

# Paddle Racket Room

by Mort Leve

The first batch of test balls to arrive fell short of the desired performance in the effort to produce an official IPRA ball. The sample balls were given the full treatment at the Evanston, Ill., YMCA, Milwaukee's JCC, the Madison, Wisc., YMCA, and the St. Louis JCCA. Now, after modifications another batch is in readiness and before the time the Division IPRA tournaments are held an official ball will be delivered.

This primary official ball may also meet with varied reactions but we have to start some place. The consensus is to come out with a fairly live ball that will enable the players to use the four-wall courts and ceiling to full advantage. There is no sense in having a "dead" ball that will enable a player to plant himself at the short line and flick in shots.

Once again we must work on the assumption that the success of modern-day handball is based on a lively ball and there is no reason why this cannot be the course of action in paddleball. Why have a "squishy" ball that will flatten out after hitting the front wall? Why have a ball that won't reach the back wall off the ceiling?

It appears that there are shots to be developed in paddleball that will take the game out of its infancy.

Maybe we're too handball-orient-

tated but only through trial and error can we find this out — pro or con.

We're fortunate indeed to have a man like Gerard Lapierre, who in his traveling sales vocation, visits and talks to paddleballers everywhere. He gets the reactions and has found where the game is developing and reports back to us.

Much will be accomplished at the

first International tournament in St. Louis, April 24-27. There will be a meeting of the minds and adjustments will be made, if necessary, to carry on into the 1969-70 season.

Chuck Hazama, physical director of the Rochester, Minn., YMCA, will head up the rules committee. The current rules will be gone over with a fine tooth comb and any changes that are necessary will be made.

If the official ball is not altogether satisfactory the revision will be accomplished.

Up to this time instructional material has been very scanty. We will sit down with the best players and "pick their brains," just as we have done with the Jacobs, Habbers, Krambergs, Singers and Schneiders.

One thing is for sure. We're not sitting idle. Last May President Bob Kendler assured action and it is forth coming. Paddleball will develop with uniformity, organization, and promotion.

*Color the game red, white and blue!* Is there any reason why paddleball — or handball uniforms must remain white just because the rules established years ago have not been changed? Certainly pastel shades will not hinder a player in following a black ball. And, it will actually be easier for a referee to follow the play in both singles and doubles if the players have contrasting colors. In other sports this is done . . . in baseball the home team wears a basic white with bright stripes or lettering and colored caps and socks . . . in football it's usually a light color against the dark color and this is also the case in basketball. Tennis has gone color . . . golf achieves a glamour pattern with a Doug Sanders "clothes horse" splash. This should be an important part of our agenda in St. Louis.

"Why don't you play handball?" This question was put to Palmer Pyle, ex-Michigan State U. and professional football standout. The 250-pound stalwart replied, "I injured my shoulder several years ago and before that time used to play some handball. But, I just can't raise my left arm without pain now so I took up paddleball. It is a wonderful outlet and gives me just the fun workout I need."

And, this is just another story of why paddleball has a place in the 20 x 40 scheme of things.

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