

Mantra, walking on to the court: ***"This is the part I like!"***

Well, I got me some new balls. Matter of fact, I tried some new ones before this last batch that were red. Red balls don't play as well as blue balls.

One reason is the red balls are harder to see. Just can't focus on the red near as much as I can the blue and this is probably due to my depth perception. But it also could be due to the red balls smashing against the wall just don't have the WHACK! as the blue balls. Another reason for buying new balls is, like other equipment, they wear out. Balls lose their balls bounce so they need to be recycled ever so often...wonder if they make half red/half blue balls?

Got me some new shoes too. The thinner sole lets me go left and right with more ease and I will say there is more bounce or spring to my east-west movement. Course, I am not going to kill myself trying to get every ball that hugs the wall but I just feel lighter in my thinner and lighter shoes. They fit higher up on my ankles which gives me more support for reaching out to hit the ball – or gives me even more support to even think about reaching.

My drill each time still follows the lessons earlier but have modified my work/play with less trying to kill the ball and work on consistent swings to keep the game going. Swatting 18 or 20 balls without stopping adds to the flow, cardiovascular longevity, and less time having to stop to pick up my balls – which takes time and energy – and a strain on my poor ole back.

Course, this doesn't mean I won't lay into a fat return and try to knock the cover off. I have to constantly tell myself with each ball return what swing to use. Setting up and performing a nice volley is a satisfying few moments of respectful workout. But when that 'one fluffy fat ball' floats back just high enough and just about the right speed I will lean into and just see how hard I can hit it. As discussed before there are few examples in my life that pay off as well as taking a bead on a blue ball and bending my racquet and just whacking the hell out of it – the resounding WHACK off the wall is just (I won't say something to behold) but is just heartwarming and bell ringing! Sometimes I wish I had my ear plugs in as the whack sometime has the crack of my Colt .45.

There is a 'wonder' about this little game of whacking blue balls. I call this paradigmatic wondering (a linguistic term for "example pondering"). A while back I said to myself "I wonder why the ball is hitting the edge of the racquet?" Occasionally I would get the goofy 'thunk' of ball on aluminum frame and not the strings. Course, this leads to the ball doing more of a ricochet than a directed driven delivery. I wondered why? (Seems like this was an issue a couple of years ago...)

Did not take long to see, feel, and trust (SFT) my swing by hitting the ball more toward the center of the strings. The adjustment was reaching out farther (a couple of inches) to hit the ball with strings rather than the edge of the racquet. Don't do it every time but now I don't wonder if every swing will be centered. Now I have paradigmatic or semantic accomplishment...linguistically, of course, applied to Whack-A-Ball.

Have discussed in the first WAB paper the idea of swinging at the ball like a baseball player and having the gracefulness of the cut like "The Judge" for the New York Yankees. His whacking a ball over 400 feet is just a picture of dynamic swat in motion – almost effortless. I 'wondered' how my swat

looked when I tried to put a blue ball through the wall? To me the motion of taking a bead, cocking an arm (my righties are just a tad better than my lefties, well, I can't hit one through the wall with my left arm for some reason), and taking a cut has to be a 'almost effortless motion' – it seemed to me. Oh no, it wasn't. I look like Aaron reaching for one of them sliders or sinkers going outside and about six inches off the dirt. This is ugly to see him try to extend past his reach. Ugly for anybody, by the way, and it is not 'artful' at all. My returns are sometimes the same way – down and out...can't reach it – goes 'whoof' (part paddle and part breath).

So I wondered until I had Kelly take some movies. I was so disappointed. Meaning it sure feels better than it looks. I just knew when cocking my arm it would be a graceful movement to marvel at. At least I thought so. Actually it looked more like a tennis player standing on one foot swinging just to hit the bastard and at the same time to keep from crashing into the turf/dirt/court/floor.

So I wondered how I could put the grace of a shot/swing/hit on the racquet ball court and make it look like a Yankee swat to right field and over the fence. So I wondered how I could 'set' my stance, 'cock' my arm, and 'release' to punch a blue ball through the wall. The crowd would stand and cheer for the couple of seconds the ball is in flight and lift the cheer higher when someone at 420 feet caught it.

No, I am not Aaron Judge. He is a Yankee slugger batting over .300 in the two hole. It is his job to reach for the fences and not mine. I need to think of my court and not Yankee Stadium.

Then I wondered what Aaron would do on my court...can you imagine his 6' 7" frame standing in the middle of my number one court – all 282 pounds of him? Bet he could almost reach and touch both walls with his wingspan. He would be one step away from any ball swishing by or flying over! And speaking of my new shoes, what size do you thing Aaron wears? Yep, size 17...not like my new shoes!

The comparison, of course, is for effect. When number 99 gets ready for a pitch he gets set, cocks the bat, and leans in just a tad to anticipate the pitch. His reaction to the 80 to 100 mph ball is immediate if he likes it. The release is a snap. He is watching the ball, sizing up the swing, and the execution is very quick. Some times the response is tremendous and sometimes it is a 'whiff.'

So I wondered about my getting set, cocking my racquet, and anticipating the return. Seems there are some similarities; for sure, a whack on my court is similar to a crack on his diamond but he has a crowd and thank goodness I do not. We both can hit our balls!

However, I will have the edge (as my new order will come in soon). My balls are blue and red. Number 99 can just eat his heart out:

I CAN GET A BAG OF 72 MULTI COLORED BALLS FOR ONLY \$107.78!!!

