthroat (three players) game. Furthermore, the panel is recessed in the wall, so as not to hinder play in any way.

According to William G. Davis, Jr., of Accu-Score, the company also markets a similar, portable unit — ideal for tournaments. Both units run on standard electricity. For detailed information concerning Accu-Score, contact Accu-Score, Box 485, Chester Springs, Penn., 19425; or call 215-265-2257.

Moving Up

Norm Peck, former men’s squash and tennis coach at Princeton University, has been named Ektelon’s new Player Manager.

Peck, 31, will coordinate and help administer a racquetball program that includes the world’s No. 2 and 3 players, Mike Yellen and Dave Peck, top women’s pro Jennifer Harding and some 1,100 Ektelon-sponsored amateurs.

Born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey, Peck coached squash and tennis at the Ivy League school from 1972-1979. Six of his squash teams won national championships, with his other two finishing second.

In tennis, Princeton was Eastern champion all eight years, always ranking in the top 20 nationally during that period.

A torn rotator cuff injury, which required surgery, forced Peck from the coaching ranks.

"Obviously, I enjoyed coaching," he said. "There are certain relationships between a player and coach I’m going to miss.

“But I’m really looking forward to working with Ektelon and its players. Though my role is still being defined, at some point in time I will take over the complete program, work with junior players, and also, travel to tournaments.”

Peck and his wife of six years, Barbara, will reside in San Diego, Calif.

Descriptions of new products are as according to information provided by the manufacturer; products have not been tested by Racquetball magazine.
The Cambridge Racquetball Club

NEW COURT CLUB OPENINGS

The Cambridge Racquetball Club opened recently on the shore of the Charles River. The 14-court facility is located in the Athenaeum House, which has stood on the banks of the Charles since 1895. According to the club's promotional brochure, the Athenaeum House has been converted to a racquetball club after a "sympathetic and tasteful renovation." Among club amenities are an attended nursery, bar and lounge, pro shop and separate sauna and steam facilities for men and women.

For membership details, contact the Cambridge Racquetball Club at 215 First Street, Cambridge, Mass., 02142; or call 617-491-8989.

Lyndhurst, New Jersey

King's Court Racquet Club will open this month in Lyndhurst. The new facility will have 26 racquetball courts, one squash court, a supervised fitness program, exercise classes, an indoor track, a heated swimming pool, steam room and sauna, whirlpools, sun room, nursery, lounge and game room, facial, massage and hair salon services as well as a restaurant and bar. All these amenities are offered at no extra charge for executive memberships. In addition to the executive memberships, there are a number of other memberships offered.

For further information about King's Court, contact the club at 525 Riverside Ave., Lyndhurst, N.J.; or call 201-460-0088.

Houston, Texas

The Edge Racquetball and Athletic Club is under construction at 1521 Texas Avenue in downtown Houston. The club is being built on the second and third floors of an existing 10-story tower, connected to a parking garage. This new 17-court facility is scheduled to open by the end of this year, at an estimated cost of $2 million.

Jim Austin, National Rules Commissioner for the AARA, is president and general manager of the new club. Austin points out that 14 of the courts will be walled in by glass and one is specifically designed for television coverage and championship play.

Other amenities include a health club, a jogging track, a swimming pool and a gymnasium. For further information about membership and additional amenities, contact The Edge Racquetball and Athletic Club at the above address; or call 713-228-2888.

Bellevue, Washington

The Bellevue Family Fitness Center is one of eight Family Fitness centers in Washington. The Bellevue facility, which opened recently, features 17 racquetball courts, two with glass back walls; an 11-lap-per-mile jogging track; a basketball court; four volleyball, badminton or pickleball courts; an Olympic weight room; coed whirlpool, sauna and steam; and indoor swimming pool and fitness center. The Club also has a parking lot of 200 spaces which, judging from the variety of facilities, was a wise investment.

For further information contact The Family Fitness Center, 1000 124th Avenue, N.E., Suite 200, Bellevue, Wash., 98005.

Greenwood, South Carolina

The Greenwood Racquetball Center, Inc., opened this month at Bypass 72 West in Greenwood. The Complex has six racquetball courts, a pro shop, a spa and a weight room. According to Joe Bowers, president of the company, this is the first club in the South to use The Sports Unlimited modular panel system to build its courts. The building was supervised by the Mr. Racquetball sales company of Greenwood.

The Greenwood Racquetball Center is open seven days a week. Individual, family and company memberships are available. For further information, contact Joe Bowers, president, at Greenwood Racquetball Center, Inc., Bypass 72 West, P.O. Box 642, Greenwood, S.C.; or call 803-229-6156.

College Park, Maryland

The Racquet Place, located at 4700 Berwyn House Rd. in College Park, had its grand opening this month. The Racquet Place offers membership for either racquetball play or the Nautilus fitness center, as well as a "full privileges" membership. Amenities include 12 racquetball courts, three with glass, a full service lounge and restaurant. The club plans to offer lessons, clinics and programs for all skill levels. For further information contact M. Siobhan Duffy, at The Racquet Place, 4700 Berwyn House Rd., College Park, Md., 20740; or call 301-474-9060.

San Antonio, Texas

The World of Sports, a sporting entertainment center designed for the entire family, opened last month at DeZavala Rd. and IH 10 in San Antonio. This facility houses such diverse elements as a six-court racquetball club, a 32-lane bowling alley, an ice cream parlor, a jewelry shop, twin movie theaters, a competition size roller-skating rink and a travel agency—all under one roof.

For more information about the World Of Sports Handball/Racquetball club, contact Rudie Holmes, manager, at P.O. Box 16386, San Antonio, Tex., 78216; or call 512-699-6635.
CHOOSING A COURT CLUB

LET THE BUYER BEWARE

BY MARK KESSINGER

Mark Kessinger is editor of Racquetball Around Ohio, a racquetball newspaper.

Just down the street from your old club stands the brand-new super racquetball club. Its fresh paint and stonework glistens, the spacious parking lot beckons you, the gigantic neon “World’s Largest Racquetball Club” sign lights up the highway.

You have already heard the rumors at your old club; “this new club has an indoor swimming pool with three-meter board, a pro-shop that has guided tours, roof-top running track, 200-station Nautilus, walk-in lockers, half-acre whirlpool, singles bar, disco, one-way glass, and so on....”

Suddenly your old club seems like a dump. No matter how happy you used to be, it is now pale in comparison and you don’t think you could ever go back. Your old days at the Y and the university courts seem like sandbox league. You vaguely remember stomping around some dark, dingy court wearing a coon-skin cap. The new club has enough candle power to require infrared goggles. Racquetball has reached the space age!

As you climb the pearl-white self-cleaning stairs towards the uniformed doorman who awaits you, something is nagging at your memory. You hesitate — what was that phrase you learned way back in high school? Tempus Fugit? E Pluribus Unum? No...it was Caveat Emptor! Let the buyer beware!

So you stop a minute to think it over: this new club is irresistible and certainly deserves a visit, but at the end of all that racquetball nirvana you know there is a big red price tag. It’s time to consider this investment of your time and money.

Each year more people discover the sport of racquetball. Because it’s fun, easy to learn and aerobic, thousands of converts are introduced to the sport and all its trappings. Usually the new player’s experience with the sport is limited to one club. The first year enthusiast is so enthusiastic that he neglects to do any shopping at all.

Failing to look beyond the excitement of the game to the club where you play can lead to an unhappy affair with racquetball. Confusing the game with the club makes the experience one blur of events. If it is a happy blur, terrific. But if there is something wrong in your racquetball experience, giving up your club is far better than giving up your game.

Failing to look beyond the excitement of the game to the club where you play can lead to an unhappy affair with racquetball. Confusing the game with the club makes the experience one blur of events. If it is a happy blur, terrific. But if there is something wrong in your racquetball experience, giving up your club is far better than giving up your game.

So you stop a minute to think it over:

The majority of players will admit that they belong to their present club because that is where they were first introduced to the sport. There is something to be said for loyalty. However, we all like to get the most for our money, and switching to a “better brand” of club might be a smart move.

Only a few short years ago, we all bought memberships at the club where we learned the game because it was the only club around. Since the racquetball boom has been heard throughout the country, we are happily faced with several clubs to choose from. The business of racquetball clubs is now competitive, and that can only bode well for the consumer — provided consumers take advantage of the options they now have. And the best way to do that is shop around. Match a club’s assets and liabilities against your needs. Get a clear picture of the kind of club you’d like to join before you go out window shopping.

First of all, formulate a budget for racquetball. You know your income, how much you can afford to spend on racquetball, now break it down into dues, court time and equipment. If the club you play at is not convenient to your routine, transportation costs should be added to the budget.

The first item in your budget is membership dues; just how much can you afford for a club membership? To get an average price of the clubs in your area, a simple phone survey will do the trick. Check the Yellow Pages of your phone directory under the headings Racquetball, Health Clubs, Fitness Centers and Y’s. Get a list of the clubs that are in your market area. Your market area is figured by club builders to be within five or ten minutes driving time. You can include any club that is within that distance of your home or job, and any reasonable detour in-between. If there is a club outside that area, you will have to decide if it
is worth the extra time and gas to be considered.

Once you have culled the list of clubs from the phone book, you can call them and introduce yourself as a new player looking for a club. The club should be able to give you membership rates, court rates, hours open, number of courts, types of amenities and an idea of programming. Don't hesitate to ask about upcoming specials on rates, guest fees, limited memberships and renewal rates. Many clubs assess a one-time fee the first year or offer discount renewal rates. Generally speaking, summertime is the best season to look for membership specials.

Now you have a list of clubs and the raw technical data. Remember that this list may not be complete. At the rate of growth racquetball has been experiencing, new clubs pop up almost a year before they appear in the phone listings. Ask around at work and among friends.

Talking about your search for a club will most likely turn up some new clubs and recommendations. Community centers, colleges, and Ys may be building or adding courts without advertising in the phone book. "Networking" with other people will be a successful way of beating the bushes. You may even find some personal guides to some of the clubs on your list.

Looking down the list of clubs within a reasonable drive, you can check the cost of memberships and find an average price for your area. Your budget for that item should be able to handle the average price. If not, then start looking for the special deals. Remember that the cost of joining a club can be offset by the court fee. An expensive membership will save you money in the long run, if the court fees are lower than the average price.

Other opportunities to save money include group rates, if you have several people interested in joining at once. Limited memberships such as "earlybird" or "nightowl," weekend passes, etc., will lower the initial fee. Not all clubs have them, so be sure to ask. Local colleges and universities may have courts available to alumni or local residents. Contact the public or community relations office for information. If you meet the qualifications and can handle the restricted hours, you will have a very inexpensive place to play.

Comparing your budget for gas, dues and court fees against those on your list will allow you to eliminate some clubs right off the bat. The "others" will merit a personal visit. Visits to the club can be arranged by calling first and explaining your desire to "test drive" the club. Be sure to get all the information about the cost of a one-time visit.

Now that you've made plans to actually visit a club, it's a good time to remember all those references you got from your network of friends and acquaintances. Perhaps someone you ran across plays at the club you want to visit. It's better to have someone show you the ropes than to try and gather all the nitty gritty yourself. Having a partner to play with and share the court cost is a big help.

Visiting the club is your chance to "kick the tires," get in there and see what the club is all about. You can't gauge the atmosphere over the phone. Be alert to how you are greeted, if at all. Some clubs have a come-in-go as you please policy while others approach maximum security conditions. Each style has its pros and cons. No matter which tactic the club adopts, its employees should manage to remain courteous and alert to your presence. The club that lets you, or anyone else, walk in and stand about unnoticed is a bit too relaxed. The club that approaches you like your old hall desk counter. The bulletin boards will reveal a lot about the club and the membership. There should be signs of activity, or at least life. Watch for personal notices that show the club cares about members and the members feel like mutual friends. League results, clinic sign-ups, tip-of-the-week, and other paraphernalia say a lot. This is the place to find out if the club has inhouse leagues, challenge ladders, parties, special events or whatever.

As you relax afterwards, taking it all in, try to mingle with some of the other members. You can find out if meeting people here is easy and if they are friendly. It's a great chance to find out what these other "owners" think about their club. Ask questions. For instance, there is no way to tell if the courts leak during the winter by looking at them in July. Most members are pleased with their club and will show some pride in belonging there. If you get more than a fair share of inhouse gripes, beware.

As you start to leave, stop at the bulletin boards in the club and at the desk counter. The bulletin boards will reveal a lot about the club and the membership. There should be signs of activity, or at least life. Watch for personal notices that show the club cares about members and the members feel like mutual friends. League results, clinic sign-ups, tip-of-the-week, and other paraphernalia say a lot. This is the place to find out if the club has inhouse leagues, challenge ladders, parties, special events or whatever.

At the desk, pick up any printed mat-
ter they have to offer. If you are not sure how you feel about the club, reading through their materials may help make up your mind. An active club will have a regularly published calendar of events or a club newsletter. This can tell you the whole story about the club. The information should be timely and enticing. If you pick up a handful of policy changes and new rules, generally speaking, you can expect more of that sort of thing after you join. A club that has constant staff shake-ups, policy changes or changes of management is responding to pressure.

If the club has a history of this fast-paced chaos, then avoid it, chances are it won't get any better.

Finally, give the club a sporting chance to have its say. Talk to the manager, assistant or whatever staff is on hand. Note just who is there when you are likely to be in the club. The staff may be able to point out a few things that you missed, or clear up some of those questions you have. It may also be helpful to know that those things which bothered you most are bothering the management and are on the list to be fixed.

Now you have a good objective view of the club from which to make your subjective decision. You have finished the first "shopping trip" and if you are pressed for time, like what you saw and want to go ahead and join, OK. At least you have taken a good, hard look before spending. If you find a better club halfway through the season, you may regret not shopping around further, but chances are that a second membership won't break the bank. Many people enjoy a second membership for those times when the courts are full and the second club is occasionally closer.

To make a final decision on what club is best for you, it is important to compare. After visiting one or two clubs you will feel like a consumer watchdog, searching the club for everything that is right, wrong and important. Comparing clubs is fun and rewarding, take a friend and enjoy the visit.

Remember, the final decision, yours, should be one that enhances your fun, fitness and enjoyment of the sport, without sacrificing your time, effort or cash flow. Maybe you don't really need that half-acre whirlpool; after all, you're afraid of the water. And a 200-station Nautilus gives you nightmares. Relax. What you really wanted wasn't a super-duper club, just a super-duper membership. •

ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS: Racquetball magazine is seeking freelance photographers to cover AARA sanctioned tournaments throughout the country. If you are interested in representing your area, please send samples of black and white sports photos (preferably racquetball) to: P.O. Box 16566, Memphis, TN 38116, ATTN. BETT WATKINS. Photos will not be returned unless self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed.

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When it comes to Racquetball shoes the Copenhagen by Patrick stands alone. We were the first
to develop a shoe specifically designed for Racquetball. We didn't take a tennis or basketball shoe and adapt it with a different sole; we started from scratch and built a shoe that nobody has come close to in quality and design.

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45 East 30th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 (212) 686-8052
AN OPEN LETTER
FROM: JIM AUSTIN, AARA NATIONAL RULES COMMISSIONER

The time has come to lay aside all political differences that have factioned our sport regarding the playing rules. Standardization of the rules is in the best interest of all players and the sport. It will serve to make our sport less confusing to the players as well as the public; it will simplify officiating, perhaps our biggest problem; and make racquetball much more enjoyable to play and watch. To that end, the AARA would like to make the following suggestions for rule changes in 1981:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AARA Rules</th>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current 3.3</td>
<td>1. Appeals. Where linespeople are designated, they shall have the same responsibility for all calls as does the referee. A player may not ask for hinder if one has not been called. Hinder calls by the referee cannot be appealed. The assessing of technical faults is the exclusive right of the referee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.4b</td>
<td>2. Suggested Change: Add: A player may appeal the following: Fault or out serves, double bounce, skip ball, rule interpretation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.5(a)</td>
<td>3. Suggested Change: Screen Balls. Passes within 18 inches of the server and obstructs the view of the returning side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.5(a)</td>
<td>4. Foot Faults. A foot fault occurs when the server steps over the service or short line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.10(a)</td>
<td>5. Suggested Change: The server must start the serve with both feet inside the service box. The lead foot of the server may extend over, but not lose contact with the service line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.10(a)</td>
<td>6. Suggested Change: DROP BALL HINDERS. Hitter or opponent. Any returned ball that touches an opponent on the fly before it returns to the front wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.12(e)</td>
<td>7. Suggested Change: Rest Periods. A two (2) minute rest period between the first and second game with a ten (10) minute rest period between the second and third games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current 4.14(1)</td>
<td>8. Suggested Change: Professional. A player may participate in a Pro Sanctioned tournament which awards cash prizes, but will not be considered a professional if NO prize money is accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>9. Suggested Change: Pro Sanctioned (IPRC, WPRCA, PRCA, IPPO, NARP and any other organization so deemed by the Board of Directors).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age Group Divisions
Open: all players other than professionals
Veteran Open: 30 plus
Seniors: 30 plus
Veteran Seniors: 40 plus
Masters: 45 plus
Veteran Masters: 50 plus
Golden Masters: 55 plus
Veteran Golden Masters: 60 plus
Senior Golden Masters: 65 plus

The above suggested rule changes will be voted on in May at the 1981 AARA National Singles Championships at Boise, Idaho.

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Call or write:
M-M Court Systems, Inc.
2160 Fletcher Parkway, Suite J
El Cajon, CA 92020
Tel. 714-449-0740

AARA BALL APPROVAL

Listed below are the ball manufacturers who have received approval of their products in AARA sanctioned tournaments. For tournament sponsorship, contact these manufacturers, your AARA State Director, or National Headquarters at 901-761-1172.

Ektelon  Regent  Trenway
Head  Seamco  Vittert
Penn  Spalding  Voit
Point West  Sportcraft
1980 JUNIOR RANKINGS

RANKINGS FOR BOYS 10 and-under
1. Rutledge, Matt NY 550.0
2. Roberson, Derek WA 500.0
3. Stark, Jeff CA 400.0
4. Douglas, Tim CA 350.0
5. Gillis, John MA 300.0
6. Blass, Ed FL 200.0
7. Hannan, Peter MD 150.0
8. Lawton, Lloyd OK 100.0
9. Vargas, Miguel CA 75.0
10. Daily, Kevin MA 50.0
11. Dunn, Brian CA 50.0
12. Eller, David FL 50.0
13. Kitzeloy, Vincent CA 50.0
14. Mark, Jim CA 50.0
15. Pitts, Tommy DE 50.0
16. Schuh, Ascot CA 50.0
17. Taylor, Brian OK 50.0
18. Miranda, Lulu TX 50.0
19. Breslin, Andrew CA 50.0
20. McDonald, John OK 50.0

RANKINGS FOR GIRLS 10 and-under
1. Rutledge, Matt NY 550.0
2. Roberson, Derek WA 500.0
3. Stark, Jeff CA 400.0
4. Douglas, Tim CA 350.0
5. Gillis, John MA 300.0
6. Blass, Ed FL 200.0
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17. Taylor, Brian OK 50.0
18. Miranda, Lulu TX 50.0
19. Breslin, Andrew CA 50.0
20. McDonald, John OK 50.0

RANKINGS FOR BOYS 15 and-under
1. Price, Gary CA 820.0
2. Armstrong, John CA 800.0
3. Parodi, Bl, Jr. KS 200.0
4. Scheyer, Eric IL 200.0

RANKINGS FOR GIRLS 15 and-under
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2. Armstrong, John CA 800.0
3. Parodi, Bl, Jr. KS 200.0
4. Scheyer, Eric IL 200.0

RANKINGS FOR BOTH GENDERS
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November '80 Racquetball 19
NOVEMBER 7-9
2nd Annual Forest Hills Tournament (3)
Forest Hills Athletic Club
3010 Caughry Rd.
Erie, PA 16506
Mark Selvage
814-833-2468

Invitational 35 + Singles (5)
Court House Racquetball Club
2625 Court House Circle
Jackson, MS 39208
Chuck Miner
601-832-4880

Foot-Joy Racquetball Open (3)
Brickston Racquetball Club
85 Liberty St.
Brockton, MA 02401
Gerry Casady
617-580-3444

Lite Beer/Penn Super Racquetball Championships (3)
Perfect Racquet
405 Camino Del Río S.
San Diego, CA 92116
Bud Musahlson

Taylor's Sporting Goods Benefit
for the Heart Association (3)
Greenville Racquetball Club
3700 Kennett Pike
Greenville, DE 19807
Orval Fauske
302-624-2472

Razorback Rollout Classic (3)
The Courts
1303 Tancred
FL Smith, AR 72903
Buxx Sawyer
501-785-1201

Atlanta Open (3)
3455 Tanglewood
Atlanta, GA 30339
Jim Cullen
404-256-5210

Natural Lite AAA Florida State
4-wall Outdoor Championships (3)
Lake Winder YMCA
3620 Cleveland Heights
Lake Winder, FL 33802
Gane Owen
813-644-3528

Wallaford Club House/Twin Racquet Classic Cancer Benefit (3)
Wallingford Club House
Neal, Road
Wallingford, CT 06492
263-255-2861
Lori Liptak

NOVEMBER 11-16
Lite Beer/Penn Super Racquetball Championships (3)
Denver International Athletic Club
1630 Welton St.
Denver CO 80202
Steve Crum
303-822-3100

NOVEMBER 14-16
Lite Beer/Penn Super Racquetball Championship - March of Dimes Benefit (3)
1980 Open
Windsor Racquet Club
109 Pierson Lane
Windsor, CT 06094
Bruce McKellen
203-683-0236

Thanksgiving (3)

County Club
3010 Caughry Rd.
Erie, PA 16506
Mark Selvage
814-833-2468

Invitational 35 + Singles (5)
Court House Racquetball Club
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Windsor Racquet Club
109 Pierson Lane
Windsor, CT 06094
Bruce McKellen
203-683-0236

Turkey Fest (3)
Merry Meeting Racquet Club
Topsham, ME 04086
Bill Stellary
207-729-0129

Cobden State Bank Racquetball Tournament (2)
Union County Racquetball Center
Cobden, IL 62920
John Lipe
618-833-8502

NOVEMBER 14-17
Long Island Open (4)
Universal Racquetball Center
40 Maple Ave.
Rockville Center, NY 11570
516-536-8700
Centre Courts
6000 Sunrise Hwy.
Massapequa, NY 11758
516-789-4000

NOVEMBER 17-22
Rapid City Happy Joe's Racquetball tournament (3)
Rapid City YMCA
Bob Hastings
605-342-8538

NOVEMBER 21-22
Tennessee Shootout (3)
Supreme Courts
6033 Trousdale
Nashville, TN 37204
Dorothy Dixon
615-832-7579

Garden City Turkey Open (3)
Garden City Family Y
1224 Center
Garden City, Kansas 67846
Gregg Reinick

Lancaster Osteopathic Hospital Benefit Open (3)
Lancaster County Racquetball and Health Club
Lancaster, PA
Benie Howard
717-567-2209

NOVEMBER 28-30
Ryan Homes Gulf Coast Championships (3)
Sarasota YMCA Racquetball Club
1075 S. Euclid Ave.
Sarasota, FL 33577
Randy Godein
813-957-0770

Burn off the Turkey Tournament (3)
Rollout Racquet Club
Rocky Hill, CT

Greater Boston Challenge of the Serve (3)
Racquetime
21 Blancher Ave.
Shrewsbury, MA 01770
Ron Meyer
617-722-4240

DECEMBER 5-7
Western New England Open (3)
Pittsfield, MA
Mike Meyer

Linn-Benton Counties Open (2)
Timberhill Athletic & Court Club
8288 N.W. 29th Dr.
Corvallis, Oregon 97330
Terry Porter
503-777-8559

Lite Beer/Penn Racquetball Series (3)
Sporting House
1515 Shepard Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30324
Karen McKinney

Racquetball Everyone Championships (3)
Dugan Racquet Club
Addison, Illinois
Ray Mitchell
312-745-9400
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There's Tension in the Racquetball Industry

BY JILL MAGOON

Jill Magoon is editor for the United States Racquet Stringers Association. This is the first of two articles she has written exclusively for Racquetball. Look for the second article, aimed at consumers, in an upcoming issue.

You're playing tough. Tonight you own the shots—all the shots, and you sense this victory. But suddenly your racquet doesn't feel quite right. Is the ball dead? Are you losing your touch so fast? The culprit...? A broken string.

Until now, you probably haven't given those strings much thought. The strings look the same in all racquets so you figure they couldn't matter too much. They do, and fortunately for you, most racquet manufacturers now realize the importance of good stringing.

Within the past three years, racquetball companies have developed as much respect for stringing patterns and techniques as they've always had for frame construction. According to Bob Larsen, merchandise manager for AMF Voit: "The sport is maturing. Players at all levels are demanding that manufacturers pay attention to the performance of a racquet. We are all realizing that stringing is a major factor in a racquet's performance."

The companies' respect for good stringing is evident in their standards. At least four of the major racquetball companies (Ektelon, Head, Omega and Voit) now recommend tensions for each of their racquets. String tension is measured for every racquet before it leaves the factory. If the tension does not fall within two pounds of the recommended tension, the racquet must be restrung.

Racquet companies differ in the methods they use to measure tension. Ektelon's stringers use the StringMeter, a hand-held spring action device which measures the tension on each string. Ektelon's research and development department calibrates the StringMeter for its own reference. Stringers for Head and Omega test tension on the Ski-flex, a hydraulic cell which measures the average tension in a racquet's sweet spot. AMF Markk Co., which makes racquets for Head and Voit, has designed its own tension tester.

Recommended tensions vary according to the frame. Ektelon Co., for example, recommends 28 pounds for the stiff
frames (the Magnum, the Hilecher and the XL), and 22 pounds for the most flexible Magnum Flex, YellenFlex and Harding. "We want a player to realize maximum playability from our frames," says Burley Thompson, Ektelon’s supervisor in research and development, "so we coordinate the stringing with the frame’s characteristics. In general, a stiff frame is regarded as a power frame. Strings at high tensions tend to react faster, to snap the ball off the strings. Consequently, we’ll put the two parameters together for an optimal effect."

The importance of tension was first evaluated at Ektelon with the development of the Marathon. The Marathon, a flexible frame, tended to warp when strung in the same manner as the stiffer aluminum frames. This warpage encouraged the research and development people to take a closer look at the stringing of all their racquets. Burley continues, "We figured that all racquets were subject to the causes of this distortion, but that the Marathon was the only frame in which it was noticeable. We took a long hard look at tensions and patterns, and developed a whole new set of stringing requirements."

Each company has developed stringing requirements appropriate for its own racquets. Omega is close to publishing a pamphlet for customers and pro shops giving stringing instructions for each Omega racquet. Production supervisor Mike Busselman explains: "There is some variation (between racquets) of tie-off points and holes skipped, so our stringers must know the patterns for each of our ten racquets." AMF Head presently prints recommended tensions on the racquet’s hang tag, and makes stringing instructions available to all dealers and stringers. Head also plans to publish a racquetball stringing booklet.

Ann Key, one of Omega’s full time stringers, strings about 100 racquets during a 10 hour work day.

Henry Hoover (far from left) and his staff, all legally blind, string Head’s racquets almost totally by feel.
by the end of the year.

One might assume a conflict of purpose between high standards and volume stringing. The two, however, seem to go hand in hand in many racquetball companies. Bud Leach, an industry king and chairman of the board of Olympian Sports Products, Inc., offers: 'Quality, consistency, accuracy and speed all become one after a while. You have to insist on that.'

At Olympian, Bud Leach’s insistence has developed a stringing machine which enables a person to string up to 105 racquets per day. Even with this sophisticated equipment, Olympian’s stringers faced a huge challenge with the recent creation of the Graphite SS, a plastic/graphite racquet with strings suspended from the inside perimeter of the frame. “Because this frame is virtually unbreakable,” continues Leach, “tension was not a problem. The challenge was in developing a string pattern which could be string well and fast. There are no holes going through this frame, so our stringers found it tough at first, but we follow the same standards for the stringing of this frame as for all the others. We’ve developed a machine to measure tension on the strung racquet, and if it’s not within one pound of our reference tension, the racquet is restrung.”

Omega’s and Voit’s racquets are also strung in-house by full-time trained stringers. Ektelon and Head send their racquets out to professional stringers, a practice which creates some very interesting circumstances...

Henry and Nancy Hoover run Mile High Racquet Stringing in Englewood, Colo. They string 400 to 800 racquets per week for Head. They are both legally blind as are their four employees. “We’ve developed a very acute sense of feel,” notes Henry. “We can tell whether the main strings are within two pounds of our limit just by pressing down on each string as we go along.”

Head’s racquetball manager, Brad Smith, supports Henry, “These people take a lot of pride in their work. Because they’re very meticulous, they do a great stringing job.” Nancy Hoover adds, “Stringing is definitely our area of expertise. We have set our own strict standards and we guarantee our work. We have to constantly earn the business we get.”

The Hoovers also do custom tennis stringing, and can string the Wilson T-2000, difficult for even a sighted stringer, totally by feel.

Four years ago, Ektelon employed 30 to 40 full-time stringers. The costs of supporting these stringers (paying them benefits and piecework) became prohibitive, so Ektelon’s policy had to change. Today, Ektelon’s racquets are strung by four contracted stringing companies (vendors), and Ektelon employs no stringers.

Sadako Jones owns one of these stringing companies. She employs 24 stringers who collectively string 2,000 to 3,000 racquets per week for Ektelon. According to Sadako: “Ektelon checks everything about your stringing service...your quality, time, tension...your entire performance. But, I guess they have to...they’re the buyer and I’m the vendor...they need to know that my people will give them good work for their money.”

Whether they employ in-house stringers or send their racquets out for stringing, racquetball companies take stringing seriously. Many companies realized the connection between a frame’s string job and its playability, and have developed very high standards for stringing. When you break a string, your stringer should follow equally high standards.
The first Annual Southeastern Season Opener was held in Nashville, Tenn. September 27-29 and drew a field of 180 participants. The host club was Supreme Court.

This tournament attracted such people as Bryce Anderson of Knoxville, Tenn.; John Hennen of Chattanooga, Tenn., and John and Keith Dunlap of Memphis. Needless to say, there was a fight to the finish for the Men's Open title. In the end it was Dunlap pitted against Dunlap with Keith the victor, 21-14, 21-15, over brother John.

The Junior Vet division was as tough as the Open division with players such as Larry Liles of Memphis. Emile Catignani of Knoxville, Mike Mjeovich of Nashville and Jim Thoni of Memphis, all vying for first place. In the final match, it was Emile Catignani who defeated Jim Thoni 21-14, 21-11.

Memphis State dominated the "B" division with Billy Hendricks defeating Jed Cowell 21-18, 21-20. The "C" division went to Dayton, Ohio's Bill Anderson, who defeated Mike Strack 21-10, 21-6.

The Senior title was taken by Frank Menendez of Knoxville 21-14, 21-14 over John Stone, also of Knoxville. Masters winner was Gene McDonald of Nashville, 21-12, 21-11 over Ray DePue of Knoxville. James Smith of Cookeville defeated Gary Christian of Dayton, Ohio, 21-10, 21-6 in the Novice division.

The tournament also offered Doubles and they stack up as follows:

The Men's Open Doubles title was taken back to Memphis with John Dunlap-Keith Dunlap over Keith Blackman-John Slaza 21-13, 21-8. Memphis State also took the "B" Doubles with Quinn Roberts-Brian Sheldon defeating Chuck Evans-Lee Terry of Cleveland, Tenn., 21-18, 21-13. The "C" division was taken by Bill Anderson-Mike Strack of Dayton, Ohio over Shawn Doyle-Pat Doyle of Murfreesboro, Tenn., in a round robin. The Senior Doubles title was taken back to Knoxville with Gil Champagne and Ray DePue.

The Women's divisions were just as crowded, and just as much fun as the Men's. Entries included women from several states.

The Women's Open was taken by Sharon Fanning of Memphis. She defeated E. Jayne of Knoxville 21-9, 21-9 in the finals. The Women's "B" division was taken by Missy Stober of Louisville, Ky., as she defeated Nancy House of Nashville 21-16, 21-7. The Women's "C" division was won by Cindy Parrott of Nashville. She defeated Paige Sutherland of Dayton, Ohio 21-5, 21-15. The Women's Novice was taken by Debbie Weyerbacher of Nashville. This match went three games and Weyerbacher just barely came through on top. She defeated Peggy King in a tough 16-21, 21-9, 15-10 match.

Unfortunately, interest in the Women's Doubles division was not as great as in the other divisions. Therefore, tournament directors combined the "A" and "B" divisions. The result was some keen competition and a few lessons in strategy. The Doubles was won by Fanning and Trammell of Memphis State. They overpowered Stober and Gogel in the finals 21-3, 21-8.

Hospitality was provided by host and hostess, Bob and Marge Bell. One of the highlights of the tournament was the dance and party on Saturday night. Next year everyone is not only invited back, but expected to return for an even bigger and better tournament.
European racquetball is "still in diapers. The sport cannot yet walk on its own."

The words are those of Han van der Heijden, developer of the first racquetball/tennis/squash complex in The Netherlands. (See Racquetball, September, 1980.) Actually, the Dutch businessman, who has been involved in the management and promotional ends of sports for many years, built the first U.S.A.-sized courts ever on the European continent. He is adding another club to his present facility, Racketcenter Westvliet, in Zoetermeer, another suburb of The Hague, Holland's capital.

Van der Heijden was initially exposed to racquetball when he attended the first National Court Clubs Association (NCCA) convention in Anaheim, California, in 1977. Not totally convinced by what he saw and heard at the NCCA convention, van der Heijden visited a number of clubs in southern California and other areas of the U.S. before making his decision to pioneer racquetball in Europe.

In addition to the two racquetball courts in his current club, another Dutch entrepreneur opened a four-court facility in Zwyndrecht, near Rotterdam, last autumn. With van der Heijden's two courts running at full capacity plus the four in Zwyndrecht, it is estimated that there are upwards of 650 racquetball enthusiasts regularly playing at both clubs. As in the U.S., van der Heijden estimates that about 40 percent are women.

"The improvement in the skill of our players has been phenomenal," he says. "I really believe our Dutch players, who started from point zero little more than a year ago, have progressed to the point where they are about at the "B" level of competition in the U.S. They still have a way to go to compete on even terms with some of the top players among the U.S. military in Europe, where racquetball is quite popular."

Racquetball is so popular, in fact, that...
Fiberesin Industries, one of the country's largest producers of racquetball court paneling, recently announced the signing of a contract to supply its product for the construction of over 100 courts at U.S. military installations stretching across Europe from Norway to Turkey.

Fiberesin's C. T. Hendrickson believes racquetball will thrive in Europe once it catches on with the local population. "It may take a while for it to get started. Europeans are sports-minded individuals. Once they get themselves involved, they'll go for racquetball. Because of increasing transportation costs—gasoline in most European countries is more than double U.S. pump prices—people are beginning to stay closer to home to pursue their leisure activities," says Hendrickson.

Furthermore, he continued, "There was genuine interest expressed in the sport at the ISPO '80 show in Munich. The court that was set up at the show was great exposure for the game. Interest was remarkable, especially among people who've been to the U.S. and seen racquetball in operating court clubs."

Though racquetball will be an important factor in Europeans' leisure activities during the coming decade, David Parisi, a Hamburg, Germany, installer of racquetball and squash courts, feels that "squash will be a bigger sport than racquetball." Parisi advances three reasons for this theory:

1. Squash, long popular in Great Britain, is well known throughout Europe.
2. Squash, introduced on the continent several years ago, has a head start on racquetball.
3. Space everywhere in Europe is at a premium. Thus, it is costly. Racquetball courts are 14 percent larger than squash courts.

These reasons, Parisi suggests, would probably enter into the decision whether a developer decides on racquetball or squash. "Squash," he adds, "has been pre-sold. The marketing problems racquetball will have early on have already been overcome by squash."

During the ISPO '80 show, a semi-annual sports equipment exhibition, the International Amateur Racquetball Federation (IARF—made up of 13 countries), of which the American Amateur Racquetball Association is a charter member, held its first international meeting. Representatives from the U.S., Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Americans in Europe attended. Raette Mueller, a German national who heads IARF from its Zurich, Switzerland, headquarters, presided.

John Brinson, an Allentown, Pennsylvania, court club owner and financial chairman of the IARF, represented the United States on behalf of the AARA.

Mueller, a believer in the patient approach to the development of racquetball throughout Europe, feels it will be two-to-three years before European racquetball begins to approach the growth rate of racquetball's early years in the U.S.

Another pioneering step, though, has been taken by Harald Claussen, a Hamburg, West Germany, squash court club owner, who will open the first racquetball-only court club, (an 11-court facility), outside of North America this month. Claussen is also partnered in two indoor tennis clubs. His racquetball club, which cost $1.6 million, is a pilot project as far as Claussen and his partners are concerned. If racquetball catches on, Claussen plans to build additional clubs in the Hamburg area, one of West Germany's most heavily-populated regions.

Also attending the international meeting was Hal Leffler, president of Americans in Europe Racquetball Association (AERA), the organization which provided the players who demonstrated racquetball during the four nine-hour days of the ISPO '80 exhibition.

(Michael Tipton (left), with the U.S. Air Force in West Germany, and Daniel Handinger of Montreal, who is president of the European Racquetball Association, put on a demonstration of the popular American game during the opening day of the ISPO '80 sports equipment exhibition in Munich, West Germany.)
Three, one (1) year gift memberships to the AARA, which includes:
One year subscription to Racquetball Magazine
Eligibility for all AARA tournaments
Membership card
Voice in all AARA policies
Official rulebook
Special product and service discounts
AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE.

A FREE one year AARA Membership for yourself. We will announce your gift with a card and then begin, or extend, the lucky recipient’s membership for one year. A great Holiday gift, that lasts the whole year.
ALL TOGETHER NOW

Group Instruction
For Backhand Technique

The purpose of group instruction as a whole is to teach a given number of people the fundamentals of racquetball as quickly and efficiently as possible. If the program is successful and effectively organized, the participants not only learn the basics of the game but are more likely to become happy and productive club members. In accomplishing this, our experience at the Courtrooms indicates that they spread the word about racquetball to their friends and are much more likely to continue in club activities to include advanced beginner lessons, leagues, tournaments and other related programs.

This particular lesson tells how our program, which is called Racquetball Guaranteed (or RBG), can teach backhand technique to fresh beginning players who normally have difficulty learning this particular stroke. We advertise and promote group instruction through what is called The Courtrooms Racquetball Lesson Factory which recently surpassed the 3,500 mark in graduates — complete with a graduation certificate indicating their completion of the nine-hour block of instruction. Classes range from 50-100 students divided into morning and evening sessions with as many as 50 aspiring players in a given session. Student to teacher ratio is a preferred one to six.

The Backhand Stroke (Actual on court instruction) Pre-class exercise (quadriiceps stretch — See photo number 1).

Undoubtedly, the most difficult problem to overcome and the hardest thing in racquetball to master is the backhand. Therefore, trying to teach someone to stroke the ball with a natural swing on the left hand side of the court is no easy task. In fact, several top pro players have inadequate backhands and use it strictly as a defensive shot until a scoring opportunity arises on the forehand side.

Probably the most common error people make in hitting a backhand is to use what I term a “chicken-wing” wrist (see photos number 2 and number 3). In this version of the backhand, the wrist is broken at the top of the backswing and the top of the racquet is tilted down rather than pointing toward the ceiling. Most beginners seem to try to push the ball with the backhand and attempt to use the arm and wrist to propel the ball to the front wall. The result is a weak and ineffective shot. Utilizing the correct grip is essential. The hand is rotated one-quarter turn to the left on the racquet handle (see photo number 4).

In group instruction, the goal is not to perfect the backhand stroke but to show the class how to use the turning of the hips and shoulders toward the left sidewall as the source of strength (see photos number 5 and number 6). Along with this movement the raising of the racquet in preparation is especially stressed. As in the forehand stroke drills, or other group teaching, the instructor can talk until he is blue in the face about getting the racquet back early before attempting to swing at the ball.
Despite the emphasis on doing this, most people simply do not do it, so in our classes we leave nothing to chance. We insist upon raising the racquet into position and keeping it there during drills. This is covered verbally in the first five minutes of the on-court instruction prior to dividing the class into separate courts with their instructors. With the slow-motion film illustrations of the backhand still fresh in their minds from the off court instruction, (I recommend the Racquetball Color/Sound Film Series from the Athletic Institute in North Palm Beach, Fla.) the class at least has a general idea of what the backhand should be like.

The backhand instruction adds a brief preliminary step before the drills begin. Without spending too much time on this, the students begin by hitting the ball on the backhand-side to the front wall after the instructor bounces the ball on the floor once. This is just to get them familiar with the feel of the backhand and the instructor ensures proper positioning of the racquet, wrist, shoulder and hips, as well as the legs (see photo number 7). A new innovation we have experimented with is having students throw a frisbee backhand, since the motion is so similar.

After three or four swings, basic flaws show up and they may include hitting the ball off the wrong foot, the "chicken-wing" wrist, lack of hip and shoulder turn in preparation for the swing as well as standing straight up during execution. A good instructor quickly recognizes these faults before the drills begin but

students of group training should be aware of these potential problems.

The first backhand drill is quite simple and basic (see photos number 8 and number 9). The students stand in a line in the rear of the court, deep along the left sideline so they can observe each of their fellow students yet not get struck by a mis-hit shot. The instructor stands on the right side of the student who is in center court, with a bucket of balls nearby, and feeds the balls straight off the front wall to the student's backhand side and the student returns the balls to the front wall, (attempting to hit every ball that comes their way whether the instructor hits it or if they hit the ball back to themselves). The idea is to hit as many balls as possible in the short time allotted.

...
If basic errors are made, the instructor stops periodically to demonstrate corrections to the class as a whole. During this drill, shots to the forehand side are thrown in every fifth or sixth ball. Remember, the instructor holds three balls in his hand at once to eliminate leaning down toward the bucket after every shot. Keep the drill fairly fast paced, do not let the drill get too slow or control is lost.

After each person has a turn at this drill, the around-the-world drill is conducted, where the students move in a continuous clockwise circle standing close to the right hand side of the court, with one student occupying center court position. The instructor feeds the ball with easy set-ups from left center court and after each student executes a backhand, they run to the rear of the line and the next player runs to center court (see photos number 10, number 11, and number 12). The instructor hits every other shot, keeping play constant. Two to three balls are all that is necessary for this drill, the entire bucket is not required. The necessity of running into center court position with the racket
raised on the backhand side is essential to success. Also, ensuring that the student is set into position before attempting the stroke is important. Trying to hit the ball with the feet moving is a common mistake and leads to missed shots.

Once the players have some success at the drill, the instructor counts out loud the number of times the class returns the ball legally to the front wall and a goal is set to attain a record number of consecutive shots, 25 for instance. This encourages the class to work together as a team.

After drilling is completed, singles play is initiated by the instructor. Matched as to ability, students play five-minute games and rotate on and off the court. The instructor always supervises the first rotation, then leaves the court and supervises from above the back wall (see photo number 13). Students also observe the other students during actual play. In this manner, they can see many of their own difficulties visually and through corrections by the teaching professional, progress is much quicker than most expect.

All lessons in the nine hours of group instruction are outlined according to which activities are to be taught, the correct sequence, the proper amount of time allowed for each drill, possible problems which may arise with recommendations for success, and allotted supervision guidelines for actual play. Class safety is a must, eyeguards are suggested but not mandatory. Teaching pros are taught where to position themselves and the class participants for safety in all phases of instruction to avoid accidents.

It is most important that all instructors who teach Racquetball Guaranteed are trained correctly in group instruction techniques in clinics taught by the head pro. We require APRO (American Professional Racquetball Association) certification after a basic training time period for all instructors who teach advanced or private lessons, which are recommended for further progress by the students. We keep a staff of 14 full or part-time instructors available.

Lastly, new innovations are a must in any type of instruction, including groups. We are experimenting with using video instruction for groups as a before-and-after concept. This involves filming students with a video camera during their first and last sessions of RBG. We use video instruction extensively in our adult winter racquetball camps for out-of-state guests here in Ft. Lauderdale. The last ingredient for innovation is constantly searching for better ways to make group instruction a learning experience and keep it as much fun as possible at the same time.
TRACE YOUR STEPS

Getting Back Into Position

By Mike Yellen

When out of position, you have to play your opponent close as we see my Ektelon teammate Jerry Hluecher anticipating a forearm by Dave Peck and trying to close the distance.

Mike Yellen, currently ranked number two on the pro circuit, is a member of the Ektelon professional player advisory staff.

As we all know, the ideal strategic position for a racquetball player awaiting an opponent's shot is center court. That imaginary seven-foot circle just behind the short line gives him the most direct access to all critical points on the court simultaneously.

It's a good strategy but, unfortunately, one which can't always be applied. Many times during a game, you will find yourself awaiting your opponent's shot while out of center court position and, sometimes, you'll be caught out of position entirely.

This might come about by accident or by the design of the other player. Either way, the result is the same: you find yourself caught between your opponent and a hard place, namely the sideline.

There are a lot of ways this can happen, but it is most likely to occur whenever your opponent is himself dominating center court during his shot. In fact, if your opponent is shooting anywhere down the middle of the court from the service line to the back wall, you are forced to stand off to one side of him.

This leaves a wide area open on the other side of the court and provides a shooting opportunity few players will fail to exploit. As I said, this isn't the only way you can be caught out of position but, since it gives us insight into the overall problem, let's explore some of the difficulties caused when your opponent is shooting from the middle of the court.

If he is directly in center court, he is more or less in the driver's seat. If you move to one side of him, he can drive the ball to the rear corner on the other side or hit a roll-corner which, if it doesn't die, will send the ball away from you in the forecourt.

If you stay behind him, he has an even greater opportunity to kill the ball or dink it into a front corner while his body impairs your view of the action somewhat and reduces the time you have to react to the shot.

Even if he is behind you, say in the middle of the back court, you have to stand to one side of the middle so as not to impair his shot and he thus has ample opportunity to put the ball in a spot as far distant from you as possible.

You have to rush in and cover extra distance as a result of being out of position and you will usually be headed for a location which affords something less than an ideal coverage position after your shot. Meanwhile, your opponent will move into a good position to await that shot.

You are going to find yourself on the short end of shooting percentages for as long as this situation lasts. If it lasts for very long, you will start to get a nagging feeling that your opponent is always in your way.

Not that he will intentionally screen you or hinder your access to the ball. Most players are careful to avoid that sort of thing and the occasional mishap—a bump or a screen, intentional or not—will usually be picked up on by the referee.

But, by letting your opponent choose the court positioning that suits him, you are going to frequently find your view just slightly impeded, your shooting alley just barely big enough to be legal and the remarkable speed your opponent demonstrates in retrieving your shots somehow diminished when it comes to getting out of your way.

It's not that he is doing anything illegal, it's just that he is occupying the space you need to be in to win. It's up to you to reverse that situation and, unfortunately, there is no simple three-step method to regaining a lost positioning advantage.

Being quick helps. So does playing your opponent close if he happens to...
Since a player’s backhand usually has more follow-through than his forehand, you have to be cautious playing tight on your opponent’s backhand side as I am here against Marty Hogan.

Here I’ve gotten position on Jerry at the short line. He anticipates and moves in to try to cut off a down-the-line drive. If he were playing someone with a weaker backhand who couldn’t hit down the sideline, he might expect a crosscourt pass instead and adjust accordingly.

Standing in the spot you want to occupy during you shot. The latter is obviously risky.

Having a pair of eyeguards would be wise. Also, you should know that most players have a much wider follow-through on their backhands than they do on their forehands, so watch out.

You can’t get in your opponent’s way or make contact with him before or after his shot. If you do, an intentional hinder might be called.

He has to be ready to relinquish his position immediately after his shot, though, and you have to be ready to rush in. Think of it as rushing into a vacuum created by his absence. You need that kind of flow. You want to avoid committing yourself to a direction before the ball leaves your opponent’s racquet, though, or he might change the direction of his shot, leaving you flat-footed.

The key to regaining the positioning advantage is to be able to size up your opponent’s shooting options quickly and anticipate his move. You won’t have to wait to actually see where the ball is headed. You’ll already be prepared and can get out of the blocks that much more quickly.

One example of a player who has mastered this technique is my Ektelon teammate Jerry Hilecher. He is known as one of the game’s best retrievers even though he has only average speed. However, he does have an exceptional ability to second-guess shots.

Unfortunately, his level of skill can be achieved only after years of play. But anyone can improve their ability in this area if they will just work on it consciously. Some shooting situations are more obvious.

For example, if you are playing a right-handed opponent who is in center court and about to hit a forehand with you on his left, it doesn’t take a genius to figure out that the ball is going to wind up somewhere in that wide expanse of floor space on the right.

If you move forward, he’ll pass the ball to the right rear corner. If you try to close that off by moving back, he’ll try a left-corner pinch or a right-side kill, either of which should leave the ball in the right forecourt. Let him shoot before you move.

Sometimes, a knowledge of your opponent’s individual strengths and weaknesses can help you anticipate his shots. For example, most right-handed players who intercept the ball at mid-court by the left wall with the opponent on their right would drive the ball back down the left wall.

However, if the shooter has a weak backhand, he may not be able to execute a down-the-line backhand drive and will have to go across court. By studying your opponent’s shot choices during the course of a game, you should gain some insight into what he is likely to do in different shooting situations.

The rules say that you can’t intentionally block an opponent’s path to the ball, but there is a lot of room for individual interpretation. Here Charlie Brumfield’s body language tells me that I will have to go around if I plan to get to what is obviously going to be a down-the-line forehand.
If you’re traveling farther than 75 miles from your home court, the following affiliate court clubs will honor your AARA (IRA) card. Please call ahead for house rules and guest fees.

**Listing Key:**
- **wlr:** women’s locker room
- **mlr:** men’s locker room
- **ws:** women’s sauna
- **ms:** men’s sauna
- **ww:** women’s whirlpool
- **mw:** men’s whirlpool
- **wsr:** women’s steam room
- **msr:** men’s steam room
- **tc:** tennis court
- **sp:** swimming pool
- **r:** restaurant
- **b:** bar
- **sb:** snack bar
- **ps:** pro shop
- **er:** exercise room
- **n:** nursery

**ALASKA**
- Anchorage Racquet Club
  - 700 South Bragam
  - Anchorage, AK
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, wsr, msr, sb, ps, er

**ARIZONA**
- Metro Athletic Club
  - 4843 N. 8th Place
  - Phoenix, AZ 85014
  - Call Darlene 602-264-1735
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, wsr, ps, er, n

**CALIFORNIA**
- Valley Court Club
  - 1140 S Chandler
  - N. Hollywood, CA 91601
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er
- Marin Racquetball Club
  - 4364 Bel Marin Keys Blvd.
  - Novato, CA 94947
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er
- Anchorag e Racquet Club
  - Anchorage, AK
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, wsr, msr, r, b, sb, ps, er, n

**CONNECTICUT**
- Sportrooms of Hialeah
  - 1900 West 44th Place
  - Hialeah, FL 33019
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, msr, sb, ps, er, n
- Jacksonvile Racquetball Club
  - 6651 Crestrline Dr.
  - Jacksonville, FL 32211
  - 904-726-3494
- Kendall Racquetball and Health Club
  - 10631 SW 88th Street
  - Miami, FL 33176
  - 305-956-0600
- Sportrooms of Sabal Chase
  - 6000 SW 113 Pl.
  - Miami, FL 33176
  - 305-956-2677
- Sportrooms of Plantation
  - 8469 NW 17th Ct.
  - Plantation, FL 33322
  - 305-472-2608
- The Courthouse Racquetball Club
  - 45-608 Kam Highway
  - Kaneohe, HI 96744
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n
- Court of Grote
  - Old Rte. 13 East
  - Carbondale, IL 62901
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, wsr, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**ILLINOIS**
- Boston Tennis Club
  - 633 Summer Street
  - South Yarmouth, MA 02664
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, tc, r, b, sb, ps, er, n
- Mid-Cape Racquet Club
  - 193 White’s Path
  - Hialeah, FL 33019
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, tc, r, b, sb, ps, er, n

**MASSACHUSETTS**
- Exercise Dynamics
  - Old Highway 71 North
  - Bemidji, MN 56601
  - 218-751-6351
- Kendall Racquetball and Health Club
  - 10631 SW 88th Street
  - Miami, FL 33176
  - 305-956-0600
- King George Racquetball Club
  - 17 King George Rd.
  - Greenbrook, NJ 08812
  - 201-355-6900
- Riciochet Racquet Club
  - 218 Washington St.
  - South Plainfield, NJ 07080
  - 201-753-2300
- The Courthouse Racquetball Club
  - 45-608 Kam Highway
  - Kaneohe, HI 96744
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n
- Riciochet Racquet Club
  - 218 Washington St.
  - South Plainfield, NJ 07080
  - 201-753-2300
- The Courthouse Racquetball Club
  - 45-608 Kam Highway
  - Kaneohe, HI 96744
  - wlr, mlr, ws, ms, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**NEW YORK**
- Sportrooms of Coral Gables
  - 1500 Douglas Road
  - Coral Gables, FL 33143
  - 305-443-4228
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, wsr, ms, sb, ps, er, n
- The Pelham Racquetball and Health Club
  - Pelham Manor, NY 10803
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**OREGON**
- Eastern Oregon Sports
  - 396 S.E. 5 St.
  - Ontario, OR 97914
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**PENNSYLVANIA**
- The Supreme Courts
  - 90 West Chestnut St.
  - Washington, PA 15301
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**SOUTH CAROLINA**
- Charleston Racquet
  - Nauticus Center
  - 1642 Highway 7
  - Charleston, SC 29407
  - 803-571-1020
- Kil pins Athletic Club
  - 405 South 2nd
  - Kil len, TX 75541
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**TEXAS**
- Kil len Athletic Club
  - 405 South 2nd
  - Kil len, TX 75541
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**UTAH**
- The Court Club
  - 120 W. Hilton Inn Dr.
  - St. George, UT 84770
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

**WEST VIRGINIA**
- Charleston Racquet Club
  - P.O. Box 3328
  - Charleston, WV 25332
  - wlr, mlr, ws, mw, ms, sb, ps, er, n

For more information on how to list a court club on this page, call Cheryl at 901-345-8000.
RACQUETBALL welcomes all tournaments to report their results. Please list all rounds of each event. Scorecard will report as many rounds of each tournament as space allows.

For reasons of space and clarity, tournament results submitted for listing in "Scorecard" should be arranged as shown in the example below. Entries using this format stand a better chance of being included in the "Scorecard" section.

Mary Duitsman (foreground) sets up a forehand shot during her Women's B match against Jenny Pynne in the finals round of the National Amateur racquetball tournament at the Glass Court Club, Lombard, Illinois, September 12-14.

NCRA 3RD ANNUAL NATIONAL AMATEUR TOURNAMENT Glass Court Club Lombard, Illinois September 12-14

Men's A: Greg Maloney over Jeff McDowell 21-17, 21-10.
Women's A (Round Robin): Janet Ceglinski.

Men's B: Dave Rodriguez over Jerry Brody 21-11, 21-14, 11-5.
Women's B: Debbie Adams over Pat Evaltik 21-17, 21-10.
Women's Novice: Robin Cunningham over Bertha Menander 21-7, 21-11.

NEWPORT CUP OPEN September 19-21 Newport Playground Newport, Rhode Island

Women's A: Mike Parent over Gilly Dinoll 15-10, 15-3.
Women's B: Mike Parent over Jim Smith 15-10, 15-5.
Men's C: James Harpe over Dennis Saccola 15-7.
Women's C: Dennis Dooling over John Keenan 15-12, 15-12; Art Cady over Roland Gazaille 15-10, 15-12.

1ST ANNUAL LABOR DAY SWING AND SWIM Back Bay Racquetball Club Boston, Massachusetts July 18-20

Men's Masters: 1st: John Lepore; 2nd: Sam Garatolo.
Women's Novice: 1st: Dan Veil.
Women's C: 1st: George Noonan.

Jubilee 350 Pepsi Challenge Open Back Bay Racquetball Club Boston, Massachusetts July 18-20

Men's Open: 1st: Jeff Riehl; 2nd: Tom Travers, 3rd: Dominick Palmeiri; 4th: Kevin Deighan.
Men's B: 1st: Tim Deighan; 2nd: Jim Durant; 3rd: Ron Martucci; 4th: Tom Embrogno.
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Allentown, Pennsylvania
October 11-12

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Supreme Courts
Janesville, Wisconsin
October 10-12

Mens Open
1st: Bruce Thompson; 2nd: Bill Schultz; 3rd: Barry Helms; Consolation: Will Mulvaney.

Mens B
1st: John Dongara; 2nd: Mike Olmstead; 3rd: Tom Hart; Consolation: Mark O’Donnell.

Mens C
1st: Dave Motherwell; 2nd: Dave Nelson; 3rd: Fred Villetmore; Consolation: Gerald Nickles.

Womens B
1st: Helen Wall; 2nd: Rosanne Langston; 3rd: Bridget White; Consolation: Diane Brandt.

Womens C
1st: Barb Hill; 2nd: Mimi Schwartz; 3rd: Sylvia Thayer; Consolation: Patty Johnson.

For Seniors Only
Sun Oakes Racquet Club
Redding, California
September 24-28

Mens Open Doubles

Mens A
1st: Mike Palmer; 2nd: Duane Carleton; 3rd: Dennis Bales; 4th: Bill Cook.

Mens B
1st: Dave Mathews; 2nd: Mario Serafini; 3rd: Jim Barry; 4th: Roger Taylor.

Mens Open
1st: Ken Seamans; 2nd: Dave Rasmussen; 3rd: Mark Wayne; 4th: Bob Dunbar.

Mens 45s
1st: Al Rossi; 2nd: Bill Dabney; 3rd: Jack Shreder; 4th: Jay Hathaway.

Mens 55s

Womens A

Womens B

Womens Doubles

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2nd: Duane Carleton; 3rd: Dennis Bales; 4th: Bill Cook.
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