

**Welcome to Tim Machan's
INTRODUCTION TO RACQUETBALL 101**

Racquetball is a sport that is just a little over twenty years old. It is easy to learn and fun to play. This course will provide you with a full working knowledge of the basics of the game, from the first all important lesson on safety, all the way to the subject of strategy. This first class is on safety is the only one during which you may spend any time outside the court. The manner in which safety is taught at our club is very special. Please take time to read this handout completely so that our instructor can answer any questions that you may have at the end of this session or before the beginning of the next.

This course is taught in a classic manner that has brought hundreds of thousands of new players into this sport world-wide. Though formal in design, this course is taught in what is referred to as a "Fun Format" that has been developed at our facility over the last three years. In each class we will cover an amount of subject matter that over the duration of the course will not only provide you with a solid base for your game, but will demonstrate to you just how easy it is to learn this great game. Whether you aspire to be a tournament player or just want to hit the ball around with your friends, the information in these classes is essential to your safety, and will be invaluable in maximizing your enjoyment of this sport.

I. WHAT TO WEAR:

The clothing you wear while learning may differ slightly from what you'll wear when you play. During class, a warm-up, sweat-suit, or long-sleeved shirt and loose fitting slacks should be worn. (I also advise that you wear Tee shirt or "T" top and shorts under these. Your top should fit close at the neck, but not be tight.) You should NOT wear running shoes! (Black soles are not allowed! Not to mention that the design of a running shoe could cause you to stumble and hurt yourself.) Tennis, basketball, or court shoes are advised. Your attire while playing Racquetball will vary depending on just how hard you work at the game. Be sure to stay cool! Overheating is dangerous! Tee shirts and shorts are ideal for normal hard play. You might start in a warm up suit and peel it off as your body warms up.

II. HEALTH TIPS:

1) Don't forget to listen to your body! Just when you decide to push a little harder, you may be risking an injury. There are many movements that may be new to your body when you play this sport! If a muscle or joint begins to hurt or even just feels "odd", stop playing! Take a time out for about five minutes, and if after returning to play the pain or sensation continues, call it quits for the day! There is no reason to press onward and risk a more serious injury. Any signs of discomfort or pain should be brought to the attention of a proper medical authority. Our club staff is NOT comprised of doctors, and their advise or that of an unqualified person might lead to further complications. If any pain persists, be sure to seek proper medical attention.

2) During long periods of play, be sure to keep your body fluids at the correct level. Don't force fluids, but if you get thirsty, take a time out and get a drink.

3) Racquetball "wasn't built in a day." Don't try to overdo your practice sessions. It takes time and conditioning to play like those fine players who play in the glass courts out front. Racquetball is not an aerobic exercise; it is depletive. If your heart or breathing rate stays too high, stop and rest.

WARNING: Be sure that you doctor knows what you're doing if you have a history of high blood pressure or cardio-vascular problems.

III. EQUIPMENT INFORMATION:

1) **RACQUETS** - The first night of class, all clinic members will be provided with racquets and eyeguards. Our policy beyond this class is as follows. Severance Athletic Club MEMBERS usually pay a few dollars to rent a racquet. But, we have a special offer for you! Pay only ten dollars and no matter how often you come to play, racquets will be available to you at no further charge during the course! Or if you want, you can buy HEAD racquets at the club costing from about thirty to one hundred and twenty dollars. You may want to take advantage of our special rental policy to make sure that you like this sport before you make any large investments.

2) **EYEGUARDS** - As you have learned by reading the week number one retention material, it is not mandatory that you wear eye protection when you play alone or with friends. It should be! But, during our clinic you **MUST** wear eyeguards! You have read and are learning just how important it is to keep yourself safe while playing. We cannot provide eyeguards for you to use during this clinic that meet the current safety standards of the American Medical Association without drastically increasing the price of this course. Therefore, you will have to decide on which type of eye protection to purchase. The article in the Racquetball Book at the Front Desk (found under Misc.) describes the success or failure of various forms of eyeguards available. At our Pro Shop, we sell the inexpensive, below specification open type, as well as, the most popular national brand of closed and safe eyeguards, Rec-Specs.

NOTE: I expect to see you all wearing eye guards at our next class. Whether you buy yours from us or any other source **YOU MUST WEAR EYEGUARDS DURING THIS CLINIC!**

Keep in mind that eye guards are invaluable during the play of any potential body—ball or body—body contact sports. You should wear eyeprotection when playing racquetball, tennis, squash, soccer, baseball, and football, just to mention a few. Keep your eyes safe ! Even for home chores and hobbies, eye protection should be worn! Your investment is not only Racquetball!

3) **BALLS** - The most universally accepted ball being played today is the Penn Ultra Blue. Many others are available and the choice is yours. Penn balls are available at our Pro Shop. Other brands of balls, though they conform to the specifications of the A.A.R.A. vary in how they bounce compared to the Ultra Blue. These playing differences can make the game more difficult to learn. We strongly recommend the Penn Ultra Blue ball.

IV. COURT USAGE:

If you are a Club Member, you, of course, have unlimited usage of the Racquetball courts during this course. If you are NOT a Club Member, then you can use the courts with the one restriction being that you may not phone in to reserve a court. I advise that any non-members be sure to call the club and check to see if courts are available before making the trip to the club. Club members know that there are more prime time court hours available at The Severance Athletic Club than at any of the other Cleveland area facilities. However, there are high usage times during certain times of the year for prime hour courts. Outside of evening prime time, 4:30 to 9:00pm Monday through Thursday, there are almost always courts available. Please call ahead, "Better safe than Sorry!"

V. HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT CLASS:

I hope that you will read the attached sheets on the basics of the rules and play before your next session **AFTER** you have carefully read the week number one safety information. It is **VERY** important that you read these retention materials for week number one! If you have the time, read the basic rules of play knowing them well will make it easier it will be to understand the demonstration during the next class.

NOTE: If you are NOT a Club Member, be sure that you are issued your blue clinic pass to the club. This pass will be dated to allow you a full three weeks of usage of the club. Come and use the club

often just as our full-time members do! You should present your clinic pass at the front desk each time you enter the club. The desk staff will give you a locker key and two towels in exchange for it.

WARNING: The club is NOT responsible for any lost or stolen personal property. Keep your key in your possession while you enjoy our facility, this will reduce any risk of loss to a minimum!

Please, come often and enjoy “your” new club!

In conclusion, we hope that your learning experience here at The Severance Athletic Club will be as exciting for you as you may have imagined. Our staff looks forward to serving you in every way we can during the next three weeks...and maybe beyond!

Note: For those of you who are interested as to what we are going to cover in the six hours of instruction, the following is the...

INTRODUCTION TO RACQUETBALL 101

Course Outline

Day #1

I. SAFTEY

- A) Doors**
- B) Equipment**
 - 1) eyes
 - 2) wrist thong
 - 3) shoes & laces
 - 4) clothes
- C) Hinders**
 - 1) body to body
 - 2) racquet to Body
 - 3) ball to Body
- D) Peripheral Awareness**
 - 1) your Body # 1
 - 2) front of body towards front wall
 - 3) moving into front center court
 - 4) glancing over your shoulder
 - 5) getting out of the way
 - 6) calling Hinders

II. RULES & SWING

- A) Playing**
 - 1) description
 - 2) rule of Hinderance
 - a) intent
 - b) proximity
 - c) calling
 - d) debating
- B) Game Structure**
 - 1) points per
 - 2) serve
 - a) good
 - b) out
 - c) fault
 - d) screen
 - e) five-foot rule
 - 3) protocol
 - a) announcing score

b) helping with calls

C) Swing

1) preparation

a) front center court

b) ready position

2) forehand

3) backhand

III. BACKWALL

A) Advantage of waiting

B) Concept of maximizing your shot

C) Method of moving to the ball

D) Steps to learn

1) near back wall (rocking onto trailing foot)

2) half-half way (getting the feet moving)

3) running from cross-court service box

IV. TYPES OF SHOTS AND HOW TO HIT THEM

A) Offensive & Defensive

1) passing

a) straight-in

b) "Vee"

2) combination (pinch)

3) ceiling

a) straight-in

b) cross court

B) Specialty

1) kill shot

2) rollout

3) splatt

V. STARTING THE POINT

A) SERVE (then move back)

1) drive

2) lob

3) "Zee"

4) junk (reliable second serve)

B) RETURN (then move up)

1) body positioning

a) relative to backwall

b) upper body low

c) feet

2) racquet preparation

3) moving to the ball

VI. HOW TO WIN & IMPROVE

A) Strategy - Where to hit the ball when

B) "Golden" Rules

1) low to low - high to high - low to high
but never high to low

2) waist high or higher ceiling ball
waist low or lower passing

C) How to Practice

1) static solo

a) "peak"

b) "dropping"

2) dynamic solo

D) Play with the instructor for analysis