

Competitive strength in tennis comes with an international aspect

BY GREGORY QUINN
STAFF WRITER

UNLV's top doubles duo of Pat Boies and Roger Petterson had not played a match since Feb. 21 when they met Idaho State March 13.

The 20 days of rest and relaxation left both players crawling up the wall. Petterson, normally soft-spoken, gripped his racket and sounded off.

"I'm looking forward to playing matches," said the freshman from Nyköping, Sweden. "That's why you play tennis; you want to play matches. If you don't play matches, then there's no (reason) to practice."

This year, Boies and Petterson faced West Coast titans UCLA and Pepperdine early in the season. That translated into cruelty.

"We didn't play so well together at first," Petterson said.

"I think (Roger) got here in January," said Boies, "and we didn't have too many matches to practice."

Boies, a senior from Montreal, Canada, and UNLV's top player, understood the scheduling dilemma facing teams like UNLV. "I think you make sacrifices if



UNLV's No. 1 doubles team of Roger Patterson (above) and Pat Boies (right) bring and international flavor to the squad. Petterson is from Sweden while Boies is Canadian.

you're going to play the big schools," he said. "You play them whenever they want to play you."

Lately, the pair have ironed out the wrinkles in their doubles game and posted some very good



wins. They've also learned to know and respect each other on and off the court. Boies admired Petterson's maturity, a far cry, he claimed, from what he was like as a freshman.

"He's pretty mellow on the court. He doesn't scream a lot (and) he won't panic. He's got a lot of experience from playing juniors, and it shows," Boies said.

Petterson laughed at this. "I don't know," he said. "I don't think there's a big difference between you and me. On the court we're (both) pretty quiet."

"Maybe as far as how we play,"

Boies said, "he's more of a baseliner. I've been trying to come in more this year. That's about the only difference."

"They're pretty even," said tennis director, Larry Easley. "Pat's probably stronger at the net, right now, and Roger's stronger on returns. They're probably equal on the serve."

Both Boies and Petterson began their careers at age eight, and by their teens they had conquered the junior leagues of their respective countries. Boies is the more traveled player, having rostered three Canadian nation-

al teams. But after one year of college, he found the Canadian system too limited.

"I realized it was kind of hard to combine school and play at the same time," Boies said. "(sports are) not on the same level as the United States. I'd say it's more club oriented."

For Petterson, Swedish universities posed an even greater void. "In Sweden, they don't have any teams at all," he said.

Which is why both are in the United States.

"It was either I quit tennis and just study," said Boies, "or go to a university and play. I spent so much time playing tennis as a kid that I didn't want to give it up."

He initially surveyed the top schools, but after consulting with friends, some of whom played for good teams but were low on their rosters, Boies decided on UNLV. "(UNLV's) schedule was real strong, so it was an opportunity for me to play higher on the team against good schools," he said.

Petterson, a hotel major, and the only player successfully recruited this year out of a group of three, is considered one of the season's bright spots. "He's definitely a good player," said Easley. "By his sophomore year he's going to be real strong. If we had Pat one more year, we'd be really tough."

Boies has three or four more classes for his degree in communications, but only two more months of college tennis. He'll miss it, he said, especially road trips.

"We've been playing bridge (on the bus) lately," Boies said. "I think that's the best part. That's when you get to know the guys better. I guess when I finish college tennis, that's what I'll miss the most."



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March 14 UNLV 6, Texas Tech 1

Blue-Gray Classic (at Montgomery, Ala.)
March 18 First Round Florida 7, UNLV 0
March 19 Consolation Auburn 5, UNLV 2

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March 13 UNLV 7, Idaho State 2
March 14 UNLV 7, Northern Arizona 2
March 15 UNLV 9, Texas Tech 0

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