

# A swing and a miss



Yes, it's a blurry image, but it's fitting, as you'll see later. This post is all about my attempts to get back in "tennis trim" and how my first efforts might be categorized as a swing and a miss.

## A swing into a different dimension

First of all, let's remind you of the origins of this "return" to tennis. I'll bring up the previous blog post on this subject so you can get up to speed.



## **Why I'm practicing**

So, now that you're back, let's talk about the first step in the adventure: finding a wall to hit against.

This is not as easily solved as you might think. Eventually, however, I located one in a big county park near me. Huge facilities including clay and hard tennis courts and a batch of outdoor racquetball courts. Thus, my wall.

And thus, the comedy commences. I hit the ball and, like some classic Keystone Cops routine, it comes flying back at me.

Now, of course, that's the point, but I'm standing too close and it's more like, "Ahh, duck!". I had my fill of a swing and a miss on those rockets.

I thought my game was out of shape, but even worse was my sense of proportion. It took probably five minutes to properly gauge how far to stand back from the wall. Sigh.

## **Watch those side walls**

When I played racquetball for a time as a younger man, I

enjoyed bouncing off the walls when making shots. Don't ask; I'm just strange.

Now, however, not so much. Especially with a tennis racket which is a much larger and slower piece of equipment. Damage alert!

It figures that control would be slow (probably slowest) to come back. Certainly not in my first effort in 3 or 4 years. Riding a bicycle my butt!

## **A swing and a pant**

It took less than ten minutes for me to pant like a dog. I like dogs, so it's not a pejorative description, merely an illustrative one.

Yes, I walk regularly. Yes, I have begun switching to interval walking (mixing jogging into my walks). None of that mattered. I was huffing and puffing like...well, like an out of shape middle aged man.

It's fair to consider that hitting against a wall is high-intensity exercise. It really bears no resemblance to actual tennis action, even singles. And I'm going to be playing doubles.

But there will be plenty of long points and running sideline to sideline, so the lack of lung capacity needs to be

addressed sooner than later.

## Things you don't buy on the internet

Okay, now we get to the picture. While the Monty Python skit that is from does tend to reflect my current tennis level, it's those socks that are the main point here.

As mentioned in the previous post (what? go back and read it already!), I needed to refresh almost all my tennis equipment.

After some research, I ordered some Nike socks from Amazon. They are everything they advertise to be – moisture wicking, breathable and cushioned.

They are also ridiculously tall. The socks are labeled as “crew”. They are more like socks to pair with lederhosen. Really, they are as tall as those worn by Michael Palin in that picture. Talk about a different type of swing and a miss.

Now, I'm never the most fashion-conscious of men, so I don't much pay mind to what people think of my clothing choices, but...

I mean, these things just look goofy. Still, they feel nice and perform well and, gee, I already own them, so...

## A swing and a miss

There you have it. First attempt at regaining some semblance of a tennis game. I have to rate it as...predictable.

Given the stamina issues and the getting reaccustomed to the dimension of a tennis court, I can forgive myself a swing and a miss or two.

Indeed, by the end of my (very short) practice, I actually managed a few "rallies" of a minute or so. That's good enough for a first time. I'm not foolish enough to overextend irrationally.

My plan is to do this every other day for a while. If I can get up to 45 minutes or so of solid practice, I think that will be enough to join back in on some active doubles play.