

Lendl selected best tennis player of 1983

United Press International
NEW YORK — Well rested after 10 days of leisure and a nice Florida sunbat, Lendl was upbeat about anything except his tennis

game is that he hasn't been able to play for almost two weeks because of a hamstring injury in his left leg. Tuesday was the first day he practiced without pain.

fact, after receiving an award Wednesday as the outstanding tennis player of 1983, Lendl said: "I'd like to repeat next year, but the way my game is now, I think I have more chance in golf."

With the \$500,000 Tournament of Champions beginning Sunday at Forest Hills, bringing with it possible matches against old rivals like John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors, this doesn't allow Lendl much time to find his form.

"I definitely didn't have as much practice as I would have liked," Lendl said, "but I'll practice as much as I can the rest of this week. Obviously I would like to do well, and I'll do the best I can under the limited circumstances."

Lendl was still overjoyed at Wednesday's award, which carried a prize of \$10,000. Although he failed once again to capture a Grand Slam championship in 1983, the 24-year-old Czechoslovakian was judged by computer rating to be the outstanding men's tennis player of the year.

McEnroe, the Wimbledon champion and Lendl's personal choice as the No. 1 player for 1983, was a close runner-up in the computer ranking while Connors, who beat Lendl in the final of last year's U.S. Open, was third.

Lendl won 68 of 81 matches in 1983 for an .839 percentage, good enough to bring him eight

championships. But although he says it doesn't bother him particularly, he continues to be haunted by his failure to win one of the four Grand Slam titles.

"Obviously I would like to win some," he said, "but I'm not running out of time. I still have a few years left."

If he had his druthers of the Big Four, Lendl would prefer to win the U.S. Open because of its strong field of competition.

Baseball: An Italian dream

United Press International
PITTSBURGH — David Farina of nearby McKeesport, Pennsylvania may make it into the major league baseball via Italy, and that country's

lived in Italy before emigrating. "We had to provide marriage licenses of my in-laws and all kinds of documents," she said.

right-hander in the Italian baseball League, Farina keeps his mother, Molly Farina, not to get her hopes up he'll catch on with the American professional baseball establishment.

The league's American scout, John Noce of California, writes to schools about good players of Italian descent, she explained. The first time Noce contacted David at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, Farina declined to join the league.

Farina wants to break into the majors intensely. But his mother wants it even more for the eldest of three athletically-abled sons.

"The second year he (Noce) came back to the house one day," she said. "David loves baseball. That's all he talks about. And he thought he didn't have anything to lose. This is his fifth year over there now."

It's definitely David's dream to see something happen (with an American team) from this, Farina's mother said. "Baseball is life and it is his dream to play in the U.S. He feels if he can't make it this year, he's probably not going to make it."

Farina, who had starred for several local sandlot teams, quit a construction job to accept the offer in Italy in 1979.

In high school, he had a .300 batting average with the Pittsburgh Pirates, but that was the last time I saw him. I feel he's qualified for the major leagues, but I'm his mother."

He and his wife, Janet, leave for his apartment in Parma in March, then return to McKeesport in September or October, where they live with his mother, his brother, Deron, 18, a football player at the University of North Carolina, and his sister Donna, 24, who quipped, "I'm not athletic."

He finished out his 90-plus mph season for Parma Parmalat, leading the Italian Baseball League in strikeouts the last two years while compiling records of 14-2, 17-2 and 16-2.

Molly Farina spoke of David's "gorgeous" trophies and medals, won in world tournament competition with Parma, noting her husband, David, who died in 1976, would be proud.

Dom, 26, a former baseball star at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, was as good a catcher as David was a pitcher, Molly Farina said, adding he

"He was an avid baseball player," she said. "He coached Little League. He worked every day of his life with David and his brother, Dom. This would be his dream. He taught them all he knows even up until 1976."

Kentucky Derby field still hot down to final 20 horses

United Press International
LOUISVILLE, Ky. Normally unremarkable occurrences, the arrival of horse vans at Churchill Downs Wednesday drew an inordinate amount of attention.

People directly connected with the 110th running of the Kentucky Derby Saturday — in hot walkers to owners to

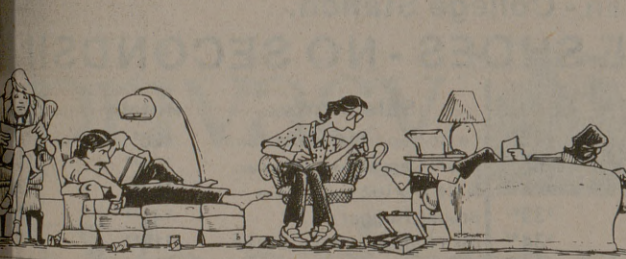
ports — were, in particular, concerned by the sight of trucks nosing around corners of crowded lanes woven through the barns of Churchill's backstretch.

Instead of reducing and clarifying the field for the Derby, the withdrawals of early favorite Devil's Bag and Santa Anita Derby winner Mighty Adversary Tuesday did just the opposite.

That's because all of them are afraid those vans might be nosing in still more candidates for the already too-large Derby field that must be

Devil's Bag, the two-year-old colt of the year in 1983, had withdrawn Tuesday because the 3-year-old was not conditioned to run the 1 1/4 mile race.

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