

OFF THE WALL

Opening Shots: The Upcoming Season



By Enrico Dubach, URA President

Summer is flying by. Are you a player who plays racquetball all summer or do you take the summer off? I've done both and it definitely helps your game if you can play at least a few times over the summer. I know I'm going to be a bit rusty in September.

We have a great year of tournaments scheduled for the 1999/2000 season. We are excited to bring you 14 sanctioned tournaments this season, plus our State Singles and Doubles Championships. I'd like to commend all of the tournament directors for their efforts in making Utah's tournament schedule one of the best in the nation. If you don't mind traveling a little, we have tournaments almost every two weeks throughout the season.

As you check out the enclosed tournament schedule, you will notice two new tournaments in Ogden. This is great! We have not had a sanctioned tournament in the Ogden area for a long, long time. They will try to schedule out-of-towners to play as late as possible in the week, which will keep the number of your travel days down. Please support these tournaments if you can.

Another change this year will be the State Singles Championships in March. The Board of Directors has chosen the Orem Fitness Center for this year's site. We receive bids each year from clubs who wish to host the State Championships. We look at the facility, the hospitality, the costs and how the tournament will be run.

In recent years, the State Singles Championships have been held in Salt Lake. This makes a lot of sense because the largest number of players live in the Salt Lake area. As the Board of Directors, we want to offer the best possible tournament for our members. We feel that moving the tournament around will add diversity and will improve the tournament in the long run.

The Orem Fitness Center is a great facility with twelve courts. They plan to be as flexible as possible when scheduling matches for out-of-town players. I know that many players will be upset with the move to Orem, so I am ask-

ing for your support on this. We will evaluate your feedback at the end of the year for next year's schedule. You could also e-mail your comments on how you feel about the tournament schedule and venue changes to Steve Coray, our newsletter editor.

Most of the programs have their schedules set for the season. The **Junior Summer League** is wrapping up with the State Junior's Championships on August 19-21. The **Adult Travelling League** is starting in September and the **High School League** will start in October.

Congratulations to **Kristen Walsh** for her recent wins at the Junior Olympic Championships held recently in Colorado Springs. Kristen won all three divisions she entered: Girl's 16&Under Singles, Girl's 16&Under Doubles with Krystal Csuk of Illinois, and Mixed 18&Under Doubles with Brent Waters of North Carolina. She had already qualified for the U.S. Junior National Team by winning the High School Championships earlier this year. Way to go Kristen!

Gene Rolfe has accepted a position on the Board of Directors. He has been active in collegiate programs and will continue with that in addition to his Board responsibilities. He replaces **Alan Jorgensen**, who had to resign because of time limitations. Welcome, Gene!

John Kitchens has also accepted a position on the Board. He will take over **Greg Baker's** position. John lives in the Ogden area and will be instrumental in the tournaments there.

Some tournament directors will try a new format this year in the Open Division. Instead of having an Open Consolation for first-round losers, players will drop down to an AA Division. This division will be played out as a regular division with prizes. **Sandy Gunn** did this at the Bountiful Bash last year and it worked very well. It allowed lower-level Open players to play more matches. We hope this will encourage more players to enter the Open Division.

Good luck this season, play as many tournaments as you can fit in, and we'll see you on the courts!

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Our Racquetball Road Trip To Ireland

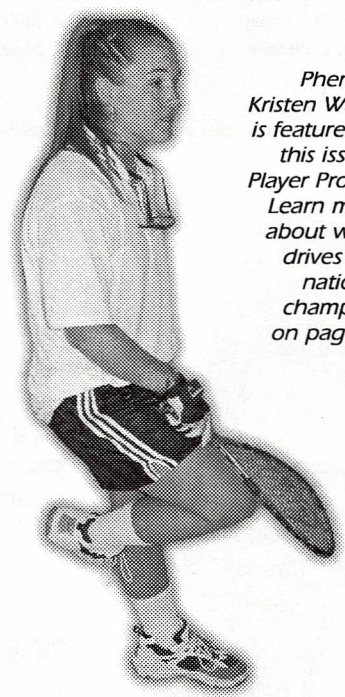


By Don Sanderson

Hello, my name is Don and I'm a racq-aholic. (All together now: "Hi Don!"). That may help you understand why it took only the flimsiest of pretexts (and generous airline pass privileges) for me to load up the family and take my 8 year old son, John, over to compete in the Irish Junior Open in April. The following is what we found the racquetball scene to be during our ten day visit in April.

"What's up with that?!" you ask? Well, at the Junior World Tourney in Orange County, California last December, we ran into Christy Slattery who is the 33 year old coach of the Irish Junior team and definitely the center of gravity for that country's junior program.

My wife, Catherine, was born in Dublin and while normally indifferent at best to the noisy chaos which describes any big racquetball tournament, she suddenly found her raison d'etre (frog term; something to do with dried grapes maybe?) and proceeded to scream herself hoarse rooting for those Irish lads and lasses.



Phenom Kristen Walsh is featured in this issue's Player Profile. Learn more about what drives this national champion on page 6.

Off The Wall

August, 1999

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Contributions may be e-mailed to the Editor at: scoray@xmission.com. Please save files without formatting (no tabs, centering, bolding, etc.) in ASCII format.

Deadlines for submission of all display advertising, stories and letters are listed below. All advertising must be prepaid. Call for rates and ad specifications.

Dec. 1999 issue Nov. 8, 1999
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From The Editor



By Steve Coray

Okay, we're making progress. The newsletter is looking pretty good. The major design changes are done and we have a number of contributors in place who will be providing you with interesting and informative reading on a regular basis.

I am excited about the feature stories we are seeing, like the articles on Luzell, Adam and Kristen and the Sanderson's account of their experiences in Ireland. I hope you value getting some extra insight into the personalities of these impressive people.

If you enjoy an article, please tell the author next time you run in to him/her at a tournament. They all work for free. I would like to publicly thank each contributor now for their willingness to help. It took the contributions of about 20 players and pros to get this issue to you.

Consider the amount of volunteer work Don put in to his two stories in this issue. Don responded to my request to write about his experiences because he loves this sport. Read his stories, you'll see.

But we still have room for improvement. My two soapbox subjects, the two things I intend to crusade tirelessly (and probably annoyingly) for are 1) more advertising, and 2) more member input.

ADVERTISING

We have a great publication. I think it is fair to say that it is one of the best state association newsletters in the country.

It goes out to a focused, active group of readers who typically read it from cover to cover, then save it and read it again from time to time. Also, our rates are rock-bottom cheap - an advertiser's dream (see rates below)! Once aware of our newsletter, advertisers will jump at the chance to place ads with us.

The problem is that, so far, they aren't aware of us. Your Board of Directors and I are doing what we can, but there are only so many volunteer hours in the day. That's where you come in. I need your help.

I need tournament directors to use 'Off The Wall' to promote your tournaments, your clubs, your events and your sponsors. I also need members to promote your own businesses and to show a copy of 'Off The Wall' to your business contacts who you think might be interested. If you have questions or ideas, give me a call.

MEMBER INPUT

If it kills me, I'm going to get you members to speak out on the racquetball issues that are important to you. I know you have strong opinions about things - I've overheard plenty of them at tournaments over the years. You just need to get into the habit of putting them on paper and sending them to me.

To get you warmed up to the idea of forwarding your ideas, I am introducing a new feature, the 'Off The Wall Readers Poll'.

In each issue I'll pose several questions about various racquetball topics, some realistic and some hypothetical, some serious and some downright goofy.

Your job is to send me your opinions. I'll continue collecting your responses until the next issue goes to press and give you the tabulated results, along with a new set of questions.

Question #1:

Of all of the active Utah tournament players, who would you most like to play doubles with and why? Please suggest two male and two female players. Your choice could be based on anything that matters to you, like their: past tournament performances, particular court skills, intelligence, personality, cool clothes, etc. And remember to list why you picked them.

Question #2:

In order, what three things do you like most about your involvement in Utah's racquetball tournaments? Please be specific and elaborate if you would like.

Question #3:

In order, what three suggestions do you have for tournament directors that would help make their events better? Please be specific and don't worry, I'll keep your replies anonymous.

These are a few topics to which I'd like to see a mass response. I hope you would also. Please send your written replies to me, now, while it is fresh in your mind, to either the URA address or my e-mail address listed in the box on the left. I'd also welcome your suggestions for more questions for me to pose in future issues.

Thanks in advance for your input on the Readers Poll and for your advertising ideas. With your help, 'Off The Wall' will just keep getting better and better. Also, best of luck in the upcoming tournament season.

AD RATES

Size	Dimensions	One Issue	Two Issues	Addtl. Issues
A 1 Column Full Pg	2 5/8" x 9 1/2"	\$60.00	\$110.00	\$55.00
B 1 Column Half Pg	2 5/8" x 4 3/8"	35.00	60.00	30.00
C 2 Column Full Pg	5 3/8" x 9 1/2"	110.00	200.00	100.00
D 2 Column Half Pg	5 3/8" x 4 3/8"	60.00	110.00	55.00
E Full Page	7 1/2" x 9 1/2"	140.00	250.00	125.00
F Business Card	3 3/4" x 2"	25.00	40.00	20.00

Full payment is due upon publication. An art production fee will be charged (at the rate of \$30 per hour) for ads which are not submitted camera-ready.

Tips From Rick: Perfect Practice Makes Perfect



By Rick Strout

It has been said that "practice makes perfect". Really, the saying should be "perfect practice makes perfect".

So many times, I see players hitting on the courts by themselves. Maybe they are just waiting for a game, or maybe they are making a real effort to "get better". But are they getting the most out of their drilling? Is all that time practicing actually helping their game? Too many times you'll see players like this hit the standard drop-and-hit 100 forehands and 100 backhands, then consider themselves "ready to play".

I would suggest a whole different approach to your practice time, that being **action drilling**. That means learning to hit **on the move!** How often does a "stand-and-hit" opportunity present itself in a match? NEVER! You need to isolate game situations that need work and then imitate them in your drilling sessions. You need to practice as you would play.

Get into the movement of where you'll be in a game. What kind of shot options will likely present themselves? What are the high percentage shots you should look for?

What about serves? How many players spend significant time practicing their serves? Not many! And if they do, they are not including defensive coverage. Remember, once the serve is hit, you need to immediately cover it...before your opponent returns the serve! Fall back into center court (about one step behind the dotted encroachment line and about a step toward the side of the court you served to) and be ready to re-kill your opponent's shot. Only a few of the top Open players can successfully kill the ball more often than leaving it up for you to re-kill. (Of course you have to avoid hindering your opponent, but that's a topic for another article.)

To practice this action, hit your serve, then cover it and re-kill it as it comes off the back wall. If you have to let it bounce a couple of times, don't worry about it. With time and "perfect practice", you'll get better and better at this skill. This simple drill is simply great - it gets you into the habit of **moving** off the serve and helps you realize that not all serves are aces. You'll learn that, if you are prepared, you will get re-kill opportunities. You can't wait to see if his/her shot is a winner, you have to assume it will be miss-hit and left up for you. But you

must be in position for the re-kill. **Cover, cover, cover!**

My best rally drill develops your ability to re-kill shot after shot, while you are on the move. In this drill, you attempt to hit a killshot down the line. Then as the ball comes back to you, move into position and hit a re-kill. It doesn't matter how many times it bounces. Just keep moving your feet to set up for another killshot.

Start this drill on the forehand side, just behind the encroachment line and a few feet from the side wall. Try to hit your shots back down the line, but be ready to return anything. Re-kill, re-kill, re-kill.

Notice that you will often be standing in an open stance, hitting with your weight on your **back** foot. Start slow, so you get returnable shots. This drill is much harder to successfully execute than you would imagine. It is not intended to perfect your rollouts, but to teach open stance hitting, better footwork and action shot making.

You'll find this type of drilling will help you get to shots earlier, see more options as they occur and teach you better court positioning for those all-important returns.

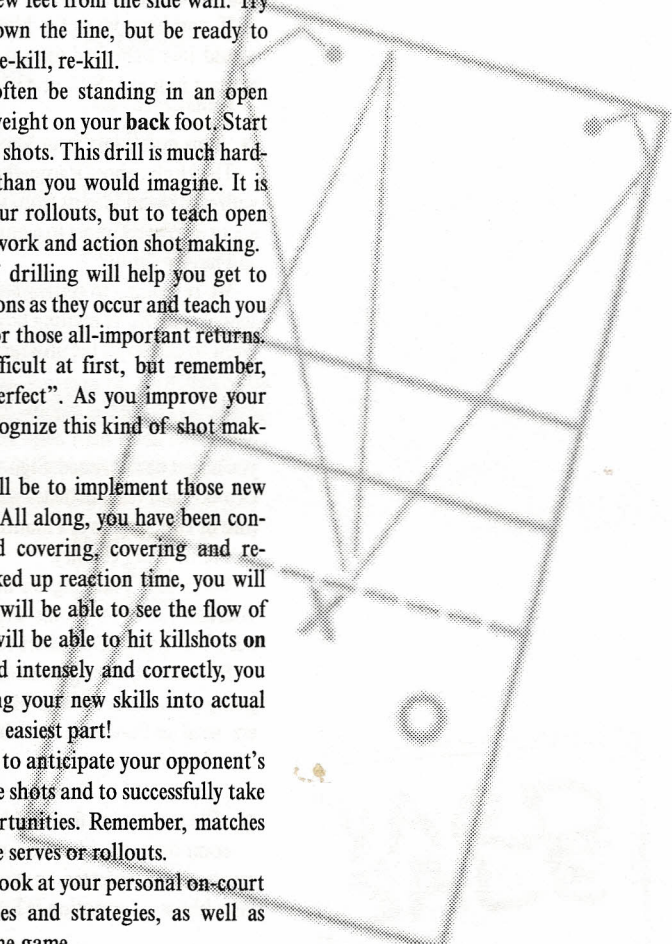
You will find them difficult at first, but remember, "perfect practice makes perfect". As you improve your skills, you will start to recognize this kind of shot making in high-level matches.

Your next challenge will be to implement those new skills in a game situation. All along, you have been concentrating on hitting and covering, covering and re-killing. You will have picked up reaction time, you will be in better position, you will be able to see the flow of the game better and you will be able to hit killshots **on the move**. If you practiced intensely and correctly, you will find that implementing your new skills into actual game situations will be the easiest part!

I want you to learn how to anticipate your opponent's next move, to react to those shots and to successfully take advantage of re-kill opportunities. Remember, matches are won on re-kills, not ace serves or rollouts.

In future articles, we'll look at your personal on-court conditioning, serving styles and strategies, as well as your mental approach to the game.

Rick Strout is an owner/manager of the Metro Sports Club, has earned nine state titles, including two open singles, and at one time or another has trained most of Utah's best racquetball players. Currently on a forced break while he recovers from a knee injury, Rick still takes on serious intermediate and advanced players as students.



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OFF THE WALL

Letters To The Editor

Logan's Matt Christensen sent e-mail complimenting the revamped newsletter and went on to say that:

Logan racquetball is still alive, although a little slow in the summer months. We are still faced with the travelling distance to attend tournaments in Salt Lake. There seems to be no easy solution. Only those players with enough persistence make the trek regularly. It would be nice if we could make more contact between regular Logan players and players on the Wasatch Front.

If you have ideas for Matt or are headed north and would like help finding a match at your level, you can contact him at U.S.U. at 435-797-8786.

This note came from Marianne Walsh:

The High School Racquetball program is looking ahead with excitement into its third season. The last two years saw about 50 players on six to eight teams competing at all levels and having fun.

We're looking to getting even more players involved this school year. We're inviting boys and girls grades 9-12 in all levels to check out the program - we'll even teach beginners how to play!

We will be in the schools recruiting new players in early September and I need help! Please call me at 487-2338 if you might be interested. Sign-ups and practices will start in October, and team matches will get going in late November (one or two Saturdays a month). The State Championships will be held in February.

We're also planning on attending the 2000 National Tournament in St. Louis with as many teams as we can take. We'll hold fundraisers to help cover expenses.

Remember, our sport needs new young players if it is going to remain strong. Marianne and the high schoolers need enthusiastic, reliable volunteers. Please help them however you can.

We want your feedback! Please send us your gripes, compliments, ideas or suggestions about tournaments, this newsletter, or anything else. E-mail and regular address information is listed on page 2.

Sign up a new member and... **WIN STUFF!**

The USRA is trying to double its membership in the next 12 months. The URA has already committed to contribute by increasing our size by 15% by the end of October. So the USRA and the URA are asking each existing member (that's you and me) to sign up one new member in September or October. Just complete the tear-out form in *Racquetball* magazine and send it in with the \$20 yearly dues and everybody wins!

The USRA and the URA get a new member, you and the new member each get a can of Penn balls and are entered into weekly drawings for LOADS of racquetball gear. You could also win the Grand Prize, two round-trip tickets anywhere in the continental United States! What's more, you'll get all that *every time* you sign up a new member.

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OFF THE WALL

Tournament Results: Luck of the Heights

This tournament was held in mid-March at the Cottonwood Heights Recreation Center. Results were not available until after the deadline for the May issue of 'Off The Wall'. Our apologies to the contestants for the delay.

	First Place	Second Place	Third Place	Fourth Place
Men's Open	Adam Anderson	Chris Baca	Jerry Montanez	Matt Christensen
Men's A	John Kitchens	Jon Xanthos	Chris Gale	Tommy Montanez
Men's B	Bob Pendleton	Brad Brumbaugh	Tyler Nelson	Clarence Verhoef
Men's C	Terry Orchard	Dan Robison	Bob Davison	Les Hinman
Men's D	Dan Robison	Cris Cecka	Quang Nguyen	Les Hinman
Men's 35 & Over	Craig Wandling	Marcus Dunyon		
Men's 50 & Over	Alan Jorgensen	Mike Doilney	Chris Segura	Pat Conway
Boy's 12 & Under	Tyson Cecka	Andrew Gale	Christopher Carter	
Boy's 16 & Under	Richard Terry	Cris Cecka	Quang Nguyen	Dan Christiansen
Women's Open	Christine McAlpine	Vicki Bennion	Sandee Hinman	Kim Blake
Women's A	Vicki Bennion	Kim Blake	Val Shewfelt	
Women's B	Heather Montanez	Karynn Christensen	Kiersten Armknecht	Karen Anderson
Men's A Doubles	Jorgensen/Dunyon	Clift/Conway	Gomez/Keene	Carver/Carver
Men's B Doubles	Schultz/Pendleton	Davis/Dimmick	Hjelm/Hjelm	Panier/Valkenburg
Mixed Doubles	Hinman/Hoey	McAlpine/Baca	Shewfelt/Christensen	

Tournament Results: Spring Smash

This tournament was held in late February at the Marv Jensen Fitness Center. Results were not available until after the deadline for the May issue of 'Off The Wall'. Our apologies to the contestants for the delay.

	First Place	Second Place	Third Place	Fourth Place
Men's Open	Jerry Montanez	Tony Glavas	Glan Aitken	Todd North
Men's A	Nate Porter	Paul Buchi	Kelly Groves	Tommy Montanez
Men's B	Keith Nahm	Tyler Nielson	Mark Sandoval	Mike Van
Men's C	Cal Stringham	Chris Clift	Jim Milburn	Wade Doyle
Men's D	Eddie Hill	Dan Robison	Glenn Pettit	Dan Thurgood
Men's 30 & Over	Kelly Groves			
Men's 40 & Over	Cal Stringham			
Men's 55 & Over	Chris Segura			
Women's Open	Christine McAlpine	Mary Ann Simmons		
Women's A	Val Shewfelt	Janette Olsen		
Women's B	Kathy Duman			
Women's 40 & Over	Val Shewfelt			
Men's Open Doubles	Hoey/Baca	North/Lucky	Owens/Julkunen	
Men's A Doubles	Buchi/Porter	Chun/Peters	Gomez/Keene	

Collegiate Program

By Gene Rolfe

We are looking forward to another great season of collegiate racquetball. Our local schools; BYU, Utah State and Weber State, have competed very well, all finishing in the top ten in the nation at least once during the last three years.

I still haven't received firm commitments from all of the schools and I am anxious to see which schools will field teams. I am organizing a small team from Westminster, where I will be studying this year, and we will be competing for the first time.

The collegiate schedule has not been finished as we

wait to see when the regular tournaments are scheduled. However, we will have a tournament each month, starting with an opening tournament near the end of September and ending with a qualifier in March. The Intercollegiate Championships will be April 5-9.

Watch for regular collegiate results in 'Off the Wall'. Many collegiate players have gone on to compete in regular tournaments and some are ranked in the state.

If you know someone who you think might enjoy playing racquetball at the collegiate level, have them get in touch with me at 801-955-6017 or contact the racquetball team at their college.

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Walsh at 487-2338 if you
have any household



Player Profile: Kristen Walsh



By Marcus Dunyon

Kristen Walsh played her first tournament at age 5, lost every game and cried when it was over. At 10, she played in her first Junior National Tournament. At 12, she retired her mother as coach and started training seriously under local pro Rick Strout.

In 1997, she won the 14&Under division at the Junior World Tournament. This last season, she won national titles in both the High School Championships and the 16&Under category of the U.S. Junior Olympics.

Kristen's light, friendly off-court personality hides a fiercely intense competitive streak.

She has beaten the best young female players the world has to offer. What local players may not fully appreciate is that, for her age, Kristen Walsh is the very best female racquetball player there is, period. Anywhere.

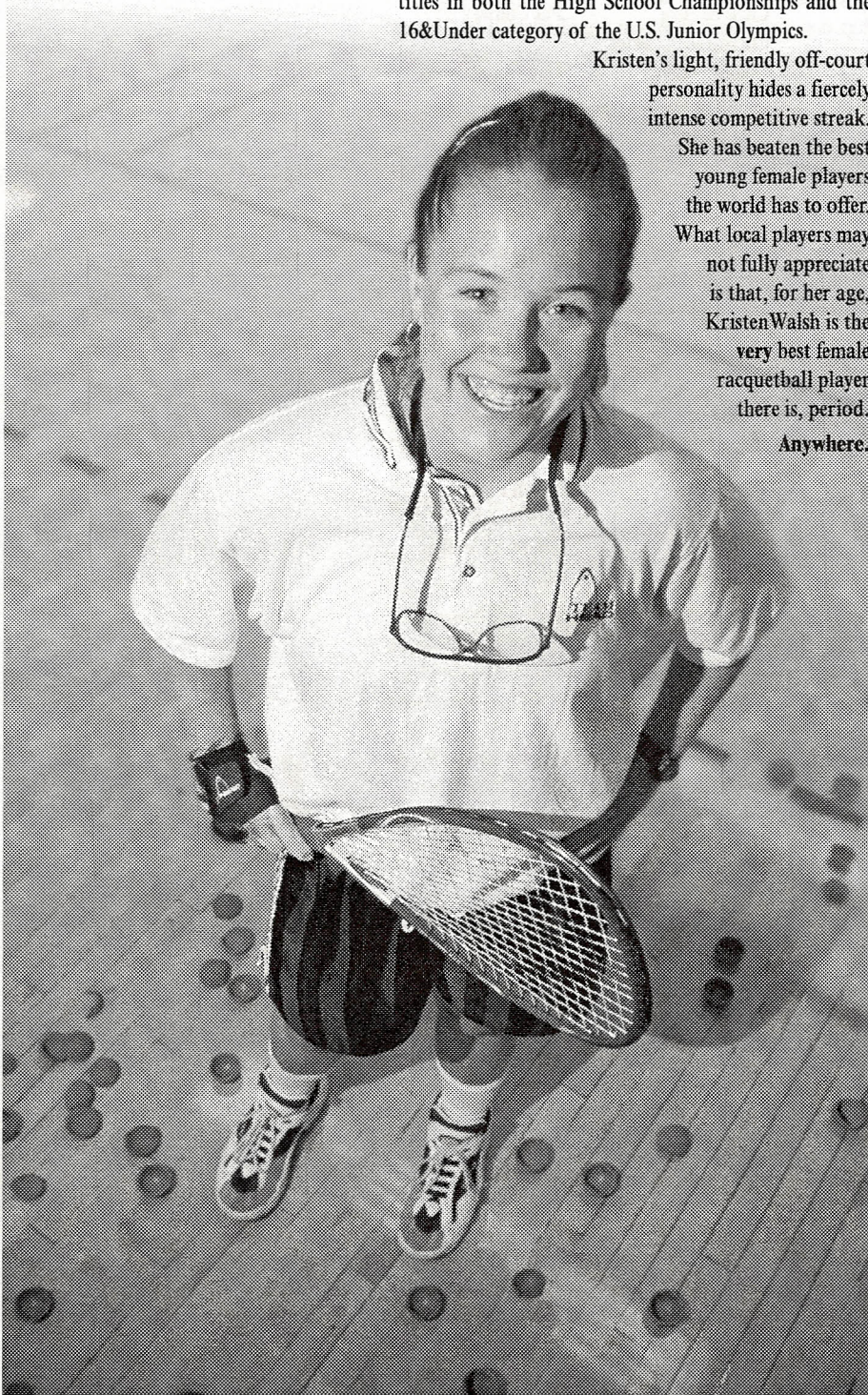


Photo by Steve Coray

Q Kristen, you are the current Utah State champions and recently you played in the U.S. Junior Olympic Tournament in Tempe Arizona. How did that go?

A I played in the 16 & Under Singles, the 16 & Under Doubles and the 18 Mixed, and won all three events.

Q So you took all the gold possible and left everyone else in the dust.

A That was the plan, man.

Q Two years ago a coach you know said to me: "There's a new sheriff in town". What did he mean by that?

A Probably that was when I played my Mom in the state finals and beat her, that my mother had been the sheriff or best player in the open up to that point.

Q How old are you?

A I am 17 years old.

Q Your parents are?

A I think they are 44 and...

Q Not their age, I want their names.

A Mike and Marianne Walsh. We live in Salt Lake City in a house actually in Holladay, and I go to school at Skyline High.

Q What other sports do you participate in and what other interests do you have?

A Just about all of them. I played basketball for my school. I did play volleyball and softball for Skyline, but now I just don't have time do everything, so I narrowed it down to basketball and racquetball.

Q Do the seasons collide and how do you handle the time if both sports take place at the same time?

A Yeah, they both go on at the same time, so after basketball practice I go to the gym and practice racquetball. I do miss a few games in the Junior World Tournament and the U.S. Open. But other than that, basketball keeps me in shape. So I just need to get to the court to swing and everything works out okay.

Q How long have you been playing?

A I have been playing tournaments since I was five and in that tournament, I lost every single match and cried after every match. But don't tell anyone that!

Q Now that you're playing national level matches, how do you train for those tournaments?

A I have tried to put together a program, but it is hard for me to follow a program all the way through. I do lots of things to stay in shape, like running, biking, go to the gym and workout on the machines and lift some weights, which I think is very important. I don't play so much when I get on the court. Instead, I work on my strokes and shots. And I prepare mentally as well as physically.

Q Is being mentally prepared the hard part of training?

A I think being mentally prepared is the hardest part of the game.

Q Do you think about the players you're going to be playing?

A Rick Strout, who is my coach, says it doesn't matter who you're playing as long as your mechanics are good and you hit the ball well. So if you are playing well, then no one will beat you.

Q Rick believes in the percentages of racquetball. Do you feel good about that approach?

A Rick has been coaching me for about three years and I like a lot of his ideas, and it is a very good game plan. Although fancy shots look good, they don't always work. So I agree with him on a lot of things.

Q Who else has coached you and had a strong influence on your game?

A My mother was my first coach and that worked for a while, until I started having my own opinions.

Q Who on the national level has helped you?

A Both Eric Mueller and Robin Levine have helped me quite a bit. Mostly with my footwork, and being in shape, 'cause if your legs are tired then your shot won't go in. They are also helping me fine-tune the little things in my game. I also worked with Michelle Gould a little on my serve. They really haven't changed my game too much, but instead have helped me fine-tune my game.

Q In racquetball, who has been your motivation?

A My Mom. I always wanted to beat my Mom! Now that I have done that, I want to be on the Pro Tour.

Q I had the opportunity to watch you play in a Pro Stop in Las Vegas. Was that your first Pro match?

A No, my first match was at the U.S. Open and I qualified, then played the second seed. I played Christine VanHess, so that was interesting, and I did alright. In Las Vegas, I played a five-game match.

Q You mention the Pro Tour, do you have a timetable for competing?

A I want to start playing the Pro Stop this year, and within two years be in the top four. I think that's a good goal.

Q The national level is quite different then the state levels in terms of competition, who are the Utah women that give you a good match?

A The level of competition is very different. A lot more women play in other states and at the national level, so the competition is stronger. In the state, Christine McAlpine gives me a tough time and I need to play well to win.

Q This year, what divisions are you thinking of entering?

A I'm going to enter the Men's Open division and see what I can do in there. It will be good for me to play the fast-paced game. It's a lot more like the Pro Tour. I'll also

enter some Men's A events this year. I haven't won one yet.

Q Tell me a little about you.

A I like sports, and everybody notices that I also love to read in my spare time - mysteries and exciting stuff. I don't like romance novels.

Q Do you have a boyfriend?

A No, not right now, and besides, I don't have time for one.

Q What else do you like to do?

A I love to snowboard and bike, go camping and travel, which is a good thing about racquetball. I like school, and although I haven't chosen a college, I want to be a physical therapist.

Q Today you are here at the Redwood Center helping with the juniors. With that in mind, what are you giving back to racquetball and why?

A Racquetball has given a lot to me as I have grown up. I feel like it can help people with confidence, staying in shape, and building friendships. That's one of the things going to tournaments has done for me - I meet a lot of people all over the nation and it makes playing a lot of fun. I enjoy watching the young kids play.

Q There is no question, Kristen, that you are the shining star in the state of Utah and, some of the time, it is hard to get people at your level to spend time with players just beginning. What would you like to tell juniors.

A Don't get discouraged with participation, and if you feel like you're improving slow, keep practicing. 'Cause one day it will just click. Also, the big tournaments are not just for the better players. They break things down so you can play with people at the same level. They are so much fun and everyone should experience them.

Comments: This was a rvery fun interview. Kristen is a great young ambassador for Utah racquetball and her enthusiasm and love of the game is very apparent. During this interview we laughed and had a great time. It's not very often a player of her stature will take the time to interview, nor spend time teaching players at the beginning of their racquetball experience.

Kristen has accomplished more in racquetball at her age then anyone in the state. But with all her medals, trophies, and national recognition, she is truly a wonderful young woman - someone we can all be proud of. Thank you Mike, Marianne and especially Kristen.

Do you know someone who you think deserves to be featured in "Player Profile" in a future issue? Let us know!

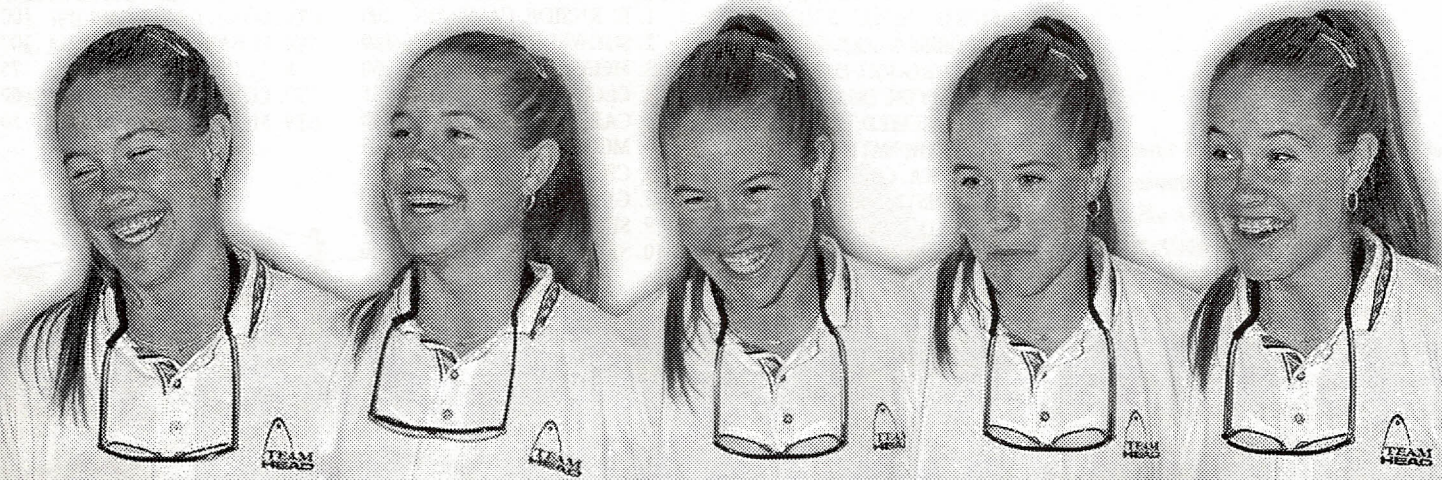


Photo by Steve

Tournament Directors will be working harder this year to avoid scheduling out-of-town players on the first night of their tournaments. We also have several URA-sanctioned events in Ogden and Orem. Please watch for tournaments that promote better scheduling and

ATTEND OUT-OF-TOWN TOURNAMENTS!

Then watch your name soar in the rankings!

Utah Penn Top Ten Rankings (as of July, 1999)

MEN'S OPEN

1. ANDERSON, ADAM	410
2. BLACK, STEVE	360
3. MONTANEZ, JERRY	235
T4. CHRISTENSEN, MATT	150
T4. GLAVAS, TONY	150
6. KITCHENS, JOHN	75
7. AITKEN, GLEN	70
8. BACA, CHRIS	60
T9. LUCKY, SEAN	50
T9. MOON, LARRY	50

MEN'S A

1. PORTER, NATHAN	330
2. KITCHENS, JOHN	310
3. TUELLER, ADAM	200
4. MONTANEZ, TOM	180
T5. BUCHI, PAUL	150
T5. GALE, CHRIS	150
7. DOUVILLE, DOUG	80
8. STEINER, BENJAMIN	75
T9. GIBSON, AARON	60
T9. JENSEN, LORIN	60

MEN'S B

1. SANDOVAL, MARK	270
2. PENDLETON, BOB	235
3. XANTHOS, JON	160
4. MASTERS, CRAIG	135
T5. LOWE, JASON	110
T5. MCARDLE, SEAN	110
7. VERHOEF, CLARENCE	90
8. FORD, AARON	80
T9. MONK, BARRY	60
T9. NELSON, TYLER	60

MEN'S C

1. ORCHARD JR., TERRY	260
2. CLIFT, CHRIS	130
3. STRINGHAM, CAL	100
4. VERHOEF, CLARENCE	90
5. ROBISON, DAN	85
6. NELSON, KEVIN	75
T7. FOSTER, JOHN	60
T7. HAYWARD, STEVEN	60
T7. HINMAN, LES	60
10. NIELSON, RYAN	55

MEN'S D

1. ROBISON, DAN	375
2. THURGOOD, DAN	145
3. NGUYEN, QUANG	110
T4. BENEFIELD, ERIC	100
T4. MCCOY, NATHAN	100
6. CECKA, CRIS	80
7. CHRISTIANSEN, JUSTIN	55
T8. CARD, KENT	50
T8. CHAMBERS, KENT	50
T8. DAVISON, ROB	50
T8. GEORGE, DALLAS	50
T8. HILL, EDDIE	50
T8. LOO, JARED	50

MEN'S NOVICE

1. CHRISTIANSEN, JUSTIN	80
2. HORTON, DAVE	50
3. EVANS, JARED	30
T4. CRANNEY, NATHANIEL	20
T4. NEWBERRY, NICK	20

BOY'S 8 & UNDER MULTIBOUNCE

1. SANDERSON, JOHN	150
2. WALSH, KOREY	75

BOY'S 8 & UNDER

1. SANDERSON, JOHN	615
2. SUDWEEKS, CHRISTIAN	150

BOY'S 10 & UNDER

1. SANDERSON, JOHN	385
2. WALSH, KOREY	225
3. GALE, ANDREW	220
4. CARTER, CHRISTOPHER	105
5. DUBACH, JONATHAN	100
T6. HALES, SPENCER	50
T6. SUDWEEKS, CHRISTIAN	50
T8. PATTERSON, JON	25
T8. PATTERSON, SEAN	25

BOY'S 12 & UNDER

1. SANDERSON, JOHN	350
2. CECKA, TYSON	240
T4. DUBACH, JONATHAN	150
T4. TERRY, RICHARD	150
5. MCGOVERN, STEVEN	100
6. GALE, ANDREW	80
7. BENNETT, PAUL	75

BOY'S 14 & UNDER

1. NGUYEN, QUANG	220
2. TERRY, RICHARD	200
3. CECKA, CRIS	185
4. CARDON, JASON	125
5. MITCHELL, DAVE	100
6. CHRISTIANSEN, DAN	55
T7. BENNETT, PAUL	25
T7. MCGOVERN, STEVEN	25
9. CHRISTENSEN, DAN	15
10. CECKA, TYSON	10

BOY'S 16 & UNDER

1. BURNSIDE, CAMERON	200
2. SUDWEEKS, BRANDON	180
3. MCCOY, NATHAN	150
4. CECKA, CRIS	135
5. CARDON, JASON	100
6. MCGOVERN, ROB	75
T7. CHRISTENSEN, CODY	50
T7. GEORGE, DALLAS	50
9. SHAW, SCOTT	35
10. SANDERSON, JOHN	30

BOY'S 18 & UNDER

1. CHRISTIANSEN, JUSTIN	250
2. TUELLER, ADAM	230
3. SUDWEEKS, BRANDON	200
4. BURNSIDE, CAMERON	105
T5. JASS, PETE	100
T5. MCGOVERN, ROB	100
T7. DESPAIN, JOSH	25
T7. MCALLISTER, IAN	25
T7. SHAW, SCOTT	25
10. PORTER, NATHAN	20

MEN'S 24 & UNDER

T1. CARVER, ERIC	50
T1. SCOVILLE, RON	50
T3. DAHL, HARLEY	30
T3. PINHEY, SCOTT	30

MEN'S 25 & OVER

1. BLACK, STEVE	225
2. SHEARMAN, TOM	150
T4. DUNYON, MARCUS	100
T4. NORTH, TODD	100
5. CHUN, GARY	75
T6. GALE, CHRIS	50
T6. KOCH, DAVE	50
T6. SANDERSON, DON	50
9. DUBACH, ENRICO	30
10. AITKEN, GLEN	25

MEN'S 30 & OVER

T1. LUCKY, SEAN	150
T1. SHEARMAN, TOM	150
3. DUNYON, MARCUS	125
T4. AITKEN, GLEN	100
T4. WANDLING, CRAIG	100
6. KEENE, PAUL	75
T7. CLIFT, CHRIS	50
T7. COUTTS, JOHN	50
T7. GROVES, KELLY	50
T7. SCHULTZ, JERRY	50

MEN'S 35 & OVER

1. DUBACH, ENRICO	315
2. SANDERSON, DON	270
3. BENNETT, BRYAN	165
4. WANDLING, CRAIG	155
5. AITKEN, GLEN	125
T6. BONA, BRAD	100
T6. SHEARMAN, TOM	100
8. QUINONEZ, VICTOR	75
T9. CONNOR, EDDY	50
T9. MAJORS, GEORGE	50

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OFF THE WALL

MEN'S 40 & OVER

1. SHEARMAN, TOM	350
2. CORAY, STEVE	225
3. DUNYON, MARCUS	200
4. MOON, LARRY	150
5. AITKEN, GLEN	125
6. FRITZSCHE, GARY	75
T7. JULKUNEN, JUHA	50
T7. KRANTZ, RANDY	50
T7. PARKER, STEVE	50
T7. STRINGHAM, CAL	50

MEN'S 45 & OVER

1. FISHER, DENNIS	400
2. BREWER, BARRIE	150
3. JORGENSEN, ALAN	130
T4. DOUVILLE, DOUG	75
T4. LOPEZ, ROB	75
T6. HANLEY, LEE	50
T6. RETFORD, MIKE	50
T8. MAJORS, GEORGE	25
T8. RIDEOUT, DAN	25

MEN'S 50 & OVER

1. DOUVILLE, DOUG	500
2. DOILNEY, MIKE	250
3. MASTERS, CRAIG	205
4. PARKER, STEVE	185
5. JORGENSEN, ALAN	150
6. CONWAY, PAT	130
T7. HEALY, JACK	75
T7. NYSTROM, TOM	75
9. RIDEOUT, DAN	70
10. DEAMER, MIKE	45

MEN'S 55 & OVER

1. RIDEOUT, DAN	280
2. SEGURA, CHRIS	175
3. WILKING, JIM	150
4. NYSTROM, TOM	95
5. PLETCHER, GENE	60
6. CLIFT, JOHN	55
T7. BOYD, BUD	50
T7. LABELLE, HAL	50
9. BECKSTRAND, DENNIS	30
10. DYCUS, ROBERT	25

MEN'S 60 & OVER

1. WILKING, JIM	650
2. MCNABB, ROBERT	50

MEN'S 80 & OVER

1. GARDNER, WALTER	50
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WOMEN'S OPEN

1. WALSH, KRISTEN	450
2. MCALPINE, CHRISTINE	435
3. WILLIAMS, SUSAN	170
4. HINMAN, SANDEE	140
5. BENNION, VICKI	80
6. WENGER, DARLA	45
T7. BLAKE, KIM	30
T7. JOHNSON, PEGGY	30
T7. SIMMONS, MARY ANN	30
9. WALSH, MARIANNE	20

WOMEN'S A

1. SHEWFELT, VAL	330
2. BENNION, VICKI	295
3. BLAKE, KIM	195
4. BODILY, SHELII	150
5. MCLEAN, CRISTAL	110
6. HENRY, ANN	70
7. SIMMONS, MARY ANN	65
T8. BLACKMAN, ALI	50
T8. NIMORI, MEGYN	50
T8. OLSEN, JANETTE	50
T8. WOODBURY, VALORIE	50

WOMEN'S B

1. CHRISTENSEN, KARYNN	255
T2. BLACKMAN, ALI	150
T2. DOMAN, KATHY	150
T2. MONTANEZ, HEATHER	150
5. THOMAS, MANDY	110
6. BOLLINGER, DAWN	80
7. ARMKNECHT, KIERSTEN	70
T8. CARTER, KAREN	50
T8. HENRY, ANN	50
T8. THOMAS, SANDRA	50

WOMEN'S C

1. MONTANEZ, HEATHER	250
2. BRIDGE, SHANNON	150
3. CARTER, LINDA	120
4. GROVER, SUSIE	75
T5. ARMKNECHT, KIERSTEN	50
T5. DOMAN, KATHY	50
T5. LYNCH, JENNIFER	50
T5. MORRIS, MEGAN	50
9. SANDERS, KATHLEEN	45
10. MIZE, KIM	30

WOMEN'S D

1. SANDERS, KATHLEEN	70
2. SMITH, DEBBIE	60
T3. CARTER, LINDA	50
T3. LAWRENCE, KARI	50
5. BLACKMAN, ALI	30
6. GROVER, KIM	10

GIRL'S 10 & UNDER

1. SUDWEEKS, BROOKE	250
2. GUNN, BOBBI	150
3. BALLARD, JESSIE	65
4. WALSH, KIMBERLY	30

GIRL'S 12 & UNDER

1. WALSH, KIMBERLY	580
T2. BALLARD, JESSIE	100
T2. GUNN, BOBBI	100

GIRL'S 14 & UNDER

1. CARTER, LINDA	220
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GIRL'S 16 & UNDER

1. WALSH, KRISTEN	1225
2. CARTER, LINDA	200
3. CHRISTENSEN, TEHRA	150
4. CHRISTIANSEN, CHERYL	75

GIRL'S 18 & UNDER

1. WALSH, KRISTEN	750
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WOMEN'S 24 & UNDER

1. WALSH, KRISTEN	150
2. ARMKNECHT, KIERSTEN	50

WOMEN'S 25 & OVER

1. MONTANEZ, HEATHER	150
2. ARMKNECHT, KIERSTEN	50

WOMEN'S 30 & OVER

1. SCHERTING, LUCINDA	150
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WOMEN'S 35 & OVER

1. EGBERT, LAURIE	150
2. BOLLINGER, DAWN	100
T3. SMITH, DEBBIE	50
T3. THOMAS, SANDRA	50

WOMEN'S 40 & OVER

1. SHEWFELT, VAL	775
2. MITCHELL, SANDY	150
T3. EGBERT, LAURIE	100
T3. MCLEAN, CRISTAL	100

WOMEN'S 50 & OVER

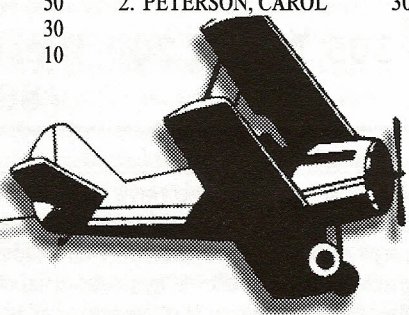
1. BRUA, SHIRLEY	50
2. LAYCOCK, LINDA	30
3. WITTEW, DIANE	20

WOMEN'S 55 & OVER

1. SAWYER, SYLVIA	300
2. PETERSON, CAROL	30



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Tournament Directors, would you like to see your tournaments grow in size and popularity? Would you like more P.R. help...**free of charge?** Christine McAlpine can help! As Director of Public Relations for the URA, Christine can help you with pre- and post-tournament publicity. All you have to do is **ask her!** But don't wait until the last minute! Call her **now, today**, to brainstorm on how to make your tournament a big success! She can be reached at work (801-345-6207) or home (801-818-2636).

Racquetball Fitness: Tackling Tendonitis



By Doug Scott

Tendonitis is simply an inflation of a tendon, the strong tissue that connects muscle to bone. Repetitive stress and continuous overloading of a tendon can cause this aggravating injury.

Common to racquetball players is a condition called medial epicondylitis, which is tendonitis of the wrist flexor muscles. Believe me, medial epicondylitis is a terribly painful thing to have. It will hinder your game and often takes months to heal.

There is no miracle cure to this condition. Cutting back on the activity that caused it and frequent application of ice help, but **prevention** is key.

KEYS TO PREVENTION

- ☆ Maintain proper strength and flexibility of the muscle groups and joints that are most often used in racquetball.
- ☆ Wear a brace, sleeve or support to help counteract stresses placed on the affected tendons.
- ☆ Prior to your match, stretch the wrist area, emphasizing a circular range of motion, followed by holding the wrist at a constant position for ten to fifteen seconds.

☆ Generally, try to reduce stress. Regular deep breathing and yawning can provide more oxygen to your brain and help calm you. Also, drink plenty of water every day to help your body flush out toxins.

HELPFUL EXERCISES

- ☆ Stretch your fingers apart, trying to make your hand as big as possible. Hold the stretch for a few seconds, then curl your fingers inward without clenching. Keep your fingers curled for a few seconds before repeating (ten to fifteen times with each hand).
- ☆ You'll need a soft foam ball for this exercise. A racquetball will do, but the foam ball is better. Hold the ball in your hand and, with your palm turned up gently, squeeze ten to fifteen times. Do this several times a day with each hand. As with any exercise, stop if it hurts.
- ☆ During the day, periodically drop your hands to your sides and shake them gently as though you were trying to shake off drops of water. This helps restore circulation and reduce compression.

Doug Scott, MBA, CSCS, is a fitness consultant and serves on the Governor's Council on Health and Physical Fitness. He is a fitness program co-ordinator at the Marv Jensen Fitness Center. Questions may be referred to him at (801)253-4404.

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AA

For those players who have won A events, but who aren't competitive at the top end of the Open category, the URA Board has asked tournament directors to offer players a new category. All first round losers in the Open category will move automatically into the new AA bracket. This bracket is not recognized by the USRA, but is intended to keep our higher-level players competing. Please support the tournaments that offer this category!

Know The Rules: Avoidable Hinders



By Kristen Walsh

Avoidable! Wasn't that an avoidable? Yes! No! Some of the spectators "speculate" (that's the nice way of saying it) as the referee shrugs off the "no call" to the enormous frustration of one of the players. The match goes on, but resentment now rules.

The avoidable hinder is one of the most misunderstood and least used calls in the racquetball world today. Watch a match, any level, and surely you will find a rally where an avoidable should have been called. In fact it is very uncommon that the correct call is made. Let's look into why that is...

I've heard many different excuses as to why people don't call avoidables. Some say they are trying to be "fair" to the players, or the person's opponent was "making an attempt to get out of the way". The most common excuse is probably that it "isn't an Open level match". The truth is that, most often, most referees don't understand avoidable hinders, so they just don't make the call.

Contrary to what most people think, avoidable hinders should be called no matter what division is being played. The rule is the same whether you are refereeing an Open or a D match.

When an avoidable hinder call is made, it results in the loss of the rally. An avoidable does **not** necessarily have to be an **intentional** act. Each of the following is considered an avoidable hinder by the USRA in the 1998-99 official rule book:

A) **Failure to move.** A player does not move sufficiently to allow an opponent a shot straight to the front wall as well as a cross-court shot which is a shot directly to the front wall at an angle that would cause the ball to rebound directly to the rear corner farthest from the player hitting the ball. Also, when a player moves in such a direction that it prevents an opponent from taking either of these shots.

B) **Stroke interference.** This occurs when a player moves, or fails to move, so that the opponent returning the ball does not have a free, unimpeded swing. This includes unintentionally moving the wrong direction, which prevents an opponent from making an open offensive shot.

C) **Blocking.** Moves into a position which blocks the opponent from getting to, or returning, the ball; or in doubles, a player moves in front of an opponent as the player's partner is returning the ball.

D) **Moving into the ball.** Moves in the way and is struck by the ball just played by the opponent.

E) **Pushing.** Deliberately pushes or shoves opponent during a rally.

F) **Intentional distractions.** Deliberate shouting, stamping of feet, waiving of racquet, or any other manner of disrupting one's opponent.

G) **View obstruction.** A player moves across an opponent's line of vision just before the opponent strikes the ball.

H) **Wetting the ball.** The players, particularly the

server, should insure that the ball is dry prior to the serve. Any wet ball that is not corrected prior to the serve shall result in an avoidable hinder against the server.

I) **Apparel or equipment loss.** If a player loses any apparel, equipment, or other article, play shall be immediately stopped and that player shall be called for an avoidable hinder, unless the player has just hit a shot that could not be retrieved. If the loss of equipment is caused by a player's opponent, then a dead-ball hinder should be called. If the opponent's action is judged to have been avoidable, then the opponent should be called for an avoidable.

Did the words "offensive opportunity" appear anywhere in that text? Let's eliminate this and other misquotes! Now, please go back and read through these actual rules **again**. It is your responsibility to call a match to the best of your ability (isn't that what you expect of other players?) and you can't do that unless you **know** the rules.

Now that you know what an avoidable hinder encompasses, there should be no more excuses for missing the call in a match. When they occur, avoidables should **always** be called.

Now that you **know** what is in the rule book, you can make the call confidently. Will there be a period of adjustment while players get re-educated to avoidables? Sure! But will it enhance the game? Of course.

This is one small step that those of you who are aspiring to the likes of rules guru, **John Yorkey**, can take. For those of you who don't know John, making the correct call will just plain make you a better referee.

Juniors Program

By Karen Knudsen

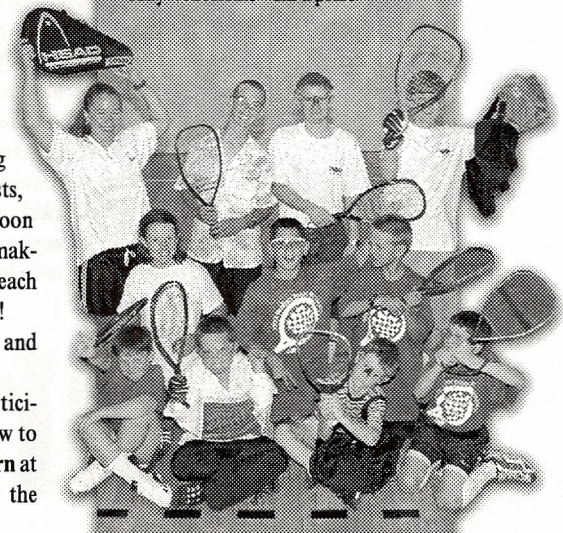
The four teams that have made up this summer's Junior League (Bountiful, Cottonwood, Redwood and Sports Mall) will wrap our summer of activity with the State Juniors Championships on August 19-21. Besides the competition, the kids will be rewarded with a pool party and an awards banquet.

This summer, kids of all ages and abilities got to compete in lots of exciting matches. In addition, on July 15, Redwood held a player appearance night, with **Kristen Walsh** hosting a number of fun activities. They did fitness tests, practiced ceiling shots and tried to break balloon targets on the front wall with accurate shot-making. The highlight of the evening was that each junior got to play a short match with Kristen!

In early August, we held a Doubles Night and Rules Review that drew out lots of kids.

Our group is always looking for more participants and more rowdy spectators. To learn how to get your club involved, contact **Ruth McGovern** at **801-974-6923**. Remember, our juniors are the future of racquetball.

Participants of Player Appearance Night show off their enthusiasm for racquetball. Kristen Walsh, left, helped entertain and educate the lucky kids who attended, and everybody went home with a prize.



Upon hearing about the team's bare bones budget Catherine promptly shuttled Christy's wife, Betty, to a nearby Costco and the two made a sizeable dent in the store's cookie and fruit inventory to the subsequent ravenous approval of the hollow-legged Hibernians. Gratitude, rapport, invitation... yadda yadda yadda, and I found myself driving on the wrong side of the road out of Shannon airport Easter morning 26 hours without sleep screwing up the roundabouts, or 'traffic circles' for the uninitiated among you. (Note to self: Try clockwise first next time).

The tournament itself was about a week later in the small town of Fermoy in County Cork. In the interim we hooked up with Christy, who himself is a member of the Irish National Team and is ranked the second or third top player in Ireland. He's a house painter and decorator by day and, though childless himself as yet, devotes himself tirelessly to the promotion of Irish junior racquetball. He does much of the fund-raising, raffles, and lobbying for government funding of the program (about 7000 Irish pounds annually, most of which goes directly for airfare to LAX and lodging for Junior Worlds).

Preferring to pack light, I almost hadn't brought any of my own racquetball gear, but I'd have been sorry if I hadn't. I ended up getting matches myself with four out of five of Ireland's top men's players, including the infamous Noel, Ireland's counterpart in dominance to Utah's Adam. Not bad for some low open backwater hack like me!

According to Christy, Ireland in total has about six 'proper' racquetball facilities. By that I think he means the equivalent of any of the clubs where we have tournaments in Utah, but I'm not sure because I never saw any of those six.

The courts I saw were usually found after driving some narrow winding country road (they're ubiquitous in Ireland and web the whole country) to some minuscule village with a small store where one can buy milk and lottery tickets, some other shops such as the chemist (pharmacy), victualery (butcher shop), about four pubs, some houses, the obligatory Catholic church, and a community recreation center with one handball court. Having two might escalate it to the 'proper' category, but I'm just guessing.

These courts were each unique, ranging in quality from one where John literally got a splinter in his hand from a dive and where the lighting was so wanting that I considered for a moment playing without eyewear just to let a few more critical photons of information pass unrefracted to my 40

year old retinas; to one totally cherry court like the one I fantasize building in my own back yard once Ed McMahon and the van crew come a'knockin'.

One court I paced off at 20 feet six inches wide after looking at it askance for a few minutes trying to figure out what seemed different. This was all the excuse I needed to dismiss my otherwise humiliating spanking at the hands of a true wide-angle-pass-meister.

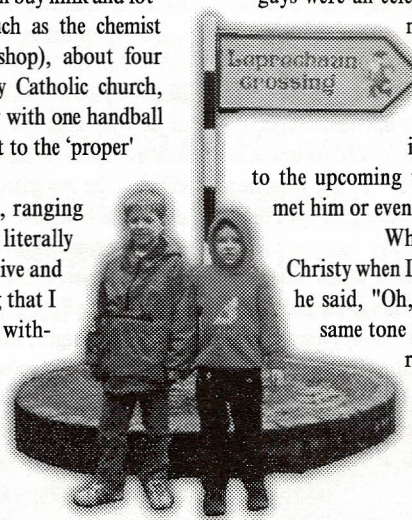
Two things were common to all of the courts, however. First, they all have coin or token operated electric meters which constantly needed to be fed. It was bizarre, really. Electricity must be very dear over there because they really sweat the lighting issue. Even some hotel rooms require your magnetic room key in a slot by the inside of the door without which it acts as a master kill switch for all room lights when you go out. The court I alluded to above concerning the eyewear dilemma had had about half of its florescent lights purposefully disabled.

Second, all the courts I saw were agonizingly slow for some reason. My supply of new Penn blues I had brought over played like hacky-sack balls. My drive serves were mush and my lob serves' normal tendency to come a bit too far off the back wall yielded to my having trouble just getting it to the back wall. Try a bouncier ball, you suggest? Just forget about finding Ektelon greens for sale in Ireland (ironic), so I just suffered.

Speaking of what else is not for sale in Ireland, my Wilson Air Hammer racket and John's Head TI-175XL were total curiosities to the Irish. No Wilson, no Head. Over there E-force and Ektelon rule. In fact, there are only three even semi-sponsored players in the whole country; Christy, Patrick Hanley, (another contender hoping one day for top-dog status), and the infamous Noel. Each get a windbreaker and stuff from Ektelon, though the loyalties seem to shallow out before shoes, rackets, gloves etc come into play because those three guys were an eclectic bunch in the accessory department. Small market I suppose.

It was Noel's Ektelon jacket that stood out like a beacon on a crowded Fermoy street, prompting me to go over and ask directions to the upcoming tournament facility before I'd ever met him or even knew who he was.

When I mentioned this coincidence to Christy when I called his house up north that night he said, "Oh, that must have been Noel" in the same tone of voice as Jerry Seinfeld uses when running into his hated neighbor Newman. Since it was just a phone



Our Racquetball

call, I'm not sure if he spit on the ground or not when he spoke the name but there is an unmistakable rivalry going on there. 'Arch-rival' is Christy's term and everybody in Ireland wants to knock off the 23 year old Noel. Evidently nobody can, including me, but I've got that slow court excuse I'm milkin' so count me out.

His claim to fame (according to his mom who was very curious about me for pre-match scouting purposes) is that he took a 16 year-old John Ellis to a tie-breaker once years ago at a tournament in Amsterdam. Now, Jimmy the Greek I'm not, but for those of you yearning for a way to hypothetically place yourself among Ireland's racquetball pecking order, I'd speculate that were Noel to have entered our last state tournament his relatively strong backhand would have taken him to the quarters or semis of Men's Open before his relative weakness (high forehands) got exploited sufficiently.

Anyway, playing all those guys was a total bonus for me since we came to Ireland ostensibly just for the Junior Open and some tourist type exploration. As for that junior tourney, it was held at a two-court facility in South Central Ireland and took two days. John was the only foreigner in the draw but you'd never be able to tell, since his red hair blended in perfectly. Still, he was quite the curiosity and everybody seemed flattered all to heck that we'd come all the way from America to participate in their tournament.

Ireland racquetball is very much a tight knit, 'everybody knows everybody' kind of community, so to insert an outsider, a very small outsider, into the mix created quite the buzz.

For those of you who may have had a chance to see John play you know he takes the game pretty seriously and can come up with some impressive shots, especially backhands. He has credible claim to being the second best eight year old in the U.S. and brought a whole different style of play over to Ireland than they were used to seeing from kids his size. He ended up winning the 10 & Under division pretty easily, but the high point of the tournament by all accounts was what turned out to be his 10-11 tiebreaker loss to young Michael Haverty in the 12 & Under division.

I've never seen a crowd or crowd reaction to a junior match like there was for that one. Both kids seemed to be playing at their finest and the crowd was totally cheering for both players. The concept of diving for a shot is essentially not a part of what the Irish kids consider doing (and I of course don't blame them a bit) so John's diving offensive kills had the crowd literally on its feet like a scene out of a Ben Hur chariot race.

Young Mr. Haverty's skills were, on balance, equally impressive and when he ended up winning after three match points against him, you could tell by the smile on

his face as he left the court that this would be a victory that he'd remember and they'd all be talking about for some time to come. I really couldn't have written a script much better.

Perhaps some of you will recall that our own hometown heroine Kristin Walsh traveled to Ireland last summer as a member of the U.S. Junior National Team. Evidently the team made a big impression over there because they're still talking about it. There can be no doubt that such a tour promotes the game and validates the efforts of those stalwart souls struggling for legitimacy in the hinterlands of the sport. And make no mistake, there was benign scrutiny of all aspects of those individuals during their stay. Fourteen year old Daniel Shannahan's family hosted Josh Tucker (National High School Champion) and Daniel clearly came to worship Josh's court skills, work ethic and overall likeable nature.

Contrast that 'ambassadorship' with the impression left by Josh's teammate (who shall remain unnamed, but his name does rhyme with a popular hotel chain) who came into the country on the wrong date, wrong airport, failed to procure Irish currency for the train ride to the right half of the country, was famously lazy about setting foot on the court to demonstrate the skills that prompted his invitation in the first place and spent most waking moments giving his chaperones fits chasing what lasses he laid eyes on. Not that I blame him on that last point, they are cute, but the point is they're still talking about what a pain in the arse he was overall.

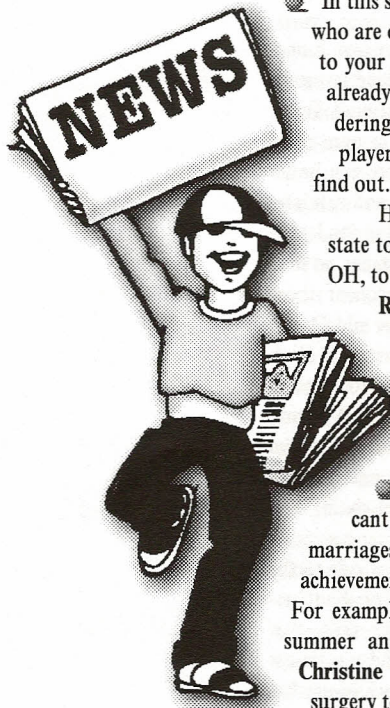
Finally, no mention of traveling to Ireland would be complete without confirming what you no doubt have heard many times before; the Irish people are among the most welcoming in the world. They sincerely cherish children (unlike the overt disdain I've experienced in England with kids. Sorry, Limeys, deal with it. The shoe fits). They are curious, interested and seem individually anxious to contribute to one's happy memories of a visit to their country.

When we were asked how our 'holiday' was going a short answer would not suffice because that question is Irish code translated to our tongue as "What's your life story? I've got time." And one gets the clear impression that if in the course of answering the literal question one slips up and alludes to the slightest adversity, a painful wound has been inflicted on the listener who may often assume tortured vicarious ownership of said travel hiccup and actively seek some sort of remedy.

When you combine our mutual passion for the sport of racquetball with their general predisposition to liking and welcoming us seemingly 'just because', our family ended up leaving with the feeling that our 'racquetball road trip' to Ireland was not only satisfying and memory-filled for us, but perhaps for our hosts as well.

Road Trip To Ireland

News and Notes



☛ In this section, we'd like to offer news about players who are on the move. Whether you have a new player to your area or know of one who is leaving (or has already left), let us know. Maybe you have been wondering about what ever happened to a particular player. If so, let us know about it and we will try to find out.

Here are a few examples: Just before last year's state tournament, **Chris Baca** moved to Cleveland, OH, to work as a flight attendant with Continental.

Ralph Bundt is getting married and has been transferred to Phoenix, AZ. **Mark Davis** has moved his family to Sacramento, CA. **Adam Tueller** is on an LDS mission in Oklahoma.

☛ We also want to hear about other significant events in our members' lives. Things like marriages, births, deaths, health issues, scholarships, achievements, job promotions, etc.

For example: While most of you were enjoying your summer and working on your off-season training, **Christine McAlpine** was recovering from life-saving surgery to have an enormous, basketball-sized tumor removed. In fact, she was probably lugging the "extra baggage" around with her during last year's state tournament and the regionals she attended in Las Vegas. She is doing fine now and is trying to get her body back in shape to play this season.

☛ The women's program is planning an informal night of racquetball and socializing Saturday, August 21, from 8-10 am, at Cottonwood Heights. The event is pot luck and there will be prizes for the players. Contact **Rose Hernandez** at 943-3190 (extension 109) for more info.

☛ Classified advertising is free in 'Off The Wall'. If you are looking to buy or sell equipment, this is truly the place.

☛ The Travelling League will have a full schedule of matches this season. If you are interested in playing for your club, contact your club's pro. If you don't have an active team, contact **Ruth McGovern** at 974-6923, and she will help find you one.

☛ Wish you could e-mail other members? Send me your address and I will compile a **Members E-mail Directory** for a future issue. Some samples to get you started:

Coray, Steve scoray@xmission.com
 Dubach, Enrico ricohope@xmission.com
 Dunyon, Marcus mdaug54@yahoo.com
 Lowe, Jason jason.lowe@datacenterusa.com
 McAlpine, Christine cmcalpin@nuskin.net
 Shewfelt, Val Val_Shewfelt@byu.edu
 Walsh, Kristen sooperwmn4@aol.com
 Walsh, Marianne lambrtini1@aol.com

☛ Local juniors **Kristen Walsh, Corey Walsh** and **John Sanderson** competed in this summer's Junior Nationals. **Kristen dominated**, bringing home gold medals in all three categories she entered: Girls 16&Under Singles, Girls 18&Under Doubles and 18&Under Mixed Doubles. **Corey** was the deserving winner of the tournament's sportsmanship award. **John** had a tough draw and didn't place as high as he had hoped.

☛ Send us your story and photo contributions. If you attend an interesting event, take a few pictures, write down a few thoughts and forward them to us. You don't have to be a pro - we'll clean up your contribution if necessary and get it published!

Precision Racquet Sports Racquetball Challenge

Precision Racquet Sports will again be promoting a series of racquetball tournaments in an effort to stimulate interest in our sport. In his third year of sponsorship, **Tony Glavas** has limited the series to four events around the valley.

One of his goals is to generally increase the excitement and competition in tournament play. Another is to increase the smaller division draws, such as most Women's and Junior events. To motivate competitors, **Tony** is offering over **\$2000 in prizes and certificates**.

Players will receive points for every skill level division they play during only the sponsored events. Current point totals will be posted at each of the four tournaments.

All skill levels that carry will be eligible to contribute to a player's point total. If a division is combined with another, the player will receive points only in the division

entered. The total points will be tallied at the final series stop at Cottonwood Heights in March. An awards presentation will follow, with prizes going to the top three finishers in each skill division. Players must be at the presentation in order to receive your prize.

Below are the series stops and the point system that will be used. Good luck!

Precision Sports Open	Sept. 15-19	Sports Mall
Fall Blast	Oct. 12-16	Sports Forum
Bountiful Bash	Oct. 26-30	Bountiful Rec.
Luck of the Heights	March 14-18	Cottonwood Rec.

First Place	100 Points
Second Place	60 Points
Third Place	40 Points
Quarterfinalists	10 Points

Attending The U.S. Open

WHAT, ME? AT THE US OPEN?!



By Don Sanderson

Mention the US Open and for most people what comes to mind? Golf or tennis, right? But for those of us more enlightened souls we know it means racquetball in Memphis, December 1-5. This is the premier event of the world's most exciting sport.

Besides being the professional event of the year, the tournament is also a level 5 amateur event open to all USRA members. Like you. Picture yourself serving 9-10 in the tiebreaker to get into the finals of your event. It could happen.

Last year I went to the Open for my first time with my son John and we had a blast! Though John was a bit young to participate then, he was an autograph collecting fool and my number one (and only) cheerleader for the two events I participated in. This year he's probably improved enough to play in Men's D (there are no junior divisions).

It's a huge tournament, using three fine facilities, the crown jewel of which is where the pro events are held at the Racquet Club of Memphis. It is there where the "made-for-TV" portable racquetball court is used for all feature matches and there's not a bad seat in the house.

And who might one see at the US Open? Everybody! From Cliff and Sudsy all the way down to anyone else you've ever heard of or will be hearing a lot about soon. And not just through binoculars or something. You could be rubbing elbows with just about anybody you can name. In the passageways, hanging out in hospitality village, at the 'Party with the Pros' on Saturday night, or just as likely sitting next to you watching a match exchanging comments about some other pro's shot selection or sportsmanship (or perhaps lack thereof).

Court rat that he is, John jumped onto any available empty court when a match was over and promptly left when the next pro showed up; unless as when Rocky Carson showed up he was invited to stay a while longer and warm up in the same court. He got a pretty big kick out of that.

We also saw Utah's very own Kristen Walsh go up against the number two women's seed in the pro division, Christie Van Hees of Canada. Very impressive. Christie had a few more tricks up her sleeve than Kristen does (yet) but there were lots of side outs and amazing gets by our local hope.

This is an inspirational, educational event. Your game will improve as a direct result of watching the best there are ply their craft. It's almost inevitable. Whether it's lob serve ideas, stroke improvements, choice of shots or even rules issues, you will come home armed with an arsenal of new weapons to polish up in time for a surprise attack on your nemesis at the next local tournament.

Ruben Gonzales, the legend, took perhaps the hardest hitter on the pro tour, Robbie DeJesus, to 9-11 in the fifth game tiebreaker in a titanic clash of contrasting

styles: Soft and sneaky (and old) vs. young and supersonic. Awestruck at Ruben's ability to counter such a powerful player who's easily young enough to be his grandson, I saw him time and again win points off of what looked like winning passing shots for Robbie to the back left corner where my only prayer would be a totally defensive smash into the back wall.

Ruben however, with the shot seemingly past him on his backhand side simply flicked his wrist in a soft little double-side-wall 'boast' shot from mid-court which died having just nicked the front right corner. Totally defensive to an outright winner in the blink of an eye with a shot that doesn't take superhuman strength or quickness, just an awareness that it's an option and some practice. That's just one example of many inspirational insights I gained before leaving Memphis after five days of pure racquetball fun.

So why don't you consider it this year. This is a multifaceted racquetball extravaganza worth the effort to make it happen. There's an entry form and ticket application (for the pro events- just get the 'ticket package', it's the best deal) in the July/August issue of Racquetball magazine, or you can visit www.promususopen.com. Carpe Diem, dudes! Come join the rest of the Utahns going to the U.S. Open!

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