Young tennis stars warned by elders

By MILTON RICHMOND
United Press International

NEW YORK — Systematically, almost deliberately, some of today's biggest stars are destroying the game of tennis, and to make it worse, they're so indifferent, so insensitive, so utterly stupid, that they can't see they're demolishing themselves as well.

Don Budge can see it, though.

So can Jack Kramer, Fred Perry, Rod Laver and Ellsworth Vines. Among some of the great women players of the past, Alice Marble, Doris Hart, Helen Hull Jacobs and Margaret Osborne duPont are able to see what is happening also.

All of them, along with a half dozen other former standouts, have put their signatures to a strong, thought-provoking open letter addressed to Today's Stars from Yesterday's Champions.

The letter is conspicuously displayed across two entire pages in the September issue of Tennis Magazine but judging from those it was generally directed at, players like Ilie Nastase, Jimmy Connors and young John McEnroe, it might as well have been written on the wind for all the good it figures to do.

The letter starts off by saying:

"This letter is an urgent appeal that we — as tennis champions of the past — address to those of you among the stars of today who, we believe, are damaging the game by your conduct.

"Tennis has given you, as it gave us, much in terms of satisfaction, recognition and opportunities for personal growth beyond the scope of the game. And that's to say nothing of the huge financial rewards you've received that were undreamed of when we were in our primes.

"But how have you repaid it?" the letter goes on. "By debasing tennis — its standards, its traditions, its reputation — and jeopardizing its future.

"We recognize that much of the problem can be traced to the influx of big money into tennis during the past few years. The frenzied pursuit of money, though, is no reason to cheapen the game.

"Let's make it plain: we're not knocking everybody . But you guilty ones — you know who you are. You're the players who berate and attempt to intimidate officials, who make obscene gestures at linesmen and fans, who use the foulest language at the least provocation, who default using transparent excuses, who smash racquets, who do 'your own thing' with little or no regard for the wishes or sensibilities of those about you.

"We're particularly distressed by the influence your behavior is having on young players. More and more kids are stretching the rules whenever they can; more and more are arguing vehemently about line calls, throwing temper tantrums when they can't get their way. And why not, they say. If you, the pros, can get away with it, why can't they?

"But you can't get away with it forever."

No truer words were ever said.

Under suspension now for what the International Men's Pro Council calls "aggravated behavior over the past two-and-a-half-years," Nastase is ineligible to compete in the U.S. Open at Flushing Meadow.

If that bothers him at all, he hardly shows it. He should worry. What's another tennis tournament to Nastase, even if it happens to be the U.S. Open?

Connors always was buddy-buddy with Nastase, even looking up to him when he first started.

Now Connors has the idea he's above tennis itself.

Certainly above the press, to which he gives no interviews.

That strikes me as rather ridiculous considering how he went out of his way to make himself available and even court the press when he first was starting out.

I distinctly remember how Connors attended a news conference to which he wasn't even invited a few years back. Nastase was supposed to have been the key figure of the occasion, but Connors, who came with his then manager, Bill Riordan, talked up a blue streak and plainly welcomed all the attention he was getting from the press.

He figures he doesn't need it anymore, he has all the money he wants, so why even lower himself by communicating with those who pay to see him play through th

Some of the others in Open see the way Connors follow suit. You know how monkey see, monkey do.

McEnroe, only 19, is fast. If he's trying to becom ious, he's off to a splendid

After carrying on mo during a match in which three-time Wimbledon cha Newcombe a few weeks ag combe shook his head and just glad I didn't act that wa was growing up."

Name games

What's in a name? Unfortunately for Southwest Conference football coaches, odd and off-the-wall surnames don't make for trips to the Cotton Bowl.

As in every year and every conference, the SWC has its share of non-everyday last names, be it Belcher and Burgers of Texas A&M University or Mudd and Box of SMU.

These are the kind of names that will throw Mutual Radio Network mikemen into a tizzy come Saturday play-by-play, or at least yield some giggles from the press box.

The TCU Horned Frogs' 1978 football roster has the largest number of names to choose from, with 107 listed on the varsity and freshman squad rosters. Junior linebacker Charlie Abel will surely be qualified as "Able Abel" at some point in the season. And won't writers have fun with the likes of Donnie Ashenfelter and Robert Hoot?

When a question arises with the TCU squad, get the answer from Chris Judge. Then of course there could come some confusion between Duncan Still and Bobby Estill. And why not ask Brad Goen where he's goin'?

The Mustangs of SMU will have their share of plays on words in the roster. A pair of sophomore receivers in tight end Gleen Box and split end Jack Boys could some day replace the M&M cliche with the "Box and Boys boys." And announcers will have fun with David Dykhuizen. All Mustang followers know there's a Ford in the Mustang tank, and running back Lee Jeane could have a future as a promoter of denim trousers.

The Aggies will introduce Temple Aday from Arlington to the season. And certainly Raymond Belcher and Mark Burger can team up in the restaurant business with the double cheese Belcher-Burger.

Texas A&M has the only player in the SWC with a double last name. That's freshman halfback Roger van Sant from Houston Westchester.

The Houston Cougars have a Black and three Browns listed on the roster. While the Coogs stick well with American names, sporting three Joneses, a couple of Loves and a pair of Taylors, names like Jugajtis, Greenawalt and Jermstad add a bit of flavor.

The Arkansas Razorbacks have a Bobo and a Moon, to go along with Bobby Duckworth and the reliable Ronnie Trusty.

Texas Tech junior James Hadnot will continue to be a favorite among surname enthusiasts, along with quarterback Tres Adami.

The Baylor Bears will try to prove unbreakable this year with freshman Bobby Glass of Duncanville joining brother Bill Glass. That twosome is following in the footsteps of dad Bill Glass, former Baylor All-America. Andrew Melontree, a 200-pound defensive end, won't be picked on often.

The Texas Longhorns are now down to just two Campbells with Tyler's Tim and Steve. But the Johnsons and the Joneses still prove somewhat confusing. If the radio and tv announcers thought Russell Erxleben was a tough name to pronounce, wait until they try Terrance Tschatschula.

The conference does have its share of presidential namesakes. The 1978 rosters show 11 Johnsons, seven Taylors, five Wilsons, four Adamses, two Carters, Jeffersons and Jacksons and one Harrison, Washington, Monroe, Polk and Hamilton.

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