

# RACQUETBALL

from DAN'S  
HAND



DAN YOUNG IS THE FOUNDER & PRESIDENT OF SIMPLE AGAIN. HE HAS COMPETED IN BODY BUILDING AS WELL AS ENDURANCE ATHLETIC EVENTS & IS CERTIFIED IN PERSONAL TRAINING & SPORTS NUTRITION.

There are two ways to play this game. The first way, if you're like me, means running around like a mad man, and only stopping to serve or receive the serve; the second way, for the more polished and groomed, involves controlling the ball and your movements, therefore exerting less energy. Both styles are a workout, but either way, you are a middle-distance athlete and you require stamina.

Because of the time constraints health club management puts on their courts, play usually lasts just one hour. That's plenty of time for your body to utilize all three of its energy systems: the Immediate, Glycolytic and Oxidative systems.

Understanding where your body is pulling its energy from, as well as understanding how to maximize the storage and usage of that energy, will help you achieve much higher levels of performance, and ultimately put a real zing in your swing.

## Energy Sources

In racquetball, energy output is primarily anaerobic, meaning without oxygen (hmm, that is unless you're me). Serving, returning and volleying the ball all require finesse, but also lightning-quick reflexes and high tolerance to pain and fatigue from lactic-acid build up in the muscles. In addition, this sport requires stamina, speed, explosive bursts, flexibility and a high level of anaerobic-strength endurance. These requirements take up energy; an estimated 80% of your energy would come from the Immediate energy system, 15% from the Glycolytic system and only 5% from the Oxidative system.

Every bit of your training and diet must reflect these elements. Since racquetball tends to be explosive, improved recovery and tissue repair—plus increased speed and strength—should be part of your year-round training and dietary goals.

Nutritionally, this means emphasizing short-term energy needs and maximizing the muscles' recovery and tissue processes. Muscles grow when they are stressed. In racket sports, the aim is to make the muscles grow stronger as quickly as possible.

## How does it apply to me?

Your target macronutrient ratios should be 55% Carbohydrates, 25% Proteins and 20% Fats.

## Simple Rules

- Low-glycemic complex carbohydrates are your best source for energy because they most efficiently refill glycogen stores in the muscles and the liver. They should be consumed throughout the day in several meals and be carefully measured.
- Consume protein in all meals throughout the day. This will provide the nutrients needed to repair muscle damage and effective recovery.
- Train anaerobically on a regular basis to failure; this stimulates increased storage of glycogen in the muscles and liver, which provides additional energy for greater capacity.
- Consume 5–6 small meals a day. Eating several small meals rather than 3 large ones will keep your blood-sugar levels stable throughout the day and will ensure that a supply of protein is always available for your muscles.
- Keep your fat intake to a minimum. Large amounts of fat in your diet will add to your body fat and cause mineral loss through frequent urination.
- Consume low-glycemic meals about 2–3 hours before a workout or game. By the time of your match, these carbohydrates are stored in your muscles as glycogen – the most efficient forms of energy.

## Recovery

I can't stress recovery enough. Recovering quickly following your match is essential to muscle repair and the volumization of your cells. You only have a small window of time immediately following exercise to maximize delivery of the nutrients necessary to initiate recovery and maximize the storage of glycogen, so your next match will be stronger than the last one. Consume a high glycemic liquid meal (Recovery Shake) with a 3-to-1 ratio of carbs vs. protein immediately following your match.

Eat Well!

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