

## The MIHP Think Tank

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## Getting the hip to the shoulder

Tracy Ryckaert, PTA, NSCA-CPT

Recently, I have had the opportunity to assess many young athletes from the competitive tennis community. Many are entering or in the midst of their adolescent years and are also competing at an elite level. Few are coming in with hopes to improve performance but a shocking number are seeing me with complaints of chronic pain at such a young age. What amazes me is how many have chalked up these pains as "growing pains" or "expected" pain from many hours of practice and the competitive demands being placed on their dominant side. First of all, pain on the medial or lateral elbow, pain under the knee cap on one leg but not the other, or pain in the front or back side of one shoulder should not be written off as growing pains. If the demands being placed on the dominant side are wearing the body down, then closer attention needs to be placed on what these athletes are doing off the court or in the gym to balance out these asymmetries or restore corrective movement patterns.

Upon assessment, a common pattern has become evident. Deceleration of the tennis backhand, that would normally occur through the opposite leg, must be overcompensated for by the dominant arm, overloading smaller muscles of the elbow and shoulder.

Another faulty movement pattern feeding into these injuries has been tight hamstrings which places a kyphotic stress on the thoracic spine. This position places the muscles that stabilize the shoulder blade to the spine in a lengthened position hindering their ability to decelerate the rapid forward movement of the racquet.

### The Do's

Off court the tennis player needs to make sure he or she is active with 3-5 exercises that will address:

1. Lower extremity stability in either single legged stance or lunged positioning in numerous directions.
2. Stabilizing of the shoulder blade with rowing activities, arm elevation past shoulder height to activate the lower traps or weight bearing through the upper extremities.
3. Mobility activities for improve hamstring lengthening in all directions and extension and rotation of the thoracic spine.

### The Don'ts:

1. Exercise sitting down (unless you plan on competing from a chair in your next match).
2. Perform large amounts of bench pressing or other chest dominant exercises. These muscles need to be taught to rapidly elongate in conjunction with thoracic rotation.
3. Isolated rotator cuff strengthening.

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### It's never too late...

RITA VALADE recently completed a One Mile Fun Run as part of the Falcon Series of Races on August 18th, in Dearborn. While this could be considered an achievement for some people, it is more impressive when you know that Rita is an 87 year old grandmother. There is more to the story.

Rita was active as a teenager and during high school; she participated in girls basketball and loved to play baseball. But, about eight years ago, after several months of diagnosis involving extended stays at two hospitals and a nursing care facility, it was finally determined that Rita suffered from Dermatomyositis (dur-muh-to-mi-uh-sy-tis). This is an uncommon inflammatory muscle disease marked by a distinctive skin rash. Common symptoms include progressive muscle weakness in the muscles closest to the trunk, such as those in the hips, thighs, shoulders, upper arms and neck. Rita had difficulty getting out of chairs, climbing stairs, brushing her hair was even a challenge. After many weeks of treatment at the Henry Ford Hospital, Rita was able to return home. She had a series of prescriptions to follow, but has been able to reduce those to only a few.

Rita's son, Bill Valade, has been a Performance Improvement client of MIHP for about two years. Knowing that his mom loved being active, he introduced Rita to Tracy Ryckaert, last year, to see if there was any possible physical therapy that would improve her "quality of life". After receiving her doctor's endorsement, Rita began a series of therapy and exercise regimes. Her initial target was to be able to "walk around the block" near her home.

On Sept. 27th, Rita and her husband will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. Way to go, Rita! You are our hero.



*Rita Valade celebrating with some rest and water after the completion of the Falcon Series One Mile Run in Dearborn, MI on August 18.*

#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 13 - DFP Relay Team Training Run (every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.)

September 14 - The Missing Links of the Spine

September 27, 28 - The Missing Link at Andrews University

Saturday's at 1 PM on PBS - Catch Sherry McLaughlin on Zonya's Health Bites!

### Exercise of the month - The Tennis Daily Dozen

Plagued with tennis elbow, shoulder or back pain? Don't let pain get in the way of your swing! The Tennis Daily Dozen was developed by the MIHP Think Tank to combat the most common biomechanical faults in tennis players. The secret to reducing elbow, shoulder and back pain is to restore normal rotation where rotation is supposed to happen. Many smaller muscles suffer when large muscles don't do their job.

Download the Tennis Daily Dozen at [www.mihp.net](http://www.mihp.net).

