

Navratilova and McEnroe on a roll

United Press International

NEW YORK — Even as they continue to win with monotonous regularity, John McEnroe and Martina Navratilova envision bigger and brighter tomorrows.

Enough is never enough for these two titans of tennis, and as each new honor is added, as each new championship is registered, they look forward to fresh conquests and more lines in the record book.

Just as they had done at Wimbledon two months earlier, Navratilova and McEnroe joined hands again to emerge as the U.S. Open champions this past weekend. Between them they have won 127 singles matches this year and lost three.

Navratilova, in particular, seems unstoppable, despite the fact she was threatened in Saturday's final by Chris Evert Lloyd before prevailing, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4. Navratilova has captured six Grand Slam championships in a row — in women's doubles as well as singles — and in the last three years has won 235 of 240 singles matches.

The 27-year-old left-hander already has surpassed \$2 million in earnings for 1984 and now is on the brink of breaking two of the most imposing records in women's tennis. With 55 consecutive victories, she is only one shy of Chris Evert Lloyd's record, and she needs only to win the Australian Open to break the record for consecutive Grand Slam titles she now shares with Margaret Court.

That first goal should come next week when she competes in a tournament at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., starting Sept. 17, but she'll have to wait until the end of November before assaulting the Australian.

"That'll be history," Navratilova said of a possible seventh successive Grand Slam title. "Then, if I don't

ever play another match for the rest of my life, I can say I've won that Grand Slam, and done something no one else has done."

By winning the Australian, Navratilova also would silence the critics who belittle her Grand Slam. Purists feel that to be a true Grand Slam champion a player must win all four titles — Wimbledon, the U.S., French and Australian — in the same calendar year.

After suffering her only loss of 1983 to Kathy Horvath in the fourth round of the French Open, Navratilova started her Grand Slam streak in last year's Wimbledon.

McEnroe, too, is looking ahead to the Australian, but for him the feeling is mixed with a twinge of regret. Except for a slip in the final of the French Open, when he blew a two-set lead to Ivan Lendl, McEnroe also would be in position to complete a Grand Slam.

"I suppose I could say it got away if I win the Australian," McEnroe said following his devastating 6-4, 6-3, 6-1 victory over Lendl Sunday that gave him his fourth U.S. Open crown. "I could certainly say that. But I don't think you can look back. You have to look ahead."

"If I do win the Australian, I guess that gives me a shot at the Grand Slam. In my mind, you have to win it in the same year, but if you can do it four in a row, that's pretty impressive. I'd be more than happy to take that."

It won't come as any consolation to the other talented young men trying to make a living in tennis, but McEnroe not only feels he has become a better player this year, he believes there still is room for improvement. What he needs, he claims, is someone to push him.

Horses give polo team problems

By JAN PERRY
Sports Writer

For those who play contact sports like football, rugby and hockey, risking injury is part of the game. In a sport like polo though, injuries seldom cross a player's mind — unless you belong to the Texas A&M Polo Club.

A&M's polo players worry more about injuries because their main pieces of equipment, horses, are usually rejects.

"The donated horses are not the best," said club president Jerry Gainer. "They're either too slow, too fast, or too jumpy. Some are uncontrollable."

Gainer and his 30 club members work with the horses when they arrive and try to break the animals of their bad habits.

The horses, strangely enough, are donated to A&M by people not even connected with the University.

The temperamental horses are not the only hazards found in polo. A young players' inexperience threatens everyone's safety.

"Polo is a really tough sport," Gainer said. "The majority of injuries come from people falling off the horses. Young players who haven't ridden much don't know how to hit the ground right when they fall."

Gainer said he's seen one broken ankle and two broken wrists occur during his three years with the team.

Those are minor injuries compared to what could, and has, happened.

"We require the players to wear helmets to eliminate any heavy injuries," he said. "But, someone could get killed real easily. People are permanently injured, paralyzed, or killed from polo. What it amounts to is mistakes. One mistake could cost someone quite heavily."

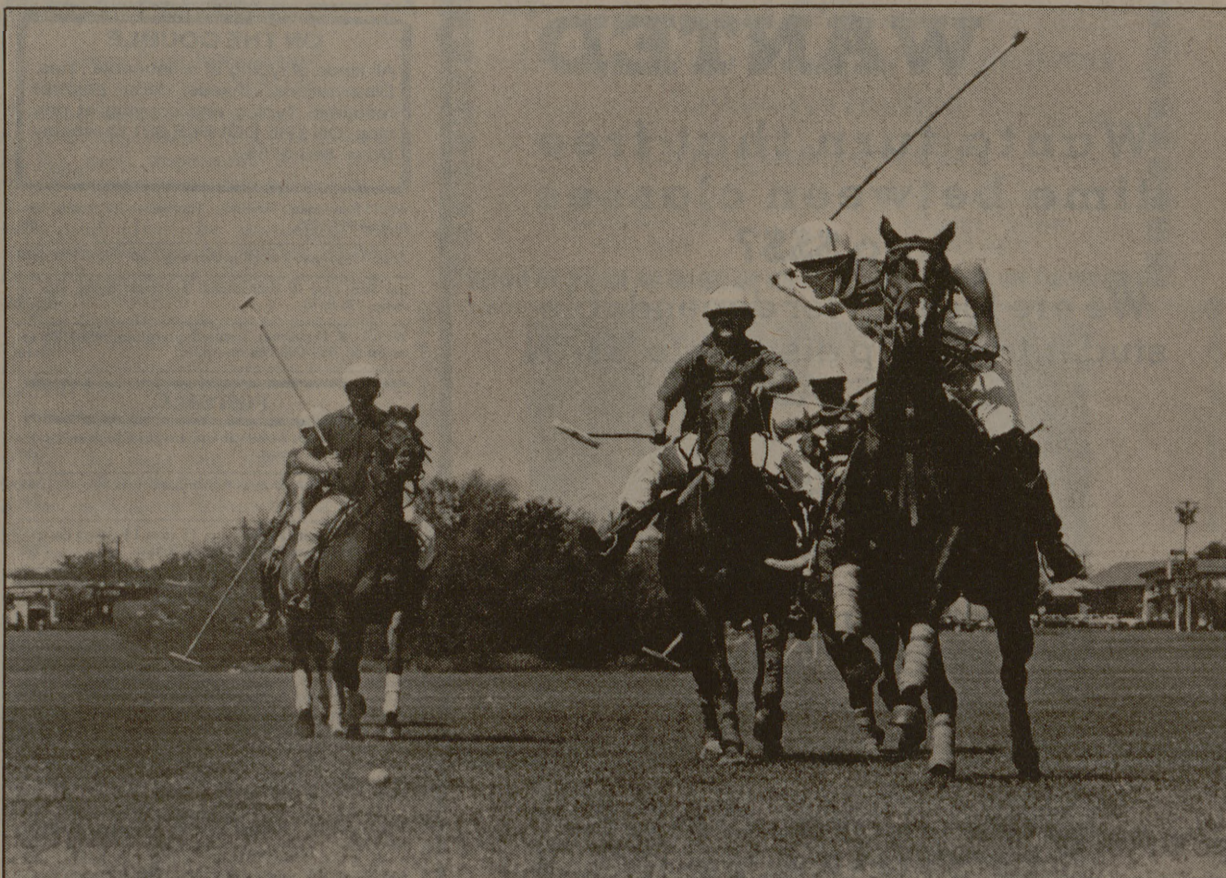


Photo by PETER ROCHA

Texas A&M Polo Club players chase down the ball in polo match held last year. The

A&M players use their best men and women in the club for the polo team.

Gainer said rules governing player safety are strictly enforced during a game to prevent careless errors. The rules specify how a player can swing his mallet, and where he can hit his horse can gallop.

If a player is hit with the ball purposely, a heavy penalty is assessed. An equally heavy penalty

is given to any player who intentionally allows himself to be hit in a blatant attempt to gain a free shot.

From the response A&M's polo club received at the MSC Open House, club members feel many Aggies also want to enjoy the sport.

The only membership require-

ments are that each person provide his or her own helmet, boots, saddle and bridle. The club provides eight horses for members' use if they don't have horses of their own.

Members who use the club's horses are required to pay a \$175 fee per semester.

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