

Pro Tennis: Game, Set, Match

by patrick beckwith

sports editor

Tennis is in a rut.

Last Sunday afternoon CBS Sports had its live coverage of the U.S. Open Tennis Championship rained out. In place of the live action, CBS showed a tape of the 1981 Open Men's Final between Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe. The sad thing is that the taped match was far more exciting and interesting than any live match CBS could have showed its viewers.

Professional tennis is no longer fun to watch. The lack of both top ranked American players and charismatic champions has led to a lot of stale tennis.

The mid 70's through the mid 80's contained some of the greatest moments in tennis history. The infamous Borg-McEnroe tiebreaker at Wimbledon, Ivan Lendl's comeback over McEnroe at the French Open final, and Jimmy Connors semi-final upset of Borg at the U.S. Open.

But today it seems as if all tennis matches are the same.

Gone are the fiery players like Ilie Nastase, Vitas Gerulaitis and Guillermo Vilas. These players brought an

excitement and competitiveness to every match they played.

They have now been replaced by robot type men that are interchangeable. Players like Mats Wilander, Stefan Edberg, Anders Jarryd and Lendl have become the norm and not the exception. Borg, unlike his Swedish counterparts of today, had a flare that made every point exciting.

There are still emotional players like Yannick Noah, Henri Leconte, Boris Becker and Pat Cash, but lately they have failed to be involved with the big matches.

But the most important ingredient missing from professional tennis in 1988, is a dominant American player.

Don't yell out the name of Andre Agassi quite yet. Sure he may be ranked fourth in the world, but he will have to stand the test of time, and more importantly, win a Grand Slam event (U.S. Open, French Open, Australian Open, Wimbledon).

And yes Ivan Lendl is now an American citizen, but he is still tremendously disliked by fans and he doesn't exactly inspire the good old USA! USA! chant.

With McEnroe and Connors quickly fading away, America finds itself without a proven top ranked mens

player.

The frightening thing is that women's tennis in America may be in worse shape.

Not only is Chris Evert on the verge of retirement, but there is no obvious predecessor to her throne as Americas best female tennis player.

The list of women that appeared to be ready to dethrone Evert is long, but their accomplishments are few.

Austin, Jaegar, Bassett, Shriver, Garrison.

Of these, only Tracy Austin achieved greatness, but injuries abruptly ended her career.

Pam Shriver has excelled at doubles, but has not achieved her potential at singles.

But the lack of great American players is not the worst problem facing womens tennis. It's the lack of competition.

The last five years have seen two players, Martina Navratilova and Steffi Graf, exchange positions as the completely dominant woman in tennis.

These two women have become so dominant, first Martina and now Steffi, that there is no competition for them.

Tennis needs a change or it will stay as exciting as a rain delay.

Barry Barto, a commitment to excellence

by andrea luce

staff writer

By looking at his overall record of 168-40-19, one might assume that UNLV Head Soccer Coach Barry Barto is a bit hard-nosed.

Wrong.

He achieves excellence through demanding 100 percent from his athletes on and off the field. Barto expects his student-athletes to give all they've got.

Barto, himself, lives by the same rules. He puts an average of 80 hours a week coaching and working with the team, fund raising and making sure he is doing

everything possible to maintain his teams excellence.

But that is not the whole



picture. Any extra time he manages to muster is spent with his wife Karen and their

three children.

When talking about his family, Barto replied, "I'm a

homebody. I like being at home."

It's a wonder Barto has time to be at home at all.

He spent six years at the helm of Philadelphia Textile,

leading them to six consecutive NCAA Tournaments and four Final Four appearances.

After UNLV soccer was temporarily dropped in 1981, Barto was selected in 1982, through a national search, to build a successful soccer program from scratch at UNLV.

In six years at UNLV, Barto has led the Rebels to four NCAA Tournaments. Barto is tremendously optimistic about the 1988 Rebel soccer team.

"This years team has the potential to be as good as in the past," Barto said. "But they haven't proved it yet, though."

With proof of it or not, he is sure about one thing. "We can win the conference (Big West)," Barto said.

That is a big order to fill, but with 14 returning lettermen, the future looks bright.

Barto has been approached by professional soccer teams about coaching, but he has passed on all the offers.

"The timing isn't quite right (to coach in the pros)," Barto remarked. "I'm enjoying what I'm doing."

Most importantly, Barto has made a commitment to himself and the UNLV soccer program.

Runnin' Rebels not set yet

by patrick beckwith

sports editor

With just about a month until the first official practice for the 1988-89 Runnin' Rebel basketball team, Head Coach Jerry Tarkanian is still unsure as to which players will receive UNLV's fifteen allotted scholarships.

A bevy of new faces can be seen at the Rebels daily conditioning workouts, including six walk-ons. Tarkanian will have until October 10 to decide which, if any, of the walk-ons will receive scholarships.

Decisions must also be made as to which players will satisfy all of the NCAA's eligibility requirements.

A quick glance at the roster reveals a lot of new names.

Coming aboard in 1988 will be three of the premiere junior college players in the country from last season. David Butler, Moses Scurry and George Ackles.

There will also be four redshirts: Barry Young, Anderson Hunt, James Jones and Rancho High product Greg Anthony.

Incoming freshman include Antoine Davison, Evric Gray and Bobby Joyce.

The five returning players from last years PCAA Championship team are Keith James, Stacey Cvijanovich, Chris Jeter, Travis Bice and Olympian Stacey

Augmon.

Whether all these players will be eligible for the upcoming season has yet to be decided. Some could either end up at a junior college, redshirt this season or become a Proposition 48 casualty.

All of these decisions will be made by October 10.

Another Runnin' Rebel note to pass along is the signing of junior college superstar Larry Johnson.

Johnson, a 6-7, 235 pound forward from Odessa Junior College, Tuesday signed a national letter of intent to attend UNLV for the 1989-90 school year.

Johnson was named the junior college player of the

year in 1988 by Basketball Times.

He averaged 22.0 points, 18.1 rebounds and 4.2 assists a game last season. He also had 97 steals and 108 blocked shots as well as shooting 62.6 percent from the field and 80.3 percent from the line.

Johnson's decision was apparently influenced by playing with Rebel players Stacey Augmon and Greg Anthony at the U.S. Olympic Basketball Trials.

Johnson survived the first Olympic cut, but elected to drop from the team prior to its trip to Europe.

Sports Calendar

Sept. 9 & 10

Soccer: UNLV Adidas/Ethel M. Soccer Classic. 7pm. Peter Johann Memorial Field. \$4 & \$2. 739-FANS.

Sept. 16 & 18

Soccer: UNLV Coors Soccer Invitational. Fri., 7pm.; Sun., 1pm. Peter Johann Memorial Field. \$4 & \$2. 739-FANS.

Sept. 17

Football: UNLV vs. Cal State Fullerton. 7pm. Sam Boyd Silver Bowl. \$6, \$5, \$4 & \$3. 739-FANS.

Sept. 24

Football: UNLV vs. Ohio University. 7pm. Sam Boyd Silver Bowl. \$6, \$5, \$4 & \$3. 739-FANS.

Sept. 30

Soccer: UNLV vs. Irvine. 7pm. Peter Johann Memorial Field. \$4 & \$2. 739-FANS.