



Welcome, Racquetball Players!

Our goal is to keep members and all interested in Kansas racquetball informed on what's happening in and around the state, and ways to participate.

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For a PDF version of this newsletter click here: [KRA Newsletter](#)

As we continue distribution of this newsletter, please spread the word and [forward](#) to anyone that might be interested in seeing it. It is with your help that we will be able to grow racquetball all across Kansas.

FEATURED

Next Up: 8th Annual KRA Shootout at The Athletic Club of Overland Park



This tournament is a one day shootout and always has a good turnout. Everyone looks to hit one last tournament before Christmas.

For more information, stop by the Club at 10440 Marty Street, Overland Park, KS, call (913) 383-9060 or you can [enter online at the tournament website](#).

Mike Wedel, Tournament Director
913-219-4420 Cell
mwedel@athleticclubop.com

Two Tournaments in January to Start the Year Off Right!

We start off the year with The Mid-American Racquetball Classic in Salina, KS at the YMCA. It will be held the weekend of January 18-20. This has been an annual event for many years and is one of the longest running tournaments in the country. Save the date and start the new year off with this one.

The next weekend, January 25-27, The 5th Annual Wichita YMCA Open will be held at the brand new downtown YMCA. We have arranged a block of rooms at the Hyatt again for an incredible rate of \$35/night and a dinner and banquet will be held there Saturday night.

We are in the heart of the racquetball season and there are a number of great tournaments coming up in Kansas. Be sure to keep an eye on www.ksracquetball.com as well follow the Kansas Racquetball page on Facebook.



The LPRT is Coming to Overland Park in February

The Kansas Racquetball Association is pleased to announce that we will be hosting a LPRT Tier 1 stop during the 8th Annual Winter Classic at the Athletic Club of Overland Park on February 22-24. This great event will feature the top women professional players from all over the world. This event is also an opportunity to support the efforts of the American Heart Association Go Red Movement. Come out, see these phenomenal athletes, play some racquetball and most of all have a blast!



Boo Birds in Racquetball

Written by Ben Croft

At every sporting venue, fans are the bloodline that fuels the event. It is obvious that without the fans, no professional or college sports teams would exist. Understanding their importance in regard to revenue generated by the organization or school is easy, but then I began to think beyond the main reason teams need fans. So I posed a question: Do fans actually play a vital part in a game's outcome or have a direct impact on an individual's athletic performance?

A few days ago I was browsing my Facebook and came across a message from a fellow racquetball player with a small clip from an article titled, Cheers vs. Jeers: Effects of Audience Feedback on Individual Athletic Performance. The article breaks down how fans' positive, negative and even neutral interactions with individual athletes (basketball players shooting a free throw, golfers and baseball pitchers) have a direct effect on their ability to perform. In an experiment led by L. Kimberly Epting of Elon University, pitchers threw 40% fewer strikes when the crowd jeered than when they cheered. In another study, (Salminen, 1993; Strauss, 2002) there was no evidence found for an enhancing effect of a supportive audience behavior. Nor did the study suggest a negative effect on Team B when fans cheered for Team A. Personally, I feel my game is enhanced when the crowd is vocal, regardless whether they are for or against me!

These studies obviously make me circle back to racquetball and how fan interaction has an impact on matches. Does the proximity of the fans have more or less of an impact on players? One of the most memorable experiences I have ever had was at the 2006 US Open when Jason Mannino played Jack Huczek in the semifinals. I have never been around such an electrically charged racquetball atmosphere. The high-level of play was amplified by one of the most intense crowds racquetball has ever seen. It was one of those matches that gives spectators goosebumps and that makes kids dream of one day standing in that court, listening to a full crowd chanting their names.

At the end of the day, my goal as a professional racquetball player is to win to support my family and myself. That being said, I am also an entertainer at heart who loves energetic crowds. Although I have not conducted any studies into the influence of fans, I know they make a difference. Whether you cheer me, jeer me, or both, I speak for everyone on tour saying we welcome as much crowd participation as possible. Just like in other professional sports, racquetball fans are the most integral part of our game, and we need them to grow.

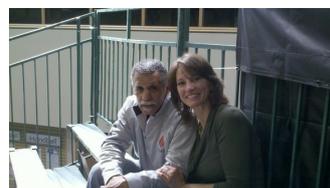
Thankfully this match was captured on camera and is available on YouTube to relive! Most of the match is on there, but here's the video with the last few amazing points.

The information in this article has been graciously provided by Ben Croft and Racquetball Warehouse – www.RacquetballWarehouse.com.

How Do You React to the Holiday Season?

by Lucy DeSarto - Racquetball & Wellness Coach

Is it an opportunity for us to eat, drink and spend to excess, only to deal with the consequences later? What if you chose to be mindful and incorporate the "TCOY Philosophy"? TCOY = Take Care of You.



~ It isn't what you do between Thanksgiving and New Year's; rather what you do between New Year's

Do you have a comment or suggestion for content for the newsletter? Or have an interest in volunteering for the KRA? Please send any feedback to info@ksracquetball.com



and Thanksgiving that truly makes a difference.

Physical, emotional and financial stress increases during the holidays; thus weakening our immune system and creating health issues. The BEST offense is a strong defense; whether it be in sports or with regards to your health. Be pro-active! Are you ignoring your body's signals for rest, nutrition and exercise? If so, your body will get your attention sooner or later; it's not a matter of "if" but "when".



Five TCOY Tips for a Healthier & Happier You...all year!

- It isn't so much WHERE you are, rather ENJOYING where you are. My holiday movie recommendation for the whole family: The Ultimate Gift.
- There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down to lift people up. Your time, resources and encouragement can

make a huge impact. It is in giving that we receive.

- If you're tired of starting over, don't quit. Keep Active...The goal is consistency so have fun to avoid burn out. Exercise (racquetball) is a great stress reliever, mentally and physically.
- Let go of perfection, aim for personal best and be kind to yourself in the process. Don't try to understand life...live it and enjoy the journey. Second movie recommendation: The Peaceful Warrior.
- Drink up...H2O that is! (caffeine, sugar and alcohol increase dehydration and health issues, so enjoy things in moderation and always remember to drink water throughout the day).

Happy Holidays and give me a call for more information on my TCOY's Wellness Coaching and learn what I can do for you. If you don't take care of your body, where will you live?



Lucy DelSarto, WEC
Wellness/Racquetball Coach
lucy@tcowellness.com
913-709-6059

Buyer's Guide: Choosing the Right Grip

provided courtesy of Racquetball Warehouse

Buyer's Guide: Choosing the Right Grip

The grip is the connection between your hand and the racquet, making it an important part of your equipment decision. They are also inexpensive, so experimenting will not break the bank. If you have always used a factory grip, read on as we break down exactly what you have been missing.

Step 1: What are you using now? Wrap or Rubber...

• Wrap Grips:

Asynthetic leather grip that is wrapped around the handle, starting at the butt cap, like that on a baseball bat. Standard on E-Force, Head and Gearbox racquets.

- o Benefit: Greater absorption, leading to less slippage. Natural cushion.
- o Downside: Limited tackiness, shorter lifespan

• Rubber Grips:

A rubber tube that slides over the un-gripped racquet handle and secured with an adhesive. Standard on Ekelon, Wilson, and Pro Kennex racquets.

- o Benefit: Increased tackiness and grip from available tread
- o Downside: Very limited absorption – slippery when wet. Will increase handle size and is susceptible to tearing.

Step 2: Which is best for you?

• Wrap Grip Types

o Smooth

Benefit: Thinnest grip available for maximum handle feel

Downside: Less traction, lower durability

o Perforated

Benefit: Increased absorption/ventilation/evaporation to reduce slippage

Downside: Thicker grip

o Contoured

Benefit: Ridges add texture and grip

Downside: Thicker grip

o Tackified

Benefit: Increased grip from tackified coating

Downside: Harder to make quick grip changes

- Rubber Grip Types

- o Smooth

Benefit: Higher tackiness, thinnest rubber grip

Downside: Highest amount of slippage when wet, low durability

- o Extruded Tread

Benefit: Most aggressive grip available, higher durability

Downside: Thickest rubber grip equates to an increased handle size

- o Recessed Tread

Benefit: Increases grip without increasing thickness

Downside: Moderate amount of slippage when wet

Step 3: Installation

If you have never installed a grip on your racquet before, do not worry! We have some helpful content here to get you on your way.

Wrap Grip Installation

Supplies: New Grip, Scissors, Pen, Staple Gun (optional)

Racquetball Warehouse (www.RacquetballWarehouse.com) offers a great video that breaks down the straightforward wrap installation. [View Video Here](#)

(<http://www.racquetballwarehouse.com/learningcenter/howto.html?ccode=WRAPGRIP>)

Rubber Grip Installation

Supplies: New Grip, Adhesive (Gasgacinch Gasket Sealer, WD-40, or Hairspray)

Racquetball Warehouse (www.RacquetballWarehouse.com) offers a great video that breaks down the straightforward wrap installation. [View Video Here](#)

<http://www.racquetballwarehouse.com/learningcenter/howto.html?ccode=SLIDEGRIP>

Step 4: Grip it and Rip it

Now that you have a brand new grip on your racquet it's time to take it out and rip some balls. If you are making a significant change in grip styles it will take a couple of games to get used to, but ideally you will end up with a better performing grip. Hopefully this guide has been useful but if you have any further questions, please contact us.

The information in this article has been graciously provided by Racquetball Warehouse – www.RacquetballWarehouse.com.

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