

By Paul Arnett

Tennis...everyone?

had been a wild weekend in on the road again, we told them off. book, full of wining, dining and nen. So after a moment's reflecther five-hour visit with the

perfect day, I thought to mywill be out there trying to find a

You think we can find a court?" I ed my roommate, hoping he

Hurry up and get ready," I said myself in disgust. "Hurry back to mland...good tune.

ut after five minutes of frused lyrics and shattered sleep, I embered the commercial where guy molds into his chair because ick of exercise. Visions of a ded marshmellow danced in my d, so I said goodbye to the bed

people fighting each other for a urt. Driving past the battle field, I mbered when finding a place lay tennis was as easy as finding

aptist in Texas.
Why the hell are all these people there?" I asked Jamie angrily.
ook at all those weekend hackers ng to hit the ball.

ses me mad seeing those clowns ng ping-pong on tennis courts. ter a ten-minute stay at Aggiewe decided to try the Bee ek courts. There were a lot of ple buzzing around the tennis -fortunately two of them were

We harrassed them into submisand they soon left the court gine letting the gallery get the of you. We walked onto the sur-/OU To ce preparing ourselves for the big y us a visit.

We've been here longer than guys," a portly fellow said. "Me my buddy have been waiting three years for this court. ooked at Jamie, he looked at

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"Man, I hate rich people," Jamie said. "Did you see the kind of car he upon my Saturday night acplishments, I assaulted my clock, turned my electric was driving; it was a '78 Firebird. I wouldn't have minded giving up the court if he had been driving a VW. ket up a notch and prepared for But those rich guys are arrogant. They think they own the world."

Yea, I know what you mean," I replied. "You think that's bad, try Get out of that bed and let's go washing your clothes around here. some tennis," my roommate It's hard enough to get a tennis uted from the living room. court, but these people will cut your uted from the living room. court, but these people will cut your throat for a washing machine."

Our next and last stop on the tennis tour was A&M Consolidated. That means every guy and his will be out there trying to find a two courts open. We wondered how this could be, and in five minutes "I think I'm getting my second wind," the mouth said. "Let's play some more." we found out.

Two courts down from us a man and his daughter were dinking the Sure, if you'll hurry up and get ball back and forth. Most of their shots were wandering over to the next court, where two guys were trying to play. But that wasn't the done

The dynamic duo held a running conversation that you could have heard in Bryan. Every time Jamie and I tried to concentrate, shouts of to the house. Our conversation was how great the other was playing boomed into our court.

'Great shot, honey!" the man yelwent playing instead. led to his daughter. "But don't think le drove to the tennis land of I'm going to let you win. I'll let loose s A&M in time to witness some my Jimmy Connors' shot and kill you. Ha, ha, ha!'

Well, this went on for an hour Instead of a quiet tennis-like atmosphere, the courts sounded like a Barnum and Bailey circus. If that wasn't bad enough, right next to us some 10-year-olds decided today was the day they would take up the

Yea," he replied. "Look at those idiots over on that court. It foxhole, with little yellow missiles

threatening our very lives. "Good show, Paul," Jamie would say. "You managed to sneak one over. Too bad I mixed it up with these other three whipping through

We had to stop every other volley to sort laundry

OK, the bald ball belongs to the jerks three courts down, the two orange ones are the carnival bark-er's... who the hell's playing with this racquet ball! We'll keep this new one, we deserve it.

On one occasion Jamie tossed our Dunlop up in the air to serve, lost it in the sun, and wound up catching a

Wilson from the court next door. 'I can't believe it," Jamie said. Everyone south of Hearne has de-

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It was a lackluster first set. But our hopes were raised when the loose with this sentence.

'Honey, your old man is getting tired. I'm afraid it's time to go "Here's looking at you, kid."

Damn, I thought to myself. Just when it looked like the barker was going home, his daughter talks him into staying. But what came next was a real heartbreaker.

Double fault for me when that sentence hit the airways. 'I can't, daddy," she said. "I have

a test tomorrow With that the dynamic duo went home. But the damage had been

Let's go home and watch tennis Jamie said. "The hackers have taken over the tennis world. We packed our gear and headed sparse on the return trip. It had

been a long afternoon. You know who said 'tennis, anyone'?" I asked my reflection in the window

'No, who?" Jamie replied.
'Humphrey Bogart," I answered.

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My Sunday morning wake-up call me. We shrugged our shoulders and cided to play tennis. It's like a circus "Well after today, I'll never play out here." "Well after today, I'll never play out here." it again, Sam," Jamie joked.
"Neither shall I."

Back at the homestead I looked at carnival barker two courts down cut my racket for the last time before placing it back upon the shelf, and in my best Bogie imitation said.

I silently shut the closet door, went into the living room, turned on "Oh you're nothing but a Crunchy Granola bar, daddy," his daughter said. "Let's play two more tube was the "you're going to mold into your chair" commercial. I got up and changed channels.

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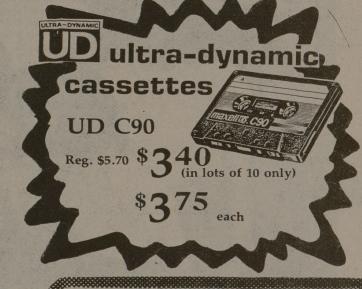
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