

the sports



David Boggan Sports Editor

Our day on court

The media. We are a strange lot. We are constantly in competition with each other. Daily, from 8-5 and beyond.

And despite this continual striving to see who can scoop who, we are compelled to compete amongst ourselves even after office hours. The amount of viewers' polls or listeners' surveys or circulation counts seem to be able to satiate our hunger for this intra-professional competition. So, occasionally we take our battles out of the news rooms and onto the next most natural field of competition—the field of athletic endeavors.

So it was that I found myself on the tennis courts at Bryan High School early Sunday morning teaming up with my editor, Debby Krenk, in the First to My Knowledge Local Media Tennis Tournament.

It turned out to be a unique tournament, to say the least. I felt like a mailman, playing in almost every kind of weather condition known to man. First there was the heat. Then there was the rain, which had been predicted by one of the weathermen in the tournament. The first rain was followed by humidity which was followed by a wind that preceded a second rain. All that was missing was the snow, the sleet and the hail.

It's not easy to get enthused about tennis on Sunday morning after a major party or the Rocky Horror Picture Show on Saturday night, but we started off all right with a two-set victory in our opening match.

If they gave out an award for stamina above and beyond the call of duty, Todd Carroll and Debbie Ramsey from KBTX would win the prize. While we had an hour to rest after our first match, Todd and Debbie only had about 30 minutes to recuperate from their three-set opening match before we began the semifinal match against each other.

There's a word for the kind of semifinal match we played. It's called "Grueling."

After leading 5-1, we finally managed to defeat the never-say-die team across the net from us 6-4 in the opening set. In a neck-and-neck second set, they won 7-5.

An obvious pattern had developed. People who had left for lunch when we started the match returned to find us still on the court. "All are still out there?" became almost a chant that afternoon.

At that point, water breaks had become the highlight of the day. I wouldn't have traded our jug of ice water for all the ace serves at Wimbledon.

The third set showed me a side of competition that I had never seen before. It was almost like the four of us were on the same team fighting a common opponent—the heat.

Todd and Debbie jumped out to a quick 4-0 lead in the deciding set and things looked bleak for the sole representatives from The Battalion.

Debby and I had set a goal for ourselves before the tournament. We wanted to take home a trophy. If we lost two more games, we would forget about that. It is here that a person's mental state is just as important as his physical state.

I tried to convince myself that "Wait till next year," was not in my vocabulary. I recalled the words of an acquaintance who is now a sportscaster in Austin. He said, at a hometown tennis tournament a few years ago, that if you dig down deep enough inside, there's always a little extra energy left.

We dug down deep and made the score 4-4. Then the lead changed hands several times until the score was 7-7. Tiebreaker time. The first team to win five points would claim this marathon match.

Just as we began the tiebreaker, the rain started to fall. The court conditions changed rapidly from sizzling to slippery.

True to form, we stretched the tiebreaker to its maximum limits.

Todd was now serving the final point of the match to me. An infinite number of "what-ifs" flew through my mind and while I was pondering one of them, his first serve went long.

The last serve. It seems a sin for both teams to come this far and for the whole match to rest on one serve, I thought. And then, as I was envisioning myself slipping on the wet concrete and sending the ball into the neighboring court, Todd hit his second serve into the net. Double fault. Game, set, match.

We were handily defeated in the finals by a superior team. But we had our trophies, we had our sunburns, we had a few new friends and, most important, we had a good time.

Martin resigns

United Press International  
 KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Tempestuous Billy Martin, who won two American League pennants and a World Championship despite constant battles with both club management and players, resigned as manager of the New York Yankees Monday after the latest in a series of battles with owner George Steinbrenner and star outfielder Reggie Jackson.

Martin announced his resignation in a short prepared statement following a meeting with Club President Al Rosen and General Manager Cedric Tallis.

"There'll be no questions and answers after this statement," Martin said. "I am a Yankee now and forever and Yankees are not talkers. Yankees do not talk or throw rocks. I don't want to hurt this team's chances at the pennant with this undue publicity. The team has a shot at the pennant. I hope they win it."

"I owe it to my health and my mental well-being to resign. I've had my differences with George but we've been able to resolve them. I'm sorry about things that were written about George Steinbrenner. He does not deserve them nor did I say them. I'd like to thank the Yankee management, the press, the news media, my coaches, my players and most of all . . ."

Martin broke into tears at this point, muttered a soft, "thanks," and was led away by friends.

"I did not ask Billy to resign and George Steinbrenner did not ask him to resign," Rosen said.

"This is naturally a result of a certain alleged statement made," added Tallis.

The final episode in the continuing battle between Martin, Steinbrenner and Jackson came Sunday night. Jackson, who was suspended for five days early last week for failing to follow Martin's instructions while at bat, returned to the club Sunday in Chicago. Jackson told the news media before and after the game that Martin had not spoken with him since he reported back to the club.

Martin was silent after the game but finally erupted at O'Hare Airport as the Yankees waited for a flight to Kansas City. He raged at Jackson and Steinbrenner, claiming, "they deserve each other — one's a born liar and the other's convicted."

The reference was to Steinbrenner's conviction in 1974 for making illegal campaign contributions.

Despite Martin's denial of the statement about Steinbrenner, both writers who reported the outburst, Murray Chass of the New York Times and Henry Hecht of the New York Post, stood by their stories.

"I stand by it completely," Chass said. "The man said it and I wrote it."

In his two years as manager of the Yankees, Martin won two American League pennants and a World Series.

The union between Martin and the Yankees was like a beautiful marriage gone bad. Martin always said he "loved" the Yankees. When he replaced Bill Virdon as manager three years ago and put on Yankee pinstripes for the first time since his playing days with Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford, Martin said sincerely it was the job he'd been waiting for all his life.

Martin, who closely followed the teachings of his bid mentor, Casey Stengel, was on his way to challeng-

ing Stengel's unparalleled success of five straight pennants and World Series championships, 1949-53. In his first full season as Yankee manager, Martin led the club to the American League pennant — its first in 12 years — only to be wiped out in four straight games by Cincinnati in the 1976 World Series.

But last year, Martin overcame frequent personality clashes with and among his high-salaried players and led the Yankees to their second straight AL flag, culminating the season with a six-game World Series triumph over the Los Angeles Dodgers. It was the Yankees' first World Championship since 1962.

Throughout his stormy tenure as Yankee manager, there was little indication of harmony between Martin and his players or the front office. Martin repeatedly communicated with the players through his coaching staff, an old Stengel ploy which the new breed of player resented. He also clashed repeatedly with Steinbrenner, although ten-

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**SMU adds to schedule**

Sept. 27, 1980, but the location of that game has not yet been set.

In basketball, SMU will take on NTSU Dec. 6, 1978 at Moody Coliseum. The two teams also have agreed to meet again in the 1979-80 season, tentatively at Reunion Arena if it is completed.

SMU and UTA will meet in basketball Dec. 15, 1978 at an undetermined location.

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