

From the Bleachers

Bolz ignorant of tennis

SPORTS EDITOR:
I am writing in response to the ignorant and biased remarks made by Jerry Bolz in "Sports Viewpoint" on Sept. 21. Obviously, he knows next to nothing about either tennis or golf and has never even attempted to learn. Unfortunately, I don't know enough about golf to defend the sport, but I do intend to speak up for tennis.

First, tennis is just as challenging a sport, in respect to both physical and skill-level demands, as basketball, hockey, or any other. Tennis requires hard work, self-discipline, and dedication. Bolz made one of his few accurate remarks by conceding that tennis players are great athletes.

Second, his statement about tennis players being "caged-up on a tiny court" is completely irrelevant. Every sport has boundaries — football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, and soccer players, to name a few, must all stay in the boundaries of a court or field. It takes a great deal of skill to learn to place the tennis ball effectively, and I think Bolz would be surprised at how hard they are hit.

The attack on tennis fans is also unwarranted.

A ticket to the Virginia Slims, a professional tournament, costs about \$10-\$15. Tickets for college matches — for example, here at A&M — are free. Compare those prices to ones for an A&M or professional football game, and calling them "outrageous" seems pretty ridiculous.

Fans do not "dine on extravagant dishes" either. The traditional strawberries and cream served at Wimbledon, though no more extravagant than ice cream, is hardly typical of the refreshments found at most tennis matches.

The scoring in tennis is no more confusing than any other system. It just takes a couple of minutes to learn. Few sports have completely sequential scoring systems, which is the simplicity Bolz seems to require.

Finally, the remark about the color of a tennis ball topped it all off. Tennis balls have been white, yellow, and occasionally orange....but NEVER green!

Melissa Kibler '89

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

Berndt says Horns may wake Owls

HOUSTON (AP) — Rice football players are disappointed about their 0-2 start but playing Texas Saturday may be the stimulus the Owls need, Rice Coach Jerry Berndt says.

"They're really not sure about themselves," Berndt said as the team prepares for its first conference showdown of the season. "We're down, we're disappointed, we're depressed."

"Fortunately, we play a team that we don't have a lot of love for. There have been a lot of years of misery that have gathered from playing and all too often losing to the Horns."

The Owls haven't beaten the Longhorns since Oct. 23, 1965, for a string of 22 straight losses.

Rice had an open date following a 41-14 season opening loss to Indiana and then lost to Southwest Louisiana 41-16 last week.

The Owls contributed to their downfall against the Ragin' Cajuns with three turnovers and 13 penalties for 121 yards.

"Somewhere along the line, we have to learn a little bit about not inflicting pain upon ourselves, not self-destructing," Berndt said. "That's what we've been doing."

The Owls now have a nine game losing streak.

One positive factor in the Southwest Louisiana loss was the performance of redshirt freshman Eric Henley.

Henley, making his second college start gained 106 rushing yards on 16 carries, becoming the first freshman in Rice history to surpass 100 yards rushing.

Henley's 36-yard touchdown run in the first half was a thing of beauty, Berndt said.

"We broke him open at the line of scrimmage, but one of their linebackers had a clear shot at him," Berndt said. "He just spun out of that, cut across the grain and went in. He's just a big-player."

Practices will be closed this week, Berndt said, because of the extra attention Owl workouts have received during Texas week.

Cowboys 'killer' October begins; Pelluer's poise pleases Landry

IRVING (AP) — Dallas coach Tom Landry eyed the Cowboys' killer October stretch of five games Tuesday and decided a 2-3 record for the month wouldn't be all that bad.

"If we were one game under .500 we would be in good shape," Landry said of the October schedule. "Then we would be in the race and have a chance to streak to the playoffs."

"The way things are going this year a 9-7 might get into the playoffs. There are no easy games on our schedule and we will have to pick it up. We are stepping up a notch in class."

Dallas is at New Orleans next Monday night, plays hosts Washington Oct. 9, at Chicago Oct. 16, at Philadelphia Oct. 23, and entertains

fast-improving Phoenix on Oct. 30.

Landry is wary of the Saints, who will be hosting their first Monday night game in three years.

"There will be a lot of noise in the Superdome and we'll have to work on it," Landry said. "We might have to cut down the plays we run out of the shotgun formation because it's so hard to hear the snap count. It will be deafening in there."

Quarterback Steve Pelluer had trouble with the noise in Pittsburgh and Phoenix.

"We may have to take a lot of snaps from under the center," Landry said.

He said he was "very pleased" with the way the team had played in splitting its first four games.

"The most important thing is that

we have been competitive," he said.

The Cowboys are tied for the NFC East lead with Washington, Phoenix, and the New York Giants with 2-2 ledgers.

"Our division should shake out in the next four weeks," Landry said. "I'm surprised about the way it has gone early. I figured either Washington or the Giants would be 3-1 or 4-0 by now."

Landry praised Pelluer's fourth period poise in the 26-20 victory over the Atlanta Falcons.

"Steve has an excellent future if he keeps it going like he played that fourth quarter," Landry said. "It just has to build his confidence."

Dallas' offensive line has yielded an NFL low three quarterback sacks.

Matson

Continued from page 11

far down the road, though not yet in the form of Olympic gold. When Matson came back to A&M in the spring of his sophomore year, he tossed the world record shot of 70-7/4 at Kyle Field. When he upped the record to 71-5 1/2 almost two years later, the grassy surface of Kyle Field was the spot again.

Matson said his career wouldn't have been as productive at any other school. He loved Aggieland and it loved him.

More than 2,000 Aggies sent their signatures in a telegram to Matson at the Mexico City games. He said the telegram was important enough to him that he kept it in his bag out on the field when throwing for the gold.

In fact, the whole Bryan-College

Station area was so enamored with Matson that April 22, 1967 — the day Matson was to throw his 71-5 1/2 shot — had been officially declared Randy Matson Day.

Fondness of Aggieland seems to be continuing in the Matson family. His oldest of three children, is a sophomore here. But fondness for his family seems to far outweigh that for A&M in Matson's heart.

The way he used to train for competition and strive for perfection, or at least improvement, leads one to think he might push his children the same way. Instead, though, Matson just enjoys watching them, no matter what they are doing.

Though truly gentle in nature, he seemed to find it easy to be ruthless with himself. His strength coach as an Aggie said that Matson wanted to get so big and strong that he could

tear a door off its hinges.

His desire to always throw better, whether by a half-inch or anything, led him to most of his successes in the shot put. This way changed in Mexico City, however.

After the Tokyo games, Matson was focused only on winning a gold medal in 1968. He felt like his career wouldn't be complete without it.

The entire experience at Mexico City seemed to be one of the rare times that this oak of a man was shaken in competition. Unlike Tokyo, with its pressureless atmosphere for a 19-year-old not expected to do well, Mexico City had Matson eyed as the favorite.

"I went in for one thing — to get a gold and come home," he said. To Matson, this attitude was a mistake.

His defensiveness bound him in the trials, and a slight scare arose as

he could only muster the last of three spots on the U.S. team.

Contrary to Tokyo, Matson was strictly tuned in to his event. He didn't join the opening ceremonies and within a few days after he had won his gold, bought his own plane ticket and gone home, against the wishes of the U.S. team.

Because of his approach to the games, being best in the world in Mexico City was more of a relief to him than a thrill. He was not satisfied at all with his performance of 67-4 3/4, even though the closest competitor was more than a foot back.

Matson can understand a lot of what this year's athletes are going through in Seoul, including A&M's shot-putter Randy Barnes, who won a silver medal last week. He said the hardest part of training for the Olympics is the mental side of it.

Bolz

Continued from page 11

call themselves — are soaring early this season. Although North Texas might not fare so well against UTEP, their story is more surprising because of their smaller size.

As a Division I-AA team, UNT has fewer scholarships and a smaller budget to work with. They don't have the prestige to draw the big players either.

Somehow, though, they have built a team that is taking on the SWC

teams with a new boldness.

Growing up in Fort Worth in the early and mid 1980's, I remember the annual TCU-NTSU games. The Horned Frogs and any other SWC team clobbered NTSU almost without fail.

But UNT, as is the pattern of smaller teams wanting to grow or move up a division, takes on the giants every year. The Eagles have been blown out by such college football hulks as A&M and Oklahoma in recent years.

These lumps are producing a tougher team this year, however. UNT opened the season with a victory over Texas Tech in Lubbock. No fluke, though. This last Saturday the Eagles lost to Texas 27-24 on a last-minute touchdown that appeared on replays to be caught out of bounds.

So instead of 3-0 UNT is at 2-1. Later in the year they play Rice and should come away with that win to put them at two official wins and a

moral victory over the "big boys" of Texas football.

It's exciting to see that the SWC doesn't have to go out of state to get beat. Goliaths like A&M and Texas can learn a lot from taking one on the chin to a David like North Texas or UTEP.

After a preconference schedule like this year, A&M might enjoy its lighter early schedule the next couple of years.

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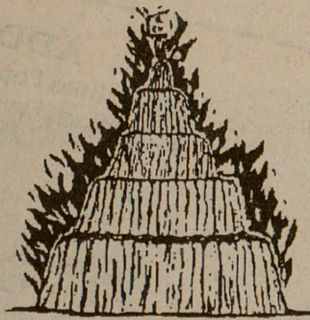
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