

OFF THE WALL

March 1995

A publication of the Utah Racquetball Association

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

On January 12-15, several of the URA Board members were able to attend the 1995 AARA Leadership Conference held at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. The theme of the conference was "It's Time to Give Something Back". The AARA focused on four major subject areas: 1) Newsletter, 2) Governance/ Liability, 3) Sponsorship/ Fundraising and, 4) Tournaments/ Sanctioning. The conference attendees were divided into four groups. Each group rotated and received instruction in these four subject areas. It was very instructive for all Board members and Directors who attended from most of the states within the United States.

Information from this conference will appear in small portions in our URA Newsletter

throughout the year. For example, examine the article in this issue on Approved Eye wear.

Manufacture representatives were there from Ektelon, Transition, Penn, Spalding, Pro-Kennex and Wilson. They explained the status of racquetball from their perspectives and addressed some of their product lines. Racquetball and Tennis have taken a dip in manufacture's sales. We have also noticed less participants in tournaments. However, racquetball has leveled off. Our current membership is growing.

We were able to visit the AARA National Headquarters located in Colorado Springs, Colorado and visit with Luke St. Onge, Jim Hiser, Kevin Joyce, John and Rose Mooney, Linda Mojer, and other office personnel. It was an informative and motivational experience for all URA Board members.

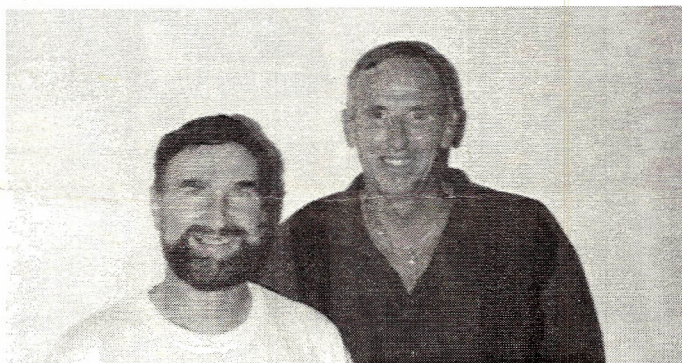
Roger Flick
President URA

STATE SINGLES TOURNAMENT

Our State Singles Tournament will be held March 21-25, at the Sports Mall- Murray. The URA Board will be in charge of the tournament. The URA Ranking/Rating system, which is now in place, will be used to help seed players, but will not be used solely for ranking purposes. Sponsors of the tournament include San Francisco Pizza, Meyers Chicken, Winder Dairy, Power Bars, America Cancer Association, EKTELON, Swiss Boy and others. We are going to hold our Annual Meeting and

banquet Friday Night, 7:30 pm. Elections of officers will be conducted. There will also be a drawing for donated items from our sponsors. We will be giving away a junior size football signed by Steve Young, as well as auctioning an official size

football signed by him. Matches will be played on Friday evening from 4 pm - 7 pm. The final matches will be played Saturday. Medals will be awarded winners.



Bob Mc Nab & Al DeCoste Men's 50+ Doubles winners at the Huntsman Chemical 1994 World Sr. Games

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Rico Dubach and Randy Krantz are preparing a URA Membership Directory. When you check in at the State Singles Tournament, you can examine your entry in the directory to make sure it is accurate. The Directory will be available to all URA members. We will be looking for sponsors, (i.e., your business) for future editions. Please contact a member of the URA Board if you would like to see your business listed in the Directory.

APPROVED EYE WEAR

One of the important issues discussed under Governance/ Liability and Tournaments/ Sanctioning break out sessions at the recent Leadership Seminar was the need to have participants in sanctioned tournaments wear approved eye wear. (Note Item 3 on the Utah State Singles Championships entry form included with this issue of Off The Wall.)

A list of approved eye wear was passed out to each Board member and/or State Director. Since Ektelon is one of our sponsors for the upcoming State Singles Tournament, we are publishing a list of their approved eye wear. Other sponsors, such as Black Knight, Pro-Kennex, Itech Sport Products/RBE, etc., will also appear in future issues of the URA Newsletter. You could call a member of the URA Board to see if your current eye wear is approved.

EKTELON approved eye wear includes the following styles or models:

Olympus
Spector
Odyssey
Scopa
Quantum
Mirage

(Prices range from \$10 to \$35.)

AARA RACQUETBALL TRAINING VIDEO

A racquetball training video and workbook was recently acquired by the URA. If you would like to view the video, please contact a member of the Board. It reviews backhand/forehand strokes, drills and conditioning exercises.



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LADIES TRAVELING RACQUETBALL LEAGUE 1995

March 4*	Sportsmall	5445 S. 900 E.	Murray
April 1	Cottonwood Heights	7500 S. 2700 E.	SLC
May 6	Fountain of Youth	4300 S. 300 W.	SLC
June 3	Town & Country	2250 S. 800 W.	Woodscross
July 15	Alta Canyon	9565 S. Highland Dr.	Sandy
August 5	Cottonwood Heights	7500 S. 2700 E.	SLC
Sept. 2	Sportsmall	5445 S. 900 E.	Murray
Oct. 7	Bountiful Recreation	150 E. 500 N.	Bountiful

(*4:00-6:00 pm Due to the Jrs. Tournament being held at this facility. Please try to be a few minutes early so we can get your feedback on anything you would like to see happen to improve the league. We need your ideas and comments to make this happen!)

Awards will be held on the date at the Bountiful Recreation Center on Oct. 7. After we will work on the next year's schedule starting with November in order to keep the league running throughout the year.

Play will be from 10:00 am - 12:00 am Saturday mornings. Ladies pay \$3.00 to participate. (The club receives \$2.00 and the League keeps \$1.00 to go towards refreshments or any other needed expenses.

If there are any changes we will notify you as soon as possible. Also if you have any questions or need a ride, please give us a call, and we will help in any way we can.

Laurie Egbert 265-8365
Norma Carlisle 261-3426
Rose Hernandez 943-3190

A WORLD OF STRING

by Kelly Kirk, Certified Racquet Technician

In Racquetball, technology has been in a race between composite racquets and quality string. And, until recently, one would have to give the winning edge to racquets judging by the frequent string breakage. Now, however, the playing field has been leveled. So if you've had a love/hate relationship with your racquet's consistency, shop around! There's a world of string out there.

Consider these the next time you re-string:

COST: Most stringers divide string into three categories: *durability*, *durability performance*, and *performance*. For just a couple of dollars more you can move from durability to a compromise of durability/ performance. If you are hesitant to try new products, ask your stringer for a warranty. Some stringers will guarantee a job for up to thirty days.

GAUGE: Just like your racquet cannot be rated too high on the power index, neither can your string be too thin. Although standards for determining string gauge (the diameter of the string) vary from company to company, one thing always remains the same: the higher the given number, the thinner the string. Depending on the brand name of the string you use, the average 16 gauge coil weighs 15-20 grams. A 15 gauge coil may contribute an additional 5 grams. Technifibre, following the thin trend, has introduced a 17 gauge called 315 SPL. This pre-stretched string is coated with silicone lubricant to enhance durability and reduce the "sag" sometimes associated with Technifibre. Rex Lawler, U.S. Team Manager for the Olympic Festival, has been recommending thin string in both the Gamma and Technifibre lines.

TEXTURE: Assuming your game has reached a certain skill level, hex strings can enhance a lob or add "bite" to a drive serve. Coatings on strings will also effect the string's performance. A good coating not only adds durability but also enhances playability. On the other hand, Gamma TNT Pro Plus 17L (light) has no coating, while the TNT 17 (a slightly thicker gauge) has a pearl nylon covering. Both are thin strings noted for power coupled with performance and both play differently depending on the player and the racquet. Strings which truly try to imitate real gut, such as Head's Profibre, are coreless and gradually fray with usage. Generally

speaking, coreless gut imitators are easy on the arm.

TENSION: Before lowering tension to enhance power, you might experiment with a premium string. Give your new string a fair trial. Players moving up to premium string often seem to confuse the extra dwell time (the .003-.004 second the ball hugs your string) with frame vibration. Premium string is often noted for its "resiliency", which according to the USRA's definition is "The ability of the string to deform (and absorb energy) and return upon ball impact the most amount of energy return." Resiliency is equated with power.

KEVLAR: Aramid fiber, better known as Kevlar, is still a favorite among racquetball players who ask for nothing more than an ultra firm string bed and durability. Among those with new blends of Kevlar this year include Ashaway's Composite XL, Gamma's Powerplay 18, and Gosen's Arammix Pro 18. If Kevlar is your choice, make life a little easier on your elbow and ask for your string tension to be lowered by 5% to 10%.

COLOR: Yes, even color can make a difference. By keeping accurate records, most stringers discover by accident the impact of dyes. So if your favorite blue goes less than three weeks, but the sickly yellow lasted three months, put the yellow back in next time! For the moment, premium strings are often restricted to natural colors. I color is a fashion priority, you may, sadly, never graduate to premium strings.

If you follow pro tennis, you may notice some players carrying a racquet which, in addition to its regular stencil (Prince, Yonex, etc.) also has two slashes stenciled horizontally. This Babolat's signature. A powerhouse in tennis, Babolat has yet to become recognized in racquetball. On the strength of Babolat's reputation, you may wish to check out Titanium. The USRSA (United States Racquet Stringers Association) has consistently given Titanium high marks.

John Boudman, the stringer at AARA Nationals, is a consultant for Forten. Forten -excluding same string, different gauge- currently offers eight choices marketed for racquetball. All are reasonably priced and fall under such titles as: "Tough Stuff," "The Boss," and "Ammo," etc.

Gamma Sports will be introducing a new line targeted exclusively for Racquetball. This company has long enjoyed a reputation among tennis players for producing strings which yield power and are still easy on the arm. And, according to Ron Carr, Gamma's Director of

Research and Development, this new line will be no exception. For the price conscious, gamma will be introducing three strings: Crush 16, Powerline 17, and a hybrid Powermix 16/17. All three of these benefit from "irradiation", a patented process Gamma established seventeen years ago. "Irradiation", the subjection of premium synthetic materials to an onslaught of high energy rays to increase the elasticity and resiliency of strings, is the cornerstone of Gamma's success. If you are in search of optimal performance and cost is not a factor, try Gamma's TNT Bullet 17/18. Still patent pending, TNT (Thermal Nuclear Technology) promises to deliver more elasticity and

resiliency than ever before.

Your string choices will be narrowed not only by how you perceive the importance of name loyalty, cost, texture, etc., but also by your style of game. And, if one, or all, of the three negatives for string life expectancy—short hops, splats, or mis-hits—are considered part of your game plan, it might take some searching to find a string which will measure up to your expectations in both performance and durability.

Don't neglect the guts! Stay aggressive in your choice of string.

from GMRA News

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE TOURNAMENT

(Redwood Multipurpose Center, Feb. 7-11)

Men's Open

1st Adam Anderson
2nd Dave Timmons

Women's Open

1st Sheri Murray
2nd Val Shewfelt
3rd Sandee Roach
4th Hope Hendricks

Men's A

1st Marianne Walsh
2nd Russell Searle

Women's A

1st Val Shewfelt
2nd Sandee Roach
3rd Kris Terry
4th Cindy Jones

Men's B

1st Dane Gorup
2nd Curtis Goble

Women's B

1st Tammy Bleak
2nd Norma Carlisle
3rd Laurie Egbert
4th Kris Justesen

Men's C

1st Mike Gallegos
2nd George Carey

Women's C

1st Melissa Lund
2nd Pam Garrett
3rd Amy Vech

Men's D

1st Nathan Porter
2nd R. J. Smith

Women's D

1st Amy Vech
2nd Melissa Lund
3rd Pam Muir

Boy's 18 & Under

1st Adam Tueller
2nd Robbie Johnston

Girl's 14 & Under

1st Candice Tueller
2nd Jennifer Bennett

Boy's 12 & Under

1st John Martinez
2nd Sam Tuula
3rd Clint Eisinger
4th Bob Martinez

FOOT NOTES

One of my most commonly asked questions is: "Dr., what is a good pair of athletic shoes?" My response to this question has two parts. First of all, a pair of shoes is not a good pair of shoes if it is not comfortable. And second, it depends on the individual's foot type. Proper shoe selection is an important part of the prevention of injury. The right athletic shoes will accommodate the needs of the individual person and help enhance performance.

Before determining what type of athletic shoe you should wear, you must first determine your foot type. Are you an over pronator or an over supinator/ An over pronator's feet generally roll inward too much, has low arches, and is more susceptible to injuries such as runner's knee, Iliotibial Band Syndrome, Tendinitis and Plantar Fascitis. An over Supinator lacks inward rolling of the feet, usually has high arches , the knees and knee caps will generally move toward the outside of the feet when he bends half way at the knees. These people are more susceptible to ankle sprains, stress fractures and pain on the outside of the shins and knees. Over pronators are more common than supinators.

Before buying any shoes, here are some tips that will help you find the best fit:

1. Shop in the afternoon or evening. This is when the feet are at their largest size.
2. Try on both shoes with the same type of socks that will be worn during the activity.
3. Try on several different models of the same characteristics and walk around the store with those shoes.
4. Check the quality of the shoes. Look at the stitching, eyelets and gluing. Feel for bumps inside the shoe.
5. The sole should flex where your foot flexes. Look for shoes with removable insoles to accommodate for orthotic devices.
6. Allow a half inch between the end of the shoe and your longest toe when you stand up.
7. The heel counter should fit snugly so that the heel does not slip.
8. Shoes should feel comfortable the day you buy them. Do not rely on a break-in period.

Shoes are important, they can prevent injury, and improve performance. By following these simple tips you can play your game longer and more effectively.

Dr. Steven P. Royall, D.P.M.
Sports Medicine Podiatrist