

CENGAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY SERIES

Beginning Racquetball

Cheryl Norton | James E. Bryant

SEVENTH EDITION

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Beginning Racquetball, Seventh Edition

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Beginning Racquetball

Preface

Twenty-six years ago, we wrote our first racquetball book, entitled *Racquetball: A Guide for the Aspiring Player*. We were inspired by an increase in college student interest in the game and by an increasing number of beautiful new racquetball courts being built on college campuses across the country, suggesting the game was here to stay. At that time, only a few people were writing about how to play the game, and none seemed to be interested in writing a detailed description of how to play. Two years later, we wrote the 1st edition of *Beginning Racquetball* with the intent of focusing on the beginning player's skill development while also recognizing that more advanced players could still profit from the content of our book.

Today, as a seventh edition, *Beginning Racquetball* is still designed for the beginning player who, as a novice, is attempting to develop skills and knowledge in racquetball. More advanced players also can use the book to review skills and strategy. Actually, the book today, in many ways, is a confirmation for more advanced players that their skills are consistent with fundamental play, and that they are making progress beyond the beginning level.

There are still only a few racquetball college textbooks that make an effort to teach the game. Of those textbooks, none go to the extent of *Beginning Racquetball*. This newest edition continues to provide a progressive learning experience that includes a logical presentation of skills and information on how to play the game and how to play by the rules. Color photographs that present a visualization of various skills

enhance the content of the book. Digitally designed figures contribute general information and present strategies related to the game. And, what makes this edition special is the logical progression from chapter to chapter that enables the student to understand, visualize, and relate to the game and the skills required to play.

The text is organized through 11 chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 provide an introduction to the game along with a base understanding of how to develop a level of fitness in preparation for playing the game. Chapters 3–9 follow a continuing building block of physical and playing skills along with strategy for the learner. The last two chapters, Chapters 10 and 11, stand alone to be used throughout the instructional learning experience.

More specifically, Chapters 1 and 2 provide information on equipment, safety, and physical preparation for playing the game. Chapters 3–5 introduce the preliminaries to the stroke in racquetball and various offensive and defensive strokes used in playing the game. The topic for Chapter 6 is putting the ball into play. Chapter 7 introduces use of the back wall and corners of the racquetball court once the ball is in play. Chapters 8 and 9 put all the strokes together in a plan for offensive and defensive strategy and how to effectively return a serve. Chapter 10 establishes drills for practice that provide a setting for the student and instructor to enhance the skills of the student through practice. And Chapter 11 presents a summary of the basic rules and etiquette associated with racquetball and how to strategically play additional games of doubles and cut-throat.

The textbook serves as a guide to developing the physical and mental skills necessary to succeed in playing racquetball. The game is presented through photographs and figures, providing a visual concept of the game in order to assist in comprehension of how to play the game correctly.

“Points to Remember” and “Common Errors and How to Correct Them” highlight key information. As a tool for self-evaluation, a set of “Checkpoints” conclude each chapter. These are self-testing multiple choice questions designed to challenge and assist the student to focus on the most important aspects of the game.

We, as authors, confess to a feeling of confidence that, through the years of writing and experience, we have put together a truly quality book on racquetball that remains consistent to a great extent from the first edition through this seventh edition. What is of particular importance is that this edition continues to provide the quality reflected in the earlier editions while still presenting new information, changes, and new ways to understand the game. This edition includes a return to color figures, and changes in the “Checkpoints” questions provide a challenge to students. There is also an update of resources, particularly websites regarding racquetball. And, there is an extended effort to encourage students to be aware of the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) and its many outreaches to racquetball players. The USRA, in fact, provides the Racquetball Rules in the Appendix of the book, which enhances the learning experience for students. Although many of these content areas

aren't new to this edition, they are promoted and enhanced as critical to the learning experience of students, and they enhance the instructor's ability to provide a full coverage of the game.

Cheryl Norton, Ed. D. and
James E. Bryant, Ed. D.

Acknowledgments

Contributions to this seventh edition of *Beginning Racquetball* are, in large part, a cumulative effect. Previous editions have been supported by creative ideas, suggestions by students, and efforts by reviewers, skilled photographers, and the production people who have digitally enhanced the figures, photos, and general appearance of the book. Our thanks go out to each and every one of these individuals who have contributed so much to the quality of the book.

Terrell Lloyd, who did most of the photography for this edition, and the most recent models Elda Shilts, Ve Le Dong, and Beau Batista deserve special credit. The Silicon Valley Athletic Club of San Jose, California, where the skill photographs were shot, deserve special recognition. Also, thanks go to the Sport Chalet of Antioch, California, for their assistance in supplying equipment to be photographed for the book. And lastly, the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) deserves very special recognition for its support and development of racquetball.

Cheryl Norton, Ed. D. and
James E. Bryant, Ed. D.

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Photography by Terrell Lloyd; assisted by Greg Harris and Tim May

1

Court, Equipment, Safety, and Resources

Racquetball is played in an enclosed court using the four walls, floor, and ceiling as the playing surface. In areas where a four-wall court cannot be built, one- or three-wall racquetball may be played. The rules and strategy for these games are similar. This text, however, concentrates only on the more complex, four-wall game.

The dimensions and markings on the court are as shown in Figure 1.1. You can easily learn the terminology used to describe the court, floor, ceiling, and front, back, and side walls. The floor lines identify the **service**

zone (bounded by the service line and the short line), two rectangular areas called **service boxes**, and the drive serve lines. The only other mark on the court denotes the **receiving line** for the player returning the serve. The floor surface also is divided into playing areas to define court positioning, as shown in Figure 1.2.

Racquetball was invented by Joe Sobek. Using a handball court, he combined the games of handball and squash into a paddle ball game, first called *paddle rackets*, that eventually evolved into today's game of racquetball. The game increased in

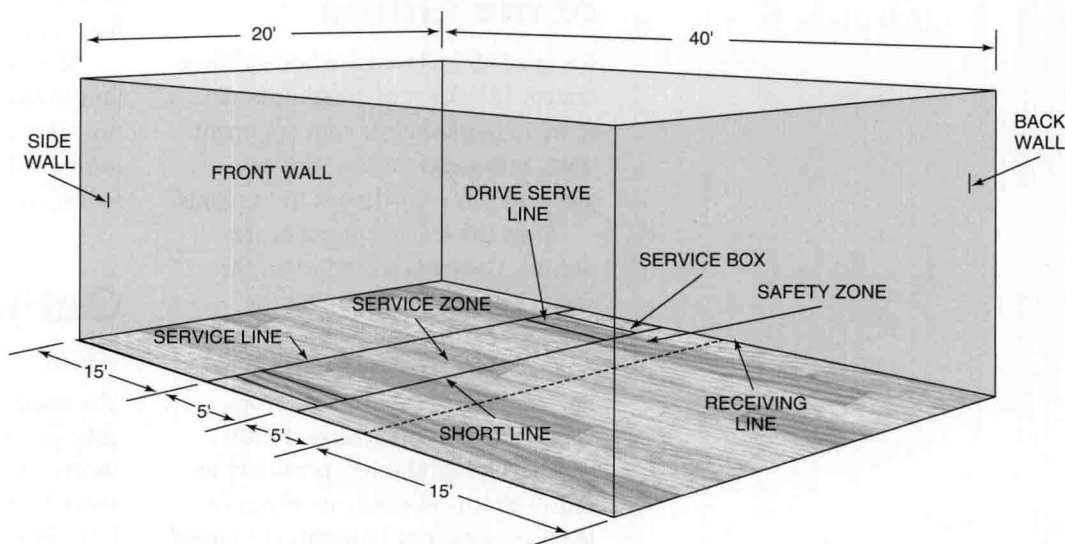


FIGURE 1.1 Dimensions and markings on a racquetball court.

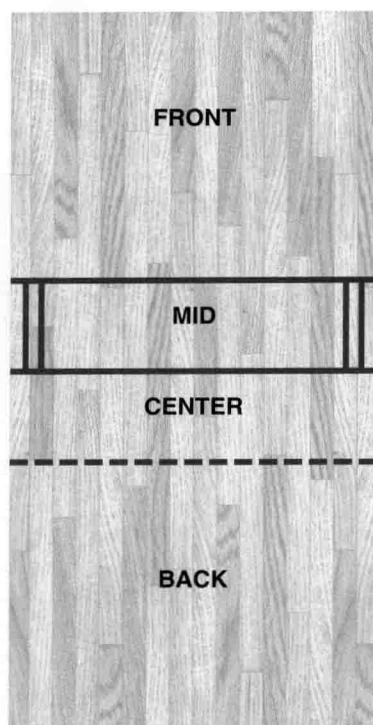


FIGURE 1.2 Designated floor areas on the court.

popularity in the 1970s, and by the late 1970s and early 1980s it had become one of the fastest growing sports in America.

At a point in the mid-1980s, racquetball declined in popularity, but by the late 1980s the decline had leveled off.

Through the 1990s there was a second decline, but by 2001 participation of American players stabilized at 5,296,000, an increase of 2.7 percent from the previous year. The demographics of racquetball have fluctuated over the past 30 years. In 2001 the Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association reported that 25 percent of all participating players were classified as “frequent player[s]”; of the group, 65.7 percent were male and 34.3 percent female. The 18–34 age group represents the majority of players.

Further, the annual income of American racquetball players is slightly above \$69,000, and 51 percent have attended college. Racquetball now is played in more than 90 countries. World championships and the Pan American Games reflect the interest and extent of participation throughout the world.

Overview of the Game

Racquetball is played as a best-of-three match. The object of the game is to score 15 points before your opponent does, and, if each of you wins one game, to play a third game to 11 points.

Only the serving player scores points. A point is scored when the server’s opponent fails to hit the ball to the front wall before the ball touches the floor twice. If the server fails to return the ball to the front wall, the server loses serve. In this way, service (and the opportunity to score) alternates until one player or team accumulates 15 points (11 points in the third game) and wins the game.

Racquetball may be played with two (singles), three (cutthroat), or four (doubles) players. In singles, one player opposes another player. In doubles, one two-person team plays another two-person team. In **cutthroat**, a single server plays against two opponents. When the server loses serve, one of the opponents becomes the server and plays against the remaining two players. Scoring is the same as in singles.

In all games, each **rally** (exchange of hits between opposing players) begins with a **legal serve**. For the serve to be legal, the server must stand in the service zone, drop the ball to the floor, and strike it on the rebound so it hits the front wall before any other court surface. The receiver stands between the back of the safety zone line and the back wall in order to return the serve.

To return the serve legally, the receiver must wait until the served ball passes the short line and either bounces in or crosses the safety zone. The front wall rebound may not touch the floor in front of or on the short line. Before the ball hits the floor, it may rebound off one side wall but not off the ceiling, back wall, or both side walls. In the return of serve and any other hit, however, the ball may rebound off any surface except the floor before reaching the front wall.

Service changes when the server fails to keep the ball in play or does not serve legally. If the receiver fails to return the ball to the front wall, the server scores a point.

Outfitting for Play Clothing

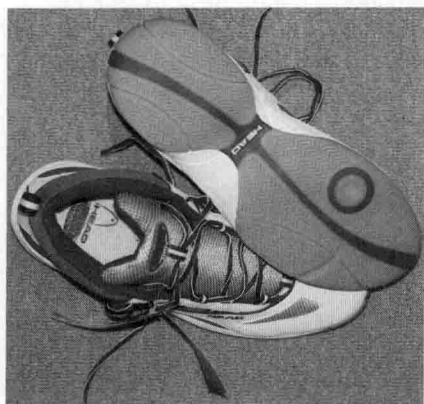
The usual dress for men and women alike is a sports shirt or T-shirt and shorts. Headbands and wristbands are optional (see Photo 1.1A and 1.1B) but aid in absorbing perspiration around the head and hands.



Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.1A Racquetball headbands.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.1B Racquetball wristbands.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.2 Racquetball court shoes.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.3 Racquetball gloves.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.4 Protective eyewear.

Shirts help to absorb body perspiration and must be worn at all times during play. Body perspiration dripping onto the floor of the court presents a potential hazard to cutting and turning associated with footwork.

Shoes

The footwear worn on a racquetball court should be an athletic shoe that supports shifting body weight and lateral movement on the court. Racquetball court shoes (see Photo 1.2) are made specifically for players who take the game seriously. A player can wear tennis shoes or basketball shoes, but they are secondary alternatives to the court shoe.

Shoes designed for running should never be used, and dark-soled shoes also are restricted because they mar court surfaces. Technology has produced an ultra-lightweight court shoe that is designed as a 3/4-top or low-cut shoe.

A court shoe should have excellent traction, comfort, and support. Shoes also should have a full-length midsole for proper cushioning, ventilation, lateral support, and moisture management for breathability and fast drying. Proper footwear also means wearing athletic socks with your court shoes to prevent your feet from sliding in the shoes and creating blisters.

Gloves

Although the use of a glove is optional, players wear a glove on their

racquet hand to help maintain better grip on the racquet and prevent the racquet from slipping from their hand. Quality gloves dry soft after use and provide a firm grip to the racquet along with moisture management.

High-performance gloves are made of ultra-thin graphite, Kevlar, and neoprene materials. These materials provide glove strength and durability, as well as padded protection for the knuckles from wall and floor impact. You should look for gloves that provide ventilation and good “feel” to the grip (see Photo 1.3).

Protective Eyewear

Players must wear protective eyewear designed specifically for racquetball players. Competitive rules require pretested eye guards that meet specific safety standards provided by the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) through a list of approved eyewear from companies including Ektelon, ITECH, Leershot, Black Knight, Eagle Eyewear, and Leader. These competitive rules extend to the reputable management of any court facility.

Lensed eyewear is available for players who wear corrective lenses and players who do not wear glasses. Severe eye damage, including detached retinas and the loss of vision, have followed direct eye hits with either the ball or the racquet, and proper protective eyewear dramatically reduces the possibility of eye injury (see Photo 1.4).

The lens must be distortion-free and provide peripheral vision. Lenses are made of polycarbonate material and must be treated with anti-fog and hard-coat treatment that resists scratching.

Players often discard glasses because of fogging. To avoid fogging, the fit of the frame requires a quarter-inch space between the eyebrow and upper rim of the frame. This allows body-generated steam to dissipate without fogging the lens. The frame must be shock-resistant, with soft rubber molded nose pads and temples for comfort and impact protection.

Ball

Specifications for a racquetball ball are determined by the United States Racquetball Association. Although

balls come in several colors, most are blue (see Photo 1.5A and B). They are 2 1/4 inches in diameter and weigh 1.6 ounces. When dropped from a 100-inch height at a temperature of 70–74 degrees, the ball should rebound 68 to 72 inches. If it doesn't, it should be replaced with a new ball.

Racquets

Selection of a racquet is dependent upon the style of play, skill level, and amount of money you want to invest. Previously, the frame of the racquet was constructed of materials including aluminum, graphite, fiberglass, and boron. Most racquets today are made of graphite, high-modulus graphite, ultra-high-modulus graphite, Hype Carbon, Tri-Carbon, and titanium (see Photo 1.6). These advanced technologies result in racquets with reduced vibration and greater control, and they generate tremendous power, all of which enhance play.

Racquet sizes and shapes also have changed dramatically. Racquets are now produced from midsize to macro oversize. These sizes extend up to 107 square inches of racquet face and presently are designed in teardrop or quadriform shapes. Racquets are designed to weigh as little as 5 1/2 to 7 ounces, because the larger the hitting surface, the greater the need for the weight of the racquet to be light to maintain maneuverability.

All racquets have a large “sweet spot” that usually is elongated and covers a larger width than the original conventional racquets. Racquet length now can be measured up to 22 inches.

Racquet faces now have longer *mainstrings*, which translate to more power. Larger racquet faces have longer strings, and the longer the string, the more it can stretch. Consequently, the trampoline effect is greater, and thus the power is greater. The more advanced requests are built



PHOTO 1.5A Racquetball balls.

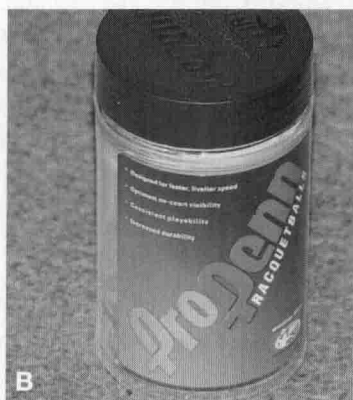


PHOTO 1.5B Racquetball balls.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

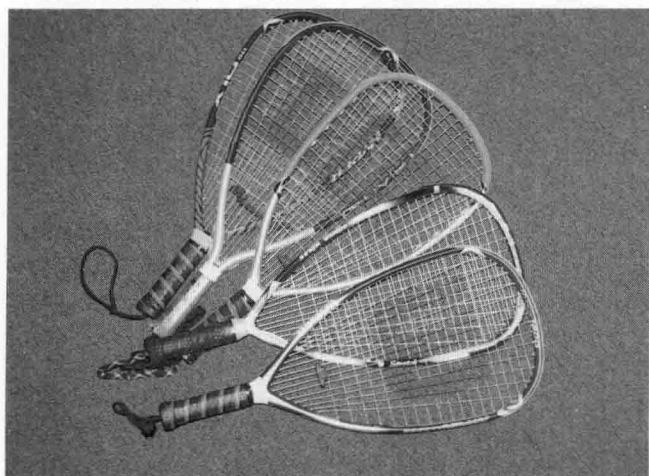


PHOTO 1.6 22-inch-length racquets.

Photography by J. E. Bryant

with a suspended string bed technology that provides increased stability while minimizing shock. It is also important that a racquet weigh 155–195 grams. For the average player, a weight of 155–175 grams is appropriate. Racquets are designed to be balanced head-heavy or head-light. Balance is an individual choice based on feel, but lighter racquets tend to decrease arm injuries. Racquets are strung with various gauges of string: A thin gauge of 17 or 18 provides more power; a heavier gauge of 15 provides a little less power but more durability.

There are accessories for racquets (see Photos 1.7A–D). As examples, tape can be affixed to the racquet to protect the bumper guards and strings from damage caused by striking the walls, and dampening vibrators can be woven through the strings of a racquet to reduce racquet vibration.

Grips and Grip Size

As a rule of thumb, the grip size should be smaller than that of a tennis racquet. Grip sizes range from super-small to medium. Most experts suggest that when gripping the racquet properly, the middle finger of the racquet hand should just touch the palm at the base of the thumb, to allow for a good wrist snap and racquet control.

Racquet Strings and Tension

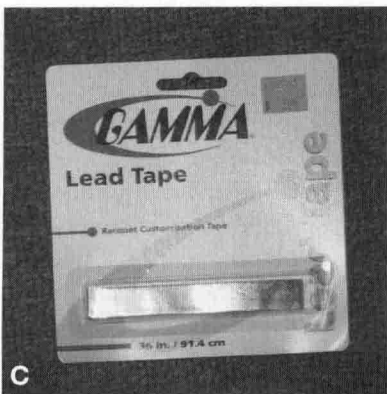
Often, racquets are already strung when you buy them. When a racquet is strung or restrung, you have to specify the amount of tension. Tension levels are recommended in information accompanying a new racquet, but if you select a tension level on your own, it should range from about 28 to 33 pounds. On the average, players opt for a tension level of approximately 30 ± 4 pounds. The less the string tension, the more power a player has, and the tighter the racquet is strung, the more control. The material used to string is usually monofilament nylon.

Handle and Tether

Racquet handle grips are made of rubber or leather. Although leather is more expensive if tack-treated, it usually allows you to grip the racquet more securely. When selecting a racquet, look for a handle that dampens vibration and reduces wrist fatigue.

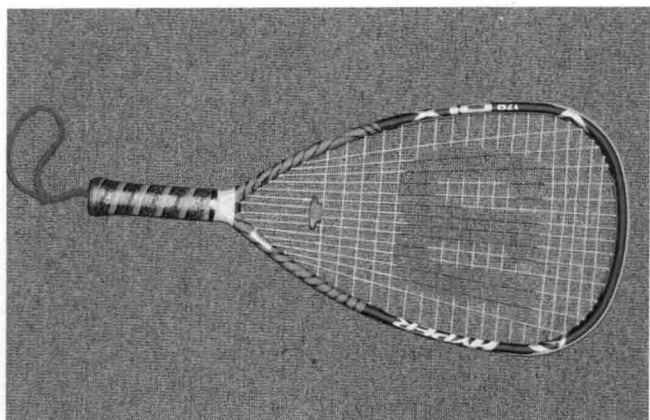
The racquet grip has an accessory designed for players who use gloves and players who don't use gloves. These “grippers” provide for a firm grip that enhances the stroke and also serves as a safety feature.

To be legal, each racquet must have a **tether** attached to the handle. The tether is a safety cord worn on the wrist during play. Replacement



Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.7A–D Accessories for racquets and grips.



Photography by J. E. Bryant

PHOTO 1.8 Safety tether.

Photography by Eric Risberg

PHOTO 1.9 Bag and cover for racquet.

Photography by Terrell Lloyd; assisted by Greg Harris and Tim May

PHOTO 1.10 Hitting a ball when your opponent is in the way.

tethers (see Photo 1.8) may be purchased at stores that sell racquetball equipment.

Racquets are easy to care for if you use some common sense. You should not leave your racquet in the backseat of your car, as extremes in heat or cold will cause the strings to become brittle or break down faster. If you keep a cover on the racquet, it will prevent objects from catching in the strings (see Photo 1.9).

If the strings are breaking frequently, you might insert plastic eyelets where the string wraps around the frame to protect the strings from wearing on the edge and possibly prevent breaking. And be sure to string your racquet with a durable 15-gauge string.

Safety

Safety During Play

Safety on the court begins when you walk onto the court, put on your protective eyewear, and shut the door to prevent people from walking in during play. During play, a racquetball court is safe only if all the players are courteous. This means staying out of your opponent's path to the ball or arm swing. Similarly, no shot is "*too good to pass up*" if a player is in the path of your swing. There is no

excuse for hitting another player with your racquet. If a player is so close to you that there is a risk of contact, you should stop play rather than continuing (see Photo 1.10).

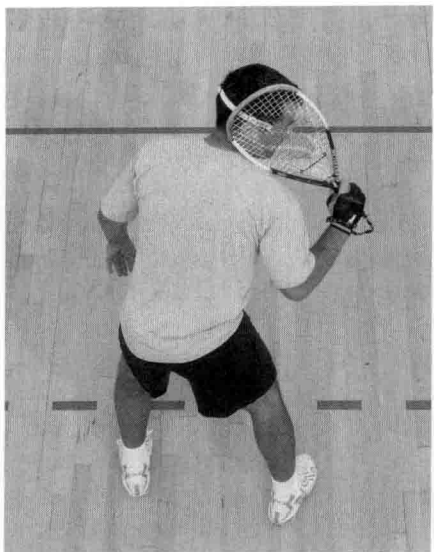
In addition, you must learn to play the strokes correctly. Too many players keep their tennis stroke alive in the racquetball court. Wide swings from the shoulder require the room a tennis court provides, and there is no place on the racquetball court for this kind of play.

Each racquet must have a tether or safety cord attached to it. This tether is worn around the wrist of the racquet hand to prevent the racquet from flying out of the player's hand and injuring someone on the court. The cord must be used at all times.

Positioning on the court when receiving serve is important. The receiver must remember to wait for the ball to bounce or pass beyond the receiving line of the safety zone before stepping into the zone to return the serve. By doing this, the server is protected from potential serious injury from being hit by the receiver's racquet either at contact with the ball or in the receiver's follow-through.

During play you should continually be aware of players' movements on the court. You must stay out of the way of the player hitting the ball, and when it is your turn to hit, take your shot only if it is clear. Most balls are hit from the back of the court forward. If you are in front of the ball, *do not* turn around completely to "see" what is going on behind you in the back court. This exposes your chest and abdomen to a hard-hit ball and also leaves your face unprotected. Rather, you should angle your body slightly so you can see the back court with your peripheral vision and hold the racquet to protect your face as you look through the strings.

Using the racquet to protect your face from an oncoming ball



Photography by Terrell Lloyd; assisted by Greg Harris and Tim May

PHOTO 1.11 Protecting your face by looking through the racquet strings.

(see Photo 1.11) is an effective safety measure only if the racquet “beats” the ball to the target. You can’t rely on your reflexes to get the racquet up in time to protect your face. As a precaution, you can use your racquet as a shield if your face is exposed to the ball’s path, and you must always wear your protective eyewear to protect your eyes against a stray shot. This way, you can play the game and finish still looking the same as when you entered the court.

Experienced players let the ball rebound off the back wall before playing it. This means that a center court position has to be held open for that player to follow the ball. If you anticipate the most direct path to the ball that your opponent can take, you can keep that court position clear. Racquetball is not a game that allows mental lapses. Each player must know where the ball is at all times, and where the other player is moving.

From a safety standpoint, court awareness is related to avoiding interference with your opponent’s shot attempt. The term **hinder** is defined as interference with an opponent’s shot. Rules regarding hinders are discussed extensively in Chapter 11 under “Hinders.” If you interfere with your opponent’s movement on the court or with completion of that player’s swing, or get hit by your opponent’s racquet, a hinder must be called. A hinder should be called by the offended player in a recreational game and by a referee during tournament play.

When a **replay hinder** is called, play is stopped and the point is replayed from the serve. When a penalty hinder is called, play is also stopped, but in this case a loss of rally by the offending player occurs. Contact does not have to occur for a hinder to be requested. Preferably, play should stop before players or racquets collide, to avoid potential injury.

Safety is a matter of habit and thinking. Protect yourself by wearing

protective eyewear, using your racquet as a shield, keeping your tether on your wrist, and closing the door of the court when playing. Anticipate your opponent’s position, the path of the ball, and the movement of players on the court. Most importantly, remember that racquetball is just a game and one point is not worth risking your well-being or that of your opponent just to make a shot.

Racquetball Injuries

Specific injuries are related to racquetball. A beginning player’s injuries tend to be bruises caused by being struck by the ball or by an opponent’s racquet, eye injuries from being struck by the ball, sprained ankles, pulled muscles, tendonitis, and blisters on the hands and feet. Most of the injuries result from playing in a small, confined space with another person who has a racquet in his or her hand.

The predictability or unpredictability of an opponent’s movement, along with the inexperience of a player, further creates the potential for injury. In addition, the game is designed for strenuous effort, and many individuals attempt to play without proper warm-up or adequate conditioning, which compounds the possibility of injury.

Bruises are part of the game, and as long as a hematoma (severe bruising) does not develop, they are considered minor injuries. Wearing protective clothing, such as sweatpants and top, provides some protection from the potential of bruising caused by being struck by the ball. Having court awareness helps to avoid being hit by an opponent’s racquet. Once a bruise, if minor, has formed, treatment usually consists of cold compresses or ice packs to reduce swelling and encourage faster healing.

Eye injuries can be serious. Following preventive safety measures

(discussed earlier) is crucial in avoiding this type of injury. The potential for internal damage to the eye, or a detached retina, is significant enough to encourage you to wear protective eyewear. When an eye injury is sustained, medical treatment must be immediate.

Sprained ankles usually are caused by a player making a quick turn without the foot following in the turn, or by lacking awareness of the opponent's position, creating an unexpected foot movement. Muscle strains or pulls result from the same overextension, as well as improper warm-up. As with bruises, initial use of ice or cold compresses can reduce swelling of a sprained ankle or a strain or muscle pull, speeding recovery.

A major caution regarding these types of injuries: Make sure you consult with a medical professional to determine if you have suffered only a minor sprain rather than ligament or tendon damage or a broken bone, as more severe injuries obviously require a totally different treatment.

Tendonitis affecting the elbow usually is caused by too much vibration in the racquet at contact with the ball, too heavy of a racquet, too many hours of play without rest, or incorrect mechanics when executing a backhand stroke. Tendonitis also is found in the shoulder area. This usually is caused by incorrect stroke mechanics or extensive playing time without rest. Characterized by inflammation of the elbow or shoulder joint, these injuries require rest to heal. In some instances, an elbow support or splint can be used as a preventive measure for elbow tendonitis, but nothing replaces proper stroke mechanics in avoiding this type of injury.

Achilles tendon injuries also occur in racquetball. Jumping and landing on the ball of the foot without lowering the heel, or pushing off

the ball of the foot, placing extreme pressure on the tendon, can cause it to rupture. The tendon rupturing sounds like a gunshot report, and the player becomes immediately immobile.

Players often ignore chronic soreness of the Achilles tendon and continue to play. The Achilles tendon and the sheath that surrounds it become inflamed, and soreness, swelling, and pain result. Ignoring these signs can cause severe problems. The only way to address the injury is to stop playing and to rest.

Prevention includes aerobic movement by jogging or use of a treadmill or exercise bike to increase heart rate and blood flow, and by stretching as part of warm-up and warm-down. An orthotic for your shoe is another preventive measure, but elevating your heel also shortens the tendon, when what is needed is to lengthen the tendon. As a result, stretching becomes even more important as a preventive measure. A stiff or achy Achilles tendon is a sign of impending rupture. Rest and consultation with a sports medicine professional are recommended to address the problem.

Blisters are common in most sport participation situations but usually can be avoided in racquetball. Blisters are caused by moisture, pressure, or friction. Hand blisters are caused by an improper grip size and extensive play that causes a "hot spot" on the hand. This type of blister can be avoided by using the proper racquet grip size and by wearing a racquetball glove during play.

Blisters that develop on the feet usually are caused by friction from feet sliding in the shoe. To address this situation, wear a pair of cotton socks with insoles as a preventive measure. Using appropriate shoes designed for court play that manages moisture can also go a long way in preventing blisters. Once blisters have developed, the

main concern is to make sure they do not get infected. For a foot blister, an athletic trainer can create a doughnut-shaped pad to reduce the pain at the pressure point and thereby allow you to continue to play.

Racquetball requires quick turns, stops, and starts. Repetitive twisting and trunk rotation are a part of racquetball. The risk of back injury increases because of the movement required in the game. Preventive measures include a total conditioning program, proper stretching (see Chapter 2), and sound stroke technique.

From an injury standpoint, there is also the danger of dehydration as well as cramps, which can make participation in racquetball uncomfortable. Older racquetball courts often do not have good air circulation; consequently, the environment can become very warm. Intake of liquids will assist in avoiding cramps and dehydration. (Chapter 2 provides further information on fluid intake.)

If you follow safety procedures, your racquetball experience will be relatively injury-free and also more enjoyable. If an injury does occur, immediate attention to the injury will hasten recovery.

Resources

Many racquetball resources are available for your use. The United States Racquetball Association (USRA) provides the official rules and publishes a magazine four times per year, entitled *Racquetball Magazine*, for its members along with a newsletter eight times per year. In addition, the USRA produces instructional materials including DVDs entitled *Beginning Racquetball* and *Secrets of the Pros* by Jim Winterton and a video, *Building Your Racquetball Dream House*, by Fran Davis. The USRA sanctions age-group and various skill-level tournaments,

sponsors regional associations, trains and certifies players and instructors, and generally promotes racquetball at the grassroots level. One of its noteworthy efforts is the promotion of racquetball for disabled athletes, including those who use a wheelchair and individuals who have visual and hearing impairments. The USRA offers a membership that includes a subscription to *Racquetball Magazine*.*

Resources also include professional instruction and coaching. Nearly every college and university offers racquetball as a course for students. In addition, fitness and sports clubs usually have an instructor available for lessons, along with a series of racquetball functions including local tournaments for all ages and skill levels. When taking racquetball lessons, questions you should ask of an instructor include:

- How much individual time will you provide me? (The more individual time, the better.)
- What will you teach me? (You need to develop as a player rather than repeat past learning experiences.)
- What kind of teaching credentials do you have? (Anyone can attempt to teach racquetball, but USRA instructor status or a teaching credential associated with racquetball is critical.)

Countless equipment manufacturers support racquetball, contributing to your racquetball development. Ektelon is a good example of a corporation that produces excellent equipment and also provides instructional materials on how to play racquetball. Its website is <http://www.ektelon.com>. Other companies, including Wilson, E-Force, and Head, also support

* The USRA requires a \$25 membership fee for college students. The membership application address is: USRA, 1685 West Uintah, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2906, or www.usra.org, or call 719/635-5396.