

Vijay Amritraj

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY



Vijay Amritraj

VIJAY AMRITRAJ

In this fascinating autobiography, Vijay Amritraj, one of India's top tennis stars, tells the story of his life; how as a child his introduction to tennis was at the insistence of his mother and father, who made great sacrifices and showed tremendous strength of will to give the Amritraj brothers, with the help of Rama Rao, the coach, the essential grounding in tennis which would take them to peaks of achievement.

Amritraj tells all; his Davis Cup triumph, his appearance on the centre court of Wimbledon, his career as a tennis player all over the world, his acting in the James Bond movie, *Octopussy*, and the various enterprises started by him. Included are delightful episodes of his finding a bride, family vignettes of his brothers, and nostalgic mentions of the warm family cocoon which always offered him warmth and strength, and still does.

Amritraj adds thoughtful chapters on Indian Tennis, the all-time greats of tennis and tennis politics.

A complete score board of Amritraj's career adds documentary value to the book.

VIJAY AMRITRAJ

An Autobiography

with

Richard Evans

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To
My Mother and Father
Whom I Have Always Loved and Admired

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
1. Davis Cup Triumph	11
2. Starting Life Upside Down	21
3. A Narrow Escape	38
4. Rama Rao and First Steps to Success	45
5. Wimbledon	56
6. Gonzales — A Technical Transition	65
7. 1973	81
8. Sweet Revenge	103
9. The Tour Continues	111
10. My Brothers	126
11. Mr. Nice Guy?	144
12. Marriage	156
13. Indian Tennis	173
14. My All-Time Top Ten	197
15. My Most Difficult Opponents	216
16. Movies	229
17. ATP President	256
Appendices	
I UN Address on South Africa	275
II Score Board	289
III ATP Press Information	314

ILLUSTRATIONS

Between pages 64-65

1. Robert and Maggie Amritraj, Anand, Ashok and Vijay, 1978
2. First steps, 1954
3. First victories, aged 13
4. The legendary elegance in action, Bretton Woods, 1973
5. Receiving United Nations Fairplay Award, Paris, 1988
6. With Australian Champion, Rod Laver, 1973
7. Partying with Disney Poitier, Ilie Nastase and Ashok
8. Ray Emerson works Vijay in California
9. John McEnroe lends support at *Octopussy* premiere in London
10. Vijay with Roger Moore as James Bond in *Octopussy*
11. Rajiv Gandhi and torchbearer Vijay at the Asian Track Field Meet in New Delhi
12. Will Prakash inherit Vijay's winning technique?

Between pages 144-145

1. A traditional marriage to Shyamala in Madras, 1983
2. In Hyde Park with first-born Prakash, 1985
3. Shyamala, Prakash, second son Vikram and Vijay
4. Friends with Princess Michael of Kent

Between pages 176-177

1. With American former Secretary of State, George Shultz, Washington DC
2. Nina Pillai watches a meeting with Duchess of Gloucester
3. A game with Tom Selleck and Chuck Norris
4. A visit to the White House, May 1986
5. Trey Waltke, Vijay, Martina Navratilova, Terry Holliday, World Team Tennis, 1977
6. Taking on Chuck Heston
7. With Sonny Bono, Mayor of Palm Springs
8. Krishnan, Anand, Vijay, Vasudevan play Indian Davis Cup Finals in Gotenburg, Sweden, 1987
9. Vijay with Jeremy Bates
10. Vijay with youngsters at Puma Carona Tennis Clinic
11. Vijay with Hiten Khatau, Director, Puma Carona

PREFACE

My career has given me everything in life — much more than I ever dreamed possible as a child. So when it was suggested that I write my life story, the first thing I thought was that it might be a way to show families with young children that there is a chance to succeed, no matter where they come from or what they want to do. Needless to say, the greatest reward of success is inner satisfaction, the feeling that you have accomplished something.

My country and my sport have been good to me mentally and physically. The feeling you get from playing Davis Cup dramatically combines your love for the game of tennis and the country you represent. I have travelled the length and breadth of the globe many, many times in the last twenty years. I have learned more, met more people in different walks of life and visited a wider variety of places than I think I would have done in any other career.

Health problems and early successes, injuries and recoveries, international travel, an arranged marriage, addressing the United Nations, a James Bond movie, recognition from the Government of India and the city of Los Angeles, all these have been my life. Now that I have children of my own who bind me to the future, they may be curious as to how it all came about. This is my story and I felt, now is the time to tell it.

Now that the book has become a reality I must thank my very good friend Atul Premnarayan for

his constant encouragement in the undertaking and *The Times* journalist Richard Evans who helped me write it. The support and friendship of Rajan and Nina Pillai, whom I have known since before they were married to each other, and of their lovely son Krish has meant a lot to me. Jake Eberts is probably my most vocal court-side enthusiast. I have always enjoyed being with him and his wife Fiona and their family, Alexander, David and Lindsey. My thanks to Dr T.J. Cherian and Dr N Govindarajalu who have healed me all my life through all kinds of health problems and to Terra and Godwin Rose. Godwin was my Dad's colleague on the railways. He healed all my physical injuries constantly with homoeopathy and kept me playing longer than I might otherwise have done.

If I hadn't come to see him in February 1982, I would never have met Shyamala. My thanks to Puma Carona and the Khatau family for their support, especially Hiten and Kasu whom Shyamala and I have enjoyed being with. The support and friendship of my brothers Anand and Ashok, whose lives will always be intertwined with mine, means more to me than I can say. And last, but of course not least, I want to thank Shyamala, Prakash and Vikram, whose love and affection is more precious to me than anything else in the world, and my first coach, the late T.A. Rama Rao, who will live in my mind for ever.

VIJAY AMRITRAJ
California, 1990

1

DAVIS CUP TRIUMPH

Through good fortune, hard work and, finally, through choice I have become a man of many parts playing a variety of roles. But no one in Hollywood could have scripted a better moment for me than that precise second on a Sunday afternoon in Sydney when Wally Masur put Ramesh Krishnan's serve into the net on match point of the fifth and deciding rubber of the Davis Cup semi-final at White City. It was a moment that crystallised all the hopes and prayers that had run through my mind in church that morning and the deep conviction I had felt throughout the tie that, yes, we could beat Australia, not on one of our own grass courts back home, but right there in the heart of Aussie land, in front of a packed stadium of nearly 8,000 Australians.

Ramesh's father, the great Ramanathan, had taken India to a Davis Cup Final in 1966 but that team had been overwhelmed by the might of Australia in Melbourne. Now, against all the odds known to man, a team with a 33-year-old part-time actor as Captain; a semi-retired 35-year-old as his doubles partner and one top class singles player who was, even then, not ranked in the world's top thirty had not only reached the final for the third time in India's history but had beaten Australia on their own turf.

My mind was full of so many emotions as I leapt from the captain's court-side chair to embrace

Ramesh, brother Anand and our manager P.L. Reddy that it is difficult for me now, sitting here in the air-conditioned comfort of my office overlooking Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, to isolate the main source of the happiness that was engulfing me. Like hot springs spurting from rock, they came from deep within me but, in the madness of the moment, were soon to dissolve into the spray of champagne as we celebrated in the locker room. Of course, we were happy; you are always happy to have won an important match but it did not require the amazing sight of little Ramesh, normally the picture of modesty and decorum, standing there with Dom Perignon trickling down his face to realise that this was more than a victory — this was the realisation of a dream; the culmination of a career; the fulfilment of a lifetime.

Sweden would be something to worry about later; dreams, after all, do not last forever. But no matter what our destiny in Gothenberg might be, nothing could diminish the enormity of our achievement in Sydney.

The 'ifs' and 'buts' are usually paraded forth by losers bemoaning their luck but that evening, as we celebrated with the team, my parents and a small circle of friends, I could afford to look back as a winner and thank the good Lord for allowing me to set out on the road which led to that magical moment and not deviate from it. On more occasions than I can readily remember it had been a close call. It might never have started, had not my childhood health improved. It would never have become a

possibility within the driving faith of my mother and, even on the last leg of a very long journey, I might have branched off at a different fork in the road if my co-starring role in the James Bond movie *Octopussy* had led to offers of starring roles.

And what if I had missed that backhand half volley when Martin Jaite had me match point down in the deciding rubber of the first round tie against Argentina in New Delhi earlier in that unforgettable year of 1987? Had I not made that shot, we would have had to beat Czechoslovakia in Prague to stay in the World Group — almost certain relegation instead of the euphoria of a place in the Final.

Perhaps the chance to actually play in a Davis Cup Final was our due after Anand and I had suffered the bitter disappointment and frustration of not being able to play against South Africa in 1974. In many ways it was amazing that we were both still around thirteen years later to get another opportunity, but in sport you need luck as well as divine guidance and when Ramesh won that fifth rubber in Sydney I knew that everything had come together for us in the most satisfying and rewarding way.

I had been certain of our ability to win the tie as soon as we secured a two-nil lead on the first day with victories from Ramesh, over John Fitzgerald and my own success against Masur. But even then I had been anticipating the necessity of a fifth rubber victory to clinch it. My body does not bounce back well after a long struggle against a player of Masur's ability and even though I was prepared to throw our young reserve Vasudevan into the doubles with

Anand, I knew deep down that my chances of beating as experienced a grass court player as Fitzgerald first up on the Sunday would be slim. I think everyone on the team recognised this; so we were all mentally prepared for the likelihood that Ramesh would have to handle the fifth and deciding rubber for us. The fact that everyone was happy for Ramesh to be saddled with this responsibility and quite confident of his ability to pull it off showed just how far we had progressed as a team and to what extent my own relationship with Ramanathan Krishnan's son had evolved over the years. It had not been an easy introduction for this young man who was eventually to become an exception to the often overlooked rule that would-be tennis players with famous fathers rarely become great players themselves. Look down today's world ranking list and you will not find a Hoad, or a Trabert, or a Rosewall or an Olmedo. Yet all the great champions of Krish's era had sons who took up the game with various degrees of strictly limited success.

Krish is justly proud of a remark made by Ken Rosewall when they were competing recently on the Over-45 Grand Masters tour. "You know, Krish", said Ken, "your greatest achievement is passing your talent successfully to your son. It is very difficult. And so few of us have managed it."

Certainly it was difficult for Ramesh when he first joined the team, because inevitably there was resentment. Anand and Sashi Menon had been with us for a long time and there is always a hint of favouritism in the air, no matter how unjustified it

might be, when a former captain's son appears on the scene. And to start with, Ramesh did not help himself. His inherent shyness and reserve made him appear remote and aloof. Often he would turn up for practice, play, and walk off without so much as a 'thank you'. It did nothing to speed the integration process.

But obviously things improved as we got to know him better and, particularly in the previous twelve months, I had developed a really strong rapport with this gentle and wonderfully talented player. The turning point might have come during the tie with Israel when I told Anand that ~~I~~ was going to try putting Ramesh in the captain's chair during my own match so as to get him more closely involved with the team effort. As is so often the case, responsibility brings out hidden traits in a person's character and I think Ramesh may even have surprised himself by the way he became caught up with the drama of my match; urging and goading me to greater efforts, his normally placid features alive with excitement. Never before had I seen such fire in those large brown eyes.

After that we had stayed close throughout the summer and I think I was able to help him during the Nabisco Grand Prix tour. He often telephoned me for advice and we consulted on a daily basis at the Essex House in New York during the U.S. Open where Ramesh enjoyed one of his most successful Grand Slam events by reaching the quarter-finals with victories over Annacone.

So, in a sense, this final rubber in Sydney, which

Ramesh simply had to win, was the final welding and the supreme test of a bond that had been growing ever closer over the years. I am, by nature, an extrovert and a seeker of harmony and compromise and it had needed a conscious effort on my part to draw the team together, smothering the obvious differences — personalities — under the all-embracing flag of mother India. That was my job as captain and now, after seven years, I was about to discover how successful I had been. Unlike the way in which we spend our lives on the tournament circuit, Davis Cup is, in the truest sense, a team sport and if the harmony is missing, individual talents are often not enough to pull the team through. Without the preparation that had gone before, Krishnan might well have lacked the confidence to go out and do what he did for India that day.

I hardly needed reminding any of this when I sat down in the captain's chair as Ramesh walked out on to the famous White City centre court. Normally I might have taken time to rest in the locker-room after my tough but vain efforts to beat Fitzgerald in the fourth rubber. But I was too overwhelmed by the magnitude of the occasion to stay away. The adrenalin was pumping and the atmosphere, with the crowd getting behind Masur in a typically boisterous Aussie manner, was electric.

Masur, who is a nice guy with a droll line in humour, has never been able to exploit his natural talent to its utmost, because he lacks a killer shot. In tennis talk, he cannot hurt you despite the fact that he is not lacking in flair or touch. He is the

sort of player who would have done a great deal better fifteen years ago. One could, perhaps, say the same for Ramesh who is far from being a power player. However, he is a superior craftsman with flat, penetrating strokes to compliment a quick eye. Basically our man was the better player but in the Davis Cup logic can be blown to the winds and when Ramesh trailed 1-4 in the first set and 1-4 again in the second, it was obvious that Masur was not going to give it away.

Quite rightly, Neale Fraser and every other Australian who got near him, had been telling Wally that he had nothing to lose and that all the pressure was on Ramesh. So Masur went out there as the underdog and, at the beginning of both sets, played really loose. Ramesh, on the other hand, was so nervous, his feet wouldn't leave the ground. It is a syndrome that affects a lot of basically introverted and apparently calm performers. They don't shake or sweat. They go stiff. Arthur Ashe was just the same. You had to know Arthur quite well to realise when his insides were churning. And, believe me they really churned. The give away was those long legs of his. They went stiff as stilts.

Ramesh, never the quickest man on two feet at the best of times, not only goes stiff but silent, too. I've learned not to expect much in the way of conversation during change-overs when Ramesh is in a tough match.

At 1-4 down in the first set, I knew I had to get him moving physically before he could start putting any pressure on Masur.

‘Exaggerate your movements’, I told him. “Follow through all the way on each stroke.”

‘Mmm’, said Ramesh, absorbed in the task of getting his hand up to his mouth so that he could take a sip of water.

‘Move your feet’, I went on, talking up a storm. ‘Jump up and down when you receive serve. Move. Loosen up. Go for it.’

‘Mmm’, said Ramesh.

The lack of verbal response is overcome by the amount of eye-to-eye contact Krishnan likes to establish with me once he is back on court. In tight situations he will look at me after every point and will want to draw encouragement from the fact that I am looking straight back at him. So you play the match with him, point by point, and by the end, of course, you are just as exhausted. But that’s what Davis Cup captains are for.

Despite the tension and Masur’s good start in both of the first two sets, I never had much doubt that Ramesh would pull through. Masur has a tendency to seize up when he gets ahead and sure enough he started pushing the ball on his suspect forehand side soon after he broke serve in both sets and after that Ramesh was able to force the pressure back on the Australian’s side of the net and stroke his way to a very sweet 8-6, 8-6, 6-4 victory.

Although we were staying at the splendid *Regent* of Sydney downtown, with great views of the famous harbour and Opera House, the post-match party never really got out of the locker-room. My mother and father, who were responsible for producing

two-thirds of the team; our manager P.L. Reddy whose dedication and attention to detail had played so great a part in our success; our Californian coach Gene Malin and Rahul Gupta, a Sydneysider, as they are called, who had been acting as our general liaison, all crowded into the locker-room and helped open up the champagne. None of us drank on normal days but there was nothing normal about this Sunday in October and, in any case, we ended up spraying most of the stuff at each other rather than drinking it. We didn't really need alcohol. We were drunk already. No spirits have been devised that can make you higher than success.

The Australians have always fought hard but, once the battle is over, they have always been great losers and I was touched by the way Neale Fraser hid his disappointment as he led his entire team into our locker-room to offer their congratulations. Pat Cash, who may well have cost Australia the tie by opting out of the singles because of a leg injury, was there, along with one of the greatest patriots you could find in John Fitzgerald. But they shook our hands and left us to our celebrations.

I was glad it ended that way as far as the team was concerned because, in my view, Fraser had gone over the top at the banquet on the Saturday night in repeating half a dozen times during the course of his speech how Australia were going to win. The middle of a tie is hardly the best time to hold a get-together dinner and I had pointedly refrained from commenting on the state of play when I spoke before Fraser. But then the former Wimbledon

champion is a very passionate man when it comes to Davis Cup. He had been captain for seventeen years now and, apart from the man he succeeded, the legendary Harry Hopman, proved himself to be the most successful Davis Cup captain in history. Even though he had nowhere near the quality of players Hopman had at his disposal. Fraser had failed only once in leading Australia at least as far as the semi-finals and, once Cash arrived on the scene, had beaten Sweden twice in four years to win the Cup outright. It is a phenomenal record, but I still thought his remarks at the dinner were a little out of place. Nevertheless he knew how to swallow his pride when it was all over.

2

STARTING LIFE UPSIDE DOWN

If there are any parents of sick, weak kids reading this, my message is simple: 'Don't despair!' I suppose I have achieved enough as an international athlete by now to prove that a robust beginning to life is not a prerequisite to success. Good health was not one of the things I was blessed with as a child but, happily, I had something that, in my case, was more important — good, strong parents. Without them I would never have made it.

Some of my earliest memories are of lying on an ironing board at our home on Sterling Road with my feet in the air and my head, face down, pointing toward the floor. This was to relieve the congestion in my chest. It was my chest that was the problem. I don't know how close I came to being born with cystic fibrosis, the fatal lung disease that virtually chokes children to death as the mucus builds up to unmanageable proportions, but it seems I might have been close because at the age of five and six I used to cough up buckets of phlegm and a visit to hospital for a couple of bottles of intravenous was almost a daily occurrence. Coincidentally, cystic fibrosis was chosen as the Association of Tennis Professionals official charity when the ATP was formed many years later in 1972 — just as I was starting to make an impact as an obviously healthy top-ranked tennis player.

A dozen years earlier that would have seemed a total impossibility. My brother Anand was already taking tennis lessons and although my parents were determined that I should have the same opportunities to become proficient in the game, no one gave me a shot. For such a sickly kid it was considered a waste of time, a waste of money and a waste of a big effort. Everyone can see he is not going to make it, my parents were told, so stop hitting your head against brick wall. Many parents would have succumbed to that kind of pessimism but, as I said, I was lucky. The word 'pessimist' has never been given a very high ranking in our family.

It would have been easy to let me stagger along as best I could, simply making life as comfortable for me as possible, because we already had a potential star in the family. As an athlete Anand was strong, agile, and in perfect physical shape. As a student he was brilliant. Quite apart from the fact that he had been a chess prodigy at the age of five, he had this burning desire to succeed at school and used to come top of the class in most subjects. If he finished second he was really hacked off.

To put it mildly, I was not quite like that. Even when I was able to attend class without any interruption as a result of ill health it was obvious I was no genius and, with the constant help of my mother who often used to go and sit in class for me so that she could come home and give me the correct lessons, I just jogged along in the middle, always well clear of failing but not too near the top, either. I suppose my biggest advantage at school was my

ability to get on with people. As a personality, I was always accessible to people, even from a very young age and I used to enjoy telling jokes and being the centre of attention.

I was certainly the centre of attention as far as my mother was concerned but for all the wrong reasons. I took up almost all of her time because I needed so much help just to get through the day. But it wasn't me alone. Our parents lived for the three of us. They never took a vacation. All their spare time and all their spare money went on our welfare and paying for the tennis lessons that, in our case, proved to be the best investment any family could have made. But they were not to know that at the outset, not merely because they had no idea how good any of us would become but also because, when they started shelling out 100 rupees a month for Anand's coaching and then another 100 for mine, there was no money to be earned from the game as there is today. The idea of becoming rich from playing tennis was just not a consideration. Prestige, fame, and the kind of contacts that could lead to a good job — yes, these were certainly incentives, but not money. Open Tennis did not come in until 1968, by which time Anand was already 16 and prior to that date, professional tennis had been confined to that select group of a dozen champions who had been signed on by the great entrepreneur Jack Kramer to tour with his troupe that were ostracised by the official tennis community and banned from setting foot on any court that came under the auspices of the International Lawn Tennis Federation. Any player

who wanted to go on competing at Wimbledon or Forest Hills had to remain 'amateur', a phoney status that was quickly dubbed 'shamateur' by those in the know. By the mid-sixties Roy Emerson and Manolo Santana, who had both won Wimbledon and were the biggest names in the game, decided to refuse all offers to turn pro and set a mutually agreed 'fee' that they would ask from any 'amateur' event that wanted their services. The fee was \$1500 — not bad for 1966, but hardly the kind of money that turns you into a millionaire.

As the sporting world knows, all that changed rather dramatically as soon as certain factions in the game, led by a surprisingly radical duo from the British LTA, Derek Hardwick and Derek Penman, followed up on Wimbledon's sudden loss of patience with the whole charade and forced the concept of Open Tennis, in which amateurs and professionals would be allowed to compete in the same tournaments, through the reluctant and reactionary councils of the ILTF. In fact the world body had little option from the moment Herman David, the fearless chairman of the All England Club, announced in 1967 that the following year, Wimbledon would be open to all categories of players whether the ILTF liked it or not.

Wimbledon was so powerful in those days that most of the ILTF delegates realised that their cosy but morally corrupt system of turning a blind eye to under-the-counter payments was doomed. David had called the game 'a living lie' and he was not far wrong.

But none of this could have been very evident to a middle-class family living in Madras and it was no wonder that my parents sat down to think long and hard when Dr Rajan, secretary of the Madras State Tennis Association, told them that the only way to discover just how good Anand could become was to invest 2,400 rupees over two years in a regular series of coaching lessons. 'And if he doesn't make the grade, don't expect to see anything back', Dr Rajan told them. 'Just write it off.'

My father had a good job with the Indian Railways and the salary was not all that bad either, but it hardly allowed for such frivolities as a hundred rupees a month on tennis lessons. Anand was seven at the time — very young to start determining whether a child would turn into a top class tennis player. But my mother and father were both concerned that he would turn into a fat lump if he didn't start taking some proper exercise. Believe it or not, for someone who is not the most patient person in the world, Anand was already spending up to four hours a day playing chess with his favourite uncle, Christopher, who had been crippled as a result of a flying accident in the Royal Indian Air Force. The youngster needed to stretch his legs as well as his mind and, as both my parents loved tennis, this seemed to be the logical answer. But at 100 rupees a month?

'Obviously we needed a little persuading', my mother recalls. 'But one remark from Dr Rajan virtually settled it for us. He said, "Millions of boys come out of college every year in India but there is

only one Krishnan.”

The truth of that statement triggered something for my parents and they took the plunge. Ramanathan Krishnan was, of course, the great Davis Cup hero of the day, the man who had twice reached the semi-finals at Wimbledon and in 1966 was to lead India to the Davis Cup Challenge Round against Australia. The idea that a Catholic family with no previous record of achievement in international sports could produce one son, let alone three, who could even remotely challenge the exploits of the great Ramanathan would have seemed absurd to a couple less determined and fearless than Robert and Maggie Amritraj. The Krishnans were Hindu Brahmins and although they lived in the same town, it must have seemed that they came from a different world. Yet now, some twenty years later, our worlds have merged, at least as far as tennis is concerned. The world of Indian tennis is Krishnan and Amritraj. The destiny of two families, so different in so many ways, yet tied by a common love for a magnificent game, have become intertwined in a remarkable and historic fashion. And who knows how long it will last? Offsprings of the Amritrajs and the Krishnans, who are already wielding toy rackets in their playpens, may help to keep the liaison alive through future generations.

But what distant dreams they must have been for Mummy and Daddy as they followed the old dictum of ‘nothing ventured, nothing gained’ and dug into their pockets for the 2,400 rupees required to set Anand off on the long road under the eagle eye of

the man who would play such an important part in our development, coach Rama Rao.

Rama Rao and Mummy — I tell you, it would have been difficult for any child of average talent not to have ended up as national champion with that kind of back-up. Even as a weak-chested, lazy kid, how could I fail? Failure just wasn't on the agenda.

But before we continue with the story of the middle son and his siblings, perhaps I should give the reader a little insight into the people who had such a great part to play in my development, both as a tennis player and a person, starting, of course, with my parents.

There was an element of fate in the way my mother and father came to meet and, eventually, to marry because, had circumstances been different, it would have been unlikely that the two families would ever have come together to arrange a marriage.

As if to offer a hint of the international pattern our lives would follow in later years, the first seeds of my parents' relationship were sown with a long distance love affair that involved neither of them. My uncle Thangaraj — Daddy's elder brother — who later became a nuclear scientist was studying in Toronto and fell in love with an Indian girl of Catholic persuasion. This presented something of a problem because my father's family were Protestant Christians. One day Daddy got a phone call from Toronto asking for his advice.

Daddy's advice can be very dogmatic. He is not a man who wavers in his opinions. As we shall see, that does not mean he is immovable in his beliefs

but there had to be a very good reason for him to change his mind. Basically he believes that love is all very wonderful but that the everyday practicality of living requires other factors to take priority. He is a traditionalist, but not an unbending one.

My uncle was in a quandary because the girl he had fallen in love with was returning to India two years before him. What should he do? Daddy left him in no doubt.

‘Nothing’, said my father. ‘Let her come back. I will go to meet her in Bombay and you have no contact for two years. If, after you return to Madras, you still feel the same way about her, then you can get married’.

And that is precisely what happened. After two years of silence my uncle returned, found the girl through my father who had been keeping a distant, brotherly eye on her and soon afterwards they were married. But that was only the first chapter in an unfolding family saga. During that two-year period the girl had been working at Kilpauk, where my mother’s father was Chief Medical Officer, at a mental clinic. By 1948, my grandfather had set up his own mental hospital just off Sterling Road, behind the house which would later become our home. It was there that my parents first met and it all came about because of my uncle’s wedding to the nursing superintendent. It was at that wedding that my grandmother first noticed my father and issued an invitation for him to visit the house. It had only just been built and the very first time Daddy ever saw his future wife, Mummy was standing at the top of

a ladder, re-arranging some photographs as they were still in the process of moving in.

Even then the relationship might never have developed — there was a religious barrier, remember, because my mother's family were also Catholics — had not the Indian Railways, for whom my father had started working, assigned him to live in a flat on Sterling Road, just a few minutes walk from my grandfather's mental hospital. The proximity made social intercourse a great deal easier and more natural than it would otherwise have been and soon my father became a regular visitor and, unusually for a young courting couple in the early years of Independence, was able to spend a great deal of time with the woman he would eventually marry.

Over a period of six months this rare courtship continued, mainly because circumstances allowed it to. Without the proximity of my father's flat to my mother's house and the friendship that sprung up between my two grandmothers, with the subsequent invitations to 'come on over' as the Americans might say, Daddy would never have had a chance to spend up to two hours a day chatting alone with his future bride on the upstairs balcony. As we know, in normal arranged marriages, things like that just don't happen.

There were occurrences — tragedies, even — that only helped to endear my father more and more to his future in-laws and to help him become an accepted member of the family before there was any official talk of marriage. There was the occasion when the son of my mother's aunt was drowned at a nearby beauty spot called Ennore. My father went off in

search of the body and spent the entire night walking the beach and wading in the shallows in an effort to find it. The family were very impressed by this and realised the depths of his feelings for them.

So even the bad happenings conspired to bring Mummy and Daddy closer together. My father balks at calling it fate. 'You cannot explain some things', he says. 'Normally there is cause and effect. But some things go beyond a single explanation. Some people like to call it fate. Maybe it is just God's will. It certainly seemed that way with us.'

It was the will of Indian Railways that, soon after he eventually married my mother in 1949, my father was transferred to Bezwada, headquarters of the Southern Railway where the temperature tends to hover at a steady 120°F. It was so hot that Mummy, who stayed behind in Madras for several months awaiting the birth of Anand, used to send down a 100 lb block of ice every other day. My father would place this in the corner of his office, close the door and reap the benefit of some very rudimentary air-conditioning.

My father was doing well with the Railways, a job he had chosen from various possibilities after graduating from Madras University in 1944 with a first in English language and something of a reputation as an athlete, having competed in the Indian Olympics at the high hurdles, long jump and high jump — clearing 5' 10" at the latter, which was pretty good at the time. Perhaps it was not surprising that he produced three sons who took to global travel in a big way because the idea of mobility and travels

to distant parts lay behind his early fascination with the Railways.

The job certainly took him to various parts of the country, for soon after I was born in 1955, Daddy, having returned to Madras after completing his successful four-year stint as Superintendent in Bezwada, was posted to Goa for six months where the sea breezes made blocks of ice unnecessary! But perhaps all of us had most fun when he was sent to the lovely city of Mysore in 1960. It was the time when the Maharajaships were being abolished and my father was allowed to use the railway saloon that used to belong to the Wodayar family who had ruled in the area for three hundred years. The last Maharaja had been a massive man, weighing 400 lb, and the carriage came complete with a bed large enough to accommodate his size.

Although he had a perfectly pleasant bungalow near by, my father frequently elected to stay in the saloon when my mother was back in Madras looking after us because that way he did not need to cook as there was always the station restaurant near by. He turned it into a real home on wheels and would order it to be taken overnight to any point in his district that he wanted to inspect next morning. I know some commuters who have to fight the freeways everyday who would find that a very enviable solution.

And, of course, for two small boys arriving on school holidays it was like a dream come true. There was this sumptuous railway car, painted white and furnished in a style befitting a real Maharaja — a moveable palace we could call home! And the nice

thing was that I think Daddy enjoyed it just as much as we did.

By that time Anand and I had been moved from our first school, which was a convent. Quite reasonably our parents decided that, although it had been convenient as a short-term measure, leaving two little boys amidst a whole school full of girls was hardly the best solution, so we were already installed at when my father returned to Madras from Mysore, unhappily without his Maharaja's carriage, in January 1963. By then Anand's obsession with chess, although commendable in many ways, had led to the tennis experiment which was to shape the whole family's destiny. Despite my father's athletic prowess at university, it was my mother who had been the tennis player of the family. Both my maternal grandparents played the game well and Mummy, inheriting a natural aptitude for racket sports, went on to play tennis for Presidency College and Madras University while at badminton she reached State level, representing Tanjore.

By the time they were married my father had started to take an interest in tennis too, and, as an athlete, had little difficulty in becoming proficient at it. Until we came along to consume their time, my parents used to play tennis together most evenings after Daddy returned from work. But that was not the full extent of my mother's activities in those early days when she still had time on her hands. For a woman of such energy, how could it have been?

In fact, it was as a result of her liking for a sport far removed from tennis that led to Anand being

born with the cord wound round his neck! Mummy used to go hunting wild boar in a jeep. Bumping around the countryside in hot pursuit of a snorting beast is not the best choice of activity for pregnant women and, after the experience of having to watch the doctors unwind Anand, I am glad my mother decided to discontinue the practice once I was on the way!

In fact, once the decision had been taken to wean Anand from his chessboard and spend money on his tennis education — as we have seen an entangled start to life had done nothing to stunt his mental or physical powers — Mummy had to begin thinking in terms of more profitable, if less exciting, activities than chasing wild boar. So in 1964, by which time I was trying to keep pace with my elder, stronger, and healthier brother on court, she started a cardboard making factory at the back of the house on Sterling Road. No, making cardboard boxes is not exciting, but multinational corporations like Horlicks and Ponds have an insatiable need for them and the business, run under my mother's eagle eye, was soon making some of the rupees needed to raise this fledgling tennis dynasty.

Forgive me if I return to a point made earlier but, looking back now on what all three of us have achieved, I still find it quite extraordinary that one woman, one mother out of all the millions of mothers in India and all the thousands of millions of family units in the world, should have had this driving, obsessive determination to turn all three of her sons into tennis champions. One woman from Madras?

Why Madras? How many families with all the right connections, facilities and geographical advantages try — and fail — to get *one* son or daughter through the gates of the All England Club with a competitor's pass tied to their lapel? What kind of absurd vision did it take for one woman to believe that she could do it with three? I suppose you have to know my mother to have some idea of the answers to these questions and even then knowing her as well as I do, I am not sure I can fully explain it.

For the Krishnans across town it was, perhaps, a little easier in that at least they knew where they were going with little Ramesh, because Ramanathan had been there before. They knew what it took and, even though the game was changing at incredible speed since the advent of Open Tennis, they understood what was required to succeed on the international circuit. But my parents didn't. They were shooting for the stars and shooting blind. There is a continent, an ocean, and a couple of seas between playing singles for Madras University women's team and stepping out on the Centre Court at Wimbledon. With the help of Rama Rao and Dr Rajan and precious little from the powers that used to run the Indian L.T.A. in New Delhi, my mother could only guess at what was required and make sure that everything within her power was done to prepare her three boys for the big wide world that lay beyond the end of Sterling Road.

If all three of us had emerged from the womb not merely unknotted but blessed with the speed of Carl Lewis, the racket skills of Ilie Nastase and the total,

concentrated immersion in his sport of a Sunil Gavaskar, then maybe the whole enterprise would have made more sense. But despite Anand's appetite for work on the court and the strength he exuded as probably the best junior player India has ever seen, no one is ever going to bracket him with Nastase as far as tennis talent is concerned. Ashok, as Rod Laver was quick to spot, certainly had natural talent, but trying to let it develop naturally when you have two elder brothers who are already established Davis Cup players is no easy task.

And then there was I. And you know what a pathetic case I was. People used to laugh when they heard my mother was paying good money to have me coached in tennis. 'But the boy's an invalid', they would say. 'And anyway his legs don't move properly. He'll never be an athlete.'

It must have been hard to argue with them. My lung became so bad after I had been playing tennis for a couple of years that one medical diagnosis suggested I had tuberculosis.

'That was a dreadful day', my mother recalls. 'We rushed Vijay to the Railway Hospital, where Dr T.J. Cherian, a brilliant doctor who did the first heart transplant in India, took some X-rays and gave us some hope. He said the shadow was over the bottom of the lung whereas, with TB, it would normally have been at the top. But the whole thing had come as an awful shock because TB was so much more serious at that time. I tell you, I wept bitterly that day.'

But even though the suggestion of TB turned out

to be inaccurate, I was confined to hospital for several weeks and put on a strict diet with antibiotics. All this would have cost a fortune under normal circumstances and I never need to remind myself that I would probably never have enjoyed the general state of good health that God granted me in my twenties and thirties had it not been for the fact that my father worked for the Railways. Free medical care for himself and his family was one of the perks that went with the job. His salary, good as it was, would never have been able to cover the kind of treatment I received at the Railway Hospital in Madras.

So apart from the ironing board treatment — feet up, head down and pats on the back to bring out the phlegm — I also have something else to thank for my eventual recovery — our goats. They came one after the other because goats only produce milk for a few months at a time and it was for their milk that they were bought and sold. Goat's milk became part of my diet every morning and evening and whether or not medical science will support the theory, the treatment seemed to have a beneficial effect on my chest.

So the three of us were not exactly a cast-iron certainty for triumph in the demanding world of international tennis and, of the trio, I was the prime candidate for failure. But there was the treatment at the hospital; the ironing board; the goat's milk; my mother; and a certain determination on my part not to give in. All these factors helped, but the overriding one was, of course, my mother. What she

went through with all of us, but especially with me, is difficult to comprehend. Two occurrences, in particular, would have finished most people, but not Mummy. Fighting through the dreadful pain she resolutely battled back. Maybe we helped her just by being there and needing the care and inspiration she provided. I hope so. It would be nice to think that we gave something back. But in reality we were simply lucky to have her still with us. A lesser woman would have died.

3

A NARROW ESCAPE

By the time Anand and I were both old enough to be taking tennis lessons from Rama Rao, my mother had settled into a gruelling daily routine that would have left most people flat on their backs with exhaustion. That Mummy eventually ended up that way had nothing to do with exhaustion. It was going to need something drastic and dramatic to force her to break stride as she herded us down the long and difficult path that led to tennis stardom and, unhappily, when it occurred, the accident was far worse than anyone could have foreseen.

It was an evening in March 1965 and we had all finished another long day that had begun, as usual at 5.30 when we left the house and ran off down Sterling Road for our first bit of exercise for the day. After the run, we would be on court at 6.15 until 7.30 before returning home for a bath and breakfast in time to be at the Don Bosco High School for class at 9.00 a.m. When classes finished at 3.30 my mother would be waiting for us in the car and, as we changed in the back so as not to lose any court time, she would drive us back to the courts for another couple of hours tennis. In between, of course, Mummy had never stopped. She had started her cardboard packaging business by then and, apart from supervising all that, there was the house to be run and my father's needs to be taken care of as well. Nor was the house full of servants. At the time,

my mother only had one domestic woman to help her.

So it was one evening when Anand had just finished playing a match and ... well let Mummy describe what happened.

“Yes, Anand’s throat had been giving trouble and the cook had just given him a glass of water. I wanted to get something hot for him, so I turned and put my hand out toward the kerosene stove that was sitting on the window sill. And the whole thing tipped over. The flames caught my sari and in a second I was engulfed. I tried to roll over but lost consciousness. It was my husband who saved me. Luckily he was standing right there and threw himself over me to put out the flames. But in doing so he was badly burned on his hands and chest as well.”

However, Mummy was in much worse shape than that. She had burns over fifty per cent of her body and when she was taken away to the hospital they did not, initially, expect her to live.

For fifteen days she lay unconscious in that hospital with Daddy being treated in a private ward next door. Within three weeks he had recovered sufficiently to warrant a discharge but, in fact, he never left while my mother was still there. For six months he lived at the hospital so as to be next to her while we were looked after at home by our grandmother. Daddy’s support must have meant a lot to her, because it was nothing less than six months of agony with pain-killing injections every morning to dull, if not completely eradicate, the pain of the skin-grafting operations that took place on an almost daily basis.

It was six months before she could put a foot on the ground and nine before she was eventually allowed home with a nurse in attendance. Even then her limbs were still stiff and no one thought she would be able to lead a normal, active life again. But they were, of course, underestimating the courage and resourcefulness of Maggie Amritraj.

Driving herself through a largely self-imposed rehabilitation routine, Mummy forced herself to walk every day and, even though she frequently stumbled and fell before she got as far as the front gate, she refused to allow her dreadful injuries to impede her progress. She was going to get well, not just for her sake, but for ours. There was a job to be done which, she knew, had been interrupted against her wishes.

'Make sure Rama Rao gets paid for the boys' tennis lessons', was the first instruction she uttered on regaining consciousness but, for a start, our proud and wonderful coach refused to take so much as a rupee in payment until my mother had recovered and, secondly, without Mummy's driving determination, it was inevitable that the routine would slacken off and that we would start missing sessions.

And in my case, it was not just the tennis that suffered. My own state of health often prevented me from going to school at all and it was my mother who used to go in my place; copy the questions from her seat at the back of what should have been my class and then return home to teach me herself. And I was not, I am afraid, a very willing pupil.

'As soon as I produced a class book, Vijay's eyes would start watering and the coughing would start',

she recalls with a laugh that is permissible now but was probably less in evidence at the time. 'Looking back I think there was obviously something psychosomatic about Vijay's reaction to schoolwork. He had a terrible memory for everything I tried to teach him and that was not because he was stupid because, as he has proved since growing up, there is nothing wrong with his brain.'

Oh, dear, what can I say in my defence? That I was storing up the energy in my brain cells for later use? Hardly. But those of us who failed to light up our classrooms with Darwinesque brilliance have a champion to fall back on, even though there are those who maintain that his views on India's place in the British Empire only prove the point. From all accounts Winston Churchill was a dunce at Harrow!

Even so, with Mummy's help, I muddled through, never top of any class but never bottom either, and I must have done some of the work myself because, incredibly, the nine months off she had with her terrible burns was not the only period of our childhood that we had to do without our mother's inspirational encouragement. Three years later, in 1968, with the factory in full swing and her mind on too many of the varied responsibilities that faced her every day, Mummy put her hand straight into the punching machine that was used to join the sides of the cardboard boxes.

'My hand was well and truly punched', she recalls. "There was virtually nothing left of it except hanging skin. So that meant another trip back to the hospital where the operation took five hours because they

had to re-construct the whole thing. All the muscles and tendons had been severed. I was lucky to get the use of the hand again, but it meant another three months before I could attend to everything properly."

If it is a truism that you have to suffer to succeed, then my mother must offer one of the best examples of it. But perhaps in a strange and painful way it was a means to an end. After all she had done and all she had been through how could we fail her? How could we allow all her efforts to come to nought? Obviously it was unthinkable and so, under the stern but kindly eye of Rama Rao on court and her own rigid set of training rules off it, we did her bidding. In truth we had little option, because any attempts to circumvent the routine were doomed to failure as I discovered when I tried to short cut the early morning run.

I thought I had found the perfect solution to the problem of having to expend all that energy at such an ungodly hour in racing off down the road and then sitting on a fence just out of view around the corner while my fit and athletic brother disappeared off into the distance and then sprinting back with him to the house to make it look as if I was appropriately exhausted. That worked beautifully for a few days, but my mother had spies everywhere and soon got to hear of my sly attempts to buck the system. So, after a good ticking off, Mummy put a stop to any further nonsense by getting in her car and driving along behind us! Some of our neighbours still remember the amusing sight of two sweaty

youngsters — and eventually a third — pounding the streets at dawn, pursued by Mrs Amritraj behind the wheel of her car, crawling along doggedly in second gear.

None of her accidents stopped Mummy driving, of course, but they did, I am afraid, put an end to her tennis which was a shame, not merely for her but for Daddy and all of us. Mixed doubles at the Gymkhana had been a great family custom when we were very young. Often they played in the club tournaments that were held at week-ends; tournaments with all sorts of different competitions like open singles and handicap singles and men's and women's doubles and so on which were all great fun. But for us the best was the family doubles. Often our parents would be competing against friends like P.V. Gajapathi and his wife Radhi and we would sit in those little pink bucket seats at the courtside and clap and cheer, which must have made a funny sight because no one else was applauding. It was all very British, the Gymkhana Club and, to an extent, still is. Tea and scones on the lawn; dancing in the evening and the honours boards hanging from the walls of the main salon with the names of past presidents of the Club. Not until the fifties can one find a name that was not obviously British.

But by the time my parents joined, expatriate membership was on the decline and, even if three little boys making a noise during a tennis match was frowned on by some, I don't remember anyone complaining. But I remember those matches, probably because the senior members of the Amritraj family

set a family tradition by winning most of the cups! That was not surprising, because Robert and Maggie Amritraj made an effective, if unlikely, combination. My mother had the loveliest strokes; beautiful backhand, beautiful forehand but couldn't move two feet either side. My father's strokes looked terrible but he used to run like hell and cover acres of ground while Mummy stood in the middle of the court executing these perfect returns after Daddy had retrieved the point from somewhere near the back-stop netting.

I have no doubt that something of their determination and competitive spirit rubbed off on me especially — Anand was competitive at birth — because by the time I started playing tennis at a serious level in the juniors I, too, revealed a never-say-die streak that perhaps one would not have expected from a sickly child who had tried to fake his early morning run.

At any rate, looking back, there can be no doubt that tennis was our salvation in more ways than one. I am sure the goal she had set herself as far as our tennis future was concerned helped Mummy recover from her injuries faster than she would otherwise have done and she, equally, is convinced that, more than all the medical treatment and regular intake of goat's milk, it was tennis that had the most beneficial effect on my health.

'No doubt about it', says my mother. 'Vijay got stronger, fitter and healthier as a result of playing tennis. It helped him both physically and psychologically and without it he may well have grown up a semi-invalid.'

4

RAMA RAO AND FIRST STEPS TO SUCCESS

Our coach Rama Rao was a disciplinarian. But he was also a devoted family friend. He never had much money, but it was typical of him to refuse payment for our coaching sessions while Mummy was in hospital. He idolised my parents and there was nothing he would not have done for us.

When I was ill with the TB scare and had to spend most of my time in my room at home or in hospital, Rama Rao would come and sit next to the bed and tell me stories about tennis; stories about the great players of his own childhood like Bill Tilden, the flamboyant American who was arguably the greatest player of the pre-war era and certainly one of the greatest of all time. And about Pancho Gonzales who would become my particular idol.

Rama Rao looked a little bit like Gonzales. Tall, with those slightly gaunt features, and lean, muscular legs. He came from Hyderabad and was unmarried, which made us sad because we felt he was always a bit lonely. Maybe as a result of that, he could be moody, too, although it must be said that we did try his patience at times.

One occasion I will never forget. We had arrived at the Island Grounds just next to the Gymkhana Club in our usual state of controlled panic; changing in the back as Mummy drove and wolfing down a

meal made up of milk, dosais and cake.

I was thirteen at the time and was just starting to get my game together to the point where I could beat players older and ostensibly better than I was. So Rama Rao had arranged a match for me that afternoon against an older boy from another school who was going to give me a tough workout. And, indeed, it turned out to be a tight match. It got to about 3 all in the first set and we were really into it. I was running around like crazy, chasing down balls, and there was Rama Rao with his dark glasses sitting with his upright posture next to my mother at court side. Then, just as I threw the ball up to serve, my concentration snapped as swiftly and as surely as a kite string cutting a rival out of the sky. For that is what I had seen out of the corner of my eye — a kite. But not just a kite. A kite that had just fought a battle and had lost and was floating down towards the ground. Floating down somewhere within reach; within my reach so that I could grab it and, in the time-honoured tradition, carry it off home as a treasured prize to fight again. Anyone who has been seriously into kite flying will know what I am talking about. Kite flying was great and it was our obsession.

So without a second's thought I threw down my racket, right there in the middle of the set just as I was about to hit a serve and charged off in the direction of the kite; past the adjacent courts: legs pumping like mad as I realised the chase was on and 15 urchins and half a dozen other boys who had been playing tennis all joined in.

‘Vijay! Come back here at once!’ But not even Rama Rao’s roar from behind me made any difference. I was gone, the kite the only thing on my mind.

Not surprisingly Rama Rao was livid and kicked me off the courts. ‘And don’t bother coming back again!’ he bellowed. Of course when I had time to think about it I felt very bad and had to go, cap in hand, with my mother to offer abject apologies.

Rama Rao did not deserve that cavalier attitude towards his coaching. I did not have to be told that. I knew I had gone too far and had done something unforgivable but, in my defence, I would like to take a minute to try to explain this kite flying phenomenon because it became such a big part of our lives as we grew up in Madras. It involved the whole family, too, because our mother and father used to enjoy it and often used to join in the fun on Sundays, which was kite flying day. I suppose, looking back, it was our one big recreational activity — tennis being just a bit too important to be classified as recreation.

Not that flying a kite was an idle pastime. Far from it. These kites were not the pretty things kiddies play with on the beach. This was big league; first division stuff and it was highly technical. The whole idea was to make string with a sharp enough cutting edge to slice your rivals right out of the sky. We formed teams and a couple of my best school friends, Ram and Padhu — both sons of my father’s colleagues at the Railways — used to help us gather the ingredients that were necessary to make the *manja*. It was not a simple process. First of all you had to buy the white thread on a roll; top quality thread made by a British

company in India. Then, like scientists in a laboratory concocting a deadly poison, we would set about mixing the solution through which the string would eventually be threaded.

First of all we crushed coke bottles into a fine powder. Then we tipped in the white of some eggs which provided a glutinous base. But the real sticky part of it all was the *vajaran* which looked like pieces of deep fried bacon when you bought it but melted when boiled and became just like glue. When that was put into the bowl with the crushed coke bottles and the eggs, you had a real witches' brew with which to soak the thread. After doing so, we would run up to the terrace at the top of the house and wind the thread around the poles at three corners and leave it for two hours to dry. And, after that, I tell you it would go through anything like a knife through butter. It was the sharpest thing you have ever seen and, with our kites attached to the end, we would go to war.

It was a sort of ritual that would take place immediately after lunch every Sunday. By 1.30 we would be assembled on the terrace, primed and ready to join in battle with a kite that, sooner or later, would appear in the clear blue sky and hover tantalisingly within our reach. Then one of us would make a move and we would engage in what can best be described as a dog fight. It may not have been as frightening as flying a Spitfire against the Luftwaffe but, nevertheless, it was pretty exciting stuff and I remember my heart pounding like mad when I was doing the flying and Anand was acting

my second. It took a great deal of skill, because you were guiding a lightweight missile made of nothing more than coloured paper and two thin pieces of bamboo hundreds of feet above your head. But with enough practice it was amazing what we could make those things do. I could make a kite swoop down a few inches from someone's head; hold it there for a split second and take it back up again. I could guide it around someone's outstretched arm. And, of course, I could make it dart across a rival's path and, in one quick motion, sever his string and win the battle. Sometimes when that happened, we would race barefoot out of the house and down Sterling Road to grab our prize as it floated to earth. Often the kite itself was all we ever saw of our adversaries because other kite flyers were usually operating out of sight ten or twelve houses away. All we would see were their kites.

But once battle was joined it was as if we got to know each other; taunting and testing each other's nerves in aerial warfare. As soon as the strings touched you could feel it in your arm and that was the moment to let out the string — and cut your fingers to pieces in the process. We soon learned to bandage our fingers with heavy tape but even so the string, coated with the *manja* containing all the coke bottle powder, was so sharp that we still got cut, which was not clever for tennis players. It was a bloody business sometimes, but lots and lots of fun.

In fact the kite flying sessions were the best times we had away from the tennis court. It was family and friends and it was competitive and exciting and

I can't remember anything else we enjoyed half as much. We must have become quite good at it, too, because one time we took a kite to Columbus, Ohio, which later became a sort of home away from home for us in the States and someone living near our American friends said he knew all about flying kites and challenged us to a duel. He never stood a chance. We cut him to ribbons in seconds and he was supposed to be the champion kite flyer of Columbus! But that was just about the extent of our international effort with kites. Now the memory just lingers on as the happiest of times.

There really were not many other activities we got up to during our childhood years because tennis took up so much time. But occasionally at week-ends we would all go to one of the lovely sheltered coves near the resorts just to the south of Madras where there are great restaurants with music on the beach. But we were always a bit wary of the water, probably as a result of our parents' concern following the drowning of an uncle I never knew all those years before.

And quite apart from fear, swimming was connected with one of the most embarrassing episodes of my early teenage years, one of those silly little things that stick in the memory. I had been paddling about in the shallows and suddenly got hit by a big wave. It happened right in front of the whole family who were lounging around on the beach with some friends, including parents with their daughters. Trying to recover from being smashed into the sand by this wave I jumped up in full view of everyone,

not realising that my bathing trunks were around my ankles. They all died laughing and I died of embarrassment.

Apart from tennis, badminton and table tennis were the other sports that occupied my attention in the early teenage years. There was even a time when I got quite serious about badminton and became good enough to represent Madras State against Karnataka in a junior tournament at Belgaum over on the West Coast. Prakash Padukone, who went on to win the Badminton All England title, was playing for Karnataka and he beat me in the singles but I think we managed to win the mixed and ended up losing 2-1. I remember talking to Prakash about whether we should continue to play badminton seriously and he decided to do so; a good decision, because he became one of the best players in the world. For me, however, there was really no choice. For a start, my parents were obviously in favour of tennis and then there is the undeniable fact that nothing encourages you more than success.

The more you win the more you want to play and, conversely, nothing will dull a child's interest in a sport more quickly than getting his brains beaten in on a regular basis. This can remain true at any stage of one's development, too. It is just a question of when the penny drops and you realise that you are not going to make it. This happened to David Puttnam who made it to junior Wimbledon one year and lost his first round match 6-0, 6-1. He felt sure that the guy who had beaten him was going to go on to win the title so he rushed off to watch his

match in the second round and was mortified to see him beaten 6-2, 6-1. It was then that David realised he was not even close to the required standard and went off and found another career for himself, eventually becoming very successful at making movies, *Chariots of Fire* and *The Killing Fields*.

My interest in badminton had really been fostered by a group of friends I used to hang out with in Madras. N. Padhmanaban was one and N. Sivaram, who was with me all through high school until he went into engineering and I went on to Loyola College, was another. There were a couple of girls who used to play with us, too, called Usha Balamore, who now teaches in Philadelphia, and Indhrani Prabhakar who started to get very friendly with Sivaram. In fact they started to get more than friendly, which was fine except that Sivaram was a Hindu and Indhrani was a Christian.

With less tolerant parents, this might have caused some complications but we all encouraged them to go for it and eventually they did get married and are now tremendously happy with two children. Which only proves that there should be no hard and fast rules about these things.

Apart from playing badminton at the Sterling Club, just near our house on Sterling Road, Padhu, Sivaram and I used to go to the movies a lot together and frequently had to smuggle Padhu in because he was much smaller than Sivaram and myself and had a tough time passing for 18. Without the identity cards all the kids carry in America, it was just a question of whether you looked the right age or not and if

you didn't you got kicked out! I remember it was *The Ipcress File* with Michael Caine which was showing at the *Odeon* in Madras that was the first adult movie that we got in to see, even though I seem to remember we were well below the age limit. Memories like that made it all the more fun to see my own name displayed outside that same cinema alongside that of Roger Moore when *Octopussy* played there all those years later.

I took table tennis seriously enough to receive some expert coaching from Mr Thirvengadam, who was a top player himself and one of the best coaches in the country. If I had known that Fred Perry, three-time Wimbledon champion in the thirties and the most successful British player since World War I, had been World Champion at table tennis before he concentrated on the bigger game I might have been even more inspired but, even so, I enjoyed it a lot and, strangely, adopted a style in direct contrast to that which I developed at tennis.

At table tennis, I was a totally defensive player. Unlike tennis, where my instinct was to hit as many winners as possible, I wasn't interested in those kind of tactics on the small table. Standing ten feet back, I would love to see the other guy really cream the ball and then get it back in play. For some reason I thought that was much more fun than trying to attack myself. Maybe I thought it looked more impressive!

But the one activity that seemed to survive longer than any of the others was playing cards. Even in the early seventies whenever we went home to Madras

we picked up where we left off in our card school, which included a couple of Coorgis, C.A. Muthanna Aiana and his sister Jansi who came from the Coorg hill country. Muthanna Aiana was a terrific fellow, a real all-rounder at sport apart from being a really nice person. After a long trip abroad, it was great for Anand, Ashok and myself to get together with them again and have an evening of cards. Nowadays, Muthanna, who still eats up a storm and never seems to put on weight, comes round to the house to play tennis with my Dad. But his greatest thrill is to spend the afternoon at the Madras races. Occasionally, when I have been at home on New Year's Day, when there is always a special gathering at the racecourse, I have gone along with him and Muthanna's enthusiasm always ensures you have a great day out.

But this chapter began with Rama Rao and it should end, albeit on a sad note, with the man who played such a major part in my development as a tennis player. In 1972 I achieved my first success in India by beating the great Ramanathan Krishnan in the final of the Indian Championships in Calcutta to end Krish's long reign and take over as a teenage national champion. It was an emotional moment for all of us and a particular triumph for the Amritraj family because Anand and I won the doubles and Ashok held on to the junior title. The next morning the headline in the paper fittingly read, "Singles Title for Vijay - but pause a moment for Krish."

But there was someone else for whom I felt a need to spare more than a moment. When we arrived back in Madras, the whole family stopped by Rama

Rao's house on the way home to pay our respects to the great coach who was dying of diabetes. I had received 100 rupees for my victory in Calcutta and, as a gesture of my appreciation of all he had done for me, inadequate though it was, I gave him those 100 rupees. He had always said he would see me become champion of India before he died and the fact that I had fulfilled his faith in me made the victory all the sweeter. But before I could play my first Davis Cup singles a few months later, he was dead.

I shall never forget that, at the time when everyone, save for my parents, were saying I would never be any good at tennis, Rama Rao never wavered in his belief that I would make it. He was a fine man.

WIMBLEDON

Is it my destiny or am I just plain lucky? How far dare one fantasise about a fusion of dreams that suddenly erupts into reality? Did I need to pinch myself as I stood there wedged in by the throng. Not really; because someone was already standing on my foot. But I felt no pain; just goose pimples at the realisation that the crush was not the crush of a cinema queue for the latest James Bond movie at the Odeon in Madras. This was Wimbledon, my sporting Mecca and out there on court was a man who was not just any old famous tennis star but Pancho Gonzales, my sporting god.

Could a 15-year-old from the other side of the world have had a more perfect introduction to the place of which he and his grandfather had dreamed for so many years — to stand there and watch not just one of the greatest players of all time but a match that has gone down in the annals of Wimbledon folklore as one of the most dramatic and exciting battles ever seen on the Centre Court? Statistically, Gonzales' unbelievable comeback from two sets to one down to beat Charlie Pasarell, spread over two days, at five hours and twelve minutes. And a total of 112 games, still stands as the longest in the history of the championships.

But I was not interested in statistics. Nor even in Pasarell as he surged, powerfully and threateningly,

to that two-set-to-love lead over my idol. All I watched was Gonzales. This was the man whose image I had seen flicker on the news clips shown in the movie houses at home. This was the man who I felt sure would have some as yet undefined influence on my tennis career. This was the player I wanted to be.

From the moment Gonzales walked on to the Centre Court that June day in 1969, I felt that the place was his stage and he was the star. The Centre Court is a very, very special court with an atmosphere all of its own. It thrills and intimidates in almost equal measures. Players who strut and bluster on courts all over the world become as meek as lambs on Wimbledon's Centre Court. Bob Hewitt and Cliff Richey, to name a couple from my era, were renowned for their explosive temperaments. Hewitt once slammed a ball point blank into the President's box in Hamburg and unluckily hit the German Federation President's girl friend. Richey was defaulted in Washington, DC, one year for ripping up the lead lines that were nailed to the clay surface. But I never saw either so much as raise their voice on the Centre Court at Wimbledon. It took men of very special stature and stars of exceptional self-confidence to measure up to the game's greatest stage and dominate with the sheer brilliance of their talent and the force of their personality. As he proved before dusk fell on one of Wimbledon's most memorable nights, Pancho Gonzales was such a man.

Under clear skies it is possible to play until almost 9.30 p.m. at Wimbledon at the height of the British summer, even on the Centre Court where the circular

roofing over the stands soon cuts off the sun's final, slanting rays. But on this particular evening, south-west London was blanketed by a low, grey layer of cloud and if it never quite rained, the atmosphere was damp and moisture seemed to seep up through the grass. Increasingly Gozales' 41-year-old eyes were having trouble picking up the bullets being fired from Pasarell's powerful, corkscrew serve and, increasingly, we got to hear about it.

With rather less decorum than a batsman would use while speaking to an umpire, Gonzales appealed against the light. But unlike his cricket counterpart, a tennis umpire does not have the power to make decisions like that. Only the referee can decide whether conditions warrant curtailing play, so some minutes after Pancho's first complaint, Captain Mike Gibson appeared beneath the Royal Box to stand by the back-stop canvas, an erect and military figure, eyes glinting, moustache bristling. He would have had many look-alikes at Poona in the days of the Raj.

The umpire glanced in his direction, hoping for a sign. But none came. Pasarell surged on towards his second set triumph and Pancho's ire rose to volcanic proportions. Storming up to the chair; the scar that runs down his left cheek almost luminous in the gathering gloom, he lashed at the unfortunate official above him.

'I want this match stopped!' he roared. 'How do you expect me to play when I can't see?'

Then in a gesture that rattled teacups in front parlours the length and breadth of Britain, he took

an almighty swipe at the BBC's court-side microphone with his racket. People told me that the effect of the blow on a live microphone sounded as if a bomb had gone off. The poor BBC sound engineer was deaf for days.

But Gonzales was not worried about being deaf; merely blind. The crowd, shocked by his outbursts, booed and the atmosphere turned electric. Awe-struck I stood there in the cramped standing enclosure, the seventh hour on my bruised feet, completely swept away by the drama and emotion of the moment. After what seemed an eternity, Capt Gibson inclined his head in imperious fashion and the umpire, reacting to the signal, intoned, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, due to the conditions, play will be terminated for the 'night'.

A scowl frozen on his handsome features, Gonzales swept up his rackets and strode off as I reeled out, the sights and sounds of an unforgettable day buzzing in my brain. Anand and I were staying in Earls Court that year at the Kingsway House Hotel. I shall never forget the address — 79, Eardley Crescent. The hotel was situated right on the corner of the busy Warwick Road. The area is not exactly Mayfair but for us the Kingsway House might have been the Ritz. We had a huge room with a sink and we thought it was the last word in luxury.

In retrospect probably the best thing about it was its proximity to the Earls Court tube. From there the District Line takes you straight to Southfields, the station nearest Wimbledon. That first morning we had stood in the queue for the customary two

or three hours in the morning and filed in when they opened the gates promptly at noon. The next day I was off right after breakfast. Nothing was going to stop me being there to welcome my hero back on to the Centre Court!

I was as pumped up as if I was playing the match myself and my excitement was only matched by the vibes generated by the packed Centre Court as the crowd roared Gonzales and Pasarell back into the arena. Refreshed by a night's sleep; aided by light in which he could see, Pancho set about turning a lost cause into a triumph of will power and courage. Through three sets he never lost his serve. The eventual score of 22-24, 1-6, 16-14, 6-3, 11-9 merely offers a hint of the splendour of the tennis laid before us. González, deprived of his rightful stage throughout his years as a professional, was determined to show Wimbledon what it had been missing. Open Tennis, which had arrived the year before, came almost too late for Gonzales. But while there was still breath in the old lion, the roar would be heard and it was poor Pasarell's lot that he should be the victim of all those years of pent up frustration. Producing cross court drop volleys that took the breath away, Pancho saved seven match points in the fifth set; defying the odds, defying Pasarell, and defying the passing years. The villain of the previous night became the crowd's new hero, but for one young person in that 14,000 crowd his victory only served as confirmation of something he had felt in his bones for so long. Just by being there to witness his finest hour, I felt the link had been made. Now,

more than ever, I knew that Pancho Gonzales would help shape my destiny as a tennis player. And so it proved.

But in 1969 the idea of actually meeting the great man was still a distant dream. There was junior tennis to be played; new places to see; a whole world with which to become familiar. The four of us travelled to all the little British and European tournaments during the summers of 69 and 70 and had the best possible time. We thought nothing of playing three to four matches a day sometimes and still find the energy to try and hoodwink our ultrastrict manager, Mr Kapanipathy, in the evenings. Some of our escapades were hilarious and, looking back, wonderfully innocent. There were times in places like Newcastle or Malvern when we would try to give him the slip after dinner and he would follow us like some amateur sleuth in an Agatha Christie novel; hiding behind telephone boxes to see which party we were heading for. Then we would see his dark, round face peering in through the window as we danced with all these lovely young English girls who were so much friendlier than young Indian ladies we had met at home. But, as I said, it was all terribly innocent. All we did was dance and sip a coke. I never drank alcohol because I hated the stuff.

It was strange that we had the energy for all this, considering that I had become quite used to playing in the men's singles and doubles as well as the Under-21 events in all these little tournaments, winning, I might add, many of the later on clay courts. People who have only followed my adult

career might be surprised to learn how effective I used to be on European clay. Pounding my forehand from the back court I used to chew up all those Europeans like Kjell Johansson and Jose Higuera who later became so proficient on a surface that, in later years, I tended to avoid like the plague.

In fact the first and just about the last time I ever became paralytically drunk was as a result of a particular triumph on a clay court. In 1970 Anand and I represented India in an Under-21 inter-nation event at Overpelt in Belgium. We beat no less than sixteen teams, overcoming Spain in the semi-final and the Swedish duo of Kjell Johansson and Tenny Svensson in the final. We clinched the title with a victory in the doubles and when they presented us with the huge trophy and filled it with champagne, my fate was sealed. I was far too excited to think about the consequences and, like any 16-year-old who has to learn the hard way, guzzled gallons of the stuff until it was dripping down my face. I had to be half carried down the street to our hotel but even though the alcoholic fumes a good Catholic upbringing still engendered the right responses. I distinctly remember someone saying, 'Vijay, church!' and, still with a silly grin on my face, I immediately crossed myself. A few minutes later I was going through a less holy ritual; throwing up all over the bathroom. But somehow, just that once, it was worth it.

I was a little bit more sophisticated about the whole business of receiving awards when I returned to Beckenham last year — for the twentieth consecutive time! Direct Line Insurance, who now sponsor the

Kent Grasscourt Championships, were kind enough to mark my twentieth appearance at an event I had started playing long before they were ever involved with tennis by giving me an award that I received from the company president.

Twenty years! I suppose everyone wonders where time goes, but somehow, on the tennis circuit, the passing years seem to swing through a quicker cycle as we return every twelve months to certain special places that each player marks off on his calendar as his sort of event, for whatever reason. This was to become our life style: grass courts at Beckenham, Queens and Wimbledon in the summer; over to the States for more grass — in the early years; and then the grey clay and cement of the latter-day U.S. Summer Circuit, our seasons marked not so much by the changing colours of the leaves above our heads as by the colour and texture of the courts beneath our feet. Such is a tennis player's life, a life we took to and embraced with all the inquisitiveness and lively appetite of youth.

It would never have been so easy nor so enjoyable had not certain friends taken us in along the way and offered us not only shelter but guidance about how to handle the big world we were exploring. Kutty and Jean Dhairyam, my uncle and aunt, took us in every time we played at Beckenham. Dr Dhairyam and his very British wife offered us one of our very best homes on the road, as it were, and it was lovely to be able to have them to stay with us recently in Los Angeles, even if we can never really repay their hospitality.

For a variety of reasons, then, Beckenham became a special sort of place for me from the moment I first set foot inside the homely little club on the southern outskirts of London. I reached the final in 1972 and won the title the following year by beating Onny Parun of New Zealand. By the time you read this, maybe I will have been able to come of age as far as playing at Beckenham is concerned by making it twenty-one in a row!

The faintest possibility of such a thought never crossed my mind back in 1969 when I took those first tube rides on the District Line out to Wimbledon. But the years have rolled on and the story has become a long and varied one.

6

GONZALES — A TECHNICAL TRANSITION

As a player Pancho Gonzales frightened people. As a coach his word was law. He had this towering presence that would have made him a star in Hollywood had he not been blessed with the finest serve the world has ever seen. He could have played the Jack Palance role in the Alan Ladd western *Shane* to perfection. A domineering role that demanded a vicious streak would have suited him fine.

Yet I feel nothing but admiration and gratitude to Pancho. After my parents and Rama Rao, no one has done more to further my career. Technically he changed its direction and enabled me to compete at the highest professional level.

Every player needs coaches at certain stages of their development. Rama Rao laid the foundations; the very basis of a sound structural game without which I would have been nothing. Buckets and buckets of balls; hit forehands down the line; hit forehands cross court; now backhands. Then up to the net; stretch for the volley and stretch some more. Hour after hour in the hot Madras sun.

But by the time I was on the tour I needed to adjust to the requirements of the modern professional game. The need to be less cautious and attack. A player must believe in someone implicitly if they are

going to make serious structural changes to their style of play and that is why the very top players frequently seek out former champions for advice and coaching. Bob Brett with Boris Becker has proved something of an exception because Bob, although raised by Harry Hopman, never played the tour but a more typical example is Ivan Lendl's relationship with Tony Roche, six times a Wimbledon doubles winner as well as reaching the singles final. It's been a long struggle, but Tony has finally started to give Ivan some confidence on the volley.

It was the same with Pancho and the serve. There was no humility about Gonzales. 'You don't want to serve like Ashe or Smith', he told me, naming two of the great servers I was having to play on the tour. 'You want to serve like me.'

How could you argue with that?

But if Pancho found something to work with, it was, as I have said, due to Rama Rao. The courts we played on in Madras were also a factor. They were not grass, because grass courts have proved to be an impossibility in southern India. I am not sure why, because there are perfectly good grass courts in other parts of the world that are just as hot. We tried it once for a Davis Cup tie against Sweden in Bangalore in 1982. We laid grass courts so as to make life as difficult as possible for a team that basically preferred slow clay but in the end we just ended up making it absurdly difficult for everyone as the courts were virtually unplayable. And we still lost!

In Madras the courts are like quick clay, slippery

and sandy and lightly topped with cow-dung. But they are a long way from being the firm cow-dung courts you find in Bombay which play more like cement. So, in fact, they were ideal for laying the foundations of a back court game, which is why I had so much success on European clay when we used to play all those small events in Belgium and Holland between 1969 and 1971.

It was stamina building, too, partially I suppose because of the heat which was never as excessive when we played in Europe. Anand and I thought nothing of playing two singles and one or two doubles matches a day. Despite my sickly beginning, I found myself quite capable of handling this workload and once again I had Rama Rao to thank for it. I always felt that he even had something to do with my height. The constant stretching during volley drills must, at the very least, have quickened my growth, for I shot up from 5' 3" when I was twelve to 6' 1" by the time I reached thirteen and a half. It might not have helped my speed but it did wonders for my reach!

So I was basically a cautious, well-structured Indian type of player by the time Gonzales came into my life at Beckenham, one of the traditional pre-Wimbledon grass court tournaments, in 1972.

Having idolised him all my life, there was obviously no one I would have preferred to help me with my game, so plucking up courage, I went and asked him. "Come and hit", was the reply. So we hit during that week at Beckenham and Gonzales gave me a few of those glowering glances and basically said nothing. "Thanks", I said, meaning it. "That's OK",

said Pancho, refusing to reveal whether he thought I should go back to Madras and take up accountancy or press on and try to win Wimbledon.

Anand and I had already decided to go over to America after Wimbledon and as Pancho was playing with Jimmy Connors on the U.S. Summer Circuit, contact was maintained. We hit some more and eventually, at the U.S. Open, when we told him we were intending to go on out to the West Coast, he said, "Come on out to Las Vegas."

Now, for many years, Gonzales was Tennis Director at *Caesar's Palace*, the ultimate fantasy hotel on what is known in Nevada's great gambling city as The Strip. *The Sands*, *The Dunes*, *The Riviera*, *The Desert Inn* (once owned by the legendary recluse and TWA founder, Howard Hughes) — these were some of the pleasure palaces that lined The Strip. But *Caesar's* was one of the newest, gaudiest, most luxurious and, to anyone interested in tennis, the best.

Beginning in the early seventies, Alan King, one of America's great Jewish comedians and a tennis convert from golf (which he used to play to tournament standard) began hosting the famous Alan King Classic at *Caesar's*. It was one of the first big money tournaments and Alan ran it in conjunction with Pancho, not always harmoniously, it must be said, and the fledgling Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) which was founded in 1972.

For a couple of kids from India to have gone out there to work on their tennis without proper direction and motivation would have been a disaster. The place is built with nothing in mind other than to take your

money and lead you off the straight and narrow. You cannot go anywhere in the hotel without walking through the 24-hour casino, because it has been designed that way. There are no clocks because they want you to forget the time. And when you do get to bed there are mirrors on the ceiling, because they want you to indulge in the ultimate fantasies. The saving grace of *Caesar's* is that it can laugh at itself; not difficult I suppose when the owners laugh all the way to the bank with other people's money. But there are some nice touches like the 24-hour coffee shop which is called the Noshorium and the statues of Julius Caesar in the restaurant where the toga-clad waitresses with legs that go on forever slither up behind you and massage your neck after a long hard dinner. All this can turn a young man's head.

Unless Pancho Gonzales is waiting for you on court. And not just Pancho but Roscoe Tanner and Jimmy Connors, a young firebrand who was already making a name for himself on the tour Bill Riordan ran on behalf of the USTA and who looked as if he would rather die than lose a tennis match. This was no pit-a-pat practice. This was the real thing and you needed to be fit and get your sleep just to survive against this lot under the burning desert sun.

We had no idea what the deal was when we arrived. We had been too keen just to get there. In fact we discovered that Pancho was picking up the tab for two weeks but there was no chance of it being wasted money. The adrenalin that sprang from the very fact of being able to practise day after day with players of this calibre was overwhelming. Niggling injuries

were ignored because we were afraid we would never get a chance like this again. It was just an incredible experience to be in a place like that with the great Gonzales there to supervise your game.

Apart from getting me to adopt a more attacking attitude on court, Pancho zeroed in, with good reason, on my second serve. At that time my second serve was a laugh. It might not be much better than a giggle now but then it was a real side-splitter. I suppose it stemmed, in part, from the basic Indian philosophy of safety first. I always had this nasty thought at the back of my mind that the point couldn't even start until I got my second serve in court.

Now I started to realise that, at this level, simply getting it in court was nowhere near good enough. If it was short and weak a returner like Connors would blow it back past you. He ate weak serves for lunch.

To stop me being devoured, Gonzales got me to throw the ball further forward and lean into it more. Again for safety reasons, I had tended to throw it too high and too far back. Now with more slice I could propel my serve forward and make sure my opponent did not steal the net away from me.

It is strange how problems tend to get reversed with the passing years. Early on, my toss was so high I had to put up with all the jokes about endangering low flying aircraft but now I have a tendency not to throw it up high enough. Anand has had similar problems. He used to have a terrific forehand but now he's looking to buy one. Tennis is a technical

and tactical maze and it takes a real master to lead you through the labyrinth. Pancho, of course, was just such a master, possibly the greatest tactician I have ever known.

He could plot the pattern of rallies before they were played and proved it to me time and again as I sat near the baseline while he played practice points with Connors. He'd tell me where Jimmy would serve; where he was going to return it; when Jimmy would try and get in and where he would volley when he did. Pancho was always there waiting for the shot, whether he made it or not.

But there were a few other lessons I learned in Las Vegas too. One afternoon, after a long hard practice session, we were all sitting around the pro shop chatting, when this little guy pokes his head in the door and asks Jimmy if he wants to hit. I stared at him in amazement because the man must have been well past fifty and didn't look as if he was in great shape.

"Nah, I'm beat", Connors replied. "Why don't you play Vijay"?

The old guy looked at me and said, "OK, young fella, I'll play you for twenty-five bucks. You got twenty-five on you?"

Reluctantly I admitted that I had. The last thing I wanted to do was to go out into the desert sun again and play this virtual geriatric but I liked the idea of picking up an easy \$25 especially as I only had about \$35 in my pocket!

"So we give our \$25 to Pancho here and the winner collects afterwards", the man said.

Once outside, the little guy looked up at me and said, "Hey, you're a really big kid. Tell you what, just to make it fairer, I'll have two serves and you just have one."

Then, after stroking a few balls and showing no signs that he could raise a gallop, he added, "You've got a real big advantage with those long legs. Just to make a match of it, give me the doubles lines on your court but you have to hit inside the singles lines in my court, OK?"

Now, I was on a high at the time. All that work with Pancho and long practice sessions with Jimmy, Roscoe, and Anand had left me feeling fit, strong and confident. What had I got to fear from some fifty-year-old who looked ready for a wheelchair?

So I agreed. And I won the first game. And that was all I won. Bobby Riggs beat me 6-1. Back in the pro shop, the guys were in hysterics. But I had a tough time seeing the joke because I knew I had been taken for a great big ride.

Riggs not only won Wimbledon in 1939 but, after helping Jack Kramer to launch the first pro tour after the war, became the biggest hustler in the West. At the time he played me, Bobby was tuning up for his biggest coup of all, the "Battle of the Sexes" against Billie-Jean King in the Houston Astrodome which became one of the great media events of the decade a year later. Incredibly that one match, which Riggs lost incidentally although he had beaten a badly flummoxed Margaret Court earlier, still holds the record for a crowd attendance at a single tennis match. A total of 36,000 watched Riggs try to

overcome age and infirmity against the tenacious Billie-Jean but the fact that he couldn't quite make it was immaterial. He made himself a fortune and created more publicity for tennis than anyone could have dreamed possible. I just wish he hadn't used me as one of his guinea pigs!

Quite apart from the considerable disadvantage of having to cover the doubles alleys — an almost hopeless task against a player with Riggs' control and accuracy — the psychological handicap of being allowed just one serve is enormous. It preys on your mind to the point that you can think of nothing else. "I've got to get this damn thing in!" you keep saying to yourself and of course the pressure mounts. Many years later I was partnering the actor George Peppard in a pro-celebrity event at Newport, Rhode Island, and there, too, the pros were allowed only one serve. We played Pat Cash and his partner in one of the matches and George and I had to laugh because poor Pat could not find the service box. He got so hung up over having just one shot at it that he found it almost impossible to get the ball in play, never mind produce a decent serve. Remembering my experience with Riggs, I had to sympathise with him.

Gonzales was not about to sympathise with me for being suckered into defeat by an old man. Coming from a poor Mexican-American background, he had learned how to take his knocks and expected others to do the same. He was right and anyway it was really only my pride that was damaged. And what was the point of being miserable in Las Vegas? Apart from the hours of hard work spent on court, Pancho

made sure we enjoyed ourselves as well and, on Saturday night, took us to a Western party where we all wore huge Stetsons and had a ball. Later he took us to see Paul Anka singing in the big cabaret room and when we came out, the endless cacophony of dice being rolled; fruit machines whirring and sudden eruptions of agony or delight from the crap tables continued unabated through the night.

What a place! It was over the top, of course, but deliberately so and even though, for me, Vegas is only a place to visit, I knew I was hooked on the showbiz world.

Needless to say I was also hooked on Gonzales as a coach, although it was not always an easy relationship. I was never terrified of Pancho as some of his peers had been on the old Kramer tour, partially I suppose because, with me, he did not need to employ the intimidatory tactics which helped build the mystique of invincibility that he liked to carry on court in his playing days. Nevertheless, if I may jump ahead a little in this story, I can offer an unforgettable example of why he was not a man to mess around with. You took Gonzales lightly at your peril.

It was a year later, at the U.S. Open in 1973 and I was on the greatest high of my life. In the third round I had beaten the great Rod Laver, the two-time winner of the Grand Slam whose exploits I had read about so avidly back home in Madras and I was in seventh heaven. But, with Pancho at my side, I avoided the trap of a let-down in the next round which so often catches a young player after a really

big win and went on to reach the quarter-finals with a supercharged straight set victory over the experienced Australian Allan Stone.

By then, of course, I was starting to think in terms of winning the tournament. Why not? I had beaten Laver, I was serving up a storm and I was bursting with confidence. What does youth know of life's pitfalls? All things are possible when you are nineteen. Or so you think.

Gonzales was more cautious. He thought I had a chance but my next opponent was Ken Rosewall, Laver's little black-haired contemporary who had defied logic by becoming one of the greatest players of his era without a killer shot. One could tell what a great stroke-maker Rosewall was just by watching him but it was not until you got out there on the other side of the net that the full extent of his extraordinary ability became apparent. Gonzales had been across the net from Rosewall more than a hundred times when they used to barnstorm the world on the Kramer tour and he knew. Pancho knew that underestimating little Kenny meant death.

More specifically, Pancho translated this caution in tactical instruction. "Whatever you do", he told me, "don't serve to his backhand".

On the morning of the match, we practised on an outside court and I felt great. As we walked back to the clubhouse, Pancho reiterated what he had been telling me all morning. "Don't serve to his backhand."

It's a long walk from the clubhouse down to the Stadium Court at Forest Hills and by the time we reached the entrance to the marquee that leads out

on to the court itself, the gangways were packed with people. My picture had been in the *New York Times* that morning and there was no mistaking Pancho and I as we pushed our way through with a little assistance from the security guards. In contrast little Rosewall, with that unassuming, hangdog look of his, almost seemed to get lost in the crowd. Hah, did I feel great! Was I ready to conquer the world!

"Remember, don't serve to his backhand", Pancho reminded me one last time as we parted company.

"Thanks", I replied, listening but not listening. There was so much buzz around me. It was Labour Day and the vast bowl was packed. CBS were televising the match live. For a 19-year-old kid from Madras it was all very heady stuff.

When we tossed, Kenny won and let me serve first. Strange, I thought. It was a blistering hot day, the balls were like pellets and, as he must have known, I had been serving brilliantly against Laver and Stone. Pretty cocky move.

I took one last look at Pancho who had settled into his seat and even as I prepared to throw the ball up to serve, I remembered his advice. But there was Rosewall, this small figure with limited reach, standing so far over to the forehand side that both his feet were in the alley. You could drive a tank down the backhand side.

"This is ridiculous", I thought. "This is an extremely fast court, I've got a big first serve and if I get it in there's no way he can even reach it from where he's standing. No need to blast it. Just a decent pace first serve will do it."

So I served to the backhand. Took three paces in towards the net and watched the ball fly past me for a winner. "Fluke", I thought. At nineteen, you think things like that. You think that when a great player hits a superlative backhand service return winner off a first serve that it's a fluke. At least that's what you tell yourself. So I served three more times to the backhand, never missed my first serve and never touched a volley. They were all past me before I could blink. It was absolutely unbelievable.

Sitting down in my chair, I picked up my towel and looked over to Gonzales. He wasn't there. "Hmm, must have gone to get a drink", I thought.

Gonzales hadn't gone to get a drink. At that particular moment Pancho was striding down the path towards the clubhouse where he snatched his bag out of the locker-room; yelled for a cab and caught the first plane back to Las Vegas. We didn't speak for three months. For three months, he wouldn't accept my phone calls.

By the time I realised he had gone for good, my concentration was as frazzled as my confidence. Rosewall was doing awful things to my wonderful serve and by the time he had beaten me 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 I was very happy to get off the court.

When Gonzales did deign to speak to me again, he agreed rather gruffly that I should meet him back at *Caesar's Palace* in Las Vegas.

"Can you speak English?" he wanted to know. It was not an unreasonable piece of sarcasm. He had stated plainly enough what I should not do and I had done it. For once, I didn't have too much to

say for myself. We had less trouble communicating after that.

No one matched Pancho as a coach until I started to work with Roy Emerson in the mid-eighties. "Emmo", as he is universally known in the tennis world, is not only an inspiring coach but one of the game's great lovable characters who has that priceless ability to light up a room with laughter through the sheer exuberance of his extrovert Aussie personality. Quite apart from all that, Emerson won a total of 28 Grand Slam titles in singles, doubles and mixed — a tally that remains unchallenged to this day and is very unlikely to be beaten.

One could say that Emmo was a little fortunate in that he won some of those titles just before the advent of Open Tennis when the likes of Laver, Rosewall and Gonzales were barred from the traditional tournaments because of their professional status. But winning a Grand Slam title is never easy, no matter who is absent, and Emmo won every Grand Slam singles title *at least twice*. That is incredible and becomes even more so when you realise that the greatest players of the current era — Connors, Borg, McEnroe, Lendl and Becker — have not yet managed to win all four of the major titles once.

So Emmo knew what he was talking about and I have no doubt in my mind that he gave my career a new lease of life just as Dennis Ralston managed to do for Yannick Noah in 1989.

I used to go down to Newport Beach where Emmo and his wife Joy were living at the time — before the move to Williams Island in Florida where he is

now Director of Tennis — because he was not keen on the idea of travelling with me on the circuit. At that time he was already away for eight weeks every summer at the famous *Palace Hotel* in Gstaad where his camps had become something of a focal point of the summer season in that chic resort in the Swiss Alps and anyway he felt he could get in more concentrated training in one or two week bursts. So we trained at the John Wayne Tennis Club where they were nice enough to make us members and Emmo set up practice sessions for me with the boys from the local team at U.C. Irvine and his own son Anthony who now plays on the tour.

It was no rest cure. With Emmo it never is. In his playing days he had this amazing ability to drink beer half the night and run it all off next morning before playing through five sets of singles and three sets of doubles in sweltering heat. Emmo's physical strength was legendary and it was partially because of this that I turned to him in the first place.

But, apart from bringing me to my knees at the end of a hard day — always with a happy smile and a slap on the back — I also discovered that Emmo had a wonderful tactical sense that enabled him to strip down opponents to the bare bones of their strengths and weaknesses. If I told him I always struggled, say, against Wojtek Fibak because of his great backhand service return, Emmo would pinpoint why by analysing where the majority of Fibak's returns went. He was great at picking where you could expect the return. If the player played to the set pattern 80% of the time, as they generally did, you had a

great chance of being able to counter it.

I used to write it all down on little cards and I have always credited Emmo with helping me to my first win over John McEnroe which came in Montreal in 1982, just after I had started working with Emerson. I had lost to McEnroe on three previous occasions but, armed with a little strategy after Emmo had plotted a path through the potential minefield that awaits any player who takes on that wildly talented and dangerously volatile performer, I was able to take him 7-5 in the third after a great struggle.

For reading a game and explaining it in simple terms, I have never known anyone better than Emmo. And I think I would even have admitted that when he had me literally sprawled on the court with exhaustion at the end of our half court drills. Only covering half the court may sound easy but all I can say is, try it with Emmo!

Pancho Gonzales and Roy Emerson could not have been more different as individuals but, just as Rama Rao set me on the road, these two great champions enabled me to understand what the very highest levels of the professional game was all about.

Despite a Davis Cup disaster of mega proportions in Madras, 1973, in retrospect, was my most successful year overall on the international circuit.

It began in February when my first appearance in the Grand Prix tournament in Hong Kong resulted in my first Grand Prix singles title. The little stadium in Victoria Park, custom-made for tennis under the supervision of the Hong Kong Tennis Patrons Association, was a great place to play and it was that year that I made my acquaintance with Ken Catton, the dedicated tournament director who has done so much to foster the growth of pro tennis in the region. Ken is a retired British civil servant, a little stuffy for some people's taste but he was always good to us and, as the scene of my first big international success, I shall remember Hong Kong with a special glow of appreciation.

The victory was particularly satisfying because I had to beat some good players to achieve it. Neale Fraser had brought his entire Davis Cup squad to Hong Kong so that they could get fighting fit for the Eastern Zone Final they were due to play against us in Madras two weeks later. After I had beaten three-quarters of his team, Neale must have wondered whether it had been such a good idea!

In the quarter-finals I beat Geoff Masters and, in the semis, took care of the former United States

champion at Forest Hills, Mal Anderson. Then, in the final I defeated John Cooper, brother of the former Wimbledon champion Ashley Cooper. 'Coop' smoothed my path a little by scoring an upset win over John Newcombe in the semi-final.

Well, of course, after that little run India thought we had the Davis Cup in the bag. The fact that we were going to play on clay in Madras compared to the faster cement courts at Victoria Park should not have been a problem because Anand and I were pretty proficient on clay at the time and the Aussies always favoured grass. But things did not quite turn out that way.

The elation I felt at winning Hong Kong was slightly dented a week later when Anand and I flew down to Singapore to play a smaller event on grass at the splendid Singapore Cricket Club which sits in the middle of the city and was the scene of so much of the action in Noel Barber's best selling novel *Tanamara*. Anand ended up winning the singles title but not before he had to save the family honour by beating a beer-swilling, chain-smoking Vietnamese in the final!

Vo Van Bey was extraordinary. I suppose the fact that he had survived the war was amazing enough but to be still playing the quality of tennis he produced against me in the semi-final at the age of 40 was beyond belief. I suppose I only had myself to blame for my defeat. Despite my experience with Bobby Riggs in Las Vegas I was way too overconfident going into the match. Fresh from beating all those Australians in Hong Kong I thought I was playing

well; knew I was playing well and felt there was no way in the world I could lose to this little guy who was old enough to be my father. But Vo got everything back and I came down to earth with bump.

The next day I was the only one rooting for Anand. The whole of the Chinese crowd were screaming for the Vietnamese and Anand needed all the fraternal support he could get. It was 95 per cent humidity and while Anand sipped water at the change-overs, there was this incredible little man swigging back bottles of beer and puffing away at half soggy cigarettes! I'd never seen anything like and still haven't, for that matter. Right there at court side in the middle of the match, he was drinking and smoking. Even the more outrageous of the beer swilling Aussies never went that far.

Eventually Anand pulled off a very hard-earned victory and we tried to put the whole thing out of our mind as we headed home for the first Davis Cup tie to be played in Madras since Krishnan had lost to the late Rafael Osuna of Mexico back in 1962. If anyone had wanted to take that as a bad omen, they would have been right.

But no one was gazing into the right crystal ball. The press and just about everyone else who thought they knew anything about tennis were convinced we were all set for a mighty upset against the redoubtable Australians. Quite logically, the feeling was reinforced when Anderson hurt his ankle and had to sit out the whole week's practice while we toiled away, five hours a day at the Madras Cricket Club where huge

stands had been erected for the great occasion. Everything was in our favour. The crowd were going to be with us to a man; we knew the courts from childhood; the heat was no problem for us and we were all playing well.

Our confidence only grew when Fraser surprised us by nominating Anderson to play singles with Newcombe. As the No. 1 and 2 ranked players in the country Anand and I were going to play both singles and doubles and everything was going to be fine. And so it was — for precisely one game of the opening rubber between Anand and Newk. At 30 all in that very first game Anand ripped a groin muscle and was carried off, in tears. A minute later our locker-room was a disaster area. Anand was in pain; my parents were in tears, I was in tears, the whole thing was a shambles. Before I had time to realise what was happening I was out on court against the supposedly crippled Anderson who immediately proceeded to produce some totally devastating tennis and beat me 6-1, 6-2, 6-1. He probably played some of the best tennis of his life and I never played worse. In little more than an hour he just chewed me into the ground in front of my hometown crowd of some 10,000 people.

Even to this day, it remains one of the greatest disappointments of my life, certainly the most humiliating moment I have ever experienced in India. It is not difficult to imagine the level of disappointment amongst the spectators who had come, all hyped up for some five or six hours of tennis and at least some measure of Indian success, only to find

themselves wending their way home just an hour and half later with India 2-0 down. What a disaster! This was the first time since the British Doherty brothers had done so at the turn of the century that two members of the same family had played one and two on a Davis Cup team and look what happened. Needless to say we were crucified in the press the next day.

But it did not end there. With Anand unable to walk, Prem Lall had to play with me in the doubles against Newcombe and Geoff Masters and, unbelievably, got cramps in the third set — cramps after just three sets of doubles! It was all mental pressure, of course, the pressure that had built up on all sides like a great wall of critical doom and we were now in a hopeless position. Almost inevitably we lost in four sets and, in the first dead rubber the following day Lall lost to Anderson.

Attempting to retrieve some morsel of pride I managed to play reasonably well against Newk and won the second set 11-9 after he had taken the first 12-10. Then bad light stopped play and brought down a merciful curtain on the whole sorry affair.

Inside I was absolutely destroyed and my feelings of remorse and humiliation were not helped by the fact that the people made it very clear they were not happy with us. We were laughed at in the street and salt was rubbed into the wound when the Indian man of the match award went to Prem Lall. There was obviously no way they were going to give it to one of us!

Needless to say Madras was not the place I wanted

to be just then so I took the first flight out and flew to London to try to recover some semblance of confidence in myself and my game. I will not try and deny that I shed some tears on the way. It is very easy for me to cry, which may be one reason why I tend not to get too close to most people. I have a lot of good friends but very few outside my immediate family with whom I allow myself to become emotionally involved. I suppose it is a kind of barrier I erect to protect an emotional temperament that the public very rarely see.

At any rate the experience against Australia brought me face to face with reality in a hurry. We had been dropped into the dungeons of despair from such a great height of expectation and been dealt with so harshly by the press that it made me see life much more clearly. I think I made a resolution then not to worry too much about what was written because, no matter what the press says, they never know what is really going on inside you. Having said that, I must admit that the press in India had never been as cruel again. Even when I arrived home to play Czechoslovakia in the Davis Cup a couple of years ago looking — and playing — like a man out of shape, they were considerate enough to say I hadn't been able to prepare properly. But they knew me by then and the whole situation was very different.

But back in 1973 I was a raw teenager of whom a great deal was expected and I took the full brunt of their criticism. Nevertheless the timing of it was fortunate. The previous year I had played at Wimbledon for the first time and been on tour in

the United States for the first time and had seen where my future lay. I knew after that trip that I would try to win Wimbledon and play there for as long as I was good enough and was equally determined to make my mark in America. Had I only played in India at the time, it is conceivable that the humiliation in Madras might have drained my enthusiasm and stunted my progress. But, happily, that didn't happen. Success was just around the corner.

There was success of a limited kind at Wimbledon where I reached the quarter-final in what was only my second appearance at the Championships. Satisfying? Not really, because, under the circumstances, I should have won the title.

This was the year when the tennis world was split asunder by the battle between the newly formed Association of Tennis Professionals and the International Tennis Federation. The old amateur establishment were scared stiff of player power and saw the ATP as a major threat to their leadership. Sooner or later there was going to be a bust up and it was the mistake of the then ITF President, Allan Heyman, to choose Wimbledon as a battleground.

The incident that created the climate for all-out war was almost irrelevant to the central issue. Nikki Pilic, the big Yugoslav left-hander who has since become West Germany's highly successful Davis Cup captain, had given his association a sort of half promise that he would play Davis Cup for Yugoslavia against New Zealand. When Pilic opted not to play because he had a professional commitment to partner

Allan Stone in the WCT Doubles Finals in Montreal, the Yugoslav LTA suspended him and, under the rules, the ITF were supposed to honour that ban on a worldwide basis.

As soon as news of Pilic's suspension became known just before the French Open, the players became restless. This was just the sort of thing the ATP had been formed to prevent — amateur officials dictating to professional players where they could or could not play. Testing the water in Paris, the ATP President, Cliff Drysdale, found a surprisingly strong mood of militancy. If Pilic was to be suspended from any of the big championships, the players wanted to pull out in support.

The ITF were aware of the mood of the rank and file but, as Heyman told a colleague, 'The players may boycott a few tournaments but they will never stand fast over Wimbledon'.

On the basis of that smug assumption, an ITF committee decided to uphold the Yugoslav's ban and suspend Pilic through to the middle week of Wimbledon, thus ensuring that he would not be able to play the world's premier event.

To cut a very long saga short — a saga that effectively changed the face of professional tennis forever — ninety ATP members elected to boycott Wimbledon that year out of a total of ninety-three entered. Ilie Nastase, who said he was being threatened by the Romanian Association, Roger Taylor who was under tremendous pressure as Britain's big hope and a little known Australian called Ray Keldie were the only ATP members to break

ranks and defy their union. Considering that the defending champion Stan Smith; his predecessor as champion John Newcombe — who had been banned the year before along with all the other WCT pros — and Ken Rosewall whose time for a real crack at the only major title he had never won was running out, all elected to support the boycott, the strength of the player feelings could not be doubted. They were standing solidly for their future.

But for Anand and myself, the whole affair came a little too early in our careers. Tennis politics went over our heads. We had not yet joined the ATP and therefore were under no obligation to join the boycott. Enough good young players like Bjorn Borg, Jimmy Connors and Sandy Mayer were also free of any commitment to the ATP so, although the field was decimated by the withdrawal, on the morning the draw was due to be made, of ninety of the world's best pros, there were enough good players around to make it a credible Wimbledon — a Wimbledon I should have won. Looking back now, this was undoubtedly the year when I had my best shot at the title.

It all began promisingly enough in the second round with a straight set victory over that rugged, wise-cracking Australian Owen Davidson who had been a semi-finalist in 1966 and was seeded seventh this time. It was a notable win for me because it constituted my first ever win on the tour over a left-hander — a breed I had found incredibly difficult to beat up to then.

I won two more matches without undue concern

and then found myself in the quarter-final to play Jan Kodes, the wiry little Czech who had ruled Roland Garros for two years in 1970 and 71. Kodes was probably one of the most underestimated players of his era for, quite apart from what he was to achieve at Wimbledon that year, he went on to prove that his grass court success was no fluke by twice getting to the final of the U.S. Open at Forest Hills, beating Smith and giving Newcombe a very tough run for his money in the process.

But although Kodes was a tough customer on grass, with a very respectable volley, I knew I had the game to beat him. Nevertheless it developed into a dog-fight all way down to 5-4 in the fifth with Kodes serving. The score reached 0-30 — two points away from a place in the semi-final. He served, came in, I made the return and off the next shot lofted a lob over his head which sent him racing back toward the TV cameras by the stop netting. Desperately, he scooped up a high defensive lob in reply. Although it was high I had no intention of letting it bounce. I was on the service line waiting to smash it away for a winner that would have given me two match points.

We were playing on No. 1 Court, a noisy arena by Wimbledon standards at the best of times, but an additional hazard was the noise that could erupt from the adjoining Centre Court. Now, by fate or divine intervention, who knows, the biggest roar erupted as the ball fell towards me out of the sky and I hit the smash long. Kodes won 7-5 in the fifth and went on to beat Alex Metreveli of the Soviet Union in the final.

I insist to this day that I did not choke on that smash. Whether the roar from next door led to me mistiming the shot fractionally no one will ever know, but I do not normally miss overheads like that and that time I did. Things like that can happen in matches of no particular importance or on points of no relevance to the outcome. But that smash could, possibly, have meant the difference between winning a Wimbledon title. As Anand might say, how huge is that?

As events proved later in the summer there was no reason to suppose that I could not have beaten everyone else left in the draw. Apart from Kodes and Metreveli, the other quarter-finalists included Borg, Connors, Taylor and Mayer. Borg and Connors were right at the start of their long and triumphant careers and were no better than me at the time. In fact, writing in the *Boston Globe*, Bud Collins called us the ABC of the game's next generation — Amritraj, Borg and Connors. I had my chance to keep the alphabet in the right order at Wimbledon that year but it was not to be.

By the time we moved on to the United States and journeyed up into the lovely New Hampshire countryside for the Grand Prix event at Bretton Woods, there was no longer any need to qualify my success. It was a dream week; a week on which fairy tales are built. Very few players could have enjoyed a tournament of such stunning victories plucked from such seemingly hopeless positions. I don't how I did it. It just kept happening and it felt great!

The scores will tell the story. In the first round I

beat a hefty Venezuelan called Humphrey Hose 7-5 in the third after he had led 5-0, 40-0 in that final set. Read that score again, please. It isn't a misprint. Under any other scoring system designed for sporting contests, a lead of that magnitude would give the player who was behind no chance of recovery. But in tennis you can take it by stages. Every game won is a staging post back from the desert; one more step back towards the oasis where you can look at your opponent in the eye again on something like level terms. I saved the three match points and just kept playing it point by point — the old cliché that is the best one in the book. Point by point and somehow I won seven straight games for victory.

That was a good start but better was to come. In the next round I beat Jeff Austin, Tracy's brother, 7-6 in the third and then, suddenly, I was presented with a chance of playing one of my idols, the great flame-haired Rockhampton Rocket, Rod Laver. I hadn't even met him before, let alone played this living legend, who had won Wimbledon four times and was the only man in history to have achieved the Grand Slam — winning all four major titles in one year — twice.

At 7-6, 6-5, 40-0 to Laver on his serve, I supposed I could have bowed to the inevitable. Two close sets against Laver would have been no disgrace. But the thing that pleased me most about this match was that although I was a little overawed by the player across the net, that feeling never diminished my ability to fight. Once again the Madras Monsoon, as Collins was now calling me in the *Boston Globe*, was

able to produce what Bud insisted on referring to as the Indian rope trick. Back I came from the very brink of oblivion to save three more match points and beat the great Laver 6-7, 7-6, 7-5. By now people were starting to stand up and applaud as I walked in to dinner at the Mount Washington Hotel every night. It was amazing.

Laver and I played some pretty amazing tennis, too. Even though we were playing on clay, we both attacked and Rocket never compromised his natural style which was to swing from the hips and get in whenever he could. But I passed exceptionally well that day and that enabled me to snatch a victory that will live in my memory forever.

John Alexander of Australia was my next victim, a comparatively straightforward one 6-3, 6-4 in the semis and then it was my first ever meeting with Jimmy Connors in the final. I suppose my victory over Owen Davidson at Wimbledon helped my confidence going into this match against a young left-hander who had already established an awesome reputation for himself. But by now I wasn't much interested in reputations. I was beginning to feel I could have climbed up any rope Collins wanted to plant. Match point down, so what? 5-2 down, double break, 40-15 in the third? Fine. Once again I got myself in that sort of a hole and once again I hauled myself out of it, this time against one of the gutsiest fighters the game has ever known, a youngster who hated to lose even more than he does now.

Two more match points saved, two break backs and there I was breaking serve for the third consecutive

time to win the match and the Bretton Woods title 7-5 in the fifth. What a week! I could barely believe it.

Reality started to hit home when I was presented with a cheque for \$5,000 — the winner's slice of a \$25,000 pot that was being put up by the sponsors Volvo. It was the very first venture into tennis for the Swedish giant who would be so closely associated with the game as Grand Prix sponsors in later years. But that was not all. I was also presented with the keys to a shiny new Volvo by Playboy's Playmate of the Year. I hardly knew which to look at first, but Bob Carmichael, a faster mover off the court than he was on it, solved that problem for me by taking the girl out and leaving me with the problem of what to do with car.

And it turned out to be quite a major problem. Without thinking I asked Volvo to have it shipped to Bombay for me and it was sent off that night down to the coast. The next day, when I received a call from the Indian Ambassador, who was being inundated with letters of congratulations from Indians based in the States, I told him about the car and what I had done with it.

'But you can't do that, Vijay', the Ambassador replied. 'You're not allowed to import cars into India'.

Unfortunately he was right. I could not import a car into India — not, at least, unless I wanted to pay a 360 per cent duty which, needless to say, I just didn't have. The news of my dilemma got out in the press back home and while my lovely Volvo slid quietly through the waters of the Mediterranean

and the Red Sea, the controversy raged. Letters were written to editors, mostly in support of my being allowed to accept a prize like that free of a crippling import duty.

Eventually the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, involved herself in the issue and came up with the classic compromise. She could not wave the import duty without creating a dangerous precedent, so the Finance Ministry was ordered to charge me the 63,000 rupees while at the same time another order was issued offering me a grant of exactly the same amount for a unique achievement in international sport by an Indian athlete. So the Education Ministry simply paid that into the coffers of the Finance Ministry and the problem was settled.

We kept the car for eleven years and my father used to drive it around town at about 15 mph in great state, never daring to risk so much as a scratch on the paintwork. It was a superb reminder of a rather remarkable week's tennis.

Obviously my confidence soared as a result and four weeks later I was experiencing another successful run when I reached the final of another Grand Prix event at South Orange, New Jersey, the tournament Tennis Week publisher Gene Scott ran for years at that historic old club before moving it to nearby Livingstone. Unfortunately Colin Dibley of the massive serve was waiting for me in the final and on grass Dibles was just too much of a handful, so I had to be content with the runners-up cheque. Nevertheless money worries were starting to become a thing of the past.

The week was notable for the fact that Pancho Gonzales, who had agreed to work with me during the lead up to the U.S. Open, proved that he was far from a spent force in the game by partnering Tom Gorman, a future U.S. Davis Cup captain, to the final of the doubles where they lost to that tricky combination, Connors and Nastase.

So we were both in good shape, Pancho and I, as we headed down the road to the Big Apple, ready for the major test of my progress at Forest Hills. Ironically two South Africans were slotted to meet me in the opening rounds and, having beaten John Yuill in the first, I then went on to defeat Pat Cramer in a much tighter match 7-5 in the fifth.

Then, for the second time in five weeks I was to play Rod Laver for a place in the last sixteen. At Bretton Woods it had been on clay. Now we were on grass, a surface that was becoming my favourite and had always been Rocket's. After four Wimbledon titles and two right there at Forest Hills how could it be anything else? And, anyway, with due respect to all the fine Grand Prix events, a Grand Slam is something different. All the great champions are tuned to their peak for the big ones. This would be the real test.

Gonzales, who knew Laver's game backwards after innumerable duels with him on the Kramer tour, gave me all the important tips on how to deal with all that talent on the other side of the net, emphasising the need to get down low to the forehand volley on big points when Laver tended to lather top spin all over his backhand.

It was a Saturday, I remember, and CBS were televising the match, just as they had my final against Connors at Bretton Woods. With or without the help of Bud Collins and a few other friends in the press box, I was starting to get well known. Happily, I was able to give the television viewers across America still more reason to take note of this tall Indian kid who had suddenly appeared on the tennis horizon.

With my serving working well I was able to stay with Laver in an evenly fought contest that went all the way down to 3-3 in the fifth set. Then the little maestro came up with the kind of one-two punch that had won him so many tight matches in the past. An unbelievable forehand pass followed immediately by a backhand pass that was just as good. They were enough to take my serve in the critical seventh game and the packed Stadium Court sensed that the knockout blows had been delivered. Good match, kid, but it's all over.

Then the rain, which had been threatening for some, started to drip from leaden skies. Not heavy enough to bring play to a halt but sufficient to make the grass greasy. Laver called for the referee Mike Blanchard and asked for permission to wear spikes. When Blanchard agreed I was surprised to see that Laver had them right there in his bag at court side. I remember being impressed at the professionalism of the man, although in this particular instance, I don't think it helped him.

Blanchard then turned to me just as he was about to walk off court and said, 'Hey, kid, you can wear spikes, too, if you like'.

'But I don't have any', I replied, trying to hide my embarrassment.

'Well, I can't help you then, can I?' Blanchard answered reasonably enough.

Strangely none of this really bothered me as far as losing my concentration was concerned. As soon as play started again, I was right back into it and took to wiping the soles of my shoes with a handkerchief after every point. Laver, meanwhile, did not look too comfortable in his spikes which have such a different feel about them and when he served for a 5-3 lead I came up with two passes on the run which broke his serve and then won the next two games to wrap it up 6-4 in the fifth. The place was stunned; I was ecstatic and Pancho his usual realistic self. He thought I had played 'average'. That was the great thing about Pancho. He never let you get carried away!

I was surprised when I got another Stadium Court match in the next round against Australia's Allan Stone but it may well have prevented me from the pitfall of a let-down after a big win and I totally outplayed the man who, for obvious reasons, was nicknamed 'Rolling' and beat him 6-1, 6-1, 6-1. Suddenly I was the hot new name. Everyone was starting to get impressed — everyone, that is, except the man I should have listened to, Pancho Gonzales, and the man I was going to have to play in the quarter-final, Ken Rosewall. You will remember the story from an earlier chapter. 'Don't serve to his backhand', said Pancho. I served to his backhand four times in the first game and never got a racket on a return. Gonzales was on a plane before I realised

he'd left me. Game, set and match to Rosewall.

Looking back, maybe I should have kept my mouth shut at breakfast. I don't expect anyone to take this too seriously but I was more than a little superstitious at the time. Still am, for that matter, but perhaps not quite to the same extent. If I followed a certain pattern of behaviour one day and did well then I would do everything exactly the same the following day and continue to do so until I lost. That year during Forest Hills Anand and I were staying at the Summit Hotel on the corner of Lexington Avenue and 51st Street, a hotel that is still used by most of the visiting international press during the U.S. Open. Even though I was starting to win a bit of money we thought that breakfast in the hotel was far too expensive. So we found a very convenient little coffee shop in a pharmacy right on the corner of the same block and, a couple of days before the tournament began, started having breakfast there.

The guy behind the counter flung our orders at us in typical New York style without so much as a grunt as he and the other people serving kept yelling through the hatch, 'Two eggs over easy!' or 'One muffin to go!' It was a scene being repeated in several thousand similar establishments all over the city at 8.30 in the morning.

But, as soon as I won my first round match against Yuill, there was absolutely no chance of our having breakfast anywhere else. This was going to be it. After the third or fourth day, the guy serving gave us a second look and said 'Hi!' I suppose we did stand out a bit from his normal Manhattan

office-worker type. When he saw us reading the sports pages of the *New York Times*, he started mentioning tennis and was obviously one of those New Yorkers who follow the big names in all sports.

We told him we were from India and he said, 'Hey, you ought to go out to Forest Hills and see this Indian kid who's doing pretty well. Won a couple of matches, already'.

I've never been able to resist a little practical joke here and there so I played dumb and said maybe we would do that. It was that day that I beat Laver and the next morning, while I was reading the paper which had a huge picture of me all over the front page of the sports section, our friend was getting really excited.

'You see', he said, jabbing a finger at the picture which to him, admittedly, was upside down, 'I told you this young Indian was good. Look, he's just beaten Laver!'

I kept a straight face and Anand sat there with that great vacant look of his and we kept up the pretence. Finally, after I had beaten Stone, I said quietly the next morning, 'Why don't you come out to the matches yourself today and watch me play Rosewall?'

'It's you? God dammit, I can't believe it! Hey, fellas, this is Vijay, that Indian kid who's beating everyone at Forest Hills!'

He was dancing about, yelling at everyone, shaking his head in disbelief. You've never seen anyone so surprised. But, of course, that afternoon I lost. Maybe I shouldn't have said anything until I won the

tournament.

By this time I was challenging for a place in the Masters, which was a nomadic event in those early years and was due to be played, in 1973, in Boston. I suppose if I had stuck at it, I could have qualified but it had already been a very long year and I needed a rest. I was also friendly with a girl at the time, which made the thought of spending a few weeks at home with my parents in Madras even more appealing. Her parents were friends of my mother and father and used to play family doubles together at the weekend so there was plenty of opportunity for us to get together. After six months away from home, it was too much of a temptation and, right after Forest Hills, I flew back to Madras.

I played Tehran later in the year — a glorious tournament in those pre-revolutionary days when we all stayed in much splendour at the Tehran Hilton and were treated like royalty — but there was one more very satisfying little triumph to come that year, a win on home soil.

The Indian LTA had asked and received \$25,000 from the Govt. of India so that we could join the Grand Prix circuit and stage an Indian Open for the first time that year. It was held in New Delhi and despite being 4-1 down in the fifth to Raul Ramirez in the semi-final I came through to win this inaugural event that was such an important showcase for Indian tennis by beating Mal Anderson in the final. Anand and I made it to the doubles final, too, but there the versatile Ramirez teamed with the veteran left-hander Jim McManus and they were too crafty

for us.

Nevertheless by the time the whole family gathered for one of our traditional Madras Christmases — which always precluded our attending the Australian Open in Melbourne — we could look back on the year with a high degree of satisfaction. Mummy had wanted her sons to become tennis players and now two of them were making their mark on the international circuit in no small way. It was great for us and, I hope, it was good for India. Certainly the fact that I was representing my country every time I walked on court or attended a public function off it, was never far from my mind and the fact that I enjoyed that side of our career probably helped me deal with the inevitable reservations we had at being away from home so much a little better than Anand who found the social obligations extremely tedious unless there was an exceptionally pretty girl in the room.

But as much as we were dedicated to the game we played, family life always took precedence over everything and although we obviously missed some good opportunities to advance our careers by not playing Australia, especially as the Australian Open was played on grass at Kooyong in those days and did not always have a very strong entry, I have never regretted being at home for Christmas. For all of us, they were very special occasions.

SWEET REVENGE

We had a remarkably quick opportunity to exact some kind of revenge against Australia for our humiliation in Madras. Although it is now customary for countries to alternate on a home and away basis when they are drawn against each other in Davis Cup, some quirk in the Zonal rules that existed before the current World Group format came into being, meant that Neale Fraser had to bring his team back to India for a second consecutive year in 1974.

This time we decided not to mess around with clay and put them on grass at the South Club in Calcutta after we had battled to overcome a resilient Japanese squad in the first round at Kanpur where the muggy heat sapped us all of our energy.

As Fraser will no doubt be the first to tell you, he was not able to bring his best team to India on this occasion. There was no Newcombe and, to many people's surprise, the Australian captain nominated Bob Giltinan, a cheery bloke who raised pigeons and never quite took off as a top class tennis player, to play second singles behind John Alexander.

We had Jaz Singh playing second singles for us and the pair were drawn against each other in the opening rubber. Talk about nerves! In front of a typically huge Calcutta crowd, the pair of them did their best to produce a tennis match given that both

were suffering from the handicap of virtual rigor mortis. In tennis parlance, they were choking so badly, it was amazing the ball ever got over the net but in the end Jaz got himself together quicker than the mustachioed Aussie and won in four sets.

That turned out to be a very valuable point because four and a half hours later I came off court having lost 17-15, 16-14, 4-6, 9-7 to the powerful Alexander. We traded bullet serves at each other for most of the time on grass that made the ball travel like greased lightning and J.A. just ended up being a little more consistent than I was on the day.

In the doubles, crucial, of course, now that we were level at 1-1, Anand and I found ourselves locked in another protracted duel with Alexander and Colin Dibley. 'Dibbles', as we called him, had a serve that did not exactly dribble over the net. If J.A. and I could generate a bit of heat in that department, we were still a long way from being in Dibbles' class. The former Customs Officer at Sydney Airport, who had joined the pro tour after frightening all the local club players in New South Wales, had one of the biggest serves the game has ever known and, on fast grass, we had a lot of trouble dealing with it. Almost inevitably, the match went to a fifth set with the score reading 4-6, 18-16, 3-6, 17-15, 1-0 to us when Dibley got cramps. Dibbles tended to get cramps in hot, tense situations and we wondered if Fraser would take the ten-minute time out for injury that was allowed at any time during a match in those days. But he decided to let Dibley battle on as best he could and, after we had managed to secure a break

of serve, Anand was left serving for the match at 5-4. At 15-0, Fraser stopped the match, and helped Dibley to the locker-room where they endeavoured to get his leg muscles unknotted.

When they came out again after the ten-minute break, Alexander charged about all over the court in an attempt to cover for Dibley but it was too late for them. Even though we were a bit worried about Anand, who was so relaxed by this time that he was chatting to people in the crowd, there was no way we could fail to win the three points needed for victory.

But when Alexander beat Singh the following day, I needed to make sure that Giltinan did not turn himself into a hero in the fifth and deciding rubber. As it turned out, I didn't need very long to finish off an exciting tie that sent us through to the semi-finals against the Soviet Union at Poona. Obviously it was satisfying to have turned the tables on the Aussies so soon but, on a personal level, I didn't need that success to rehabilitate myself as a player. The way I played during the summer of 1973, culminating in the victory over Raul Ramirez in front of my own crowds in the Indian Open, had restored my belief in myself.

In retrospect the feat of beating Australia in the quarter-finals has taken on greater significance with the passing of years. It was to be the last time Fraser failed to take his team at least as far as the semi-finals until Yannick Noah led France to victory over them on an indoor clay court at Clermont-Ferrand in 1988, all of fourteen years later. A phenomenal record.

‘We seemed to spend our lives playing in India in those days’, Fraser explained when Richard Evans spoke to him at White City during the 1990 New South Wales Open. ‘We played in Bangalore a couple of times because Krishnan wanted to keep us off the grass and then we had that win in Madras before losing in Calcutta — all within the space of a few years. .

‘We never got the chance of playing at home because we were not designated as part of the Asian Group at the time and, under the rules, had to play all our matches away against Asian nations. I got so fed up with it after a bit I got the rule changed. But then the whole format was switched to the World Group system we have now so it didn’t matter any more.’

It must have been frustrating for Fraser but, in 1974, our frustration had nothing to do with home ties. We could hardly complain about that as we had the Soviets to play at Poona in the semi-final which would have been a very tough assignment in the USSR — as we discovered several years later. But at Poona Anand, who lost to Alex Metreveli in the opening rubber, eventually came up with one of the finest performances of his career. I had beaten Temuraz Kakulia in the opener and Anand and I had a good time in the doubles watching that very tough piece of work Sergi Likhachev destroy Russia’s chances by trying to play the big macho man. He kept on trying to hit us in the head with close-range volleys and Metreveli, a delightful character from Tblisi, didn’t appreciate that sort of behaviour. Breaking the golden rule of never getting down on

your doubles partner, Alex started to tear strips off Likhachev whenever he tried it and even began berating him for making mistakes which he did with increasing frequency as the match wore on. As soon as that happened, the Soviets had no chance and we won in four sets.

Metreveli had lost to Jan Kodes in the Wimbledon final the year before and was capable of producing some brilliant tennis, so neither captain Krishnan nor I was particularly keen on the prospect of a live fifth rubber against him. But for a while that seemed to be on the cards as Kakulia swept to a two set to one lead against Anand and then surged ahead 5-2 in the fourth. But from the very brink of defeat, Anand clawed his way back and finally clinched a truly heroic victory 6-3 in the fifth. It was a superb fighting performance that ensured India a place in the Davis Cup final for only the second time since the inception of the competition in 1900. Krish had been responsible for taking India that far in 1966. They lost to Australia in Melbourne and now he was to be captain of the team that was to play either Italy or South Africa in the final just eight years later. But as soon as we heard the Italians had lost, our celebrations in Poona were dampened. We knew we would face tremendous political problems but, with the optimism of youth, we hoped that a way could be found for us to play.

We were back on tour in Europe, playing the Paris Indoors, Stockholm Open and other tournaments in which we found ourselves in the company of our would-be South African opponents, Ray Moore, Frew

McMillan and Bob Maud when we read in the *International Herald Tribune* that the Indian Tennis Federation had defaulted us and allowed South Africa to win the Cup by default — a sad way for the first nation outside the Big Four of Britain, the United States, France and Australia to win the coveted trophy.

But we were more than sad. We were furious. Both Anand and I were perfectly prepared to accept our Government's decision whatever that might be because we realised that they would be looking at the consequences from a higher perspective. But it turned out that R.K. Khanna had taken it upon himself to make the decision before any government edict was issued. That, we felt, was highhanded and premature.

We were in Paris when we read the news in the *Herald Trib*, playing at the little Stade Coubertin near Porte St Cloud where everything was a great deal more cramped than it is now during the Paris Open at the vast Omnipalais. As soon as we heard the news we wanted to get on the phone to Delhi and Anand eventually found a phone we could use in the press room. It was in the morning before the matches had started and the place was empty. Or so we thought. In fact there was a Reuters reporter lurking just outside and he heard every word that was said. It made a nice little story.

'I yelled at Khanna', Anand recalls. 'I was furious that he could make a decision like that without proper consultation with the Government or ourselves. In the end he was go pissed off he threatened to take

my passport away.'

Our frustration was natural. As young athletes it was perfectly normal that we should be carried away by the idea of playing in a Davis Cup final. How often does that chance come in a tennis player's career? The fact that we got a second chance thirteen years later was something of a miracle but, as I pointed out when re-capping the whole story in a speech I gave recently at the United Nations, it is very hard to rationalise the larger picture when childhood dreams are at stake.

Anand's remarks to Khanna were picked up off the Reuters wire and turned into blazing headlines in India and we realised we had a little fence-mending to do. It was not that we were insensitive to the apartheid problem. We just wanted to explore all the options, including the possibility of playing at a neutral site like Singapore which the South Africans were very willing to do. I felt that we had a great chance to win the Cup and that one should weigh the psychological advantages of that against any damage we might do to the anti-apartheid movement which, quite naturally, was dead set against any sporting contact with South Africa.

When we got back home after Stockholm, we gave a whole series of press conferences to clear up the position which was really one of anger over Khanna making decisions he wasn't qualified to make and made it plain that we fully supported the Government in any anti-apartheid stance it thought appropriate.

But, in *World Tennis Magazine*, Richard Evans, who had been with us in Stockholm, wrote a memorable

article called 'A Cup of Broken Dreams' which just about summed up the way we felt. It was a heartbreaker, but there were millions in South Africa who had a lot more to worry about.

THE TOUR CONTINUES

By the mid-seventies we were starting to feel like veterans of the tour. Airports, aeroplanes, hotel rooms and the tennis courts of the world were our transient homes as the great tennis caravan wended its way across the globe, taking in every imaginable type of climate and terrain.

How familiar it all started to seem for us; how sophisticated we had become in such a short space of time. We were now being looked after by Donald Dell's high-powered management firm with its head office just a stone's throw from the White House in Washington, D.C.; we had taken a place in Studio City in Los Angeles so that we had some sort of a base in the States and then Mike Cardoza, one of Dell's bright young men, who looked after our personal affairs before leaving for a job with President Carter in the White House, set us up with a place in Bermuda where we spent a few weeks each year; relaxing on the beach and having a wonderful time.

With my natural extrovert nature and acquired social skills, I suppose I found it pretty easy to mix in different circles and, at my side, I had a brother who could get us anywhere we needed to go faster than your average travel agent. Anand is a wizard at remembering which plane takes off when and was usually one step ahead of the girl at the ticket desk as she grappled with how to get us from Kuala

Lumpur to Kingston, Jamaica or some other impossible journey.

How different it had all become from that day when we arrived in Columbus, Ohio, on that first tour of the States in 1972 to be met at the airport by a couple called Peter and Jane Mykrantz who had volunteered to take us on as house guests for the week, sight unseen. They knew we were Indian all right and we both managed to keep a straight face when Jane started talking to us in very, slow precise English as if we might not understand. We played along for as long as it took for us to pass a MacDonald's on the way into town.

'Hey, do you think we could stop here', I announced suddenly. 'I'm dying for a Big Mac!'

We all had a good laugh and Jane and Peter quickly became our family in the States. We are as close as can be and they must take most of the credit for the way we settled so quickly into the American way of life. They made it seem such a warm and hospitable place and we had some great times together in those early years.

So it was highly appropriate that the third Grand Prix title I ever won should have been the Buckeye Boys Championships at Columbus in 1975 when I defeated Bob Lutz in the final.

That same year I had on to the Indian Open title, played in Calcutta this time, when I beat the wonderfully talented Spanish left-hander Manolo Orantes in the final. Anand and I were also in the doubles final which we lost to Orantes and his partner Juan Gisbert but the whole of the last day's play had

been thrown into jeopardy by the Spaniards' need to get to Stockholm for the Commercial Union Masters which was due to start 48 hours later. Connections to Scandinavia were very scarce in those days and they needed to get to Delhi by the Sunday evening if they were going to make it.

On a normal scheduled flight they would never have made it but, luckily, the President of India, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, who was also President of the Tennis Association, was coming to see the finals in his private jet and readily agreed to fly Manolo and Juan back to Delhi with him. So, with a little Presidential help they got to Stockholm in time and went on to win the doubles title there as well.

By 1975 we were seeking a little respite from the endless travel by basing ourselves in California for eight weeks of World Team Tennis, but by 1976 I was raring to go again on the WCT circuit and the end of February saw me reaching the final of the St Louis Classic, where I lost to the muscular Argentine Guillermo Vilas who was just starting to make his name on the tour.

But two weeks later the Amritraj family christened the new tournament at the Racquet Club in Memphis in true style. Serving and volleying really well on the indoor Supreme carpet, I won my first WCT singles title by defeating the former Wimbledon champion Stan Smith in the final and then Anand and I made it a double week by beating the formidable duo of Marty Riessen and Roscoe Tanner in the doubles final. Deservedly, the tournament Tommy Buford runs in Memphis had become one of the most popular

on the tour amongst the players, even though WCT are no longer connected with it, but, of course, we have reason to remember our first visit there with special affection.

The Amritraj brothers had developed into one of the most consistent pairs on the tour by this time and we came agonisingly close to making it to the Wimbledon final that year. Having played some good, solid tennis to get to the semis, we came up against Raul Ramirez and Brian Gottfried, definitely one of the best pairs I have ever seen play the game. At the crucial moment in the fifth set we secured the break that left Anand serving for the match. Maybe there was an evil genie lurking around the All England Club that we never knew about because something always happened to us at crucial moments there.

Serving for the match at 15-0 in the fifth set against a team like Ramirez and Gottfried is crucial-enough but it was at that very moment that the line judge called a foot fault on Anand's second serve. Maybe, he did foot fault. There was a tendency for him to drag his foot over the line when he was pressing too hard but for it to be called just then was unnerving, to say the least, and Raul and Brian seized on the moment to break back and eventually beat us after a terrific battle 18-16 in that fifth set.

After a disappointing first round loss at the U.S. Open, I was able to recover quickly by beginning a long-standing love affair with the delightful tournament at the Newport Casino in Rhode Island. Don't be misled by the name. There was no raucous games

of crap going on around the beautifully manicured lawns of the old Casino. This was no Las Vegas. Just a slice of old world tranquillity presided over by one of the game's great eccentrics, Jimmy Van Alen, the man who must be credited with the advent of the tie-break. Jimmy, a New England aristocrat who still dresses as his ancestors must have done at garden parties at the turn of the century, was obsessive about the need to cut short endless sets and although his original tie-break of just nine points which was called sudden death was scrapped after a brief experiment, the tie-break we know today must owe its existence to Van Alen even though he sniffs at it for being too long.

Mike Blanchard ran the tournament when I first played there and he was soon succeeded by a very bright and engaging lady called Jane Brown who helped set up the Tennis Hall of Fame which is now so much part of the Newport scene. But behind Jane, there was the driving force of Joe Cullman, former chairman of the Board of Philip Morris who made the Hall of Fame his pet project after helping Gladys Heldman set up the original Virginia Slims women's circuit in the early seventies.

All these people were closely involved with this event which survives now as the only grass court tournament of professional stature in America. I found it a wonderful place to escape to after the rigours of Wimbledon, for it is usually played in July, although in 1976 when I beat the Rhodesian Andrew Pattison in the final, it followed Forest Hills.

That was the year Hamilton Jordan helped Jimmy

Carter get elected President of the United States. Little did we know at the time what a dramatic effect Hamilton would have on our little world of tennis a decade later when he would take over as Executive Director of the ATP. But my victory in that election year began a strange sequence of successes for me at Newport. As it turned out I always seemed to win the title in a Presidential election year. In 1980 when Ronald Reagan won for the first time I reclaimed the title with a victory over the lanky Californian Brian Teacher and four years later when Reagan got himself re-elected, I won a third title, beating another big server Tim Mayotte.

Everyone thought I was all set to do it again in 1988 when I suddenly struck form and got through to the semi-final, only to have Wally Masur squeeze past me 7-6, 7-6. Perhaps they will give me a wild card in 1992!

By 1977 I started having problems with my elbow. I realise now that the aluminium framed racket that I thought was so wonderful because it gave me so much power was posing a serious threat to my career. The vibration was sending shudders up my arm every time I hit the ball and sure enough the sensitive ligaments in the elbow soon started to tell me all about it. Thank heavens the wonderful technology that has been moulded around materials like graphite fibre glass and kevlar have largely eliminated problems like this in recent years. Anyone who is suffering from tennis elbow should not only see a qualified physician who specialises in sports medicine but should also get hold of *World Tennis* or *Tennis*

Magazine from the States and study the racket listings which tell you the vibration factor of each racket. You may love your old metal framed zinger that makes you feel like Jimmy Connors — who never wanted to throw his away until Wilson stopped making them — but I shall be surprised if you have much of an arm left.

Anyway before I get into the gory details of what happened to my arm, let me record that I was able to get my hands on another significant title before the pain grew too bad. After seven years of constant doubles play together Anand and I had decided to give ourselves a breather, just to freshen up and maybe learn a little from playing with different partners.

Dick Stockton, the big-serving Texan who had reached the Wimbledon singles semi-final in 1974, agreed to team up with me for the WCT circuit and although we took a couple of weeks to get going, I didn't seem to be having too bad an effect on Dickie's singles play! Playing some of the best tennis of his career he beat Connors in the finals of both the U.S. Pro Indoors in Philadelphia and the Rothmans International in Toronto and won his third title in three months by defeating Nastase in Rotterdam. By then we had started to get our act together and, although Tom Okker and Wojtek Fibak were the hot team on the tour that year, we made it through to the final in St Louis and again the following week when Dickie did so well in Rotterdam where Okker and Fibak won their fifth title of the tour.

Those two appearances in the final were sufficient

to put us into the WCT World Doubles Finals which were being played in Kansas City that year — the hometown of Lamar Hunt's beloved Kansas City Chiefs, the gridiron team he still owns. Ten years before, when we were still at home dreaming of places like Wimbledon, the WCT circuit had started in Kansas City with the group that became famously dubbed as 'The Handsome Eight'. Coloured clothing and crowds that were allowed to cheer during points were all part of the brave new world Lamar and his shortlived partner Dave Dixon was trying to inject into the game's conservative structure at the time but, in ten years, everything had settled down and the tennis did not look so terribly different when eight doubles teams hit town for the 1977 Finals.

Our form in the final weeks of the tour had given Dickie and me a feeling that we could do well but in the end we surpassed our expectations, beating Eddie Dibbs and Caraso Barazutti to reach the final where we overcame the talented combination of Vitas Gerulaitis and Adriano Panatta to share the top prize of \$80,000 which was as big a pay day as I had enjoyed at the time. In addition we both received a 50-piece set of the most beautiful Waterford Crystal which I sent to Jane and Peter Mykrantz in Columbus for safekeeping. In fact, they said they would not give it to me until my wedding day and were as good as their word. Apart from one big centre piece which they proudly displayed in their living room in the intervening years, all the other pieces were kept wrapped up until they had them shipped to Los Angeles for Shyamala to enjoy.

But that looked as if it was going to be my last piece of success in 1977. Early round losses at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open only confirmed that my form was being affected by the state of my elbow and by the time the Indian Open came around in the first week of December I was in terrible shape. I hadn't played for several weeks and there seemed no chance of my being able to answer the pleas of the tournament chairman, the late Ram Batra, who was desperate to have a big name in the draw. As the Indian Open was being played in Bombay that year, there was considerable pressure to have someone who could attract big city crowds. The previous year Sashi Menon had kept the interest up in Bangalore by reaching the final before losing to Australia's Kim Warwick, but with no superstar from overseas entered in Bombay the tournament committee were nervous.

But what could I do? I could hardly pick up a racket, let alone practise and, after endless discussion with my family and medical friends, the idea of surgery was becoming a very real possibility. At about that time both Stan Smith and Manolo Orantes had put themselves under the knife in an attempt to cure the tennis elbow problem and I realised this was probably the only solution for me as well.

But in the meantime the Catholic Centre in Bombay told me of a faith healer from the Philippines who was in town at that time. I had already heard of the supposed miracle a Philippine faith healer had worked on Tony Roche's arm when the great Wimbledon doubles champion had been at the end of his tether after two operations some five years

before. Roche had made a complete recovery. Could it be worth a try?

Encouraged by Ram Batra and given morale-boosting support from my mother and Ashok I decided to go for it.

There were huge throngs of people surrounding the place where the faith healer was at work when we arrived on the Friday before the tournament was due to start and I was feeling very nervous. Luckily for my state of mind, we were allowed to go to the head of the queue and very soon I was being welcomed by this extremely polite and low-key man (his name was the Rev. N.G. Taylo), clutching a Bible which he read quietly to himself for a few minutes before attending to me.

He said he loved tennis and that I should relax and not worry. That was easier said than done but, with a fluttering heart, I lay down on his table and felt a plate being put under my outstretched arm. Then I felt him put some water on the elbow. The whole area felt wet and, according my mother and Ashok, who were standing right there, blood appeared over the elbows as soon as he had drawn his finger across the area without actually touching it. Truly, only the Lord knows how this is done. Sue Roche had witnessed exactly the same thing when Tony had his elbow treated and, a couple of years before during a tournament in Manila, John Newcombe, fascinated by his partner's experience, went with Richard Evans to witness another faith healer perform an operation on a woman who had a cyst on her stomach. Again blood was drawn, with no possible sleight of hand,

by simply drawing the finger across the affected area about 1½ inches above the skin.

I felt no pain. Even when he put his finger into the open wound and drew out some matter, I felt nothing. After a few minutes, he wiped away some blood and, unlike the man who treated Roche, did not even put a bandage on it. There was nothing to see. The man wanted no money, although I think I left him a racket and I was out of there before I fully comprehended what had happened. For someone who has not been through this experience, it is, obviously, difficult to believe. But it happened, so what am I supposed to say?

He had told me not to try to play the following day, so on the Sunday, after I had woken up with a feeling that something had improved, I went out and practised. Apart from a little initial stiffness the arm felt fine. Ram Batra, who must have believed in miracles, had refused to take me out of the draw, so on Monday I played and the following weekend I won the Indian Open title for the third time, beating the dogged little Memphis lefthander Terry Moor in the final.

The whole thing was very strange, but I firmly believe that a lot of things have happened in my life that are not a coincidence. If some things have come my way and others haven't, it is because He ordained it. I have no other explanation.

The faith healer never suggested his treatment would offer a permanent solution and sure enough the pain returned after a few weeks. I consulted all manner of specialists around the world but, in the

end, when surgery seemed to offer the only chance of saving my career, I didn't travel very far. Just down the road, in fact, to the Lady Wellington Nursing Home where I was attended to by Dr Ramamurthy, one of the country's top neuro surgeons; Dr Krishna Rau, the chief of the hospital; and our loyal family doctor T.J. Cherian. I was flattered. The operation hardly required such star-studded help. Although it sounded complicated, a nurse could probably have managed it with a little supervision.

Apparently the injury had come about as a result of a blood vessel bursting during a World Team Tennis match for which I had not warmed up properly. This had led to scar tissue forming which in turn trapped some nerve fibres of the ulnar nerve. To solve the problem, the scar tissue had to be cut away without damaging the nerve. Tricky, but hardly micro-surgery.

Nevertheless they put me out to do it and, apparently, when I was being wheeled out afterwards, eyes still rolling from the effects of the anesthetic, I said, 'I can't believe Mummy would have gone through this every week just to have her dressings changed'.

Obviously my mother's terrible accident had left a sharp impression on my mind. The thought of being in such pain that you needed an anesthetic just to have the bandages removed is a little hard to comprehend. Happily my pain amounted to little more than discomfort in comparison.

The operation was a total success and I was back

in court again in six weeks. Not long after Chuck Bennett, the young American who had started looking after my business interests when I switched from Pro Serv to Mark McCormack's IMG, fixed me up with a Donnay racket contract — a new fibre glass model that was much easier on the arm.

As a result I was back in action soon after the start of the 1978 tour with my financial future looking secure once again. The contract was a good one and I was beginning to get some very good money from endorsements and exhibition matches. Full marks to IMG and the hardworking Bennett for that. The amount of money coming my way continually surprised me, given the fact that my ATP ranking — partially as a result of playing WTT where rankings didn't count — had dropped from 26 at the end of 1975 to 46 at the end of 1977 and did not climb back up to 20th in the world until 1980.

I suppose the fact that I was 'different' from the average Anglo-Saxon pro on the tour helped, as did the fact that I was always ready to put myself out for sponsors by attending parties and engaging in all the little social niceties which Anand found so difficult. A little effort goes a long way in this corporate-minded world and that is even truer today than it was back in the late seventies.

Title-winning success eluded me throughout the summer of 1978 and might have done so all year had I not allowed myself to be persuaded to fly down to a Grand Prix event in Mexico City while playing in Barry MacKay's TransAmerican event in San Francisco. I was loath to go at first, because

Mexico City was rapidly turning into the pollution capital of the world and I still had problems breathing in really bad atmospheric conditions — a legacy of that childhood illness.

But they were desperate for another well-known name to offer some sort of a challenge for the local hero Raul Ramirez who, two years earlier, had achieved the unique feat of finishing on top of the Commercial Union bonus pool standings for both singles and doubles. Raul was a remarkable performer. For a guy who had no backhand, a weak first serve and a moderate volley, this handsome Mexican achieved far more than anyone would have expected in a very fruitful career, including leading his country to two Davis Cup victories over the United States. His success was based on speed, a great forehand and a cunning mind that had been well versed in the game's tactical skills by another player with similar attributes, Rafael Osuna, who was killed so tragically in a plane crash while still in his prime.

Ramirez, however, was one of those players I quite enjoyed meeting across a net and, by the end of that week in Mexico City, I was very happy that I had accepted the challenge. I not only beat Raul in the singles final but left the Amritraj imprint firmly on the tournament by helping Anand take the doubles title, beating Ramirez and his American partner Freddie McNair, another fine doubles player, in the final.

That week's success helped assuage the disappointment I felt a couple of months later in Calcutta when I lost my Indian title by playing a bad match against

the Frenchman Pascal Portes who went on to reach the final. The Indian Open was very much a French affair that year because the title was won by a superbly built youngster who, just a week earlier, had won the first of many Grand Prix titles that would come his way in Manila. His name was Yannick Noah and, not surprisingly, the Calcutta crowds fell for his athletic skills and Gallic charm.

A year later I reclaimed the Indian title when the tournament moved back to Bombay by beating West Germany's Peter Elter in the final. It was a satisfactory way to end a decade that had brought fame and riches beyond all imagining.

MY BROTHERS

For the first fifteen years on the circuit, right up to the time of my marriage, I never travelled alone. If Anand was not with me, then Ashok was. Sometimes, the happiest of times, all three of us were on tour together, a real band of brothers who enjoyed each other's company and gave each other great moral support.

I would have hated having to be on the circuit by myself. In fact I would probably not have lasted very long in what was becoming an increasingly lonely and competitive existence as the camaraderie of the great Australians, which pervaded the whole tour, started to wane and the age of the travelling coach dawned.

It was not until 1969 that Anand and I started playing doubles together. Before then I had not been good enough. When we went abroad for the first time in 1967, I played doubles with Sashi Menon and the following year I did not travel overseas.

As soon as we started playing together, Anand and I meshed well as a team. First of all we were good friends. It is not vital for a doubles team to be close buddies — Frew McMillan and Bob Hewitt, one of the most consistently successful teams of our generation, never mixed socially off court — but it is absolutely necessary to be friendly and to respect each other. There can be none of this 'Oh, we'd

have been all right if he hadn't screwed up those break points', attitude. Blaming your partner is out, an absolute no-no. You are both in it together and, as professionals, you both know that each of you is going to have days when the ball won't find the middle of your racket. Support rather than criticism is the only thing that will get you over the bad patches and help the partnership survive.

I suppose I could have felt intimidated playing with my elder brother who, at 16½, had already won the Indian Junior title twice, but Anand never made me feel that way. He took the senior role, of course, and nothing much has changed in that respect — he still does to this day! He likes to get on with things and is basically an extremely impatient person. That makes him appear blunt to people who do not understand him and have not had the opportunity of experiencing just how good-hearted and genuine a character he is.

Like my father, he is also shy and introverted which, of course, made him a direct opposite to me! As a result, I took the lead socially when we were on tour together; did most of the talking and generally assumed a role that was above my station because I was younger and less of a player at the time. Anand never seemed intimidated by this or threatened in any way by my social precociousness, nor, as the years passed, by the undeniable fact that I was becoming the better player.

This spoke volumes for Anand's character, because no one needs to be reminded of the onus that is placed on the eldest son in an Indian family to be

No. 1 amongst his siblings at whatever endeavour he pursues.

There is no point in trying to hide the fact that my greater gifts at tennis created a very difficult period in our family. Because my temperament is one that tends to emphasise the positive and store away unpleasant memories in the subconscious, I have never dwelt on the unhappy repercussions that followed my first proper victory over Anand which came in the final of the Asian Championships at Poona. I say 'proper' because Anand, feigning injury, had virtually given me the Indian Junior title in Delhi the year before because he had already won it three times and my parents thought it was important for me to gain some of the confidence that a big title would bring.

This was just the beginning of their struggle to work out how best to cope with two sons who were rising very rapidly to the top of Indian tennis — a world of which they had little knowledge. Inevitably mistakes were made and my father is amazingly candid about them. Considering what took place I think it is better that I turn over part of this chapter to him and let him explain as he did, in his own words to my collaborator, Richard Evans, when they spoke over several hours one day at our home in Madras. This is how my father looked back on this difficult period in our lives.

'At Poona in 1975 all the best players were competing in the Asian Championships — Krishnan, Mukerjea, Lall — and we were obviously thrilled when the two boys made it to the final. But then

Vijay handed Anand a very bad beating which was not at all what I had expected or hoped. I was very upset. It was not the way things were supposed to happen; not the way I had been brought up to believe. The eldest son was supposed to lead in all things and I felt Vijay should have recognised that. I must confess I took it up with him very severely when he returned home. It was a mistake, of course. I was totally wrong and I see that now. Neither my wife nor I said a word to Anand about it, because we felt it was Vijay's mistake, but really it was ours. It became a very, very difficult time for all of us until it was clearly understood and accepted that Vijay, as the more naturally gifted of the two, was the No. 1 player. But it took time for us to accept that fact and, I tell you, we had many sleepless nights, my wife and I.

'I had to go away the day after I spoke to Vijay, criticising him, but even then I was not at ease about it and I felt so bad that I phoned him and we spoke for half an hour. I was less severe on that occasion but I know he felt it because we did not seem to understand his point of view. He felt it his duty to win and naturally he was right. Unfortunately I think it affected Vijay for a long time. I think he had the capacity to make it into the top five in the world early in his career but we may well have hindered his progress by the stance we took over Anand.

'It was just that the traditional order of things, what we still considered to be the right order of things, got in the way of our judgement. You must understand that nothing quite like this had ever

happened before in Indian sports. Maybe we could have assessed the position properly if we had been great players ourselves but we had to make a judgement within our limited knowledge and initially it was the wrong one. Experts might have realised a lot earlier that Vijay was the natural player who never had to practise one-tenth of the time Anand did. But parents are sometimes too close to things and Vijay, remember, had been a very sick child.

‘Happily, all this never affected their own personal relationship. Anand has always been very fond of Vijay and in family matters, Vijay has always been very deferential to his elder brother. Obviously the situation was troubling for Anand, too, but he never took it out on Vijay and the pair of them travelled the world together for the better part of fifteen years and were the best of friends. I thank God for that.’

My father is right. It was a very emotional time for all of us, this sudden realisation that the family order was being disrupted. Obviously I felt I was right to have tried, wholeheartedly, to win that match against Anand but I know how difficult it was for my father to accept the fact that his eldest son would no longer be the No. 1 tennis player in the family.

But once we all came to terms with it, we were strengthened rather than weakened by it. A crisis of this sort in another family might have destroyed relationships but, by understanding the adjustments that had to be made, we became even closer and more supportive than we had been before. I don’t know whether or not my father is right in asserting that his reaction to my win in Poona impeded my

progress as a tennis player but I do know that the survival and emotional growth of our family was far more important to me as a person.

From the first moment that I began to realise that my talents as a player would turn me into some kind of a celebrity, I have been very careful to try to understand the responsibility that this brings. Inevitably there will be high points and low points on the public stage and, always, I have needed the support of the family unit to carry me through these moments of triumph or disaster.

While thanking God for the exceptional gift he bestowed on me, it must be said that it would probably have served both Anand and myself better had we been able to swop our talents for the game. While I would always be looking to branch out into activities outside tennis, Anand, having turned away from chess or the academic career that was his for the taking, is perfectly content to play tennis morning, noon, and night and probably would have been able to put my kind of talent to better use than I have myself. A strange thought, but one that has crossed my mind a couple of times.

Conversely, I suppose I am better equipped as an outward personality to handle the 'star' role that my tennis abilities thrust on me. Lacking Anand's shyness or impatience, I can handle the constant chores associated with talking to virtual strangers better than he can, so in that respect it has worked out well.

As soon as we started travelling abroad together in the late sixties we learned to harmonise our talents to our mutual benefit pretty quickly — and I don't

mean just as a doubles team on court! Directing my extrovert personality towards the art of hustling, I used to encourage club members at all the little tournaments we used to play in England in places like Malvern, Felixstowe, Hoylake and Chichester to play Anand at chess. Then I used to bet on my brother. Nothing too extravagant — extravagance in any form was not a word your average English tennis club member would tolerate in any case — but nevertheless two or three pounds in those days went a long way. For a couple of Indian kids with hardly a penny in their pockets, it meant a couple of good dinners at the local Indian restaurant. And as you know, it is tough to beat Anand at chess!

Being as different as we were helped, I think. For years on end, we were constantly in each other's company and learned to patch our differences so that they worked out well for both of us. Even so, I have always felt that Anand's mind, which is so sharp, has been wasted on the tennis court. Throughout his schooldays, he proved himself to be brilliant at a whole variety of subjects like physics or mathematics but, largely because of his consuming passion for tennis, he never gave himself a chance to explore that brilliance in an academic career.

Instead the fertile mind is now the storage place for mountains of historical data about the game. We should have had Anand constantly at our side during the writing of this book because he would have been able to recall instantly who we beat in the doubles semi-final in Chichester or Cincinatti or Arthur Ashe's score against Rod Laver in the semi-final at

Wimbledon.

Happily, it was often the same with our travel schedules. My big brother has left an army of bemused airline ticket agents still grappling with their computers while he has bypassed all the technological wizardry to tell them off the top of his head that there is no problem landing in Rome after the last British Airways or Alitalia flight has left for London. Just try Qantas or Gulf Air or one of the carriers that come through in the early hours.

'And then, my dear', Anand would say, leaning over to tap the top of their desk for emphasis, 'we will be at Heathrow in time to catch that early morning British Midland to Manchester. No problem.'

A lot of tennis players are pretty proficient at getting themselves from Sao Paulo to Palermo or Prague to Montego Bay (easier now that Nikki Lauda is flying his Boeing 767 into Jamaica from Vienna) but Anand would have to be the best. He should have opened his own travel business. Instead he has done very well with the tennis club he owns out on Long Island where the people, being New Yorkers, think, talk and act fast . . . just like Anand.

Yet, in depicting Anand as an impatient individual who has little time for small talk and little tolerance for fools, it would be totally wrong to suggest that he is intolerant of other people's ideas or that he will not listen to friends — or brothers — he has come to know and trust. Anand is a classic example of how looks can be deceiving.

Some men find his sharp-featured looks intimidating. I say men because girls rarely seemed to have

the same problem! But a lot of people, I think, misinterpret his expressions and body language, especially on court where they are convinced he is frequently angry with me when I miss a volley or whatever. But this simply isn't the case. Anand is often angry at himself and, being so much more demonstrative than I am, this often spills out in a general venting of frustration — glowers and glares that are vivid enough to encompass all around him. But it is not directed at me or at least he never lets me feel that it is, no matter how infuriated he might be when I fail to bury an overhead!

In later years, I think Anand started to feel a lot of pressure playing with a younger brother who had passed him in the rankings. Especially in Davis Cup, but also in the regular Grand Prix tournaments that we used to play, I believe he felt the constant need to prove himself and to ward off suggestions, sometimes voiced in stage whispers amongst the tennis fraternity in Delhi or Bombay, that he was only playing because he was my brother. This would have been hard for anyone to take, let alone someone as proud as Anand.

As far as I am concerned, this has never been the case. Throughout my life I have always done what I felt to be right in the moral, ethical, and practical sense. No doubt I have made mistakes but I am satisfied in my own mind that they have always been honest ones.

When I took over as India's Davis Cup captain, Anand generally played doubles and second singles because I thought he was the best man for the job.

But not always. There have been times when I thought it was best to play someone else and did so. Against the United States at La Costa in California in 1982 it was a close call whether I should play Ramesh instead of Anand with me in doubles and, after weighing up all the usual factors of current form and the type of opposition we were facing, I opted for Ramesh.

Anand was not particularly happy — who is when they are dropped — but he accepted my decision just as he did under more trying circumstances six months later when we had to travel to Donetsk in the Ukraine to play the Soviet Union. I had taken a week off from filming *Octopussy* in Udaipur and quickly realised that this was one assignment that might have stretched the abilities of James Bond himself. But quite apart from the fact that Roger Moore was not on our team, neither was Ramesh who had pulled out with some injury or other.

So it was up to Anand, Sashi Menon and myself with no one to support us except Anil Jauhar, the treasurer of the Indian Federation who had flown up from Delhi with me. As far as the weather was concerned, Donetsk in the first week of October might have been in Siberia. The temperature was zero and we were playing outside. In addition they put us in a hotel with no central heating, no hot water, and no interpreter, so that there was no chance of ordering what we wanted to eat — even if there had been a choice, which was unlikely. Frankly, I didn't think they needed to do all that. They had a pretty darn good team and would probably have

beaten us anyway!

Practice was frightening, it was so cold. I was wearing two track suits although Anand, of course, didn't need to go to that kind of extreme because he would sweat after hitting three balls in the Arctic Circle. Sashi, who had a temper as powerful as Anand's when he let it go despite an outwardly quieter disposition, was not amused by the whole thing either.

But there we were, stuck in this desperate place with a Davis Cup tie to play and I had to make some decisions. In my mind, the outcome would revolve around the ability of our second singles player being able to beat their No. 2 because, even allowing for the inequality of the conditions, Anand and I should be able to handle the doubles and I was expected to beat their No. 1. Anand had been playing second singles on our team in the previous rounds and felt he should continue to do so. In this instance I didn't agree. For a start, it would take some of the pressure off me to have a fresh partner in the doubles and secondly I felt that Sashi, an aggressive, unpredictable player, would not only be capable of beating their second guy but, fired up on a good day, might just be able to knock off their No. 1 as well and so give us a major bonus.

I talked to Anand about it alone and explained my reasons. He insisted he felt strong enough to handle both roles as he had done in the past. But when I told him I had made up my mind, he accepted it without question. There was no argument, no cross words. If we had been making a decision about the family, it would have been different. I would not

have been 'captain' in those circumstances and would probably have bowed to whatever decision my elder brother made.

But this was Davis Cup and we were making a decision based on what was best for the team. I don't think it was even the fact that I was captain that prompted Anand to acquiesce. I think, through having travelled with me for so long and having got to know the way my mind worked so intimately, he had come to realise that I do not arrive at important decisions without careful thought and serious reasoning. In other words he realised that I was doing what I genuinely felt to be best for all of us under the circumstances and that was enough for him, whether it would have been his decision or not.

It would be nice to have a happy ending to this story but being genuine is, unfortunately, no guarantee of success. Sashi started brilliantly in the second singles, led by 6-2, 4-1 and then lost in four sets. Our retreat from the Ukraine had begun.

But there were no recriminations, certainly not from Anand. We had given it our best shot and the Ruskies froze us out. The following week I went back to being a movie star and Anand found another tournament to play. Cemented as it has been over the years, our relationship runs far too deep to be affected by winning or losing a Davis Cup match. I have always felt that if anyone made a serious move to hurt me, Anand would take his head off without a second's thought and worry about the consequences later. I hope it never happens, but it is a good feeling.

It is also gratifying to know that Anand is never going to need anything but my moral support and brotherly love. The Amritraj Tennis & Racket Club at Bay Shore, Long Island, is doing very nicely and he may well open another out on the West Coast some day.

Ashok, with his natural flair and the obvious advantages our presence on the tour gave him, still found it a struggle for a whole variety of reasons that ranged from the pressure of having to live up to the exploits of his older brothers to the chronic airplane sickness he suffered every time he went near anything with wings and a tail. There was a period when Ashok would throw up immediately on take-off which is not a very happy prospect for a touring pro who can expect to fly, at the very least, twice a week.

Nevertheless, despite the need for a regular supply of paper bags, it was great to have him along when he joined us on the U.S. Summer circuit in 1974. He had just lost to Billy Martin in the final of Junior Wimbledon so the talent that was to impress Rod Laver so much was already beginning to make itself felt. Rod felt Ashok probably had more potential than either of us but it is questionable whether we went the right way about bringing that potential to fruition.

If he was going to play full time, we obviously wanted to have him with us and while he benefited from having two brothers as automatic practice partners, I am not sure, looking back, whether it was a good idea to have pitched him into the big

time quite so fast. Because of us, Ashok was getting wild cards into top line tournaments because Jim Westhall at Bretton Woods; Sam English at Louisville; or Stan Malless at Indianapolis were trying to be helpful and were, in any case, excited by the idea of having three brothers in the draw. The only other tennis family which could possibly have come close to matching us in that respect, either then or now, were the Lloyds when John and David were on the circuit and the younger brother Tony was coming up through the juniors, although he never became a tour player. Today, of course, the incredible Sanchez family in Barcelona have Emilio and Javier on the men's circuit and their little sister Arantxa already established as the youngest ever winner of the French Open. There is even another sister Melissa, who played on the team at Pepperdine in California and is now competing full time in some of the smaller WITA tournaments.

A run in at the satellite level may well have done Ashok more good but it would have meant him travelling alone and doing without the advice and coaching tips we were able to pass on during our regular practice sessions. Obviously he preferred to be with us and we all had an enormous amount of fun together but even so, we were not his coaches in the formal sense and, by leapfrogging the intermediate level, I think Ashok missed laying down the fundamentals of his game as we had done.

We shall never know if Laver was correct in his assessment of Ashok's potential but, just by being the only one of us to reach the final of Junior

Wimbledon proved that he was in the same class and technically, he had one huge advantage over us. He was two to three steps quicker than both Anand and myself and how we envied him that extra bit of pace which both of us always lacked, even on our most fleet-footed days!

I suppose he came closest to realising his potential during the time he spent with me in World Team Tennis playing for the Los Angeles Strings in 1976. There were moments that summer when the talent really shone through in that abbreviated, highly pressurised form of tennis and it proved that Ashok had the temperament and the ability to compete at a high level. But in regular Grand Prix play, the results never came with sufficient frequency to encourage him to continue with it as a full-time career and, in 1979, he quit.

It was sad in that I always felt Ashok had a lot more tennis in him than was ever revealed but, as I have said, some of the fundamentals had never been taken care of as thoroughly as they should have been and if we must take a small slice of the blame for this, then R.K. Khanna, the secretary of the Indian Tennis Federation, must accept his share as well. There is no question that Ashok would have been selected for far more junior teams had he not been our brother. Having two Davis Cup players from the south was bad enough as far as Khanna was concerned but the thought of another Amritraj coming through to make a Madras trio was more than he could take. There is no doubt that Ashok suffered discrimination in this respect and did not

get his fair share of opportunities.

Ashok has been wonderfully successful in the demanding world of Hollywood where it is not easy to compete with some of the sharks you find in that never-never land and yet still maintain your integrity. Ashok has done that and we are all proud of him. In fact my parents have no complaints at all apart from the fact that, as we write, he is still not married. It has not been easy, of course, for Ashok to maintain his Indian heritage after spending so many of his formative years either out on the world tour with Anand and myself or settling into a typical Hollywood lifestyle. He is, undoubtedly, the most Westernised of the three of us and, for many years, had a serious relationship with a beautiful American actress.

However he has come to terms with the fact that our parents are probably right as usual and has allowed them to begin the search for an Indian bride. In the long run, I am sure it will be the correct thing for him to do.

Anand, of course, caused a bit of a disturbance in the family circle by breaking with tradition and finding a wife on his own — a stunning blonde from New York who, apart from visiting India once on a Fulbright scholarship, had little knowledge of the Indian way of life. As soon as Anand realised he was serious about her, he settled that problem by bringing her home to Madras and leaving her after a week or two to fend for herself at Sterling Road!

Being a bright and adaptable girl, Helen passed all the surreptitious tests set for her. My father, candid as ever, does not deny that there were reservations

to be overcome

'When I had first met her in the States, I was not impressed', my father recalled. 'Obviously she was not what we had envisioned as a wife for our eldest boy. But when it became clear that they were serious, Vijay argued very forcibly that we give the idea a chance. I found that interesting because Vijay is far more inclined to the traditional way of life than Anand, but it was clear that the friendship these two boys had formed was very strong and Vijay was quite prepared to stick his neck out on his brother's behalf. And, of course, he was right. Once we got to know Helen in our own home we realised that she was a very good girl and that her parents had brought her up with values very similar to our own.'

The fact that Helen came from an Italian Catholic family helped enormously and this strikingly contrasting couple were married at St Patrick's Cathedral on New York's Fifth Avenue on 12 October 1980.

Anand, who is so like my father, looks back on it now with typical honesty.

'Everyone thought 28 was a good age to get married but both Helen and I, looking back, realised that it was too young, especially as far as I was concerned', Anand says. 'But I was sure that Helen would make a good wife. No matter what I have got up to in the past myself, I did not want a wife who was a party girl. I wanted someone who was intelligent and well brought up. Helen's father was just like Daddy in many ways and although this was in no sense an arranged marriage I looked for the same qualities my parents would have looked for in finding me a

wife. They had tried for a while but I wasn't impressed with what I had been shown.'

'But I knew I would have a bit of a battle on my hands convincing my parents. So when I took her home to Madras I said, "Don't say a word to start with and dress from head to toe and everything will be all right". And it was. It couldn't have been otherwise really because Mummy and Daddy are not stupid and Helen is such a good person. Too good, for me, sometimes. She is the absolute perfectionist to the n'th degree. It drives you bananas. She wants the whole world to be perfect and I tell her "but, sweetie, life's not like that". It doesn't stop her, of course, which is fine, really, because she is a wonderful mother for our son, Stephen.'

11

MR NICE GUY?

People think I am Mr Nice Guy because I generally accept doubtful calls and occasionally even applaud my opponent's better shots. I tend never to get angry or even mildly annoyed on court — at least I never look as if I do — and this gives the impression that I am a 'good sport' which, presumably, is why I keep on winning sportsmanship awards.

I suppose it is for others to decide whether all this is justified but, to be honest, it is not totally a question of altruism on my part. The real explanation is a little more complicated than that.

Basically anything contentious that happens on court comes down to a fight within myself, not with anyone else who might be involved. I suppose it is part of my Indian way of looking at things that makes me feel that anyone who behaves badly will get their comeuppance. The thought worries me. If I accept a call that I know has been wrongly called in my favour, it will haunt me for the rest of the set. Like some evil genie it will sit there on my shoulder, laughing wickedly whenever I put a forehand into the net. 'Hah, serves you right', it will say and I'll end up missing more and more forehands and my game will fall apart. This may seem stupid but I believe it to be true because it had always happened like that. Some of my worst losses have come about

after lapses on my part when I have turned my back on calls that I knew to be wrong.

One of the most depressing instances occurred one year in Toronto when I was playing a young South African called David Schneider on an outside court in a howling gale. The wind can really blow in Canada and the conditions made it difficult even for the umpire. Maybe he got dust in his eyes or something, because he kept on making mistakes early on in the match and almost all of them seemed to go in my favour. Schneider became furious because some of the calls really were pretty outrageous but I never tried to get any changed, basically I think, because it was just so difficult to play out there. The whole thing was a hassle and I was just happy to take anything I could get.

But I wasn't happy about it, of course. Not deep down. I managed to win the first set but things soon started going from bad to worse as I fretted over all those calls that probably should not have been mine. Even though I should have beaten Schneider before I broke sweat I ended up losing 6-3 in the third. I regarded it as an appalling defeat.

Probably not as bad, however, as losing to a little clay court specialist from Ecuador called Eduardo Zuleta at Beckenham . . . on grass. Not even close, either. 6-3, 6-4 to Zuleta on grass. Even now I can't believe it. Zuleta was a little guy with a sweet smile, a big moustache and a dubious reputation. If ever Ashok is looking for someone to play the part of a South American con man, I must remind him of Zuleta. Come to think of it, he would have been

perfect in *Romancing the Stone*. He certainly romanced me out of the match, all dainty footed and darting little returns that looked like a sleight of hand. But it was the same story as far as I was concerned. I had accepted some bad calls in the first set and my game just fell apart. How stupid could you be? Getting a bad conscience playing a guy like Zuleta was really dumb.

I'm a bit better now. I suppose life in general has hardened me up a bit and I really just try to play the calls, good and bad, and accept whatever luck comes my way. A lot of players prefer it that way because everyone knows that in the long run it will all even out, no matter how hard it is to take at the time. Obviously a player like John McEnroe has a very hard time with that kind of philosophy because injustice of any sort really bothers John. If it's wrong, why shouldn't it be put right? Why accept it? He still can't satisfy himself that there is a good answer to that question although he has come to realise now that his method of complaining about bad calls has been totally unacceptable in the past and the more mature McEnroe goes about pointing out the errors of an umpire's ways in a much calmer and more civilised manner now.

Early on in my career I suppose I was idealistically naive. I thought a lot of people felt the same way I did and I was often surprised when I discovered a few who didn't. I always thought Arthur Ashe had much the same attitude to right and wrong as I did and I still hold to that view . . . despite what happened in Caracas.

The trip to Venezuela came towards the end of the 1976 World Championship of Tennis tour, run by the former British Davis Cup player, Mike Davies, on behalf of WCT's boss and owner, Lamar Hunt. Anand and I had joined the WCT tour for the first time the previous year when it had been divided into three groups of 28 players each, called Red, Blue and Green. We had been with the Red Group and had not done badly. I had finished in a tie for the ninth place on the points board and Anand came in at eighteenth. As the players who finished above me included the former Wimbledon champions Stan Smith, Cliff Drysdale, Bob Lutz, Mark Cox and, in top place, the talented Australian John Alexander, I felt I was keeping good company. In addition we won a doubles title in Atlanta so we were both optimistic when the new tour was formed for 1976.

This time, however, the group format had been abandoned and 47 players had been signed up to play a maximum of eight of the 24 tournaments scheduled for the year, with the top eight points winners qualifying for the showcase showdown in Cowboy Town — Dallas. In some ways that made the competition tougher because the opposition varied from event to event with big guns like Jimmy Connors and John Newcombe suddenly appearing for a couple of tournaments here and there.

Even so everything came right for us in Memphis, Tennessee, at the beginning of March. Not only did I end up winning the singles with a wildly fluctuating victory over Stan Smith in the final by the weird score of 6-2, 0-6, 6-0 but Anand and I secured the

doubles title as well by beating the dangerous team of Marty Riessen and Roscoe Tanner in straight sets in the final. The singles win bumped us into the top half dozen in the race for Dallas and although I had slipped a bit by the time we headed south at the end of the month Caracas was still a very important event for me and the man I drew in the first round was — Arthur Ashe.

With sixteen man events and only four seeds, that was the kind of opposition you could find yourself faced with and there was no use fretting about it. This was the big time where a first round one week could easily be a final; the next and the only thing to do was to get out there and treat it just as if it was a final. This was no tour for the faint-hearted.

The court, a sort of plastic indoor carpet, suited us both, as it was quick and by the time Arthur had won the first set and I had fought back to take the second, it was clear that there was not going to be much in it. In fact Ashe broke first in the third set and served for the match at 5-4 but I broke him back and now we were going down to the wire — a tie-break in the deciding set. Even that was close and, at 5-5, I served what looked like an ace down the middle but it was called out. On the second serve I heard a let and so did Arthur because he just half-heartedly popped the ball back over the net. I didn't move for the ball and let it go, waiting for the 'let' call. But it never came. 6-5 to Ashe, said the umpire who had clearly not heard the ball hit the tape and, as there was no let call judge he was just trusting his own ears. I looked up at Arthur but

he was just turning around to collect the ball to serve. On the match point Arthur served to the backhand court and although the ball was out, once again there was no call and he won the match. It was a tough way to lose — three bad calls in two points right at the end of a match that had produced some great tennis from both of us.

Initially I was very upset, both at the loss and the way in which Arthur had behaved out of character. I had just assumed that he would always act the way I did and offer to play two whenever he knew his opponent had been victimised by a bad call. And in almost every instance I can remember, both before and after Caracas, that has been true. Arthur would not accept anything he did not think was rightfully his.

But this was a very tight situation for both of us — Arthur was shooting for top spot in the points table which carried huge bonuses and I needed that match to keep my chances of making Dallas alive. At a moment like that there is no place for the finer points of etiquette and sportsmanship in pro sports. You play by the rules and if the rules are interpreted in such a way as to make you lucky, so be it. Take your luck and run. You shouldn't feel any guilt about that because next time it will be the other guy who gets lucky.

There is just one problem with that philosophy as far as I am concerned. I do feel guilty. I wish I didn't, but I do. As I said earlier, the fight is entirely within myself and I am not seeking any medals for it. And I don't expect others to feel the way I do

and I wasn't mad at Arthur for accepting his luck. I just thought he was more like me.

Against Ilie Nastase, however, playing Mr Nice Guy proved to be a definite tactical advantage and I cannot deny that I piled it on a bit occasionally in a deliberate attempt to defuse the Romanian time bomb that was ticking away on the other side of the net.

Like John McEnroe, to some degree, Nastase needed to get the adrenalin pumping to play at his best. Temperamentally, he was confrontational on court. There had to be someone to scream at; someone to sharpen his blade for him before he could get down to the serious business of carving up his opponents with all that rapier-like skill. Very early on I made up my mind that he was not going to use me as a foil for his temperamental needs.

One occasion I remember in particular was the year WCT played a tournament in the vast Exhibition Hall at Earls Court. It was, I think, the only time tennis was ever played there as usually Patrick Deuchar, WCT's man in London, organised Lamar Hunt's tournaments at Olympia or, later, at the Royal Albert Hall.

But this time it was Earls Court, just round the corner from where Anand and I had stayed on our first ever visit to London only a few years before. Now far from being a wide-eyed kid flying in from India to visit Wimbledon for the first time, I flew in cross-eyed with jet lag from the United States to find myself playing Ken Rosewall for the seventh time in my career. How quickly things change!

Nevertheless it often helps to go into a tough match virtually straight from the plane before you give the jet lag a chance to take hold. In a sense you are still flying when you walk on court and, in this instance, I found that to be a definite advantage against the little maestro who had given me so much trouble in the past. Before I really discovered where I was I had beaten him for the first time and Kenny, who had been in London practising for several days, was not too amused at having lost to someone who had just stepped off the plane that morning!

The thrill of that victory kept me going and it needed to because, just as a sample of what kind of draws you got on those WCT tours, Nastase was my second round opponent. By this time, of course, we had played many times and had become good friends, largely as a result of having played World Team Tennis together for the Los Angeles Strings. And that, too, was to my advantage because Ilie, who basically has a very sweet nature, found it very difficult to work up a hate on court against people he really liked — although it did not stop him trying!

But I compounded this problem for him by killing every argument stone dead through the simple expedient of giving him the point. That took the wind out of sails completely. Suddenly there was no one to argue with. As soon as I conceded the point, the umpire was calling the score in his favour and that was that. There was nothing left to do but play tennis.

At courtside Ilie's lovely first wife Dominique, a long-limbed French brunette with a smile as wide as

the Champs Elysee, was laughing her head off. We had always got on well together and she knew exactly what was happening out on court.

'You naughty boy, you were so nice to him', Dominique giggled in her delicious French accent when we came off with the scoreboard showing a straight set defeat for the defused Nastase. At least I could plead that I was usually nice to people but we both knew that there was more than a question of good manners involved when I played Ilie.

Nothing much worried little Eddie Dibbs, the feisty little fighter from Florida who just got on with the business of wearing you down with his double-fisted backhand no matter what was happening on the other side of the net. This is what he did to me in the semi-final and went on to win the title. It was a fairly rare occurrence for 'Fast Eddie' to win tournaments indoors, for he was primarily a clay courter who managed to win the West German Open in Hamburg no less than three times in four years between 1973 and 1976.

Being nice to Nasty didn't always work, however. If he was particularly wound up, nothing could stop him mouthing off at lines judges and umpires and there were numerous occasions when he should have been penalised far more harshly than he was. On one occasion he did not get away with it because there was a loophole in the format of the tournament which allowed drastic action to be taken.

We were playing what became known as a 'taped-for-television' special at a little place called Salisbury, Maryland, an event run by WCT who had

their own little television network at the time. They would stage a tournament like this usually with eight top players and then have it shown on one of the cable networks that were starting to spring up at the time, with one match being shown each week. It made good business sense but only added to the confusion of the viewer and, in the long run, did the image of pro tennis little good, because these things would pop up all over the place in a time frame that often made no sense at all. Because there is so little coordination between rival companies in American television it would have been quite possible to have turned on your television set in the middle of the U.S. Open, on a day, say, when Connors was playing Nastase in the quarter-finals on CBS, only to find the same two players competing in this meaningless exhibition in Salisbury or Des Moines, Iowa, that had been taped seven weeks before. It was called overkill but at least it put money in our pockets.

At any rate on this particular occasion I was playing Nastase in a round robin format and I needed to win in order to pip Connors for a place against Nastase in the final the following day. With quite a bit at stake, it turned out to be a really close fought battle and, naturally, Ilie was wound up like piano-wire. Inevitably he was not playing a very attractive tune and, in the television truck, WCT Executive Director Mike Davies did not like what he was hearing. Davies had not been an angel himself during his days as a British Davis Cup player but foul language had never been one of the ways he

allowed his Welsh temperament to express itself and he would not tolerate any excessive swearing amongst the players who signed up for the WCT tour.

Unbeknown to us, Mike was obviously fuming away as he sat in front of the monitors in the truck and finally his patience snapped. The score was 2-1 to me in the third set when suddenly Davies marched on to court, wound down the net in front of a startled crowd and two very startled tennis players and turned to me and said, 'The match is over. You win', and then looking across at Nastase, added, 'and you lose'.

Heaven knows what the crowd thought because Davies, who had not been planning to go on public view that day, was only wearing jeans and they must have wondered what right some guy had to appear suddenly and roll down the net!

Nastase, predictably enough, leapt out of his chair and pursued Davies off court, yelling as he went and Mike had to call a meeting to calm things down because Connors was fuming, too, not just because he was a big pal of Ilie's but because my victory, awarded by default, had kept him out of the final.

But Davies stuck to his decision because he had seized on a rare occurrence whereby having to do without a match didn't matter. Of course the crowd's interests had to be considered to some extent but they were not the prime consideration. This was a tournament set up entirely for television and Davies knew that he had one match more than he needed to put out in the allotted network time. So he had the luxury of being able to scrap one match without

it ruining his programming. Knowing this, he made the most of it by trying to make an example of Nastase. It was a brave effort but, in the long run, I doubt if it did much good. On court, in the heat of battle, there was no way you could make Nasty nice. Nor, conversely, was there any way you could turn me into a tantrum-throwing lunatic. I claim no credit for that. It is just the way we are.

12

MARRIAGE

Strangely, I suppose, for someone who may be perceived as a very cosmopolitan and internationalised Indian, an arranged marriage was the perfect answer for me. Given the lifestyle I was leading and the values I held dear, there was almost no other solution.

For, despite all the people I had met and the relationships I had formed with some very charming and beautiful women in America and elsewhere I had never considered not marrying an Indian. In fact I tended to be a little more specific than that. I always had in mind to be married by the time I was thirty to a southern Indian girl, preferably Catholic, who would be at least six to eight years younger than I was.

This was what my father had done, so I wanted to do it, too. It was as simple as that. If I have been blessed with anything in life it has been through having parents who were perfect role models. Almost without exception, every piece of advice they have given me has turned out to be right, even if I rejected it at the outset. And the fact that they never turned round and said 'I told you so' only strengthened their hand.

Given the success of their marriage, why would I want to do anything different? The example was there, so why not follow it? To me, the logic seemed

hard to refute.

Had I been spending more time at home in Madras, it might have been possible to meet someone by chance — almost as my father had done with my mother — especially as dating, in the Western manner, is a little more acceptable now. Nevertheless dating a girl for any length of time is still considered tantamount to a marriage proposal, especially in the south, and I would have been very wary of the whole business. The fact that I was well known would also have been a drawback, because I have always had a fear of being pursued for my public image rather than the person I really am. It was not entirely a coincidence that I ended up marrying a girl who was wholly unimpressed by 'Vijay Amritraj, Tennis Star' for the simple reason she had never heard of me!

So, at the age of 27, in 1980, I asked my parents to find me a wife. Delighted as they were that I wanted to follow the traditional way of doing things, I think they felt the pressure to perform. They knew I was not going to accept the first eligible girl they found, nor would they have wanted me to, but I had sort of set them a deadline so there was no time to sit around. The chances of finding the woman of my dreams strolling down Sterling Road were not good — lightning does not strike twice in the same street!

I haven't heard all the stories of their search but I know they cast their net far and wide, travelling long distances around southern India, and no doubt having quite an amusing time in the process. At any

rate, I ended up meeting three of the half-dozen girls they thought might be suitable.

The first one, I had lunch with alone in Bangalore on one of my trips back to India. The first thing one has to admit about her was that she was stunning to look at; as near to a ten on ten as you are likely to get. Now there is no point in suggesting that this is not a major plus but for me looks have always been the icing on the cake rather than the cake itself. I know I am far from being an Indian Robert Redford and consequently have always put far more emphasis on personality and the ability to amuse and attract people through the art of conversation. As a result I expect a girl to be able to do the same.

Having said this, I am not implying that the beauty sitting opposite me was stupid or devoid of things to say. It was just that something didn't click. I suppose I was put off by the fact that everybody had said 'yes' except me. Although neither of us was indelicate enough to actually mention the word 'marriage', my parents had told me that her parents and the girl herself had agreed to it in principle. This bothered me.

During the conversation I somehow got the feeling that she felt it was already a fait accompli and didn't think it necessary to find out who I really was. Apart from what she may have read in the newspapers, she didn't know me any better than the waiter serving us in the restaurant of the Ashoka Hotel. Yet she had already made up her mind to marry me! What was I like as a person? Didn't she want to know that? I would have hoped so but, for whatever reason,

maybe shyness, maybe indifference, she never transmitted this to me.

Of course marriage was never discussed. The fact that we were lunching alone together was delicate enough and we parted on perfectly cordial terms. But something told me this one was not for me. One lunch is hardly a fair test, of course, but you have to trust your intuition in these things and, under these rather special circumstances, it is always easier to say 'no' than 'yes'. There is a big difference between walking away and committing yourself for life!

I did see another girl in Madras who was just not my type at all but before leaving Bangalore an uncle of mine set up a lunch with some good friends of his who had a daughter. It was more of an afterthought, than anything but we decided to go along just to have a look.

Well, we had a look and the sight was very lovely indeed. When she came down the stairs, I looked across at Ashok who had fallen into the role as sort of chief adviser in these matters and his reaction was obviously the same as mine. It was not just the looks but the personality of the girl that was so obviously appealing.

However ... as well, first of all she wasn't a Catholic. She was Christian but not Catholic. I suppose, when it comes down to it, I put religion on top of the list of categories I was looking for in a wife. It is just that religion has played a very important part in my life and I would find it difficult living with someone who did not worship in the same way as I did. Even though religion is an intensely personal matter, I

also believe it is something for people who love one another to share and although I ended up marrying a woman who is probably more overtly religious than myself we still enjoy going to church together. It is an integral part of our lives.

So the fact that she was not a Catholic worried me but there was also another problem which might have created even more disruption in the family. It transpired that her father had his heart set on finding a son-in-law who would settle in Bangalore and take over the running of his business for him. Frankly, I did not see this in my future so we did not pursue it. Happily my uncle acted as a sort of conduit as far as putting out feelers on the marriage situation was concerned, so we never actually got as far as talking about it family to family. So, in this instance, we never had to say 'no'. But I believe it worked out well for her because she got married soon afterwards and her husband is, indeed, running her father's business.

Throughout all this period, my parents were flying here and there, following up tips and suggestions from friends and contacts. It had become a full time occupation and I will not have to explain to Indian readers how diligently they went about it. This was serious business!

One obvious place for them to look was Sri Lanka. I had stated a preference for southern Indian Catholics and there were, of course, many good Tamil families in the Colombo area. Checking into the Oberoi Hotel, as was their custom, they started calling a list of contacts and met with a couple of families

who, for some reason or another, did not turn out to be suitable. However, they were thinking of continuing their search in that region and, partly with that in mind, they were attending a party at the Sri Lankan High Commission back home in Madras when they spoke to the First Secretary about the matter. If you hear of any possibilities just let us know, they said.

Does fate play a part in our destinies? I have never been able to argue very convincingly against the notion. Almost the very next day, my would-be father-in-law walked into that same High Commission in Madras seeking information about a certificate his third daughter needed to attend medical school in the city. And in course of the conversation he had with the First Secretary he just happened to mention that his eldest daughter was due to get married that summer but that he was on the lookout for a suitable husband for his second daughter and should the Secretary, by any chance, happen to hear of any nice young men around town, could he let him know?

Well, the guy was not slow to get on the blower to my parents, I can tell you, and within the week they were back at the Oberoi in Colombo, making arrangements to meet Mr and Mrs Wenceslaus. Shyamala's parents were only too happy to have my mother and father over to the house but Shyamala herself was absolutely not interested in meeting them. It was nothing personal. How could it have been? She just didn't want to meet prospective in-laws of prospective husbands for the purpose of an arranged marriage. She was against the whole concept. She

had received sixteen different approaches during that very year from the parents of would-be suitors and had refused to meet any of them. She wasn't interested and that was that.

However her parents managed to convince her that it would be very impolite not even to say hello to Mr & Mrs Amritraj who had come all the way from Madras. So, although the name meant nothing to her, that was what she did. Being very casual about the whole thing, she popped downstairs in a pair of jeans, smiled, shook my parents by the hand, exchanged pleasantries and disappeared up to her room again. It was a brief appearance but a fateful one because Mummy and Daddy were smitten. They thought she was lovely, lively and right in just about every way. The age was right; the religion was right; even the geography was right, because her father had come from southern India before settling in Colombo. They might have looked very calm about it all but inside they were jumping up and down.

It was January 1982 and I was playing in the United States when my father called. He tried to sound very casual about it all but I know him too well. If he's excited about something he can never conceal it from me so I knew right away that he thought this latest find of theirs was 'it'. How it would have developed, if at all, had I not got injured soon afterwards while playing in Richmond, Virginia, I have no idea but, once again, fate took a hand. I did get injured and, with two weeks to go before I was due to play in the Milan Indoors, I decided on the spur of the moment to fly home to get some special treatment

for my leg from Godwin Rose, a former colleague of my father's at the Indian Railways who had studied homoeopathic medicine and had gone a long way to perfecting the art. He had been treating all my family for years and I instinctively turned to him whenever I had a problem.

But the decision to go home had nothing to do with what my father had told me on the phone. It was only when I was airborne with Air-India that Mrs Wenceslaus called my mother to say that she and her three daughters would be in Madras that week to do some shopping for the eldest girl's wedding which was coming up on the 2nd of June. Perhaps, Shyamala's mother suggested, it might be a good opportunity to meet. My future bride did not, apparently, have much say in the matter and, in any case, she had no idea I was going to be there.

Her curiosity had been whetted to an extent, however, by her best friend, Leila, back home in Colombo. Leila was a tennis nut who knew all about me and couldn't believe that my parents had been making enquiries about her friend Shyamala. In between rushing off to play tennis at her local club Leila would tell Shyamala, 'At least go and meet the guy. You must at least check him out.'

So from that standpoint alone, there was a flicker of interest on her part but only flicker. She was going to be in Madras anyway and when she heard that I had arrived in town and that the Amritrajs had invited her mother and sisters to dinner at the Gymkhana Club, she sort of resigned herself to it.

When I got home I could sense the feeling of

suppressed excitement on my parents' part, so, of course, I readily agreed to join them for dinner although, after the previous failures, I wasn't building up any hopes.

We sat out on the lawn in the pleasantly cool (by Madras standards) evening air and the dinner went well. Premila, the youngest sister, did most of the talking and I tried to chip in with my own ten cents worth occasionally. It was the 15th of February — a date I have much less trouble recalling than the score of some of my important matches — and the main impression I came away with was that I liked all of them. I just found them very pleasant people to be around and that was obviously a major plus.

As we got in the car to drive home, my parents could hardly wait to hear my reaction, but I deliberately tried to remain cool because it was still too early to make any kind of a commitment and I didn't want to raise their hopes.

'I think we ought to meet again tomorrow', was as much as I would say.

So the next morning we went round to the Atlantic Hotel and while the two Mums talked in the bedroom of the suite they had taken for their shopping expedition, Shyamala and I sat chatting in the living room for about forty minutes. We talked about everything except tennis but the dreaded question, 'I know you play tennis but what do you do for a living?' never came. She was ignorant of professional sports but she was too intelligent to ask silly questions.

I am not, however, going to try to pretend that it was brainpower alone that swayed me. I definitely

found her very attractive. Later I teased her when she asked what first attracted me by saying, 'The shape of your butt!' As she was wearing jeans when we had our little talk at the Hotel, she had given me plenty of opportunity to admire it.

But, of course, it was a whole variety of things that made me want to find out more about this charming, lovely-looking girl from Sri Lanka and so, on the third day, I paid another visit to the Atlantic to have lunch with Shyamala and Mrs Wenceslaus. That went off very well, too, and I now realised the decision was looming in front of me. I talked it over with my parents for a bit later in the day and had a final talk with them before catching the plane to Bombay that evening to make the connection to Milan the following morning. I was well aware of the magnitude of the whole affair. Saying 'yes' was a monumental step for me to take. This was not a tennis match. This was life. But somewhere deep inside me I knew the decision had been made.

'I think this is it', I told my parents before leaving for the airport.

Now it was their turn to get scared. Their delight was tempered by all the inevitable thoughts of a mother and father who have their son's welfare at heart. There is always an element of risk in an arranged marriage, because judgments have to be made on the basis of such relatively scanty evidence. But my parents are firm believers in the idea that two young people with the will to do so can make a marriage work if the important things in their backgrounds are compatible. The values, the belief,

the manners, and the upbringing.

'If these are the same, then all the problems and crises that will inevitably appear at some time or another in a relationship, can be worked out,' says my mother firmly. With her record, how can you argue?

Nevertheless, the moment of mild panic set in when I told them that I thought Shyamala was the one and it was two elated but slightly apprehensive people I left in Madras that night.

But the signs on Shyamala's side of the family had all been positive ever since our first meeting. I don't know what I did exactly to bring about the change in her attitude towards an arranged marriage but whatever it was must have been convincing because when her father, who had not been in Madras, called my parents after receiving reports of the week's happenings, he said that he didn't feel the need to meet me before giving consent.

'If my wife and Shyamala approve then it is all right with me', said Mr Wenceslaus who has proved to be the most reasonable of fathers-in-law! Not to mention the nicest.

Shyamala and I were married in the same church as my parents, San Thome Cathedral on the beach on Madras. The wedding lasted three days, as these things do in India. Although there was a lot of pressure on me to have a horoscope drawn up beforehand, as is often customary in my country, I resisted. I knew instinctively that I was marrying the right girl at the right time. We could not have had a better endorsement from our friends. One thousand

people crammed into a church built to hold only 800 and 4,000 guests came to the reception at Rail House, the official railway guest house where my in-laws were staying. We shook hands with every single one of them, and they gave us so many gifts that it took us a whole year before we were able to open them all.

We invited friends from all over the world and they had thought of everything it is possible to give as a wedding present, from toasters to the gold sovereigns that are a traditional Indian gift. It was a traditional wedding. Shyamala chose to wear a selection of beautiful saris, and on the wedding day itself I wore the *shirvani* (high-buttoned tunic) just as my father had, though for dinner on the first day, when we had 500 guests, I wore a navy-blue blazer, and on the third day, when another 500 came, I had graduated to black tie. When we had thoroughly celebrated in Madras, we boarded the private jet belonging to Al Hill Jr, the president of World Championship Tennis, and flew off to Colombo to continue the reception in Shyamala's home-town.

The first thing to do after our wedding was to give Shyamala a taste of life on the tennis circuit. I am afraid I didn't waste any time and the poor girl spent part of her honeymoon at the U.S. Indoor Championships at Memphis. That may not seem like the most romantic setting in the world, but tournament director Tommy Buford runs one of the most popular events on the tour and the hospitality we received certainly made up for the lack of swaying palm trees on golden beaches.

There was no shortage of sand or palm trees at the next stop, which was Kuwait. It offered a great example for a newcomer to the tour of how suddenly the backdrop to tournament life can change. The hotel in Kuwait may have been a Marriott but it did not look very much like anything we had seen in Memphis primarily, I suppose, because it was a ship! Instead of going to the expense of building a new hotel, Marriott had bought a liner and cemented it to the dockside. 'Welcome aboard, sir!' they said as people checked in.

In fact we didn't stay on board but took one of the little pavilions that had been erected along the quayside as a sort of hotel annexe. The courts were right there so it was all very convenient and I think Ilie Nastase and I managed to entertain my bride; not only by winning the doubles title when we beat Brod Dyke and Rod Frawley in the final but by turning up on court in a sheik's flowing robes, head gear and all. But even Ilie admitted it would be a little impractical to try and play in them.

The introduction to Los Angeles had gone off well, largely as a result of a huge party Ashok threw for us at the house we were sharing at the time in Sherman Oaks which sits just near the San Diego freeway at the beginning of what LA people call The Valley. The house, which had its own tennis court, had suited us fine, but if Shyamala and I were going to make a proper home in Los Angeles I knew we would need a place of our own. Especially after the baby was born.

I reckoned after the way Shyamala managed the

birth of our first son, she deserved anything I could give her. I thought I had it all planned perfectly but babies have minds of their own and Prakash was impatient to get out into the world. As a result Shyamala had to handle a lot of things without me and had it not been for the kindness and support of our dear friends Sid and Dottie Balkin, I don't know what would have happened.

The baby was due on 17 October and, after a Davis Cup tie I had to play against Japan in Tokyo which was scheduled to finish on 2 October, I was planning to take the remainder of the month off. So when I left for Tokyo I moved Shyamala into the Balkin's Beverly Hills home and everything was supposed to be fine.

It was still fine when I called from the Keio Plaza Hotel on the Saturday to say that I would be catching the evening flight out right at the end of the matches on the following day. Because one gains almost an entire day travelling back across the Pacific date line, that would put me back in LÁ on the Sunday morning.

I called even before I went through Customs but there was no answer from the Balkins' house. Trying to keep calm, I immediately called Ashok who said, 'Congratulations! Get over to the hospital right away.'

So mother and baby were waiting for me when I arrived at the Tarzana Medical Centre not far from our present home in Encino after Barry Balkin, Sid's son, had picked me up at the airport. The sight of the little infant left me speechless for a moment. You don't know what to think. We had only been

married a year and now we were a real family. When I came to my senses I think my first thoughts were of the responsibility it carried. Having a wife was one thing, because she was a grown woman who was capable of looking after herself, but now this helpless life form had shown up and I found myself thinking, 'Do I have enough to protect these two human beings?' It was almost as if I was tapping my pockets to see if I had enough.

But I was also incredibly proud of my wife. Despite the warmth of the hospitality and practical assistance she received from Sid Dottie, and Dottie's mother Helen, she was still a stranger in a strange town and not just another Indian town, either. There is nothing about LA that reminds you of Madras or Colombo. It must have been daunting for her, but she managed beautifully and had even succeeded in giving us a son whose birthday would always be a public holiday in India — 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

I wasn't taking ~~any~~ risks when Vikram was due on 3 November 1987 and was right there at her bedside and, just as the birth began, I remember Shyamala telling me to take a note of the time. It was 10.18 p.m. It was a wonderful experience being there at the birth but also a disturbing one. Although Shyamala had a much easier time with the second baby, there is still pain involved and it is much worse for me to watch someone else in pain than to suffer pain myself. You have this dreadful fear that maybe you are making things worse for them by watching and not being able to do anything to ease that pain.

But I suppose only a woman really understands about giving birth.

By the time Vikram was born, our new home in Encino, not far from the Universal Studios we had dreamed about visiting as kids, was built. That had been very important for Shyamala. Although Los Angeles is far more cosmopolitan than most American cities and is full of foreign nationals who have settled there, the transition from the security and familiarity of a family home in Colombo had not been easy for her, especially when I had been away on tour.

But the new house was her project and she created an environment she felt happy in. The design was hers and she used all the ideas she had picked up from houses she had seen at home and other things she had read in magazines to fit her tastes as closely as possible. My only concern, naturally, was that we might run over budget. Too many of my friends had warned me that building a house in LA was like opening up a bottomless pit. But Shyamala had a simple answer to that.

‘We’ll pray and everything will be fine’, she said. And it was.

If anything we came in under budget and for that we have our builders to thank. They were a couple of young guys called Shawn and Brian Antin who were in their early twenties and whose father was the man we bought the land from. They had worked on commercial property before but ours was to be their first custom-built house. Maybe we prayed a little harder as a result of that but, in reality, we had nothing to worry about. They built a lovely home

in precisely six months in 1986 and now Standard Pacific Builders is such a success that Shawn and Brian take vacations on their own yacht. As far as we are concerned, they deserve it.

Shyamala deserved the house they had built for us, too. She was only 24 at the time but knew exactly what she wanted and exercised her amazing memory for detail to add the final touches to the fittings. The result is that we have a beautiful Californian house with a definite Indian feel about it.

This is very important as far as I am concerned, because I never want Prakash or Vikram to lose sight of the fact that they are Indians. It is difficult because Prakash obviously picks up all the colloquial Americanisms at school, which is fine up to a point. But the cultures really are so different, absolute night and day in many ways, that I am determined not to let them become submerged in Americana to the extent that they lose sight of their Indian heritage. It is so easy to let television run your life in America, which must be resisted at all costs. But, hopefully, our children can end up with the best of both worlds if that is not asking for too much.

I think at some time in the future Shyamala would like to return to India on a more permanent basis and I would have no quarrel with that. From my point of view, if we could just shrink the Pacific Ocean it would make my life a lot easier!

INDIAN TENNIS

People frequently ask me why India does not produce a higher ratio of international sporting champions. We are, after all, a big country with vast human resources. But that alone is not enough. Facets of a national character have to be taken in consideration, too, and the fact is that there are two in-built attitudes emanating from our Indian culture that work against us.

First, in India, we tend to be satisfied with what we have rather than seek that which appears unattainable. And secondly, we feel it is better to play the game in a stylishly sporting manner rather than go hell-bent for victory at all costs.

In other words, our athletes are not doing absolutely everything in their power to be the best. Within India one can get by with that attitude because we are all like that. But obviously it is not good enough when we are exposed to the savage realities of international competition. This is a pity, because we have our fair share of talented people in India. We are quick to learn and an ability to absorb tactics at an early age is an essential ingredient in creating young champions; Michael Chang, the 17-year-old French Open champion, offering a prime example of how intellect can triumph over brawn. As a race we are also handsomely endowed with hand to eye co-ordination which is why so many of our youngsters excel

naturally at ball sports like cricket, hockey, squash and tennis.

Where we fail miserably is in the legs area. Of course I can only speak for myself in this respect but unhappily I am the norm rather than the exception. India simply does not produce little twinkle-toed geniuses like Maradona or lithe, long-striding fast bowlers like Michael Holding. We are blessed with skill but not speed. We are crafty but not mobile, not at any rate by international standards. Without being unduly immodest, if I had Bjorn Borg's legs I could have been No. 1 in the world.

On today's pro tour pace and power are paramount and of the two, pace, providing it is allied to a quick tennis brain, is the more important. I think Chang has proved that by winning the French Open without a really big shot. But Michael is a rarity and the type of tennis we saw between two heavyweights, Boris Becker and Ivan Lendl, in the final of the 1989 U.S. Open, is far closer to the pattern that is emerging — a pattern rooted in bone-crushing power. However it should be noted that Becker is only starting to live up to the reputation he created for himself by becoming the youngest Wimbledon Champion in history after an enormous amount of work on his mobility. By nature Boris is cumbersome as, indeed, was another Wimbledon Champion Stan Smith who was rejected as a ball boy at the Los Angeles Tennis Club when he was thirteen, because he was considered a slow mover with over-size feet! Stan worked hard to overcome that and Boris has worked even harder, running up and down moun-

tainsides in Austria with the great Romanian bear, Ion Tiriac, on his heels and later being put through his paces on the track by Frank Dick, director of coaching for Britain's Olympic athletes.

Hard work is all very fine but there is still a limit to what can be achieved. Nature did not intend the tortoise to move as fast as the hare and although I would not like to suggest there is that much difference between Indian athletes and those from other countries, we are still stuck with a hereditary problem that may take a generation or two to overcome. Certainly we have got to do something to deal with the ever-changing nature of world sport with its accelerating accent on speed and power.

During the Olympics in Seoul I had several fascinating conversations with our hockey captain Somiah who told me that the European nations had relaxed some of the rules regarding the physical aspects of what, previously, had been considered foul play, thus allowing the game to become rougher. In addition most of the pitches have been changed from turf to artificial grass which had speeded up the game considerably. As a result there is less time now for the skilful stick work at which the legendary Dhyanchand used to excel. The consequences of these changes have been inevitable. Once world champions, India's hockey players now find a bronze medal beyond their grasp.

Hockey is just one example of how so many of the major international sports have changed in recent years and, in doing so, have downgraded the special skills at which Indians were naturally so adept.

But these are technical deficiencies which, with hard work, possibly can be overcome. The improvement will never be of any use however unless our attitude to sport — and the very concept of sports as a full-time profession — undergoes a radical change. International sports is far too professional as we near the end of the twentieth century for there to be any half measures. Unless parents understand that a youngster wishing to become a professional in any sports must view that undertaking with exactly the same measure of commitment as he or she would view a career in law, medicine or chartered accountancy the results will never have a chance of measuring up to the standards set by the rest of the world. This is fact and we have got to come to grips with it.

Now, I know exactly what many concerned parents with athletically talented children will say in return. They will point out quite correctly that if you go to the university to study law or any of the professions, you will graduate eventually, even if it takes up to five years. And once you have graduated you will be armed with the credentials to set off on a successful career. But, the parent will say, you can spend five years messing about with a tennis or cricket ball, even with the best teachers in the world, and there is no guarantee at all that you will graduate to the level required to make a good living from the game.

Now, obviously this is extremely worrying to the normal Indian parent who adheres, as I do, to the normal progression of things. In India, more than in other countries, perhaps, we search for that feeling

of security by believing that there are certain times in our life for certain things. First of all it is the parents' duty to put the child through school and college. Then the father will help you find a decent job and with that comes the first real feeling of independence even though you will still, in all probability, be living at home. Soon you may be able to get a car and become the young man about town. But after a couple of years, the parents' final obligation will be to find you a wife. So when you finally move out of your parents' house at the age of 26 or 27, you will have all the trappings of a successful man — a good education, a good job and a good wife.

I think all that is wonderful and I would be the last person to want to change a pattern which lays the basis for a happy life. However, it must be recognised that a career in professional sports cannot fit into that pattern. And unless a way can be found to work round that pattern, it is totally unreasonable to expect Indian athletes to win Olympic medals or Grand Slam tennis titles because they simply don't stand a chance.

None of this would matter very much if the desire to produce athletes of international quality was not there. But all the signs over the past twenty years since I started a career in sports point to the fact that there is now enormous interest in sports of all kinds and a real desire to compete at the highest level. Great changes have taken place in Indian sports in this period of time with public interest being matched by corporate interest. Major companies now

see sports marketing as a legitimate way to advertise their products with the result that money is available for the numerous schemes that are already in place.

Tennis coaches all over India are starting to make good money because of the demand that has increased tenfold since the days when we were driven off for lessons with Rama Rao. The standard of coaching may not be universally high, especially at the advanced level, but a sound knowledge of the basics is something that all Indian coaches have in common. So much so that several have proved very popular in the United States. There are more than a dozen Indians coaching tennis in the Eastern States alone and one, Bidyut Goswami, has risen to the heights of being head coach at Columbia University in New York as well as director of coaching at the exclusive Westchester Country Club. Americans have come to realise that with an Indian coach, the fundamentals will be correct.

All this is fine for the cream of the crop of who break through but it does not solve the basic problem of making tennis, or any other sports, an attractive long-term proposition for a young boy or girl. Quite apart from the BAT-Amritraj scheme, which I will come to in a minute, I have a few suggestions to overcome this problem which I think are worth pursuing.

One, which I intend to follow up and act upon, only concerns those at the very top of their sports who have a serious shot at making it on the international stage. But something has to be done at this level because without the hero — the Bjorn Borg

figure — the magnet which draws other young people into sports is missing.

My suggestion is that the top ten companies in the country are approached at the senior executive level and asked to name the two sports in which the directors are most interested. Then they would be asked to guarantee two jobs for athletes from both those sports from the age of 25 or beyond, depending on when that person finished his or her athletic career.

Say two jobs were handed out to tennis players by a company every two years, that would mean that there was a safety net for ten players every decade — a guarantee that even if they did not turn into an international superstar, they would still have a secure career ahead of them when it was time to quit.

In sport, no one can ever tell when that time will come. It may come suddenly and sickeningly out of the blue like the fate that befell the Wimbledon doubles champion Peter McNamara who beat Ivan Lendl to win the Grand Prix title in Brussels one week and, just as his ranking rose to the top ten on the ATP computer, tore his knee to bits in Rotterdam the next. The popular Australian was finished as a singles player from that moment on — an income of half a million dollars a year reduced to nothing overnight.

That can be psychologically as well as financially devastating, which is why it is so important for a young person to have something solid to turn to in the event of serious injury.

But even for those who emerge physically unscathed, the prospect of a good job when they retire is all important. Only a minuscule percentage of athletes who take up a sport full time can hope to make the breakthrough into the kind of sphere that earns you enough money in ten years to secure your family for life. If you are sensible with your money and make sound investments, a tennis player who can maintain a top twenty ranking for a period of five years or more should have few worries. But we are talking about the elite here and even a moderately successful player who holds a top hundred ranking for a number of years cannot look forward to a life of leisure when he can no longer compete on the ATP Tour. That is why the lack of long-term job security frightens so many performers of international potential away from a full-time athletic career.

Many, I think, would prefer to have that security awaiting them in the future than a lump sum infusion of cash early on to help set them on the road. The companies, too, would prefer not to have to put money on the line but rather wait to employ a college graduate who will come to them at a mature age with all the additional knowledge gleaned from worldwide travel and considerable contact with the kind of people international sportsmen are constantly meeting. That is an education in itself; one which offers a far broader view of the world than most domestic companies can expect to receive from their home-grown employees.

In sport as in business contacts are everything. It is almost impossible to get anything done if you do

not know who to turn to or how to bring like-minded people together to set a scheme in motion. The more you travel, the wider your network of contacts becomes and your capabilities increase accordingly. Obviously the Britannia Amritraj Training Scheme would never have got off the ground had I not already established a close working relationship with Nabisco, the world-wide conglomerate which sponsored the Grand Prix tour for the final years of its existence.

The first germ of an idea was sown as a result of a conversation I had with Rajan Pillai, vice-president of Britannia and a senior executive of Nabisco Brands in 1984. I was worried about what was going to happen to the Indian Davis Cup team when Anand and I retired and I discovered that Rajan shared my views on what needed to be done. It was too much of a risk leaving it to chance. A proper training programme needed to be implemented so that a handful of the most talented young players in India could receive the benefit of the best coaching we could find. Talking about it was one thing and talk we did. We met in New York, London, Singapore, Bangkok and a few other places I happened to be playing or passing through but the whole project started to reach the launching pad when F. Ross Johnson, the chief operating officer of Nabisco, and his senior vice-president Mike Masterpool visited India later in 1984. Rajan and I went with them to Goa for the day and it was over lunch by the pool of our hotel that Johnson said, 'That's a brilliant idea, let's do it'.

So suddenly everything became possible. With the go-ahead from the very top, it was merely a question of getting down to the nuts and bolts and making this thing happen. Coaches were obviously our prime concern, because our idea was to bring up to a dozen of the best youngsters in India to Madras, put them into school and fit four to five hours a day of tennis training into their curriculum. Six days a week they would be working with the coaches we had to find for them so there could be no compromise on that score; the coaches had to be the best.

Instinctively I turned to Peter Burwash, a former Canadian Davis Cup player who had set up a remarkable network of coaches in over fifty countries around the world, many of them Third World nations with only basic amenities, which demanded a high level of dedication from the men posted there. I had met some of these young fellows and had been impressed by their attitude. Anyone signing up with Burwash had to commit to a no smoking, no drinking and very definitely no drugs clause. When travelling they were expected to wear a coat and tie. Apart from the quality of the technical advice his people offered, Burwash wanted to upgrade the overall image of the professional tennis coach. Handsome hunks in sneakers and biceps-baring T-shirts who chased the girls with a racket in one hand and a beer in the other were definitely out as far as Peter was concerned.

A vegetarian, Burwash encouraged his people to follow suit and it was the emphasis he placed on diet, aerobics and all the latest American-inspired

aids to complete physical health and fitness which appealed to me in particular. His methods of teaching would place emphasis on those areas where Anand, Ashok and I had been found wanting — in speed and mobility.

Peter had no one in India at the time and was very enthusiastic about the whole project when I met him in Los Angeles. We quickly came to an agreement and the next job for my brothers and me was to select the boys who would become the guinea pigs for the first BAT programme. This was a tremendous responsibility. We were proposing that 13-to-17-year-olds should leave home and come and live in Madras where we would put ourselves in charge of not only their tennis but their education. This was nothing short of taking on the responsibility of the final development of an entire human being. Doing this for one's own son is one thing; doing it for someone else's is another thing altogether.

At this point, one thing became clear. If my mother didn't agree to take charge of the children's welfare we could not proceed. There was no one else with whom we could entrust the day-to-day care and supervision of such a disparate group of youngsters, all of whom would need a mother figure to turn to during their first months of being away from home. Luckily, my mother agreed to take on the task and, immediately and inevitably, became totally involved. If a boy stubbed a toe, my mother would make sure it was properly attended to. If anyone fell behind in his school work, failed to go to church on Sunday, didn't eat his breakfast, or simply became homesick,

Maggie Amritraj was the one who attended to it.

I think it filled a void in her life because, even with the cardboard factory to run and my father to look after, the comparatively sudden disappearance of three sons from the nest had left a lot of time vacant in the day of such an energetic woman and the idea of having to worry about a new batch of half-a-dozen adopted sons suited her just fine!

It was not a simple task, because the boys brought their customs and religions from all over India; from Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Hyderabad, and elsewhere and being the sort of person she is my mother often became emotionally involved with their welfare to a point that could be distressing when they did not live up to her expectations. But mostly they have been a wonderful bunch of kids working conscientiously under their Burwash coaches Ted Murray, Fred Boeker and, later, Dave O'Meara.

This is a relief because Anand, Ashok and I were responsible for choosing them. We decided that all three of us would make an independent assessment of each boy we saw and rate him on a scale of ten. Those that received the highest marks were selected. Right from the start, however, I wanted to make it quite clear that the expectations should not be too high. They were not all going to make it and the last thing I wanted was for the press to start pointing a finger at them when they failed. That would have been grossly unfair, because we were learning as much as they were and, as the years pass, there will obviously be ways in which we can improve the programme.

But by May 1985, a start had been made and the three of us had made a commitment to pay one visit a month to Madras on a rotating basis so that we could keep in close touch with developments and give the BAT boys, as they became known, the feeling that we were personally involved in their progress. On a couple of occasions I have been able to bring my Nabisco colleague Rod Laver with me. The fact that Laver is the only man in history to have achieved the Grand Slam twice, the feat of winning all four of the world's major championships in one year would be enough to make him special. But he also happens to be one of the greatest guys I have ever met, a totally genuine and delightful human being who has been a wonderful ambassador for the sport since he retired from the tour in the mid-seventies. Naturally the BAT boys were thrilled to see him and listen to his expert advice.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the boys and their parents for taking the plunge with us on this uncharted venture. It took courage and foresight on their part and, even if some of them never turn into the champions they aspired to be, then I hope they will look back on the experience as a beneficial part of their lives. Certainly they should have learned something from the competitive camaraderie that was established under coaches like Dave O'Meara and that will be no bad thing for their future.

In the first batch to join us there was Rohit Rajbal from Delhi, Gaurav Nateker (Bombay), K.P. Balraj (Madras), Raffi Farooqui (Hyderabad) and Sridhar

Bhabalia (Bombay). Of that original intake Nateker and Farooqui are still with us five years after.

Then we had Asif Ishmail from Bombay who was the Asian Junior champion in 1989 and Leander Paes from Calcutta who reached the last 16 at Junior Wimbledon in the same year. In addition we have Anirban Barua from Gauhati in Assam, Akshat Misra (Hyderabad) and Rohit Reddy (Madras).

Although Nabisco are no longer involved now that the company's term as Grand Prix sponsor had ended, the programme will continue under the Britannia banner. Rajan Pillai has committed himself to that and, as a member of the Britannia board of directors, I shall be offering all the support I can at the corporate level.

Unfortunately, five years after the BAT programme came into existence it is still the only one of its kind in the country. This is sad on many counts, not least for the fact that everyone thrives on competition and we would welcome it. If there was a national training squad or another commercially sponsored group in, say, Bombay or Poona, our boys would benefit from the chance of competing against rival groups.

But where are they? Why are we still alone? We have proved that it can be done; we have proved that you can go out and find sponsorship; we have proved you can design a programme for a specific purpose; we've proved that it can be followed through successfully at least as far as giving a few youngsters a healthy and unique kind of education. So why has no one followed us?

Why, in particular, can't the tennis association do

it? They have the clout of the Government behind them; an even greater access to sponsorship than most people; the ability to acquire land or anything else that might be needed to set up a school of this type, and the technical knowhow to lay down courts anywhere in the country. So what's the problem?

Unfortunately for our association, the problem seems to be that it requires work.

I find fault with them for that. There can be no possible excuse for the fact that the same failed formula is being pursued now that was followed thirty or forty years ago, certainly long before I came into the sport. Promising young players are sent off to Europe for the same three months to play the same tournaments and they come home with the same results. Anything they have learned during their trip abroad is soon forgotten as the routine of school life takes over and tennis is pushed to one side.

The Indian Tennis Federation cannot claim to have produced a single top international player off its own bat since Independence. Ramanathan Krishnan and his son were both the products of Ramesh's grandfather and most of the others have also risen to the top as a result of family projects. We were raised by our parents and their decision to put us under the instruction of Rama Rao; Jaideep Mukerjea and Prem Lall were both the products of heavy family involvement in their development in Calcutta. Sashi Menon worked hard at his game in Poona and then turned himself into a Davis Cup player as a result of his time as a member of the powerful USC college team in Los Angeles. Jaz Singh, who went to Notre

Dame, also needed to fine tune his game in America before he could aspire to Davis Cup standard.

So the harsh truth of the matter is that the association has produced no one of international significance. Any company facing that kind of failure rate over a very short period of time compared with the long barren years we are talking about here, would have gone back to the drawing board and come up with any number of alternative solutions. It doesn't require a rocket scientist to work out that a programme which is producing a zero success rate needs to be changed. But the ideas that come out of our association's headquarters are as stale and unoriginal as they were when Anand and I first set off for Europe.

There is no excuse for this abject failure rate. Twice in the last three decades our tennis officials have been given the opportunity to jump on the bandwagon created by a natural talent that has passed by their front door and to build something from it. First of all there was Ramanathan Krishnan and then there were the Amritraj brothers. In our own way, we provided Indian tennis with almost the same kind of inspiration as Bjorn Borg offered the Swedes. The difference is that the Swedish Federation recognised just what kind of an opportunity Borg provided and immediately set about doing something about it.

Coaches were trained to the highest standard and sent out to the regional towns to train others; indoor facilities were built within reach of every major community so that little blond kids called Mats and Stefan only had to get on the bicycles on snowy

winter evenings and paddle off to a nice, warm tennis court where a coach was waiting to teach them how to play.

All the little Stefans wanted to become Bjorn Borg and an amazing number had a jolly good crack at it. Quite apart from Mats Wilander and Stefan Edberg, who have now amassed ten Grand Slam Singles titles between them, a whole host of other Swedes like Joakim Nystrom, Anders Jarred, Mikael Pernfors and Jonas Svensson have made it into the world's top twenty — frequently matching the number of Americans in that bracket on the ATP computer, an incredible feat, considering the entire population of Sweden (eight million) is reckoned to be lower than the active tennis population of the United States.

The West German Federation is equally well aware of the opportunity provided by the sudden emergence of Boris Becker and Steffi Graf. To have two such talents blossom at virtually the same time within a fifty-mile radius of each other was a phenomenal piece of good fortune and the German Federation, to its credit, recognises that you cannot legislate for that sort of thing. But you can legislate for the kind of programme that can capitalise on it and that is where the Indian LTA have been so culpable.

It is not even that we are asking them to produce champions. We are simply asking them to attempt to produce champions. We are asking them to go out and do some work for a change. This criticism is directed not simply at the top echelon in Delhi but all the way down the line to the 26 state associations, all of whom have the ability to come up

with their own ideas and implement their own programmes if only they had sufficient gumption to do so. Obviously some like Maharashtra and West Bengal have more opportunity than many of the other regions because of the particular popularity of tennis within their areas.

Obviously some inspirational direction from the top would be of considerable benefit but that has never been provided and the overriding impression one is left with is that all these secretaries at the state level are in the job for the specific purpose of bettering themselves. How much better that betterment would be if they could do a job that was worthwhile!

It is not even as if the sporting associations in India — for it would be unreasonable to confine this criticism to tennis — receive no encouraging signals from the Government. The former Prime Minister and his mother before him had both given all manner of support to Indian sports and the Davis Cup, in particular, has benefited from the attention given it by Rajiv Gandhi.

Whenever we had a Davis Cup tie in Delhi, the Prime Minister always hosted the draw for us which gives the whole occasion a tremendous sense of importance. This is far from being the case in the United States where a Davis Cup draw is often conducted by a USTA official in a low-key ceremony that hardly merits the attention of the local mayor.

We have been lucky, too, in recent years in having a Sports Minister who has a real love of sports and takes a keen interest in it. Mrs Margaret Alva had, at the very least, created a Sports Ministry where

people would listen to what you have to say and remain open to new ideas. I only wish some of that openness would filter down to the national associations.

In discussing this problem, it is impossible to escape the fact that Indian tennis has laboured under a yoke called R.K. Khanna for much of the last twenty-five years. I was far from being the only person in Indian sports who was appalled when Khanna manipulated another term of office as Secretary in 1988 because it meant that we were heading back into the dark ages once again after an all too brief period of enlightenment under the leadership of P.L. Reddy.

From the earliest days of our involvement in Indian tennis Khanna was the only name we heard about. He was the boss up in Delhi and anything he said was law. Naturally he surrounded himself with like-minded people and had three or four henchmen who were as useless as he was, if not worse.

Useless is, perhaps, too gentle a word to use in describing the way Khanna used to run Indian tennis in the late sixties and early seventies. His philosophy was based on the idea that the country's best players should be coerced into playing in official tournaments for the absolute minimum amount of money. When, as a junior on a shoe-string budget, I played in a tournament in Amritsar, Khanna agreed to pay me ten rupees for expenses and then demanded an entry fee of twelve rupees. That was the way he operated and when Grand Prix tennis made a brief appearance in India in the mid-seventies, ATP officials like Jim

McManus went home shocked by the double dealing that had gone on over the prize money. McManus spent half the week in Delhi in Khanna's office trying to extract moneys that were laid down by the Grand Prix rules and had been agreed beforehand. But Khanna is a chartered accountant and has a way with figures. The columns always seem to add up to his advantage.

What I came to resent most about Khanna's leadership was the rotten image he was creating for India and Indian tennis in the international community. 'Oh, don't go to play in India, they'll rob you blind', was a comment one heard on numerous occasions in the locker-room and it really stuck in the throat. But Khanna didn't care. He was too busy collecting awards for himself and doing nothing. When Krishnan led India to the Challenge Round of the Davis Cup against Australia in 1966, Khanna was awarded the Padma Shri and Krishnan got a handshake. When Krish, Anand and I took India through to the final again in 1974 — unhappily against South Africa in a final that was never allowed to be played — Khanna received an even more prestigious honour, the Padma Bhushan. He didn't get these awards for being a great chartered accountant. He got them because the three of us worked desperately hard to produce the very best tennis of which we were capable while he sat on his backside trying to work out ways of paying us even less than he had agreed.

It got so bad that, after beating the USSR in the semi-final at Poona in 1974 which was a great victory

for us, we were lucky to get out of town with our expenses paid, let alone anything else.

The fact that India was blessed with three world class players was none of Khanna's doing but he became the beneficiary. As a result he was able to hide behind our success and camouflage the stagnation which existed at the grassroots level during his first tenure of office. Nothing was happening. But Khanna didn't care, because we were winning matches for him. His successor Dilip Bose was a nicer man but hardly more innovative. It was only when P.L. Reddy became secretary in 1984 that some pressure for the forces of good in Indian tennis were exerted. Suddenly a bright light was shining and things started to happen. Junior programmes were instigated and young players were encouraged at every level.

Nor could anyone accuse P.L. of worrying about his own welfare. When he travelled on tennis business for India, the secretary flew on the cheapest economy class ticket he could find and lodged himself at the cheapest hotels. On numerous occasions I remember him staying at bed-and-breakfast places in Earls Court while everyone else was at the Gloucester or the London Hilton.

'It is always better that one more junior should have the chance to travel rather than spend unnecessary money on myself', P.L. would tell me when I enquired after his welfare. Frankly, I don't think the secretary of the Indian Tennis Federation should live as cheaply as P.L. did, but what a pleasant contrast he offered to his predecessors.

P.L.'s open and friendly personality helped to draw many of India's best junior players towards the association instead of having them feel alienated by it and the rapport he established with the senior players had a great deal to do with our success in 1987. I have no doubt at all that P.L.'s presence was an inspirational factor in helping us reach the Davis Cup Final that year. Naturally it helped that all the playing members of the team were from Madras, as was P.L., so obviously communication was easier at every level, but that was of secondary importance. P.L. Reddy is an exceptionally pleasant, helpful straightforward and selfless individual of a type very rarely found in sports administration. We were lucky to have him.

It was just so refreshing to be dealing with someone who was open to new ideas. P.L. was instrumental in bringing artificial surfaces into India so that our players could practise on the kind of courts that they might find when they travelled abroad. He readily accepted my suggestion that we try something different with the position of Davis Cup coach and welcomed the Californian Gene Malin with open arms. Gene was made to feel part of the team and helped inject a new attitude and sense of purpose to our training. We all got on and we all had fun. Inevitably this was translated into better performances on court, so much so that a team which, on paper, was nowhere near to being the second best team in the world, made it all the way through to the final. Team spirit played a large part in that and P.L. was our leader.

Unfortunately P.L. is not a politician, certainly not a politician with Khanna's Machiavellian talent. As a result Reddy is no longer secretary and Khanna has got his old job back. It happened in Cochin in 1988 when the elections were held at the annual general meeting. P.L. was running for re-election on a ticket with Natwar Singh, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, as President and Anil Jauhar as treasurer.

There was no doubt that Khanna, who had his own candidate for President running with him, would have given P.L. a good fight in an open election but, given the success of the Davis Cup team the year before, I would have been amazed if Khanna would have been able to oust such a well-liked figure, even allowing for a certain amount of North-South jealousy.

Khanna, however, was too cunning to allow it to get to a vote. On the morning of the election, Khanna took Natwar Singh to one side and impressed upon him that he would be defeated if he ran with P.L. and that, as a prominent cabinet minister, that would reflect very badly on his reputation. The best thing for him to do, Khanna suggested, was for P.L. to be persuaded not to run and for Natwar Singh to join Khanna's ticket in place of the nominated presidential candidate who, of course, Khanna was quite willing to jettison at the eleventh hour.

With his political career to think about, Natwar Singh fell for this devious line of argument and P.L. immediately agreed to stand down when asked. Why? Because P.L. is a nice man, that's why. Because he wants nothing to do with sordid political manoeuvring

and self-serving deals that circumvent the democratic process. A more bloody-minded man would have refused, but P.L. is not like that. And it is because he is not that way that he was so good for Indian tennis.

With Reddy out of contention, Khanna's re-constructed ticket ran unopposed. In my view, it was a tragedy for Indian tennis, because Khanna is simply not the right man for the job. If any of the Amritrajs had been in Cochin, it is possible that we might have been able to ensure that the delegates were given a proper election and a proper choice. But, to date, we have not involved ourselves directly with tennis politics in India and have no immediate plans of doing so. But Khanna will need watching and maybe he will remember a little scene that took place in a hotel room in Bombay when my mother and I were trying to persuade him to be a bit more reasonable over some point or other that directly affected my career. I was only 16 at the time but I was already big on quotes and I remember telling him, 'You can kick an old man because you know what he is but never kick a young man because you never know what he'll become'.

I hope R.K. Khanna remembers that. I really do.

MY ALL-TIME TOP TEN

Selecting your World Cricket XI or All-Time Top Ten tennis players is a wonderful way to pass the time in airport lounges or on rainy afternoons in the locker-room when the covers are on and you are second match on and the referee refuses to call it for the day. I won't allow any arguments about who should open the batting for my World XI — just check the career record of my good friend Sunil Gavaskar and there is no further discussion. But was Tilden better than Budge, or Budge better than Kramer? How would the great American pre-war champion Helen Wills Moody have fared against the post-war teenage sensation from the States, Maureen Connolly?

When you look at old movie clips of Budge or Perry or von Cramm you get the impression that they would be eaten alive by the power and speed of the modern professional. But did cinematography in the thirties give a true impression of the way the game was actually being played? And even if it did, the champions of that era were only playing as well as they had to. Given graphite rackets, better shoes, advanced training methods, improved diets, and all the other factors that make each generation of athletes superior to their forebears, wouldn't Don Budge's backhand have cut as big a swathe through our defences today as it did when he beat Gottfried von Cramm to win the first of his two Wimbledon titles

in 1937? Possibly. But it is an argument best left as just that — a good stimulating topic of conversation.

In selecting my All-Time Ten I am going to stick to my time or at least to those players close enough to my era for me to have seen them, if not actually played against them. And even then the choice is not easy. It is a very close call between the first three but I am going to remain loyal to my boyhood hero and I think that, by now, the reader may be able to guess who that is.

PANCHO GONZALES : I saw and played against Pancho when he was past his prime but that only increased my awe of and admiration for the man. Knowing how good he was at forty told me all I needed to know about how great he must have been at thirty. That match against Charlie Pasarell at Wimbledon provided all the evidence necessary for the world, let alone me, to realise just what an impact he would have had on Wimbledon in the late fifties and early sixties had professionals been allowed to play there.

One does not immediately think of personality as a weapon in a player's technical armoury but in Pancho's case, it was his greatest weapon. That overpowering personality of his ensured that the match was half-won as soon as he walked on to the court. Even some of his own great contemporaries were scared stiff of the man. If the tennis circuit has always been a bit of a jungle then Gonzales was the lion, king of beasts ready to devour anyone who had the temerity to stand in his path. The attitude he took with him on court immediately made you

feel inferior. Only someone as confident in his own power and ability as Lew Hoad could look him in the eye and, on occasion, stare him down. Pancho respected that. When he was at the height of his powers and the height of his arrogance on the old Kramer tour, Gonzales would not give you the time of the day until you had beaten him. Respect was earned the hard way.

Talking technically in more conventional terms, the serve and volley was the soundest part of his game. In my opinion his serve and volley was as near to perfection as you could hope to achieve. On a scale of 0 to 10 I would rate it at $9\frac{1}{2}$. I don't think his forehand was great. It tended to be a bit hit-or-miss and was not as good as his backhand. But he was a great athlete and again one has to get back to the manner in which he played his matches; the way he handled the big points; the way he manoeuvred you about the court, forcing you into positions where you knew he could hurt you most — these were the things which made him such an awesome, dangerous opponent.

He is, needless to say, very different from me in temperament but that did nothing to diminish my admiration of the man or prevent me from trying to model my game on his. I even tried to walk like him. I don't think I even succeeded in scaring people like Pancho, but it was worth a try!

I hate to try and divide the very greatest players into a sort of ATP computer ranking list, one, two, three, because they were really on par in their overall greatness as far as being true, 24-carat-gold cham-

pions was concerned but as I have always considered the greatest win of my career to have been against the next man on my list. I suppose that clinches it.

ROD LAVER : The way he played the game was a marvel. For a man of relatively small stature, he had perfect balance, incredible speed, and every shot in the book. He was so unassuming that, at first, people did not realise how much flair he had and how much of it he was giving to the game. He was the first great left-hander to go over his backhand — notoriously the weaker side for the left-hander who, pre-Laver, had tended to push or slice their backhand and just hope that they could get it back over the net. Laver showed his fellow southpaws that the backhand could be an attacking weapon and the moment during a match when Rod switched from slice to top-spin on that flank signalled that he felt confident enough to take you apart. He grew up in Rockhampton in Queensland; so it was inevitable he would be called 'The Rockhampton Rocket'. That flaming red hair helped to add a little colour to his shy, subdued off-court personality which contrasted so sharply with the way he played tennis.

Laver was not too successful when he was sent abroad for his first world tour as a green teenager but luckily the shrewd eye of Australia's legendary Davis Cup coach Harry Hopman was watching him and Hop knew he had time. I once heard a story of how another former player came to watch Laver practising one day and noticed how he attacked the ball on virtually every shot, hitting a good many of them out.

‘The kid’s got a lot of talent but he makes far too many mistakes’, the ex-player observed to Hopman who was standing at courtside. ‘Don’t you think you ought to rein him in a bit, calm him down so that he doesn’t hit so many balls out?’

‘Not on your life!’ replied the wily old fox. ‘With his talent, one day they’ll all start going in and then what a player we’ll have!’

From all accounts Harry Hopman was not a great tactician but he had an unerring eye for spotting the champions of tomorrow and an equally unerring ability to let them develop, aided by hard work and discipline, in their own way. So Rocket’s genius was allowed to flow unhindered and within a matter of years he had become only the second man in history to achieve the Grand Slam — winning all four major titles in one calendar year. Only Budge had done it before, but when Open Tennis came in, Laver went one better and did it again in 1969. No one has done it since, not even once, and, given the competition at the top today, it may be that Laver will stand alone forever as the only two-time Grand Slammer in the history of tennis. If that turns out to be true there will not be a soul who would suggest he did not deserve it.

Laver was as fine a champion as you could wish for, not merely by virtue of his demeanour on court but through the feeling that he still managed to impart to you across the net that he was capable of upping his game and beating you at any moment. The scariest part of his game was revealed when he got into trouble and, for a fleeting moment, you

thought you had got him. Then the floodgates would open and all that talent would engulf you and you would be treading water frantically just to stay in a match you thought was yours. Yes, actually beating Rod Laver was special — so special, in fact, that there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that beating him at the U.S. Open in 1973 was the greatest achievement of my career.

BJORN BORG : He has to be up there amongst my top three because he was a phenomenon in our sport and you won't see his like again. Just as Laver's two Grand Slams may never be equalled, so it is impossible to imagine that anyone will emulate Borg's incredible feat winning five consecutive Wimbledons.

It was made even more incredible for me — and I don't think I was alone amongst my peers on the tour in feeling this — because each year Bjorn won I didn't think he was good enough to do so. I really did not think he could serve and volley; I really did not think he felt comfortable on grass; I really did not think his second serve and the way he manoeuvred his way into the net was good enough to allow him to win consistently on grass and yet each year he would go and win it again! It was incredible and really defied logic but then great champions have the capacity to do that.

Of course on clay he was invincible and that was easier to understand even though winning the French Open six times is not something that figures on the list of what most mortals think they might possibly achieve in life. Six times out of the last six years that he played Roland Garros! That alone makes him

a very special kind of champion but with his speed, intense concentration, unflappable temperament, and technical solidity off the ground clay was always going to be the surface on which he could grind opponents into the dust.

It was strange that he failed to seize the one real opportunity he had of winning the U.S. Open on clay when they ripped up the grass at Forest Hills in 1974 and laid the grey, loose-top Har-Tru on which the WCT Tournament of Champions is still played to this day. Jimmy Connors beat him that year and he has admitted looking back, that his loss in the final that year to a player he really should have beaten on clay is the one defeat that comes back to haunt him. More so now, of course, because the U.S. Open was the one really big title he never won. I find that a big perplexing, too, because when the championships were moved to Flushing Meadow, I would have thought the medium-fast Decoturf cement-style court would have suited his game just as much as grass ever did. But every year he failed to win it the pressure may have built in his mind and somehow it always eluded him. To me it proved nothing other than that he was human.

But his overall supremacy in the game during that period between 1975 and 1981 marked him as one of the game's outstanding achievers and, of course, his success had an immeasurable influence on the game in Sweden. It would have been impossible to predict when Borg won the French Open for the first time in 1974 that a Swede would win the world's premier clay court title no less than nine times in

the following fifteen years. Mats Wilander has kept the blue and yellow flag flying over Stade Roland Garros with almost as much consistency in recent years, winning it for the third time in 1988, and it is incredible to think that if Borg had not gone off to play World Team Tennis for two years in 1976 and 1977, the Swedish tally could have risen to eleven. Whichever way you look at it Borg's legacy is very special indeed.

The legend which grew up around him was rather special, too. He never said much and carried himself in such a way that an aura of untouchable invincibility grew up around him. If anything needed to be said, it was usually his coach Lennart Bergelin who did the talking. Soon people started to regard the silent Swede with a touch of reverence. Personally I think he did great things for the game and its image and, along with people like Arthur Ashe and Stan Smith, he made one proud of being a tennis player.

JIMMY CONNORS : In my mind, Jimmy is only one small notch below the other three. I have always had a tremendous admiration for the way he plays tennis, an admiration that has grown and grown as Connors has gone on and on. His longevity is unbelievable. He has won 106 singles titles on the Grand Prix or WCT tours during his career, which is more than thirty ahead of his nearest challengers, McEnroe and Lendl. More incredibly still, perhaps, he has never been out of the top ten on the ATP computer since the rankings were invented way back in 1972 and for a four-year period between the Seiko Classic in Tokyo in October 1984 and the

Washington, DC, event in July 1988 he had to maintain that position with the benefit of the points earned from a singles title. It seemed that he would be stuck on 105 forever, but to have remained in the world's top ten from the age of 31 to 35 without winning a title only emphasises Jimmy's fantastic consistency and dedication to his sport. Tennis consumes him and always has done. He throws himself into it with the same all-embracing fervour and professionalism as Meryl Streep taking on a new movie role. Both are totally engulfed by what they are doing and the results show.

Technically, Connors' service was definitely flawed. It had a problem right from the word go and he never snapped out of it.

There was also a small area on the forehand where he was vulnerable. People have tended to make a great deal out of it, but in fact you had to be a very good player indeed to exploit that particular weakness in Connors' game. Anyone not in the top ten struggled to find it. But it was there. Because of the grip he uses and the racket he used to use — that steel-framed Wilson T 2000 that they eventually stopped making because no one else could play with the thing — it was possible to get the ball down low to Jimmy's forehand and he would find it difficult, if not impossible, to get it back up over the net. It was a matter of precise angles and Jimmy didn't help himself by always trying to go for the perfect approach shot which made the fine line between success and disaster all the finer.

I think everyone realised that the forehand was

exploitable when Ashe played such a brilliant soft-ball game to beat Connors in the 1975 Wimbledon final, but you had to be playing awfully well to do it. And if you were not, then the two-handed backhand came into play and murdered you. That backhand had to be one of the great shots of all time — so accurate and taken so early. If Jimmy hit it right, the guy on the other side of the net just had no chance. It was lethal. Still is, for that matter. That shot is one of the reasons why Connors has always been one of my favourite players to watch and I think that goes for a lot of people. But from the average spectator's point of view I suppose it was his personality and that hell-for-leather, gutsy, do-or-die style of his that has earned him millions of fans all over the world.

Jimmy Connors is *committed*.

LEW HOAD : To an even greater extent than Gonzales, I never saw Lew in his prime and never even got the chance to play against him. Although younger than Pancho, Lew's back went not long after he joined the Kramer tour after winning consecutive Wimbledon in 1956 and 1957, and although he battled on through the pain barrier for a number of years, he was finished physically as far as being a top contender was concerned by the time Open Tennis arrived in 1968. But greatness never leaves a great player. No matter what the passing years do to the body and the reflexes, innate talent shines through and I got a very clear indication of just how great Hoad must have been when I made a special point of watching his first round match on his return to Wimbledon in 1968 when he played Jaideep

Mukerjea.

Now "Muk" could play on grass and, at that time, was playing the best tennis of his career, which meant that the standard we are talking about was not at all shabby. And he was facing a man who not only had a bad back and was 33 but who had played hardly any serious grass court tennis for ten years. But Hoad beat Mukerjea 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 and it wasn't even as close as the score suggests. Lew toyed with him. It was as if he was strolling around out there with a beer in his left hand.

I had heard stories about Hoad from some of the older players, notably Gonzales, of course, about how Lew used to saw off the end of his Dunlop Maxply so that he could hold it like a table tennis bat and still generate all the power he needed from that massive forearm. Many of the matches he played against Gonzales during their 100-match tour in the late fifties were played on fast boards and Hoad used to step in and take Pancho's first serve on the rise. On one memorable occasion that sent the British crazy he took a set off Gonzales 6-0 in 13 minutes. That was in the old London Professional Championships at Wembley when they used to lay the wooden boards down for the pros every year. And Gonzales wasn't playing badly that day. In fact he recovered to win the match! Pancho rates Lew as the toughest opponent he ever had to face and, from what I saw of him, I can well understand why.

JOHN MCENROE : Amongst all the players I have mentioned so far I don't think any had as much natural talent for the game as McEnroe. Yet,

technically his game is extremely flawed. Nobody should ever try and teach a child to play like McEnroe. It is impossible to teach, or to try and imitate the things John can do with a racket and a ball because only one or two people in an entire generation will have the touch, feel and flexibility in their hands to be able to pull it off. McEnroe can hit winners from absolutely hopeless positions and hit them to perfection. You can't teach that nor even recommend that anyone try it because they would probably end up in a tangled mess on top of some poor spectator.

At the height of his powers in the early eighties, his serve was definitely one of the best the game has ever seen. I don't think I ever faced a better serve than McEnroe's. The strength of that left-handed delivery, especially the one that swung away from your backhand in the ad court, lay in the fact that by the time you actually managed to get a racket on it, he was already five feet inside the court and by the time the return reached him he was practically hanging over the net. And the chances of the return being any good were not too high either, because in all probability you had been grovelling around in front of the foot fault judge, trying to scoop the ball off the deck.

Of course, I would not recommend anyone imitating his temperament, either. It must be a very tough temperament to have to live with. Some of his excesses on court have been inexcusable but one has to remember that McEnroe is a true perfectionist and sets himself the most incredibly high standards. He may be intolerably harsh on those around him when

he is playing but he is harshest of all on himself. It does not make for a quiet or easy life, but then the streak of genius rarely comes wrapped in a sweet and even temper.

KEN ROSEWALL : Everything was sweet and even about Kenny's game — at least for the little maestro himself. If you happened to be the poor unfortunate soul on the other side of the net, life could be very rough indeed. And perplexing, too. You would see him standing there, peering at you under that tidy little thatch of black hair, at least a foot inside the baseline and you would give him your very best first serve and in a flash the ball would come zipping back across the net and you'd be stretching for your shoelaces again, trying to dig out that pinpoint return.

Like Laver, lack of height meant nothing to Rosewall. In fact his centre of gravity was so perfectly balanced that it made everything smoother and easier for him as he glided about court, anticipating so well it made you sick. But part of that ability could be traced to the fact that, like Borg and Connors, Rosewall simply saw the ball earlier than most players. Strange this, because I don't think Kenny's eyes were noticeably close together like Borg's or Connors'. I say strange because I believe it has been scientifically proven that people with close-set eyes can see a distant object faster — and we are talking of hundredths of a second here — than people with eyes set further apart. But a couple of a hundredth of a second is all you need on a tennis court to get a line on a first serve and move into position to be able to play the shot you want. No matter where his

eyes were set, Rosewall had this ability and it was just one of the factors in his game that tended to make life very miserable for anyone playing him.

But I think Rosewall was unique in the compact, economic way he played the game. He was as thrifty with the effort he expended on court as he was with the money he earned from the game. Everything was done with a minimum of effort because his stroke play was so classically moulded that he didn't need to do anything excessive out there. He was fifty before he suffered his first real injury, purely from the effects of playing tennis. That was hardly surprising because, with his pop-it-in serve and flowing strokes nothing was ever put under any strain. For Rosewall tennis was a game of chess and he played it like a master.

ILIE NASTASE : You can't exclude this guy from the top ten. On sheer talent alone he deserves to be on anybody's list. Apart from McEnroe, no one I have seen comes close to having this much natural ability. The only thing he lacked was a good volley. If he had been able to volley properly he would have won Wimbledon three or four times. Instead he had to be content with two appearances in the final and one Grand Slam title each at Roland Garros at Forest Hills. Plus, of course, four Masters titles between 1971 and 1975. But if he had been able to hit a proper volley with the wrist cocked and the racket head up, even his self-destructive temperament which lost him heaven knows how many matches would not have been able to prevent him winning twice the number of major titles he eventually laid his hands

on. It wasn't that he didn't move well at the net but rather that he refused to punch his volleys. Sometimes it seemed as if he was intent on teasing his opponent; of playing cat and mouse with him rather than going for the clean, quick kill. But especially towards the end of his career at the top, I think it was more a lack of nerve than anything else that affected him. He started thinking about his game too much and the nerves crept in. For a complete natural too much self-analysis can be fatal.

That was a shame, because the game has never seen such an entertainer as this wildly handsome Romanian. Just a glimpse of him on court was enough to tell even the most casual observer that he was watching something special. In tennis terms, this was Mozart and Beethoven and Liszt all wrapped up into one. Any fool could tell how great he was just by looking at him glide about the court. As a result he brought tremendous exposure to the game and created enormous interest in tennis everywhere but especially, of course, in Eastern Europe.

Not everything he did on a tennis court was right — far from it. But mainly he was funny. Eighty per cent of the time he was funny and twenty per cent he was gross but, as he has proved by the way he goes on playing, he loves the game and the game loves him.

IVAN LENDL : In this age of computers and calculators and high-tech fitness methods one cannot exclude Ivan from this top-ten list. I have no intention of being rude when I refer to him as a machine. In fact he deserves nothing but admiration for the way

in which he has used every ounce of his ability, coupled with the advantages of modern diet and training techniques to fight his way to the top of the tennis world and stay there, as undisputed No. 1, for as long as he has. Whereas tennis was the easiest thing in the world for Nastase, this tall, straight-backed Czech had to work at it. And I mean really work. A particular stroke that might take Nastase or McEnroe one hour to perfect would take Lendl eight or more. And even then he would need constant practice to keep it in working order.

But even as Ivan worked on his body, making it stronger by the day, so he became mentally stronger, too. The doubts that afflicted him when he started reaching Grand Slam finals and losing with what seemed like monotonous regularity at Flushing Meadow (three times), Paris and Kooyong before he finally won the French Open in 1984 when McEnroe let him back in after leading by two sets to love, evaporated to leave a very tough and durable winner who, by 1986, was totally dominating the world circuit on every surface except grass.

Obviously his as yet unresolved problems concerning his dedicated attempts to win Wimbledon — and the Australian Open when it was still played on grass at Kooyong — centred around his serve and volley. Basically his serve-and-volley motion is not technically correct for a quick surface. He can serve and he can volley but he can't put them both together. Not, at least, when it comes to trying to beat the very best grass court players in the world. After two appearances in the Wimbledon final he is obviously

not that far away but, hard as Ivan Lendl has tried, the natural fluency of a born-fast court player like McEnroe or Stefan Edberg who beat him the semi-final at Kooyong in 1985, will always expose the one major flaw in his remarkable armoury. But let no one say it has been through lack of effort. Ivan may not be exciting but he is a great professional and has been a credit to his sport.

ARTHUR ASHE : As my tenth man it was almost a toss up between Ashe and Stan Smith, his great friend and rival of the early seventies when they both matured into great champions. Both ended their careers as title-winners at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open as well as in the WCT Finals in Dallas and innumerable other important tournaments around the world, not forgetting their considerable contributions to America's cause in the Davis Cup.

Of course one was white and one was black and it is not on the basis of colour that I am choosing Arthur! But there is no point in denying that Ashe's colour gave him a very special platform from which to spread the word as far as tennis was concerned and tennis was well served by this remarkable ambassador. Smith, too, was an upright figure in the game in every sense but the impact Ashe left in so many parts of the world, especially after his various tours of Africa, was unmatched.

Ashe was also a wonderful player, free and fluent and full of flair. There is no question that he had more flair than Smith, who was more in the Lendl mould, of being a very effective but manufactured performer who had to work extremely hard to achieve

as much success as he did. Ashe's game was all fire and fireworks which either exploded into the most glorious Catherine wheels or went off like a damp squib. But he was always great to watch and proved, with his clinical and quite brilliant dissection of Connors in that 1975 Wimbledon final, that he was tactically an intellectual player as well — a player of instinct who could also sit down and plot a winning strategy when it was required of him.

Arthur was a top player who cared about the game as well as those who played it and the ATP was lucky to have him as their second President. Many of the rules that have since become law were formulated under Ashe's Presidency and there is no doubt at all that he put into tennis every bit as much as he took out.

So that, for better or worse, is my All-Time Top Ten and I don't even want to think about the great players I have left out. Roy Emerson, who helped me so much at a crucial stage of my career, must be considered in the same breath as that group because his title-winning record is simply phenomenal — 28 Grand Slam titles in singles and doubles with all four Grand Slam singles titles won at least twice. Emmo may have been a little lucky in that he hit an era when some of his great contemporaries were in the pro ranks but what a winner the guy must have been!

And then there are players like Tony Roche and Bob Lutz who were unfortunate with injuries which prevented them from reaching their full potential. Both had enormous talent and perhaps it was only

partial coincidence that both spent much of their career overshadowed by more extrovert personalities who, as far as natural ability was concerned, were marginally inferior tennis players. I refer, of course, to John Newcombe who partnered Roche to five Wimbledon doubles crowns and Stan Smith who helped Lutz with the U.S. Open doubles on four occasions.

By winning the French singles title in 1966 and reaching the final of the first Open Wimbledon two years later, Roche proved himself a superb all-court player before a chronic arm injury sent him off to the Philippines in search of a faith healer — the cure actually worked — but Lutz, who had severe knee problems, never quite reached that level in singles even though he was a major force in the early days of the WCT tour. It was then, of course, that he was separated from Smith, who had elected to remain on the Independent Pro tour and Bob immediately began to play better singles as soon as was away from his partner's dominating presence. Stan is a great guy but as a player he had a somewhat superior air about him which could be quite intimidating to anyone in his circle. At any rate I always used to have a great deal more trouble playing Lutz than I did Smith which brings me to another list, similar but significantly different from the first — that of players who I personally found the most difficult to play against which is not at all the same thing. As you will see some of the names are very different.

MY MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENTS

No prizes for guessing that John McEnroe was the player I had most difficulty with when he first burst on to the tennis scene in the late seventies. When a new talent comes along, all the "old pros" immediately start probing for his weaknesses and testing him with a variety of plays to see what he doesn't like. More so than today, perhaps, the locker-room used to be a pretty useful source of information in this respect. "Stretch him to the forehand; he can't go down the line off that shot" or "Chip to his backhand and come in— he can't pass." All this sort of stuff used to be very helpful before you faced a newcomer for the first time.

But after McEnroe had been around for a few months, you didn't get much out of anyone except a lot of head scratching. Probing for weaknesses in McEnroe was a futile exercise because the guy didn't have any. No matter where you tried to put the ball, you couldn't hurt him — or at least that was how it seemed at the outset.

I think the thing I found most demoralising on the first few occasions we played was his serve. His serve was a joke. I mean there was no way you could get the thing back half the time and if your opponent keeps on winning his service games to love or fifteen, frustration sets in pretty fast. And in one respect, which didn't help at all, McEnroe was no different

from any good serve-and-volley player — when he was serving well his whole game was lifted to a higher plane and that, of course, made him awesome.

After losing to him quite badly three or four times, I realised that I had to stand back and get someone to feed me some fresh tactical ideas. There has to be a better way to play anyone, no matter how good he is, but to do so one needs to clear the brain and stop bashing it against the brick wall that has been created, in part, by one's own sense of bewilderment and frustration.

I was lucky to have Roy Emerson to turn to and he plotted a blow by blow tactical plan for me on how to play McEnroe. Shortly afterwards, we were drawn to meet again in the quarter-final of the 1981 Canadian Open in Montreal. I phoned Emmo at his home in Newport Beach, California, the night before and we went through it again. First I was to chip and come in behind his second serve no matter how good it was. This took away the open court for him to volley into. Secondly, on your own serve, he would come back to your backhand volley off his forehand ninety per cent of the time. After Emmo pointed this out to me I began to realise that John had more feel on the return of serve off his backhand side. He could do more things with the shot at the last moment, fooling you with a late flick of the wrist. But off the forehand return he would almost always go to your backhand volley, so I ended up serving more second serves to his forehand in Montreal and it certainly helped. I came back from losing the first set to win a tight one in the third and beat him

again, more decisively in a three setter when we next met in the ATP Championships in Cincinnati soon afterwards. These tactical ploys didn't necessarily make the difference between victory and defeat but they certainly helped to make the contests a lot closer than they might otherwise have been.

Beating him also helped our personal relationship off court. Although there might have been a shyness factor involved which was certainly not the case with Gonzales, McEnroe also seemed to become approachable on equal terms only after you had beaten him. It was a matter of respect. Once you had earned his respect, he treated you differently. It was a clear cut thing with him, black and white, no grey areas. That is how he sees the world and it makes life very difficult for him because, once you are in the public eye, there are grey areas all over the place in terms of how you deal with people and how much you allow the public to intrude on your private life. But John doesn't see it that way and consequently life is very difficult for him. Not, however, any more difficult than he makes it for his opponents on a tennis court. It wasn't his tantrums that annoyed me so much, although they can be annoying. It was simply his tennis. At his best he plays in another world.

KEN ROSEWALL: What a wonderful player, what a great guy and what a pain to play! I think that would be the opinion of many players of my era who waited anxiously — and vainly — for the passing years to take the edge off Rosewall's game and still he would go on carving you up with those delicate

little strokes that were as effective as a surgeon's scalpel.

I think playing Rosewall made me realise I basically had problems with two different sets of players — left-handers of any stripe and right-handers with great backhands. This was because I could only put in a decent second serve by going down the middle in the deuce court and wide to the right-hander's backhand in the ad court. I could go for an ace to the forehand in the first court but if I went there with a second serve it tended to get chewed. So with lefties, whose forehand is almost always their strongest side and with great right-handed backhands I was in trouble whenever I missed a first serve, because I went straight to my opponent's strength with my second.

Partially for this reason, it took me a long time to beat a left-hander of any consequence. Tony Roche, Roscoe Tanner, Ismail El Shafei, Jim McManus and, of course, Jimmy Connors beat me (even though I hardly rate Connors as a true left-hander because his backhand was actually his stronger side) and in fact the very first top left-hander I beat was the greatest of all, Rod Laver.

But, like Marty Riessen, who once held a winning record over Laver but used to go through agonies against Rosewall, I found Kenny the most difficult opponent. His anticipation was uncanny and there were two factors which made your life particularly miserable. First, he had an incredible ability to turn defence into attack, so you were always finding the initiative snatched out of your grasp in mid-point.

Secondly, he would check you the instant you hit a second serve to that backhand. His favourite ploy was to hit an off-backhand straight back into your forehand corner which is the most difficult shot to play off a service return because the natural momentum from a serve to the deuce court carries you to the left. So there you were checked by the Grand Master of the first move. His next move would be the cross court to the backhand to have you stretching that way and it wouldn't have seemed so bad if he had been merciful and finished you off with the next shot. But he wouldn't do that. He would keep you alive a little longer and then deliver the KO. By the end of the set you were really dead.

Often he would look dead, too, but it was all an illusion. Despite all the head drooping and racket trailing signs of fatigue between points which only made him more appealing to the crowd, his reactions and speed were razor sharp as soon as the point started and the mental pressure he put on you was constant. He would try for every point and even at 40-0 up you never felt safe. It was all a kind of exquisite torture because, somewhere at the back of your tormented mind, you knew he was playing beautiful tennis.

HAROLD SOLOMON: I suppose Solly and his good pal Eddie Dibbs will not figure on the lists of great players of the seventies but both were mighty effective performers and won more than their fair share of matches. Dibbs, that cheery little prankster from Miami, may have been marginally the more successful of the two but it was Solly who gave me

the most trouble. Only on slow surfaces, mind you, because on anything fast I had the weapons to beat all the clay court masters of the era such as Guillermo Vilas and Manolo Orantes. But on a slow court I found Solomon as difficult as anyone and, once again, it was the second serve to the backhand factor that played a part in that, because Solly's two-hander off the backhand was his tougher shot and I was always serving into it.

Returning serve against Dibbs was easier for me than it was against Solomon, too, because I could hit Eddie's second serve and get in and pick the pass. Solly, on the other hand, was always making me dig low for the volley, thereby setting himself up for the pass which he hit with unfailing accuracy. Solly was a clever player and a bright guy off court, too. He went on to become President of the ATP and, with his wife Jan, raised a lot of money for the World Hunger Project. I admired him for that but I didn't like his game — especially when I was on the other side of the net.

JOHAN KRIEK: I am sure this great, muscular little athlete who had to be one of the fastest guys I have ever played against would feature on a lot of players' lists of people they least liked to play. His exceptional speed and athletic ability would certainly be a factor in that but it was his "out-to-lunch" attitude towards his tennis that made him so exasperating to play. You never knew what he was going to do next and one always had a strong suspicion that he didn't, either. How you played really didn't have much bearing on the subject at all.

It all depended on whether his shots went in or out and just how much control Johan had over that situation I never could tell.

He had the most slap-happy forehand I have ever seen, but if he got hold of it properly you never saw it. I was given the perfect example of how futile it was to worry about your own form when playing Kriek when I played him in back-to-back tournaments one year in San Francisco and Monterrey, Mexico. I played quite well indoors at the Cow Palace and beat him 6-2, 6-2. The next week, again indoors on a similar court in Mexico, I played almost exactly the same and lost 6-2, 6-2. It's no use worrying too much about a guy who tries to ace you on a second serve at 15-40 but it can be really annoying when he makes it!

SANDY MAYER: Sandy's younger brother Gene was reckoned to be the more talented of the two and his years ranked in the world's top ten would bear that out, but Sandy was tough for me for the simple reason that he succeeded in doing what I have managed to do late in my career — and he did it well, especially on a medium fast surface.

On a medium first serve, depending on your toss, or on a second serve, he would play it off his forehand or his backhand and come behind it and volley the return away for a winner. This was a facility that I found very difficult to counter, but anyone who saw me playing Bruno Oresar in the Davis Cup tie in New Delhi in 1988 will see why it can be so effective. It even worked for one game against Slobodan Zivojinovic before that massive first serve started

finding its mark and obliterating me from contention. It can be very effective against a net rusher on a fast surface if you execute the move properly. First of all you have to be moving in to take the ball early. Then you just have to hit the return to the side a little. It doesn't have to be on the line; you can give yourself a much bigger margin for error than that. The fact that you are moving in as you make contact will generate all the pace you need to put the server under immediate pressure as he lunges for the ball. At that stage he has three things to overcome: 1. The return is down low so he is having to play it off his ankles. 2. By the time he does so you are at the net, so he has to look up at a figure already in a physically dominating position. 3. With you at the net he has very little space in which to play his return which is almost certainly going to be easy meat for your volley.

Only the really solid grass court players like Brian Gottfried or Tim Mayotte can place the ball regularly in the very localised area that is available to them once you have successfully hit and come in. Anyone else has problems — even McEnroe doesn't like volleying low balls against an opponent towering over him at the net.

Sandy Mayer, who was an astute player who made good use of what his Hungarian-born father taught him as a youngster, worked all that out early in his career and because he did it so well I found him very difficult to play.

MILOSLAV MECIR: Because, in my terms, he is a relative newcomer to the scene, I haven't had a

chance to play Mecir as often as I have most of the players on this list, but the fact that no one — not even “Bobo” Zivojinovic — has beaten me so badly in Davis Cup on Indian soil says a fair amount for how much trouble I have had playing him. He seems to be a moody player who is not strong enough mentally yet to take the final hurdle of winning a Grand Slam title — witness his loss to Edberg in the semi-final at Wimbledon when he had Stefan two sets to love down and again 3-1 down in the fifth — but he has a wonderful and rather deceptive talent that obviously confuses a lot of players.

To my mind, his greatest asset lies in the fact that he takes the ball so early. That is an ability that he transfers equally well to grass or cement from the slow clay on which he grew up in Czechoslovakia and it immediately puts his opponent on the defensive. Coupled with that he has the facility to disguise the speed of his shots, using his body rather than the speed of the racket head to add extra pace to the third or fourth stroke of a rally. I think Mats Wilander and many of the Swedes who had had such a tough time with him in recent years have difficulty in picking the direction of his shots. I can pick the direction but I still find myself late getting there. His speed helps him, too, for he is very mobile for a big man and gets down to the ball well, which helps him when he has to volley on faster surfaces. Miloslav is not an overwhelming player, but he is terribly economical and very effective.

WOJTEK FIBAK: I always found this very shrewd Pole a tough opponent, which isn't to say that I

never beat him. In fact one of my victories over him, in the long-deceased WCT Challenge Cup in Montreal, allowed me to qualify for my round robin group and go on to reach the final where McEnroe destroyed me. But, just as runner-up I won \$70,000, which was by far the biggest second place prize money cheque on the tour at the time, so beating Wojtek was profitable as well as satisfying. But I never found beating him an easy task to accomplish.

Fibak never quite made it into the world's top ten but hung around ominously between twelve and twenty for a number of years, picking off bigger names as they passed him on the way up or as they slid back down. He was a tricky customer, tactically sound and very strong mentally. And, once again for me, the threat of a really good backhand was always a psychological handicap when we played. Fibak had a very good backhand indeed and that, allied to the fact that he never gave you any pace, making it hard for you to generate enough of your own to hit winners, made battles with him both mentally and physically fatiguing.

ANDERS JARRYD: I have always thought that Jarryd was a very underestimated player. Personally I would much rather play Edberg than Jarryd, which was one reason why I was particularly sorry to see Stefan ruled out of contention for the Davis Cup final in Gothenberg. I knew Jarryd would replace him and that was not to our advantage at all. I am afraid I went on to prove it by losing to him rather badly, but on a couple of other occasions I had come much closer and felt I had a really good chance of

winning. In the Davis Cup in Bangalore on the grass courts that the Swedes didn't think too much of, I led him by two sets to one before losing 6-4 in the fifth and in Cincinnati I had led 5-2 in the third and final set before he battled back to beat me.

But Anders is like that. He is a fighter and very aggressive for a Swede, both in the way he plays the game and with his on-court personality. He will show his emotions far more than any of his compatriots and really lets you know he would rather die out there than lose. Technically I find him tough, because he takes the ball exceptionally early and hits it with a lot of top-spin; not late, loopy sort of top like Wilander but early, flat top which really fizzes back at you. And he's quick, too, which makes him even more dangerous.

HENRI LECONTE: Henri has so much natural ability it's frightening. But, like his compatriot Guy Forget, he is not sufficiently disciplined mentally to make full use of what he has. Both Frenchmen need to make more intelligent use of what they have but Leconte, in particular, is a prize example of a hopelessly talented athlete who scatters his God-given gifts around like confetti.

Strangely — considering how difficult I find him to play — I hold a 2-0 winning record over him, including a match that stands out in my mind because it may end up being the last Grand Prix singles title I shall ever win — the final of the West of England Champions at Bristol in 1986. That, of course, was on grass, but Henri has proved he can play on that stuff; in fact, given his fine showing at Wimbledon

and his victory in the New South Wales Open at White City, it may be one of his best surfaces. But don't ask him why, because he probably doesn't know. He's all instinct. He goes out there to compete and to play and I have a strong suspicion he really doesn't know how he does it. That puts him in the Kriek class — don't bother trying to figure out what he's going to do next because he doesn't know himself.

And he does the most amazing things. Normally, if you stretch a guy on the dead run to the forehand side, he'll go up the line. But no, Henri goes for the short angle cross court, doesn't he? And you are standing like a dummy on the wrong side of the court. But he can do that sort of thing because he has a phenomenally strong wrist. In fact he's a strong boy and there is really no corner of the court into which you can work him and be confident he won't come up with something to hurt you. You can send him back chasing a top spin lob and he will still swing round and crack the return past you at a million miles an hour.

To my mind he needs nothing except consistency to win Wimbledon. He proved he could go a long way in a Grand Slam event by reaching the final of the French Open in 1988 where he feels under enormous pressure from the French crowds who are very critical of his style and attitude. So if he can get that far there, I do not see why he cannot go one better at Wimbledon where everyone loves him and the surface is really better suited to his game. If he can just concentrate and cut out some of the more unnecessary errors, he could be capable of

anything.

DAVID PATE: Pancho Gonzales used to help Pate when he was young and growing up in Las Vegas — hometown of the new sensation of the American game, Andre Agassi. I'm not sure I ever beat David and that doesn't surprise me, really, because he used to tee off on everything, especially when he first joined the tour as a youngster and he didn't take long to move into the world's top thirty just by surprising people. He used to go for it all the time; whacking away at every little opportunity and it became very hard to counter if he was playing well. When I played him, he even ended up serving bigger than I did and there have been moments over the past few years when he has seemed on the verge of a major breakthrough — getting to the final of the Benson & Hedges Championships at Wembley in 1986 and the Suntory Japan Open, the first year it was played in its fine new setting at Ariake Stadium in 1987. But, like Leconte at a slightly lower level, consistency continues to elude him. Not against me, however. For me he was consistently difficult.

MOVIES

I and James Bond? I and Roger Moore cavorting about Udaipur in a palace awash with gorgeous, half-naked girls? Oh, sure. Tune into fantasy time and try selling that line to the little star-struck ten-year-old sitting goggle-eyed in front of the cinema screen at the Gymkhana Club in Madras. John Wayne was up there on the screen; Big Duke larger than life, crashing through the jungles in *Hatari*, lassoing wild animals and dangerous bad guys from the bonnet of his jeep. And when it wasn't *Hatari*, one of my all time favourite films, it was cowboys and Indians, *The Lone Ranger*, *Red River* with Montgomery Clift and the Duke again but always it was movies, movies, movies.

They were an obsession for Ashok and me, more so, I think, than for Anand. Ashok saw *The Sound of Music* thirteen times. You have to be crazy or an incurable movie-buff to climb that mountain so often.

For me it had started with the children's movies at the Gymkhana Club and then had graduated to the adult cinema evenings every Saturday. That was when my fantasies began to take a serious hold on my imagination. Luckily, as kids, we were able to act out many of them, firing our cap pistols and racing up and down Sterling Road with all the other members of the railway community whose families lived nearby.

But even as we grew older and started to realise

that our celluloid heroes were really just people acting out a part, the thought of being one of them, of elevating oneself up there to the big wide screen was just a preposterous thought. How could we ever aspire to anything like that? It was, as Andy Williams was singing at the time, like dreaming the impossible dream.

But that did not stop us going to the movies like *The Ipcress File* with Michael Caine, the first film I ever saw outside the Gymkhana Club. It was showing at the Odeon, a cinema we would often be thrown out of for being underage. Ashok, being the smallest as well as the youngest, always had a problem trying to pass off as eighteen. But that never stopped him trying!

But the fantasy started coming into slightly sharper focus when Anand and I undertook our first full American tour in 1972. One of the first tournament stops was in Philadelphia where we were playing on grass at the old Merion Cricket Club and staying with Herb Munger and his family, one of those hospitable people who used to put players up during the tournaments in those days. Every single day I was there I used to walk past this store and gaze at a movie camera in the window. It cost \$28 and I couldn't afford it. But when I got my prize money for the week, which only amounted to fifty or sixty dollars, Herb virtually forced me to buy it.

"You'll never make a better investment", Herb told me. "You're going to be travelling all over the USA and at the end of the trip, you'll have something irreplaceable."

How right he was. I spent the precious \$28 and started shooting everything that moved. Herb had given me 50 feet of film to get me going and I never stopped. I shot scenes at every house we stayed in and every club we went to as well as all the usual tourist attractions. Anand got to be the star of the show because he was in just about every other frame. By the time we got to Hong Kong at the end of the year, I was able to buy a more sophisticated camera with a zoom lense. Now, just as Herb predicted, I have six hours of priceless footage at home in Los Angeles — a record of our youth and the friends we made that will be there for our grandchildren to see.

By the time I actually got a camera to my eyes — even if it was not quite the kind John Huston or David Lean might use — I began to get a feeling that, sometime in the future, we end up with a close connection to the movie world. The fantasy no longer seemed quite so out of reach. We were, after all, beginning to be seasoned travellers and had even taken the tour at Universal Studios — another dream come true. Back home in Madras we had seen the little footnote come up on the screen at the end of every Universal movie: "When you come to Hollywood, be sure to visit Universal Studios".

Now we had done that and, somewhere in the back of my mind, the possibilities grew. It started, I suppose, in the sort of unlikely place new ventures tend to start — in a glass-backed elevator, sliding down the side of the 40-storey atrium of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dallas. In the elevator with me

were Al Hill, a close friend who was Lamar Hunt's nephew, and Linda Carter, who I had already known for many years. Introducing Al to a star of Linda's magnitude (at the time she was one of the best-known women in America as a result of her role as wonder woman in the television series) was probably what did it for this long-time movie buff. Al had been hankering after a chance to get involved in Hollywood for years and, unlike many young men with similar dreams, this son of one of the wealthiest men in Dallas, had the money to do something about it. So from that brief conversation in a lift, an idea emerged and it did not take long to bring Ashok winging in from Los Angeles. Although Linda did not become part of the company we were about to form, she sparked it off and remains an enthusiastic supporter to this day.

After a remarkably short time, we came to an agreement with Al and Amritraj Productions was formed. Offices were taken on the Avenue of the Stars in Century City — a skyscraper adjunct to Hollywood with Beverly Hills on one side and the studios of 20th Century Fox on the other. Suddenly we were in the movie business!

For a variety of reasons Ashok was more than happy to hang up his racket and take on the task of running the company full time. As I have said the films had been his passion from day one and the chance of making them his full-time career was obviously irresistible to him. It could, of course, have gone to our heads. The temptation to jump in the deep end and start thinking in terms of handing out

million-dollar contracts to Robert Redford and Paul Newman to star in some Amritraj epic was always there. But I like to think that our Indian upbringing and the inherent caution that is a national characteristic saved us from any such stupidities.

So we started modestly and stayed close to home, as it were, by making the highlights film of the WCT Dallas Finals in 1981. It was a good way to get started and I still remember Ivan Lendl's girl friend of the time, a beautiful model called Taryn, wearing one of our T-shirts with 'Amritraj Productions' prominently displayed across her front. We liked that a lot.

It was at this point that I began to give some serious thought to another ambition of mine — acting. But even with one's own film company it is not something you can just walk into. It may sound all very glamorous and fun but acting is a very serious and demanding profession that requires training, dedication and hard work. Stars from other walks of life, especially sports, have a chance of getting in through the back door just because producers think they will add to the film's potential at the box office. But even then you have to know how to react to direction and carry yourself before the camera. The great Cleveland Browns full-back Jim Brown made it — remember him with Lee Marvin in *The Dirty Dozen*? — but many sports personalities have discovered that just because you look big and strong like Nick Nolte doesn't mean you can act.

Nevertheless I wanted to give it a try. But how much of a try? To the total exclusion of my tennis

career? No, I wasn't quite ready for that, although I was serious about acting and eventually enrolled in classes in Los Angeles. However I got lucky before that and, not for the first time, it was the kind of contacts you made out there on the international tennis circuit that opened the door for me.

I have an actor friend, who I see a lot of whenever I am in London, called Michael Billington — namesake of the well-known film critic of the *Guardian* — and, for many years before her marriage, Michael dated a girl called Barbara. Through Michael I had met Barbara during some World Team tennis matches at the Forum near LA Airport. Not long after, Barbara married Cubby Broccoli who just happened to be producer of the James Bond movies. (That, actually, is not Cubby's only claim to fame. His Italian grandfather invented the vegetable.)

Somehow, as a result of this tenuous connection, Cubby got to hear about me and, to my astonishment, I was approached just before Wimbledon 1982 to do a screen test for Roger Moore's next Bond movie which was to be called *Octopussy*. Initially all I could do was laugh. Were they serious? Me, acting not just in a big feature film but in a *James Bond* film, that series of box office blockbusters that had me glued to the screen in countless cinemas all over the world ever since I was allowed into one? But they were serious; so serious, in fact, that they wanted to see an interview I had done a little while before on the big ABC television programme 'Good Morning America' just to see how I looked on screen.

After viewing that, the offer became firm. I met

with the director, John Glenn, and the executive producers in London and managed to lighten what was quite a serious meeting when they told me, with straight faces, that they wanted me to do a screen test with a snake, as it formed an integral part of the plot and the role I would be playing as James Bond's Indian assistant.

"But I've never worked with a snake except McEnroe", I protested. The crack was a little unfair on John but it had the desired effect and we all got on famously after that. Except that I was landed with a screen test with a snake which was no joke at all as far as I was concerned. Some people are kind enough to call me charming but I had never contemplated directing that charm towards a snake and the thought terrified me.

The whole thing also posed considerable logistic problems. That year, 1982, I had to play through the qualifying at Wimbledon because of the political row that was going on in tennis between World Championship Tennis and the game's establishment, which I have described elsewhere. So there was no guarantee that I would even be involved in the first week of Wimbledon which was the time slot Broccoli wanted for the screen test. So, taking a chance, I agreed to do it at 8.00 a.m. on the first Thursday of Wimbledon, praying that, even if I was still in the tournament, I would not be scheduled for singles that day. Initially, at least, my prayers were not answered. I not only won all three qualifying matches but my first two rounds in the main draw as well and found myself scheduled to play Roscoe Tanner

on the Centre Court on Thursday afternoon. Well, I thought, if I pull this off I will become the only person in history to do a screen test at Pinewood and play a Centre Court match at Wimbledon on the same day. As it turned out, I never got the chance because, naturally, it rained all afternoon and my match, which I eventually lost 6-4 in the fifth, was postponed till the next day.

However I was still somewhere in the first set with the snake and not getting on too well. As preparation for the screen test I had been given four pages of dialogue to memorise which turned out to be the least of my problems. Midway through the trauma of trying to battle my way through the Wimbledon qualifying, which is one of the most nerve-racking tournaments on earth at the best of times, I was called up by the producers who said they were sending the snake and its master round to the Kensington Hilton where I was staying so that we could become acquainted.

My faint hopes that it was all a nasty nightmare collapsed when my phone rang and a marginally hysterical receptionist said that the film company had hired a room just off the main lobby and were waiting for me. When I walked in I was confronted with the sight of this nice Indian gentleman sitting at a table on which there lay this absolutely huge snake — ten feet of undiluted cobra. They started to explain to me how we could start practising the routine of getting accustomed to the snake while I conversed with the snake charmer who would actually be an undercover agent for British Intelligence.

But I took another look at this vast cobra and said, "Listen, I am sure you are very nice people and I am sure this is a very nice snake but I hope you kept a cab waiting because there is absolutely no way I can work with this thing, no matter how long you give me to get used to the idea. And quite apart from the fact that guests are probably checking out of the hotel in droves, which is not going to help my chances of being allowed to stay here again, I really do think you ought to take your snake and disappear."

Muttering about how silly people were about these things, they did, in fact, manage to get their snake back through the lobby and out into the night without inducing any known cardiac arrests. The next morning I got back onto the phone with the production people and told them that hotel rehearsals with cobras were out and that we would just have to get to know each other at the screen test where I would be happy to hiss away for as long as the snake felt appropriate.

And so it was that, on the very day that I was expected to play a five-set tennis match against Tanner and his left-handed serve, which many people found every bit as unnerving as a snake bite, I found myself being picked up at the Kensington Hilton in a big limousine at seven o'clock in the morning, not the kind of hour a player would normally rise if he had to play a big match that afternoon. However, this was no ordinary day, as I told myself settling back in the plush upholstery. This was what a movie star's life was all about — greeting the dawn with a

smile, even if it did entail having to greet a snake as well.

My smile only grew when I was ushered into a dressing room at Pinewood that had "Vijay Amritraj" in large letters on door. The make-up girl arrived and she was followed by the wardrobe people and someone else brought coffee and doughnuts and I thought, "Hey, this is better than the locker-room!" A whole new world was opening up to me and I loved every minute of it. But the best was still to come. When they had titivated my make-up and finally got me ready by about nine o'clock, I walked out for what, after all, was only a screen test for a rookie actor, to find myself in a vast movie set — the exact set that would be used for the moment in the film which was called for in the script. And there, curled up in his basket, with the snake charmer sitting behind him, was my cobra. The set was filled with cameramen, lighting men, and technicians of every sort and immediately the atmosphere grabbed me. This was the big time; this, for me, was almost the same as walking out at Centre Court at Wimbledon and yet, somehow, it did not reduce me to a rattling bag of nerves as the Centre Court has done so often and would do, momentarily, again the following day.

Far from withdrawing into my shell with fright, I just opened up and felt supremely confident. I knew my lines; I felt I understood what was required of me and I was even starting to come to terms with the idea that the snake was probably ready to play his part as well and stick to the script which, no

matter how grisly it got for me personally later on, did not have me being bitten to death by a ten-foot cobra.

There is no doubt that having played in front of crowds for so many years had an enormous effect on the way I was able to handle the situation. The adrenalin I felt pumping through my body was tremendous, so much so that I even started to use the presence of the snake to lift my performance. I began treating it as if I had been working with snakes all my life, even, at one point, letting it crawl out of the basket when I was carrying it, and climb all over me. I knew that a little poison has to be left in a snake's tongue, otherwise it dies, and I knew, too, that cobras are very capable of crushing you to death. But suddenly none of that seemed to matter. I was on a high and just drew on it in a positive, rather than a negative, way. From his reaction, I am not quite sure that the American actor James Brolin, who was with me in that scene when I was carrying the snake in its basket, felt quite the same way!

After lunch at Pinewood, I was driven back to Wimbledon but the rain beating down on the windscreen of the limousine told me all I needed to know about my chances of playing Roscoe that day. The afternoon was a washout and I was left to reflect on my chances of playing opposite Roger Moore in a James Bond movie. Was this really happening? Apparently it was, because a couple of days later I got a call from Cubby saying that the test had gone well, that they thought I looked great on screen and that I had the part.

To say that all this caught me unprepared was an understatement. I hadn't a clue as to what kind of fee to ask and I had no agent. Luckily, after two years in the film business in Hollywood, Ashok had a good working idea of what to ask and he helped me a great deal. So I asked for what seemed to me to be quite a lot of money and they agreed. Even more amazingly they also agreed to give me all the weeks off I wanted, so that I could go and play the tournaments to which I was already committed.

Quite apart from the fact that they often refused Roger permission to fly off home to Switzerland for the weekend, allowing me to take part in an active international sport in between the various scenes I had to play was quite extraordinary risk for a film company to take. What if something happened to me? What would they do with the ten or twenty minutes of very expensive film they had in the can? Everything would have had to be shot again with a different actor, at an enormous cost. This is why producers place such rigid restrictions on the activities of their actors during shooting and why I was so very privileged to have been treated with such understanding.

It was probably just as well I didn't have an agent at the time because he would never have believed it. As it was I soon signed up with a friend of mine, Jack Gilardi, who was vice-president of International Creative Management (ICM) and, unlike a majority of actors in the notoriously fickle town of Hollywood, I have stayed with him ever since.

There was, however, a major obstacle that had to

be overcome which turned out to be much more serious than not having an agent. I was neither a member of British Equity nor the equivalent actors' union in America, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG).

True to form, Equity were not about to budge on the issue when they got to hear about it and there had not been much hope of keeping it dark. Cubby Broccoli had been up in the players' team room at Wimbledon on numerous occasions during the Championships that year and the whole place was abuzz with rumours about my being offered a part in a Bond film. Television camera crews were starting to follow me about and ask all sorts of questions and, no matter how much we wished otherwise, the secret was out.

Cubby, however, is not a man to get miserly when going after what he considers to be the right people for a Bond film. Some years before he had flown Gayle Hunnicut back to London from Hollywood where she happened to be at the time and put her up in luxury at one of his apartments on Park Lane because Gayle had closed her own London home for the summer. After a week of expensive costume fittings, etc., Gayle's original doubts about her suitability for the part were proved correct and Cubby flew her back to Los Angeles — no problem, darling. Barbara Bach eventually got the part.

Cubby's solution to my problem was just as costly and even more dramatic. He phoned his friend Leonard Goldberg who has produced most of the great American television hits of the past two decades like *Charlie's Angels*, *Fantasy Island*, and *Loveboat* and

asked him for a favour.

"I have this Indian tennis player who needs a SAG card so that I can use him in my next Bond movie," Broccoli explained. "Can you give him a quick cameo role somewhere in the next few days?"

You have to be Cubby Broccoli or someone with an equally impressive track record to make that kind of request, even from a good friend, but sure enough Goldberg came through and, having had my Wimbledon part curtailed by Tanner, I found myself flying back to Los Angeles to do two days work with Ricardo Montalban on *Fantasy Island*. Immediately I flew back to London and Cubby, along with John Glenn, the director, had to appear in front of an Equity tribunal — even though I now had a SAG card — to plead his case for not using an Equity actor.

The case was argued on the grounds that if he had been similarly restricted in his choice of casting in the past, Sean Connery would never have been James Bond; Harold Sakata would never have been Oddjob and half the best villains in recent cinema history would have remained unknown. It was a difficult argument to refute but, quite understandably, Equity were as interested in protecting jobs for their members as we are at the Association of Tennis Professionals and I believe a compromise was eventually reached whereby Broccoli agreed to give a small part to an Equity member that otherwise might have gone elsewhere.

So in the space of a month, this Indian tennis player had played a small role in a top American

TV series, acquired a SAG card and signed on for a fourteen-week co-starring role alongside Roger Moore in a James Bond movie. This, I remember thinking, just has to be a dream!

If it was, it was a long one and kept on getting better. Almost before the ink was dry on my contract I found myself aboard a chartered Boeing 747 jumbo jet heading for Udaipur along with the stars of the movie, the production staff, technical crew and 32 of the best-looking girls you have ever seen in your life. And I wasn't even married at the time!

However it must be said that, on arrival in Udaipur, we discovered that some bright staff person had been clever enough — or cruel enough, depending on your point of view — to house all 32 girls in the Lake Palace Hotel which sits right in the middle of this fabulous lake and can only be reached by boat! There were rumours of desperate midnight swims and all manner of schemes to breach the stronghold, but my lips are sealed. It would be revealing no secret, however, to admit that the thought of 32 of the most perfectly built females in the world all billeted together just out of reach left some red-blooded members of the crew — not to mention the local lads of Udaipur — in a state of considerable nervous tension.

But for those of us enjoying star billing in *Octopussy* there were some compensations. Along with Roger and Louisa Moore, Louis and Gik Jordan, Maude Adams, Kristina Wayborn and Kabir Bedi, I was given a beautiful, lake-view room at the Shrivnivas, an old palace recently converted into a superb hotel

by the Taj Group.

Gazing out of the window at the view was not on the agenda, however. Film companies may provide you with all kinds of luxuries but there is seldom much time to lie around and enjoy them. This was especially true in my case because not only was everything new to me — even down to having to learn how to ride a hotted-up Honda three-wheeler — but I was also having to practise, if you can call it that, so that I would be in some kind of shape the following week when I was due to switch hats again and fly off to the Ukraine to play Davis Cup against the Soviet Union.

So my day started at 5.30 a.m. when I went off in search of the local pro at a little tennis club that had grass growing up through the clay. To put it mildly, the poor fellow was not exactly on a par with Andrei Chesnokov but he did his best and, after a few drills I went for a run. On my return I found Roger sitting by the pool, already dressed in black tie and dinner jacket for that morning's scene, having his make-up done. By eight o'clock we were ready and Roger, as ever, was looking absolutely immaculate.

I cannot continue with this story without mentioning what it was like to work with Roger Moore. Needless to say, I had been very nervous at the idea of working with this superstar in my very first movie. The history of the cinema is littered with instances of egocentric stars using every trick in the book to unnerve and even humiliate newcomers as they struggle to find their feet. And there have been few newcomers as

raw as I was.

Never having met him before, I was full of apprehension when I first saw him on the set at Pinewood and wondered how best to approach him. I needn't have worried. Before I had a chance to make a move, Roger walked 'over to me and said, "I've watched you play so many times and I just wish I could hit the ball like you do! It's terrific having you on the picture and I'm sure we'll have a great time."

Instantly I saw why this man of such genuine charm is one of the most popular actors in the business. Roger was as good as his word. From the moment of that first meeting, we did have a great time together, mainly because Roger made sure that we would. He was an absolute delight to work with and went out of his way to make everything as easy as possible for me. Whenever the director asked me whether I thought I could do a certain scene, Roger would step in and say, "Sure he can. Come on, we'll try it together."

Generally this was great for my confidence, although there was one scene we did when we were back in London which put the kind of butterflies I get on a tennis court into more realistic perspective! Basically, the scene required me to drive that little snorting three-wheeler cab through a paper wall that had a painting on it with Roger on the back. For structural reasons, the size of the fake paper-wall only gave me six inches breathing room on either side, so precision was of somewhat paramount importance. There were only two paintings, so the

opportunities for messing it up were strictly limited. And even then missing your first serve might mean you would not be in a fit condition to try and avoid a double fault.

Frankly this was one occasion when I was about to accept the director's offer of a stuntman to stand in for me but, true to form, Roger had an unwavering confidence in my abilities. I must have served an awful lot of aces when he saw me play!

Before I could say a word, he chirped in, "No, Vijay can do it. We'll have a go."

As Roger was putting his life on the line as well, how could I refuse? So, taking a deep breath, I laid down a couple of markers, much as I do when I put racket covers on the other side of the net when practising my serve, and off we went, accelerating straight through the painting, down a couple of steps the other side and coming to a screeching halt. Roger climbed out of the back as if he had just taken a stroll round his front lawn. The satisfied grin on his face seemed to say, "Piece of cake, old chap!" No wonder he makes such a great James Bond.

In retrospect the famous racket-wielding flight through the streets of Udaipur which became such a memorable scene in *Octopussy* required even more technical skill and was a great deal more hair-raising and complicated to perform although, possibly because it was so much fun, I didn't feel so nervous about it.

With me at the controls of the cab, slashing away at the villains trying to stop us and Roger embroiled in a fight in the back, the danger of mowing down

either the camera crew in front of us or one of the twenty-five extras positioned along the way was considerable. But in fact the only accident happened in rehearsal when two stuntmen went through Roger's fight scene in deliberate, point-by-point slow motion. Three knives were to be used by Roger's assailant; two of rubber which were to be used to stab Roger and one with a steel blade which could be made to clang realistically against the iron bars of the cab. But even experienced stuntmen working in slow motion can make mistakes and suddenly the wrong knife went through one man's hand and there was blood gushing everywhere as the poor fellow was rushed off to hospital. Tough guys, stuntmen. He was back on the set soon afterwards, his hand stitched and swathed in bandages.

I had to put all that out of my mind and concentrate on the none-too-easy task of keeping this buggy moving at a swift 25 mph. It was difficult because, like most humans, I only have two hands. One was needed to wield the racket with which I was warding off the attackers and the other needed to be alternately on the throttle and the brake, both of which were located on the handle bars but on opposite sides. Tricky. Too much throttle and I would crash into the camera-laden truck in front of us and too much brake without an accompanying throttle boost would send us into a stall. We needed more than a couple of takes for that one. In fact the whole scene took three days to complete, but everyone thought the final cut looked great.

After a week with Anand and Sashi Menon in the

Soviet Union which required a rather rapid readjustment of priorities, not to mention an absorption of culture shock, I returned to Udaipur to test my snake-charming skills. Any headway I had made with the cobra in London was of little use now because, of course, we were using a different snake and unfortunately this one didn't seem to have paid as much attention in drama class as the English cobra and resolutely refused to do anything we asked of him. As a result the scenes didn't go off quite as well as had been hoped, but at least I survived the ordeal.

I didn't, of course, survive in the screenplay and, after I had been bumped off by the lake, I left the rest of the company to finish location shooting and rejoined them later in the year when everyone was back at Pinewood for the interiors. I couldn't believe how well it had gone and how easy everyone had been to work with. I don't suppose it is always like that, but with Roger setting the standard for gentlemanly conduct, this crew got on famously.

Roger's friendship was a major bonus for me and I was delighted when he came to watch me play a few months later and then joined in the pre-Wimbledon pro-celebrity event my producer friend Jake Eberts of Goldcrest fame organises every year at the Royal Albert Hall.

By the time *Octopussy* premiered at the Odeon, Leicester Square, in June 1984, I had met and married lovely Shyamala and I was proud to have her on my arm as we ran the gauntlet of cameramen and flash bulbs on the way into the huge foyer of

the world's flagship *Odeon*. After settling Shyamala in her seat I had to go back to join the line of those who were being introduced to the guests of honour for this Royal Premiere, the Duke and Duchess of Wales or, as they are more familiarly known, Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

Obviously I was thrilled at the prospect of meeting them and, in lieu of a dinner jacket which I did not possess at the time, I had asked permission to wear my wedding outfit, a gold brocade Shervani with crossed tennis rackets on the buttons. Clearly I was not going to get lost in the crowd in this costume, but I had wanted to wear something Indian for an occasion that was going to put India in the spotlight and it seemed to fit perfectly. Happily, as we shall see, it also met with Royal approval.

Prince Charles came down the line first and immediately began asking all the right questions about my tennis and I remember thinking, "he's so good at this sort of thing. He's so fit to be King!" I can only assume he had been briefed on every member of the cast, because he does not follow tennis and certainly could not have chatted so naturally about the game otherwise. After a couple of minutes, the Prince moved on and I got my first close-up, in-the-flesh look at his wife. Amazingly, Princess Diana looks even better in real life than she does in her photographs and the off-the-shoulder dress she was wearing that evening did nothing to diminish the impact.

I was wondering whether I would get my breath back quickly enough to think of something to say

when she opened up the conversation by looking me straight in the eye and saying, "It must be the tennis. You're in great shape."

Instinctively I returned the compliment by blurting out something like, "I think you look pretty terrific yourself," and immediately wanted to bite my tongue in case I had been too familiar. But Her Royal Highness just smiled dazzlingly and proceeded to talk very knowledgeably about tennis which, of course, she plays as well as follows keenly. Probably more than anyone else in the line she had plenty to talk to me about and proceeded to do so, saying how much she was hoping to get away from a few official duties so that she could make an extra couple of visits to Wimbledon and asking questions about my career. The minutes flew by and the cameras were on us constantly in close up, not only on live television but on the close circuit screens inside the auditorium as well. We must have chatted for all of ten minutes which created a traffic jam down the receiving line but just as she was ready to move on, she startled me by reaching up and fingering one of the gold buttons on my tunic.

"They are very smart," said the Princess. "Where did you get them?"

"Nowhere exotic, I am afraid," I replied. "Actually I found them just round the corner at Marble Arch!"

She laughed and finally moved but, of course, that was not the end of it. The tabloid press had a field day the following morning and back in the locker-room at Queens I had to put up with an endless stream of wisecracks from the guys about "my friend

Princess Di". I must say my bride took it all very calmly.

All in all it was a memorably star-struck evening for everyone, I think, especially those of us in the tennis fraternity. John McEnroe and more than a dozen players were there and Leif Shiras, the blond American with the film star looks who was to excel himself at Queen's that year by getting to the final, was asked to take a blind date along. As it was Grace Jones, Leif had no complaints and they certainly proved that blond and black can look pretty good together. But Anand and Helen could have told you that.

There was also an incident during the showing of the movie that I think Richard Evans has recounted elsewhere but which is worth re-telling. Few people who do not follow the pro tour intimately are aware just how much a player's career lives or dies by his ATP computer ranking. His ranking, based on a round-by-round points system at all Grand Prix events, determines whether or not he can get into the tournaments he wants to play. For a big championship like Wimbledon the cut-off usually goes down as low as 120 or thereabouts and it is always agonising for the 'next man in' as we term it, who has to sit around and hope someone catches flu or pulls a muscle before the first round is completed.

This particular year the next man in was a big, extrovert American called Bruce Kleege and he just happened to be at the premiere, sitting amongst all the other players. With a quick wit that still makes me laugh when I think about it, Bruce watched me

get murdered up on the screen and immediately jumped up out of his seat and shouted, "I'm in! I'm in!"

A whole row of the stalls fell about laughing while the rest of the black tie audience wondered what on earth was going on. It was one of the best 'in' jokes ever.

Like authors who discover that the work on a book is not finished when they type the last page, so actors are still called upon for promotional work long after the last scene is in the can. Happily, I was able to combine some tennis with promotion for *Octopussy* in places as far away as Australia where the film was due to open soon after the New South Wales Open in Sydney which I had been planning to play anyway. I also went on ABC's "Good Morning America" in New York and toured India in the company of our Big Baddie in the movie, Kabir Bedi. After all that I finally kissed *Octopussy* goodbye and was able to reflect for a moment on just how lucky I had been to break into the acting world as part of such a high-profile and successful production.

Octopussy was one of the best-received of all the Bond movies and I was lucky enough to benefit from some of the acclaim. United Artists took out huge, double-spread adverts in movieland's two home town newspapers, *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety*, recommending us all for Oscar nominations which might have been a little optimistic, but Hollywood is no town to hide your light under a bushel. If somebody isn't trumpeting your wares for you, you might as well not exist.

But I did exist now as an actor. I had an agent, a SAG card and a big movie credit behind me and although parts for a tall, dark-skinned Indian with a funny accent were never going to be two a penny in a town that took a long time to accept anyone other than Sydney Poitier as a token black star, at least I had got through the first round with a reputation of being able to do the job.

Nevertheless it was a year before another job came along. Stephen J. Cannell Productions, which had a good track record in television, was working on a series called *The Last Precinct* which was about a station of dead-end cops and was supposed to be a comic take-off of the Police Academy. Thrown in amongst this bunch of ageing no-hopers was an exchange policeman from India. Obviously it was a part for me and the director seemed to agree when I went to read for it.

But it wasn't quite as simple as that. I had been playing a lot of tennis the previous year, 1984, and my ranking was a quite respectable 45 on the ATP computer. As we have seen I had been able to work *Octopussy* into my tennis schedule without too much problem, thanks to the understanding of Cubby Broccoli and John Glenn. But doing a television series was a totally different matter.

The producers of *Last Precinct* made it plain that I would have to give up tennis for the duration and that was obviously a major step for me to take. There was another problem too. Basically my wife was not thrilled about my acting career. Shyamala had married a tennis player and had gone to considerable

lengths to acquaint herself with her husband's sport which, in my case, was also my livelihood. Very soon she was telling me more about the computer ranking and how it worked than I knew myself! Yet, suddenly, I wanted to be an actor which, as a profession, is not viewed in quite the same light in India as it is in the United States and Europe. Shyamala thought I was crazy to jeopardise my tennis to become something as dubious as a movie actor.

Yet it was something I desperately wanted to do and when she realised that, she relented. The money helped, too. To have built the house we now call home in Encino, California, would have required me to reach at least the semi-finals of every tournament I entered throughout an entire year if I had simply stuck to playing tennis. I earned that and more for what turned out to be a second series I was to do over just nine months two years later — a show which was ultimately more successful than *The Last Precinct* which only survived eight weeks, largely because a one-hour comedy show had never been tried before and could not compete with the Starsky & Hutch-type action dramas.

Nevertheless I learned a great deal about the acting business in those eight weeks and, even though the show itself didn't work out that well, my participation in it was well handled by my agency, ICM, and I felt it had given my acting career another boost.

The last episode, however, gave me an insight into what an actor has to go through in the cause of his art. The script called for me to play an undercover cop who was going to have to infiltrate a call-girl

service as a female prostitute. It took the make-up department four hours to make me presentable as a good-looking tart each day but that was not the worst of it. Many of the scenes were played outside on location on Venice Boulevard down by the beach and, right on the section of cordoned off pavement, was my chair with 'Vijay Amritraj' emblazoned on the back.

I had been hoping that any passing Indians would not recognise me under the wig but the chair was a complete giveaway, so I quickly threw some of my clothes over the back in the hope of remaining anonymous. The closest I came to detection was when an Indian did join the crew's table for lunch one day and turned to someone sitting a couple of places away from me and asked under his breath, "Is that Vijay Amritraj the tennis player over there?"

Quickly butting in, I said, "Don't be silly! Do you think he'd do something like this?"

In the acting profession, of course, any role like that is considered to be a great part and, needless to say, I found it very challenging. I kept remembering Dustin Hoffman's great performance in *Tootsie* and tried to draw inspiration from that. But that is the insider's attitude. Trying to explain to some passing countryman who may have held you in some kind of esteem just what you are doing dressed up in a wig and falsies in broad daylight on Venice Boulevard is not something you want to be bothered with when you are trying to remember how to look like a hooker!

ATP PRESIDENT

By 1985, with my tennis career on the wane, I was finding myself more and more involved with a variety of businesses. I had no intention of giving up tennis completely and still haven't, for that matter, which proves two things. That I love the game and I am obstinate. That is the only conclusion to draw as I sit here with a throbbing ankle after twisting it in the first round of the new ATP Tour event in Memphis in February 1990. If someone is telling me to get my 36-year-old body off the circuit I am listening, but only just. I won two rounds at the ATP Championships in Cincinnati last summer so I must still be competitive. That, at least, is what I keep telling myself. We shall see.

But, no matter how much I love the game, tennis could never occupy my entire day. Although I would not describe myself as a workaholic, I find it very difficult to be idle. I prefer going to bed early, but I also get up with the dawn and like nothing better than to get stuck into the faxes that have arrived overnight from Madras on my nifty little NEC machine before breakfast. Being involved in business affairs gives me the adrenalin boost I need — a replacement, I suppose, for the thrill of playing on Centre Court.

My first major business commitment came about as a result of the Britannia Amritraj Tennis scheme and my increasingly close friendship with Britannia's

chairman Rajan Pillai. It was Rajan who invited me to sit on the Britannia board and things have moved on apace not that the company has separated from Nabisco brands and has gone into a joint venture with the huge European consortium BSN which owns, amongst other brands, Belen biscuits in France.

Then there is the Leela Kempinski Hotel at Bombay Airport. We like to think of it as the premier "airport" hotel in the world and anyone who has stayed there tends to agree. End of commercial! It was the founder, Capt. Krishnan Nair, who invited me to join the board and I was delighted to do so because he is such a energetic and delightful character. Leela is his wife's name and it has been very lucky for him because one of his sons, Denis, runs the very successful Leela Lace fashion line while the other, Vivek, is managing director of the hotel, Kempinski, who run five-star establishments in Berlin, Toronto (Sutton Place) and Dallas, are planning another Leela Kempinski that is due to open in Goa later this year.

The Nairs have been nice enough to name a suite after me at the Bombay hotel which I don't always get to stay in because, happily, sometimes it is already taken.

More recently I have developed a major involvement with the Carona Shoe company which is Bata's closest competitor in India. Hopefully the competition is going to get even hotter now because we have just completed a deal to bring Puma into India and I have agreed to become the corporate spokesman for the new Puma Carona line. People who have never visited India and think of it mainly in terms of a

Third World economy do not realise how big the sports goods market is and just how much money is spent on sports equipment.

Then there is my own little company, the Lam Sports Group which I have set up near the family home on Sterling Road to deal with all the things I get involved with on an individual basis in India. I have been lucky to find a very senior executive, John Thomas, to take charge of it for me and he liaises closely with my father who has his own office near by.

How do I manage all this and live in Los Angeles? Don't ask my wife, because you might get a rather terse answer! Actually Shyamala is very happy that I am maintaining such close ties with India and, of course, my trips home are now more frequent than ever. That suits me fine, too, because, no matter how happy I am in Los Angeles, India is in my blood and I can foresee the day when we return to live in Madras or maybe Bangalore on a more permanent basis. As it is, the new tax laws, extending the period of time non-residents can be in the country each year from 80 to 120 days, has certainly made it easier for me to pursue my business interests there.

All this keeps me busy but I still find time to keep up-to-date with what Ashok is doing with the film company in Beverly Hills — a life of Albert Schweitzer with Malcolm McDowell in the title role is due for release shortly — and, although my agent can't believe it, I still want to continue my acting career.

But, in the last few months, something else has started to consume more and more of my time —

tennis politics. Having made such a big thing of liking to meet people and being a communicator all my life I suppose it was inevitable that I should get tapped for some role in the running of the game. But it so happened that the last years of my career as an active player coincided with a period of political upheaval in the men's game. At the instigation of two former presidents of the Association of Tennis Professionals, Ray Moore and Harold Solomon, the ATP had gone outside the game to find a replacement for the outgoing Executive Director, Mike Davies, and had come up with the somewhat startling choice of Hamilton Jordan, the former White House chief of staff who had been instrumental in getting Jimmy Carter elected President.

Jordan, who had beaten a bout with cancer, was looking for a new challenge and I think he might have been a little surprised with the size of the one he found with the ATP! The task he set himself, after a few months of acclimatisation, was the one that should have been done years before — namely, for the ATP to leave the Men's Tennis Council and create its own tour.

Without going into all the complicated ramifications of how and why, Jordan accomplished this in a remarkably short space of time, primarily, I think, because the stature of the man as much as his organisational skills gave the players the confidence to take the plunge. In retrospect, I did not agree with the precise way the new tour was set up in partnership with the tournament directors for reasons that I will explain shortly but there was no doubt

that the move was a bold and exciting one and there could be no better moment to become involved with the game's administration.

The first approach came in the spring of 1989 when I was practising with Weller Evans, the senior ATP road manager who knows the players better than anyone. We were in Seoul, where I was playing in a small Grand Prix event and the next week in Singapore Larry Scott, a Harvard graduate who was getting involved in the politics of the tour, also discussed the possibilities of my running for the new players' council which would replace what, until then, had been the ATP Board of Directors.

It was obvious that Larry and I had similar ideas and I was delighted when he was also elected to the ten-member players' council after I had decided to run. This took place at Wimbledon and, as was the custom with the old Board, the elected players then decide who should be President and Vice-President. Everyone seemed to want me to be President, which I considered a big compliment and, happily, Larry Scott got the V-P's job. I felt right from the start that we would make a good team because he is an excellent organiser and can communicate with the middle and lower ranked players while I can take a more visible role and deal with the top guys on a more equal basis. It hasn't been easy but I think we have managed to create a more positive image for the new tour than might otherwise have been the case. Certainly, those nations from outside the United States and Europe who must have felt excluded from much of the decision-making in the past seem to

have been greatly encouraged by the fact that an Indian was now in a position of influence. The problem is that they all want me to attend their events which, ever for an inveterate traveller like myself, just isn't possible.

But the visibility has been a plus and the *Times* of London ran a very favourable and prominently displayed article the day after I was elected President. However, even to this day many people who are not intimately involved with the game, do not realise exactly what has happened to the ATP since we broke away from the Men's Tennis Council and formed our own tour in partnership with the tournament directors. Note that phrase, "With the tournament directors." For the ATP, as an independent players' union, has ceased to exist. There is no such organisation as the Association of Tennis Professionals. The company is now called the ATP Tour and the players have only 50% of it.

When I visited the new ATP Tour headquarters at Ponte Vedra, near Jacksonville in Florida, soon after my election to meet Hamilton Jordan and the Tour Board which is a separate body from the Players' Council*. I made it quite clear that I thought the merging of the ATP with the tournament directors was a mistake. A joint venture would have been a

*The Tour Board governs the tour and is made up of three ATP reps — originally Larry Scott, Marty Davis and Colin Dowdeswell although I have now replaced Dowdeswell, and three tournament directors, Charlie Pasarell (U.S.), Franco Bartoni (Europe) and Graham Lovett (International). The Players Council of which I am President acts only in an advisory capacity.

much better idea but, of course, there is no going back, so it is something we will have to live with.

Nevertheless, the public think of it as a players' tour; the press write about it as if it was a players' tour and therefore it is the players who take the flak — and the praise if there is any on offer — for anything that happens. This is what I told the meeting at Ponte Vedra.

The tournament directors may not have liked it but the hard facts are inescapable. "With all due respect to all the hard work you guys are putting in," I said, specifically addressing Pasarell, Bartoni and Lovett, "and with due appreciation of all the money you have poured into the tournaments, the fact remains that in the minds of the public this will never be anything other than a players' tour. So if we are going to carry the can for everything we should at least have the power to make any changes that we see fit. But we don't have that power because this is a 50-50 partnership."

Our partners had no direct answer to that because, in reality, there isn't one as things stand. I don't know why Hamilton Jordan agreed to the merger because none of us was consulted and, in any case, I was not even on the Players Council when the decision was made. Obviously he felt it was the right decision and CEO's must be given the authority to make decisions like that. Nevertheless it was a fairly major step and highlights the dangers of bringing in outsiders. The ATP was a very precious entity to the association's founding fathers like Jack Kramer, Cliff Drysdale and Arthur Ashe but they were no

longer in on the decision-making process. So the ATP became the ATP Tour. There's a difference, as we are finding out.

So much of the problem rests with communication and the resulting *perception* of what is happening. The problems that arose between Jordan's office and the top players during the first few months of the Tour in 1990 were all about lack of direct communication, which allowed a certain perception of what was happening to take hold.

I found myself in a similar position when, as an ordinary ATP member, I read in *USA Today* while I was attending the Dinah Shore Golf Classic in Palm Springs in March 1989 that Mark McCormack's International Management Group had been awarded the marketing and television rights for the Tour.

I am the kind of person who tends to give everyone the benefit of the doubt, at least the first time around, so I automatically assumed Hamilton had canvassed a wide range of opinions before taking such a major step. The deal was worth over \$50 million to the ATP Tour over three years, so there was certainly nothing minor about it. But because the news came out of the blue, many members of the rank and file — especially those who, unlike me, were not IMG clients — were very unhappy and the press had a field day headlining the fact that Mark McCormack had “taken over” the Tour. Funny how you never hear that kind of talk now because, of course, it had nothing to do with reality, merely perception.

It is essential for a CEO to be able to act on his own without constant referral to the membership but

equally I think everyone should be kept informed of any major changes that are in the wind. There comes a time when even the President of the United States has to get the approval of Congress and I think the ATP Tour should be run just like a major corporation or a small government. But that is not easy, because we are not located between convenient boundaries but are spread out around the globe. So communication becomes doubly important. One should always remember that you can lose much of the strength to be derived from a particular decision if it is not presented in the right way.

I have high hopes that Mark Miles, the tournament director from Indianapolis who was appointed to take over from Hamilton during the Lipton International at Key Biscayne in March 1990, will be better than his predecessor in this vital area of communication and player relations. Hamilton did a fantastic job in getting us as far as he did but, as he is the first to admit, he had never been a tennis person and this started to show once the heavy politicking had been accomplished and the time to spend some time massaging egos in the locker-room arrived. Miles not only ran the Pan American Games in 1987 but was a member of the tennis team at Wabash College in Indiana and has had a life-long love affair with the game. So, as well as organisational skills, he understands the peculiar workings of a tennis player's mind. And that is not easy because we can be pretty peculiar!

Nevertheless my job is a fascinating one and has become even more demanding since I was elected to

take over Colin Dowdeswell's place on the Tour Board. That puts me in a decision-making rather than simply an advisory role, so there will be no more hiding behind a great big Amritraj smile. I'm in the hot seat now, which is both an exciting and a sobering thought.

I have no idea how long my involvement will last, but by the time I move on I do want to see a better relationship established between the top players and the ATP Tour staff. Somehow the players must be made to believe that we are all in this together and that it really is their tour. At the moment we are a long way from that as John McEnroe made abundantly clear when I drove out to see him at his house in the Colony at Malibu just after I had arrived back in LA from the Tour Board meetings in Indian Wells.

After a long discussion about his future in the game which seemed very uncertain at the time, we adjourned to the Malibu Deli for lunch along with his brother Patrick, Richard Evans, and Gary Muller, the South African touring pro who had been practising in the area. There, one of the most famous and easily recognisable faces in sport held forth on what he perceived to be the problems facing the ATP Tour.

McEnroe had already lashed out at Hamilton Jordan's invisibility factor during a tournament in Toronto a few weeks before and nothing had happened since to improve his attitude towards the new set-up.

"It's not our tour", he exclaimed. "How can it be

our tour when we don't have any input? We've just exchanged one bunch of guys in blazers for another bunch and they don't give a damn what we think."

As the top players, represented by Eliot Teltscher, had given the Tour Board a list of 14 demands prior to the Masters and had 12 of them met, that was not strictly true but again it was a question of perception getting away from reality.

However there was no doubting the reality of the passion McEnroe brought to the conversation. If anyone had failed to recognise the tousle-haired figure, clad in baggy track suit bottoms and a yellow T-shirt when we walked in, the Malibu Deli was soon echoing to the familiar sounds of the McEnroe voice as his energy level rose with each bite out of a huge turkey sandwich. Much of what he said made sense, because he is far more intelligent than some people realise and always he is brutally honest, often far too honest for his own good. Frequently the truth hurts and John is never afraid to ram it down people's throats.

But, after everything that has happened to him, he is suffering from some kind of a persecution complex now and will get side-tracked in the middle of a perfectly rational conversation about some perceived injustice that has cut him down. Nevertheless he has earned the right to make demands. His record after a twelve-year commitment to the game stands comparison with anyone's. And those demands are not entirely selfish. McEnroe has always had the best interests of the game at heart, no matter how badly he has acted on court and I have no doubt at all

that he wants to see pro tennis succeed long after he has left it.

He is loyal to his friends, too. "Look at Pat Cash", he said, waving the startled waitress away when she came to check on the needs of our animated little group. "He's been out of the game for a year with an injury; he's got no computer points and he has to go off and play a Challenger in Martinique, for God's sake, because he can only get four wild cards into big tournaments during the year. That's the rule, isn't it? So there he is, a guy who won Wimbledon, playing against some no-hoper in Martinique. How do you think he feels? It's so demeaning, man."

The discussion raged on and although the ideas that spun off McEnroe's tongue were not destined to become law in the immediate future, the meeting was as stimulating as it was useful. We had made contact, exchanged views and McEnroe had a little less reason to feel left out of the decision-making process. That had been my goal and if we had achieved it then the four hours taken out of a busy day just prior to my departure for more meetings in Key Biscayne would have been well spent.

McEnroe is special by any standards, but all the top players have earned the right to be treated as special cases. It is no use pretending that these international superstar celebrities are just the same as the journeyman pro ranked 50 in the world. Each one has to be approached as an individual. In talking to Ivan Lendl one has to take into consideration his background and the struggle he went through to

break out of Czechoslovakia. No one has worked harder to become No. 1 in the world and for this, above all, he commands respect. But, in the end, it doesn't matter where you come from as far as having responsibilities are concerned. Even Ivan Lendl cannot exist in a vacuum.

With Boris Becker one is dealing with a highly intelligent and very mature young man who has the foresight and patience to realise that everything takes time to settle down. If he respects you, Becker will listen.

Stefan Edberg is a more silent volcano. People who think there is no motivation or ambition behind that cool Swedish facade don't understand what it takes to win Wimbledon. It is just not Stefan's nature to show it and, if he has trouble making his feelings known, it is up to us to help him express them.

Andre Agassi, Michael Chang and Pete Sampras represent the best of the new generation who are coming through and although Agassi looks like a natural trendsetter with his compulsive need to draw attention to himself, it may be the sharp-witted Chang who emerges as the leader of this younger group once he gains sufficient confidence to speak out on issues that affect his sport and his career.

There is one thing that the youngsters coming through the system must realise, however. The better you get, the more responsibility you must accept. Professional tennis may have millions of dollars on offer for its most successful participants but success does not come free. Being rich and famous is fine but a player must recognise who it was that enabled

him to become rich and famous and give a little back to the public by always performing at his best and to corporate sponsors by spending a couple of hours in their company so that they feel a part of the world they have offered to support.

Tennis players are often accused of being money-mad but I think most of them are too sophisticated to believe that money buys happiness. As professionals they owe it to themselves (not to mention their agents!) to get as much as the market will allow for a particular deal and while many give away thousands of dollars a year to charity, they will insist on being paid large sums for exhibition matches and public appearances as a matter of principle.

But few would need much convincing that money does not buy affection; that money does not get rid of loneliness or diffuse the sorrow of bereavement. These emotions are beyond the reach of a purely financial solution which makes money a very relative commodity.

I have been incredibly lucky because I have earned large amounts of money doing what I like best. I enjoy the kind of business I do and I enjoy the kind of sport I play and I would always opt for the most enjoyable choice rather than the one offering the biggest financial gain. My one nightmare is having to work at something I would hate, just to earn enough money to keep my family secure. I hope it never comes to that.

The past couple of days have been spent in Miami, helping to organise ATP player meetings; the announcement that Mark Miles is to take over from

Hamilton Jordan and the presentation of the ATP Tour Awards Dinner which, this year, will benefit the American Cancer Society. It has been non-stop as usual and I have hardly had a chance to say hello to Anand who is actually sharing my room with me at the Inter-Continental. It must be years since we roomed together.

The announcement that Miles will be taking over from Hamilton seems to have gone over well with the players and I think he will turn out to be an excellent choice. He moves more easily amongst tennis players than Jordan and the effect he has had on the event in Indianapolis during his four years in charge was reflected at the dinner when his tournament won the "Best Super Series" category for the second consecutive year.

After hosting the dinner, it was 3.00 a.m. before I got to bed, which always leaves me feeling wiped out the next day. But there were so many people to talk to, especially celebrities like Lynda Carter and her husband, Kathy Lee Crosby, and Mike Connors who had answered my call and flown in from Los Angeles or Washington just for the night which is typical of the Hollywood community and only underlines my earlier comments about fame bringing its responsibilities. They got nothing out of it except another look at an airport and a glimpse of Boris Becker, but hopefully the Cancer Society were able to direct a few more dollars in the right direction as a result.

The Lipton Players Championships started the next day at Key Biscayne and I was running around again,

attending meetings all over the place and introducing Mark Miles to the international press who always cover Butch Buchholz's tournament in force. Later I was asked to say a few words for the next ATP Tour television highlight programme which is going out every week now to countries around the world from the TWI studios in London.

This will have a tremendous impact in the long run, not just for the Tour but for tennis in general and one of the best features is the way one of the middle-ranked players is spotlighted each week so as to increase the recognition factor for the great support group who seldom get written about unless they happen to be playing one of the super stars.

Ramesh Krishnan was being lined up for one of the feature spots which, of course, was why I was needed. I made a point of saying that, for the sake of Indian tennis as well as his own satisfaction, Ramesh should continue playing for the next four or five years.

We need him to bridge the gap between the generations and hold the fort during the inevitable lull that follows a period of strength. Zeeshan Ali has been making progress during his first two years on the tour and, at twenty, still has plenty of time to improve. But it is important for the image of the game in India to have a player of Krishnan's stature and tennis heritage out there competing with the best in the world and I am sure he will not fail us. One thing is certain. Ramesh is never going to get bored with the game. He lives for it.

As for my own involvement, I am making no

predictions. My period as Davis Cup captain of my country was very precious to me and reaching the final against all the odds in 1987 will remain one of the highlights of my life. But maybe I can be of better assistance in other areas now for I am lucky enough to find myself with a variety of options open to me, more indeed than I could have ever dreamed possible during those early years as a sickly child at Sterling Road.

I suppose you could say we flew our kites pretty well, my brothers and I, but none of us needs to be reminded who got us off the ground. A father's loving support and a mother's devotion and sacrifice have enabled us to roam far and wide and achieve the absurd ambition of three brothers from Mādras playing together at Wimbledon. You see, dreams really can come true. And we are not finished yet.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

U.N. ADDRESS ON SOUTH AFRICA

There are very few issues I feel more strongly about than the responsibility of a top international athlete to use his position — his fame, if you like — in a constructive way. Nothing in the entire world offers a better opportunity to open up avenues of communication between races and peoples than sport. It is, in fact, such a visible vehicle for getting a message across that politicians use it unmercifully for their own ends all the time. Now it is time sports stars themselves used it as a vehicle to break down barriers and promote harmony between youngsters throughout the world.

There are not many individuals on this earth who find themselves in the privileged position of a Sebastian Coe, a Sunil Gavaskar, a David Gower or a Carl Lewis, to pick four superstars at random outside my own highly visible sport, that enables them to speak out and be listened to on virtually any subject they choose. If some Minister of Health tells kids not to take drugs, how many do you think will listen? But if Carl Lewis were to go into the black areas of Houston and speak out against the death sentence so many urban kids are putting themselves under with crack and heroine, at least some of them would stop to think about it.

But the drug problem is so huge that it needs more than sporting heroes to tackle it. What cricketers, boxers, runners, swimmers, and basketball stars can

do on a daily basis is set an example in manners, style and sportsmanship that will tell the next generation, "Hey, man, *this* is the way to do it. I made it this way and I feel good about myself. So follow my example."

This is where sport can have such a huge impact on the social life of a city or a nation. With unemployment high in many countries and more leisure available to those who do have a job, sport is playing an ever greater role in modern society and it is time those sociologists who still regard sport as an irrelevant diversion from life's problems start giving it the importance it deserves.

But, above all, it is up to the athletes themselves to get the message across. We have a duty to do more than just read the sports pages, play our games and have done with it. Most of us at the top of our professions are well paid for our efforts and we are relinquishing our responsibility if we do not attempt to take on a wider role and act as spokesmen and communicators no matter how many people we reach, be it 500 or 50,000.

I was given an opportunity to get a small message across when I received a United Nations Award in Paris a few years ago and was invited to receive it in front of a UNESCO audience that included ambassadors from all over the world. I could have got up and said "I feel honoured. Thank you", and sat down. Instead I made a point of saying, "You have not honoured me. You have honoured India as a whole because I am an Indian and you have honoured the game of tennis because I am a tennis

player. So I accept this award on behalf of all-Indians and all tennis players.”

Hopefully, by doing that, I created two constituencies, and politicians are dependent on the support of constituencies. Next time I have the chance of addressing such an influential audience, they may remember I am speaking on behalf of a wider group, rather than a mere individual.

On 18 May 1988 I was, indeed, offered the privilege of speaking to a very influential audience — that of the U.N. Special Committee Against Apartheid — at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. It was a very great honour and it came about when the Committee contacted the Indian Mission at the U.N. and asked if I would be available to join a list of speakers that included such illustrious names as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Allan Boesak. Naturally I seized the opportunity and it was with some trepidation that I found myself standing in front of 2,500 delegates sitting behind their national flags in the great Assembly Hall at the U.N.

There was a slight panic at the start because I was the only speaker who did not have a typed transcript of his speech prepared beforehand and the press attache was desperate to get a legible copy to give to the translators. We managed it somehow but it was not easy because I was making changes to the speech I had written out in long hand with alterations all over the place even as I walked up to the rostrum. It was nerve racking, to say the least, but, in the end, this was what I said:

"As an Indian and a sportsman, it is a matter of great pride for me to address this assembly on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Special Committee against Apartheid and I thank you, Mr Chairman, for the invitation. My country, as is well known, broke all relations with South Africa as far back as 1946, and was the first to call the attention of the United Nations to the evils of apartheid by bringing a complaint to the General Assembly. The Special Committee, Mr Chairman, under your guidance, has since its inception contributed in no small manner to sensitizing world public opinion on the problems of racism. I address you today in my capacity as a professional sportsman, who has been inculcated with the virtues of fairplay and equality. It is a matter of great sorrow and shame that these aspects of a human being's character are exactly those that are trampled in South Africa. We believe that man is born free, that he is carved in the image of God. Can we say this of millions of dispossessed black South Africans who are tortured, beaten, killed, and slave-driven in order to perpetuate the system of apartheid and the vicious economy that it entails — an economy built on the untold sufferings of a subjugated people?

"South Africa survives despite almost universal condemnation of the world community on account of the support it receives from collaborators. Among these I would list not only countries but individuals like artists, sportsmen, businessmen, tourists and many more. If we are to help our fellow beings in that beleaguered nation, it is up to each of us to

renounce apartheid, and refuse to collaborate in any way with the racist regime, even though it may involve personal or financial loss. I believe that individuals can play a large part in the ultimate collapse of the system, for it is they who lend moral support to the South African regime by virtue of participating in events within that country and thus giving an impression of normalcy which is exactly what the racist regime is looking for.

“As a professional tennis player, Mr Chairman, I relate an incident which posed a great dilemma for me as a youngster. My first official contact with South Africa came in 1974 at the age of 20 when as India's No.1 tennis player I had led my country to the Davis Cup Final for only the second time since Independence. We had felt that we had a better than even chance to beat South Africa and win the Davis Cup for my country which had always been my dream ever since I had started the game. Till then, I only knew what little I had read about South Africa's apartheid policies. Now coming in direct contact with that country made me take a much closer look at South Africa, its policies, its people, its association and contact with the West in every walk of life and the incredible struggle of the non-white people of that country for what the rest of the world take for granted. Morally it was an easy decision to make not to play the final, but as a sportsman two thoughts kept coming into my mind. One was that we might never play in another final, and the second was that we might never have as good a chance to win the Davis Cup. With the Government of India's strong

stand against apartheid we chose not to play. As a sportsman at age 20, I felt a little disappointed but my heart felt wonderful that I had somehow supported the struggle of a people fighting just to live like everybody else. Because of our default in that final, it took just a couple of years to expel South Africa from the Davis Cup competition and thirteen years for my dream to come true and play in another final.

“Since that time, I have watched closely with growing pain at the violence and deaths of so many human beings, not because of a natural disaster but because of an adamant and stubborn thinking of a very small minority.

“Sports is big business now and not just a game any more and sportsmen and women must realise the world over that with fame and fortune comes an incredible responsibility which may affect the lives of people in different countries. It is easy to say ‘let us keep sports out of politics’, but practically, it is just not possible in certain cases. There are some issues that we must support or oppose, because we must clearly understand in our minds that we are first human beings before being sportsmen and women.

“As I said earlier, I am proud that despite the coveted Davis Cup that we could have won for my country, the vision of black South Africans, their history, and the abhorrent system of apartheid was enough to dissuade both me and my country from participating, thus giving the Cup to South Africa by default. Victory was theirs, but it was a hollow

one, for the whole world knew that we did not play on a matter of principle. It is exactly that which I think that your Committee's sports and cultural boycott is intended to do. I hope that there will be more and more artists and sportsmen who will have nothing to do with apartheid South Africa.

"Over the years as a professional, I have been made several offers, including vast sums of money, to play exhibition matches in South Africa, which I have declined. I feel that every individual, important and unimportant, artist, diplomat, professional, or sportsman, has a certain responsibility towards his fellow men and women and if I may add, hopefully, a conscience. It is thus up to each of us to contribute in our own way towards a better world — a world of equality, of dignity, of freedom. I am saddened to see many driven by purely monetary reasons to participate in sporting events in South Africa. Often they are already very comfortably off. Yet, they try to close their eyes to reality. The daily newspapers are full of such controversies and I do not have to remind this august assembly of issues which have been appearing recently. This year also happens to be the 25th anniversary of the first lobby against South Africa's participating in the Olympics. They were finally struck off in 1970. I believe that similar action is possible in other sports bodies and I hope that the Committee along with the like-minded sportsmen and women will commence action on a broad front. I would personally be happy to lend any assistance that the Committee may require.

"In conclusion, Mr Chairman, I would like to thank

the Special Committee again, for giving me the opportunity to address them and the other distinguished invitees and guests. I would like to reiterate that those of us who are in the public eye have a special responsibility towards the people of South Africa. Our actions and words should match our conscience and be united in sending a clear signal to the racist regime that the end of apartheid is near. Most of all, I would very much like to play some day very soon in a South Africa which is non-racial, democratic and united."

Much has happened in South Africa, of course, since I made that speech and, happily, much of it for the good. But before President F.W. de Klerk set out on a brave new path towards real democracy in the land of apartheid by releasing Nelson Mandela and legalising the African National Congress as well as other previously banned political parties, the ATP had to make a tough decision in the context of international tennis.

Originally the new ATP Tour, which was set to start in January 1990, had included two major events in its itinerary in Johannesburg and Cape Town. To have held over the South African Open in Johannesburg from the old Grand Prix tour would have been controversial enough but by adding Cape Town the scheduling committee had stuck its neck out and given the anti-apartheid movement an even greater opportunity to zero in and attack the ATP for failing to fall in line with the Gleneagles Agreement which basically calls for a sporting boycott

of South Africa.

When I was elected President of the Players Council, I realised that this was one of the first issues that needed to be addressed on both moral and practical grounds. Several members of the Players Council who had not been party to the original decision such as Mats Wilander, who, interestingly, has a South African wife, and Tim Mayotte objected to it for moral reasons. But from a strictly selfish standpoint, the ATP found itself becoming hopelessly embroiled in the South African question to the detriment of everything it was trying to achieve in terms of creating a better international circuit. At every press conference we held, critical questions on South Africa took up so much time that there was little opportunity to talk about the new tour. Obviously something had to be done.

Personally I was torn between two schools of thought. Naturally I abhor apartheid, but is a total boycott the best way of eliminating it? Quite apart from the fact that I objected to sport being singled out as the sole tool to be used by the pro-boycott lobby — businessmen, scholars and entertainers, generally, are not condemned nearly as vociferously as athletes when they visit South Africa — was there not a way in which we, in tennis, could help to hasten change by using our contacts to communicate with the de Klerk government and bargain for speedier integration? Although events eventually overtook us, I believe we probably missed an opportunity here, because it became very apparent during talks we had with South African representatives that the authorities

in Pretoria were desperate for the two scheduled tournaments to stay on the calendar and would have been prepared to make all kinds of concessions to achieve this end.

At any rate, we did not treat the problem lightly and spent an entire day of meetings at the Parker Meridien Hotel in New York just before the 1989 U.S. Open, listening to both sides of the argument. First, we spent four hours hearing the view of the South African delegation, brought to us by our former President Ray Moore, a long-time Californian resident who has continued to work hard in developing multi-racial sport in his native country. The delegation included Jacques Sellschop, a businessman and tennis coach with very high-level contacts in the South African government; Ronnie Van't Hof, a former player who has now set up a junior tennis programme in Soweto and a leading high school principal in Soweto who has also been working assiduously to get kids off the streets and onto tennis courts. Their forceful presentation was very persuasive but I suppose the odds were always stacked against them. They had no answer to the problems we were facing as a result of continuing harassment from the anti-apartheid lobby nor to the strong feelings of the likes of Wilander and Mayotte.

Equally it was difficult to ignore the views of the second group who also met us for a further four hours which was led by another of the ATP's former Presidents, Arthur Ashe. I questioned Arthur for a long time on his decision to make two visits to South Africa in 1973 and 1974 and his subsequent decision

to join the pro-boycott lobby. It was hard not to be sympathetic to his point of view and Ashe's stature and sincerity is such that he obviously carried many of the Council members with him.

In the end we decided to take Johannesburg and Cape Town off the calendar but to leave their dates free so that there would be room for them to return if dramatic changes were to take place in the immediate future. Although there is a long way to go, the desired change seems a lot closer now than it did then.

We decided to keep the Challenger events on the calendar so as to keep a life-line open to young players who were trying to earn enough ATP computer points to gain entry to the international game. We also made an exception to the rule book and agreed to allow South African players ranked in the world's top 50 to play in those South African Challengers so as to give them some appeal to local audiences. Again, I felt this only fair because there is no way that young athletes should be penalised for policies over which they have absolutely no control.

Although our decision to cancel the two major events took the heat off the ATP Tour and allowed us to get on with our business, the South African question did not go away. We have several South African members in the ATP and I feel very strongly that their rights as individuals have to be protected, too. Victimising an individual athlete, who is competing as an individual, just because he had the misfortune to be born in a certain country is no

better than practising apartheid, especially as the majority of the players in question have left South Africa and taken up residence abroad. What else can they be expected to do?

Yet more and more countries are taking steps to ban individual South African sportsmen from competing within their borders which, in many cases, is the height of hypocrisy. Japan is one of the countries concerned and I must admit that I find it difficult to stomach the extent to which Japanese companies maintain powerful and profitable links with South Africa while the Japanese Government continues to refuse visas to South African tennis players who wish to compete in tournaments in Tokyo. There should be a limit to how many ways you can slice the cake.

Canada, Sweden and Spain are other countries who are currently making it difficult for players like Danie Visser, Pieter Aldrich, Christo Van Rensburg and Gary Muller to compete in ATP Tour events staged in those nations and, as we have a policy that all our members must be allowed to play in any tournament for which their ranking qualifies them if they so wish, we are heading for a major problem. Up until now the South Africans have been very good about not rocking the boat for everyone else by simply not entering events in countries where they know they are not welcome. But, as such countries increase in number, it is beginning to seriously affect their ability to make a living. And for what reason? Because they support apartheid? No, they do not support apartheid. In fact most of them oppose it

quite vociferously. The reason is simply that they carry a South African passport, a document they cannot get rid of until they have spent years as residents in the United States or elsewhere. It is inherently unfair and I hope to be able to do something about it.

As I write, requests are being sent through the necessary diplomatic channels requesting interviews with high-ranking government officials in Canada, Sweden and Japan so that I may have the opportunity to state our case. We have taken the step of eliminating our big money South African events. In return I shall be asking for some kind of justice for our blameless South African members. It should not be too much to ask.

In fighting for the right of the individual I shall be doing no more than following the principles of one man, one vote for which Mahatma Gandhi fought prior to India's independence in 1947. The same principle must now be followed to its rightful conclusion in South Africa. As Gandhi pointed out, lack of education is no reason to deprive someone of his or her democratic right. He maintained that if you do not give a person the authority to vote you are never going to give them the incentive to acquire the education to use it wisely.

It is all wrapped up in the right of the individual, an inalienable right that cannot be denied anyone, no matter how expedient it might be for politicians to do so. Not even tennis professionals.

But our problem is a matter of principle rather than one of great moment in the wider scheme of

things. The big picture can only be changed through the determination of men of goodwill such as Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk to uproot the last vestiges of apartheid and create a nation where sport can be allowed to do what it does best, promote harmony and happiness between all peoples.

Appendix II SCOREBOARD

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
72 Wimbledon	GP	Grass	R128 Jeff Austin R64 Jim McManus	7 5 9 8 3 6 2 6 6 4 1 6 2 6 6 8
72 U.S. Open	GP	Grass	R128 Vitas Gerulaitis	6 2 3 6 2 6 3 6
72 San Francisco	GP	Carpets	R32 Robert Bob Hewitt	7 5 0 6 6 7
73 Queens	GP	Grass	R64 Colin Dibley	9 8 6 8 3 6
73 Wimbledon	GP	Grass	R128 Troy Turnbull R64 Bernard Mignot R32 John Lloyd R16 Owen Davidson Q Jan Kodes	6 4 6 2 6 4 6 1 6 1 6 2 7 5 6 4 3 6 2 6 7 5 7 5 8 9 6 3 6 4 4 6 6 3 6 4 3 6 5 7
73 Bo Orange, NJ	GP	Hard	R32 Sherwood Stewart R16 Vitas Gerulaitis Q Dick Stockton S Pancho Gonzales F Colin Dibley	7 5 6 4 4 6 6 3 6 4 6 7 6 4 6 4 6 2 6 3 4 6 7 6 4 6
73 U.S. Open	GP	Grass	R128 Eugene Scott R64 Pat Cramer	6 4 7 6 6 2 3 6 6 3 6 7 7 6 7 5

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
74 Rome	GP	R32	Rod Laver	7 6 2 6 6 4 2 6 6 4
		R16	Allan Stone	6 2 6 2 6 2
		Q	Ken Rosewall	4 6 3 6 3 6
		R64	Ezio Di Matteo	6 2 6 7 7 6
74 French Open	GP	R32	Ilie Nastase	2 6 6 3 5 7
		R128	Belus Prajoux	5 7 7 5 6 3
		R64	Fred McNair	7 5 3 6 6 3
		R32	Jan Kodes	2 6 2 6 2 6
74 Nottingham	GP	R64	Mark Farrell	4 6 3 6
74 Wimbledon	GP	R128	Robert Lutz	7 5 6 4 8 6
		R64	Ken Rosewall	2 6 7 5 8 9 1 6
74 Bretton Woods	GP	R32	Steve Turner	7 6 6 0
		R16	Patricio Cornejo	0 6 6 3 6 3
		Q	Jeff Borowiak	3 6 6 4 6 3
		S	Harold Solomon	1 6 3 6
74 U.S. Open	GP	R128	Steve Docherty	6 7 6 1 6 3 6 2
		R64	Bjorn Borg	6 1 7 6 3 6 1 6 6 2
		R32	John Yuill	7 6 0 6 7 6 6 7 3 1 Ret
		R16	Marty Riessen	6 3 6 3 6 4
		Q	Ken Rosewall	6 2 3 6 3 6 2 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
74 Stockholm	GP Hard	R64	Hans Kary	7 5 6 4
		R32	Haroon Rahim	6 3 7 6
		R16	Arthur Ashe	6 7 6 7
75 Las Vegas	GP Hard	R32	Sherwood Stewart	6 1 6 0
		R16	Stan Smith	6 3 6 4
		Q	Ken Rosewall	2 6 3 6
75 Nottingham	GP Grass	R64	Rick Fisher	4 6 6 3 9 7
		R32	Bob Robert Carmichael	5 7 6 1 1 6
75 Wimbledon	GP Grass	R128	Barry Phillips-Moore	7 5 6 3 6 4
		R64	Jimmy Connors	8 9 0 6 6 8
75 U.S. Open	GP Clay	R128	Jun Kamiwazumi	7 5 5 7 7 5
		R64	Arthur Ashe	3 6 1 6
76 Philadelphia	WCT Carpet	R64	Bye	
		R32	Stan Smith	4 6 3 6
76 Memphis	WCT Carpet	R16	Andrew Pattison	1 6 7 6 6 3
		Q	Cliff Drysdale	6 4 6 3
		S	Robert Lutz	2 6 7 5 7 6
		F	Stan Smith	6 2 0 6 6 0
76 Palm Springs	GP Hard	R64	Steve Krulevitz	6 3 3 6 2 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
78 Queen's	GP Grass	R64	Brian Fairlie	3 6 8 6 4 6
78 Wimbledon	GP Grass	R128	Carlos Kirmayr	6 1 6 3 9 8
		R64	Phil Dent	6 3 3 6 3 6 6 4 5 7
78 U.S. Open	GP Hard	R128	Dick Stockton	3 6 7 6 4 6
78 Los Angeles	GP Carpet	R64	Gene Stuar Malin	3 6 7 6 7 6
		R32	Brian Gottfried	1 6 3 6
78 Maui, Ha	GP Hard	R32	Tim Gullikson	4 6 6 7
78 Basle	GP Hard	R32	Rohun Beven	6 4 6 3
		R16	Rolf Gehring	6 3 1 6 5 7
78 Cologne	GP Hard	R32	Peter Fleming	6 4 6 2
		R16	Trey Waltke	7 6 7 5
		Q	Balazs Taroczy	6 4 6 4
		S	Heinz Gunthardt	6 2 6 2
		F	Wojtek Fibak	2 6 1 0 Ret
78 Stockholm	GP Hard	R64	Robin Drysdale	6 7 Ret
79 Birmingham, Ala	GP Carpet	R32	Eliot Teltscher	1 6 3 6
79 Philadelphia	GP Carpet	R64	Roscoe Tanner	5 7 4 6
79 Memphis	GP Carpet	R64	Bye	
		R32	Eddie Dibbs	6 4 6 1
		R16	John Alexander	5 7 7 5 3 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
79 Stuttgart Ind	GP Hard	R32	Terry Rocavert	7 6 6 7 6 4
		R16	Frew McMillan	6 7 6 4 7 5
		Q	Brian Teacher	6 3 6 3
		S	Wojtek Fibak	2 6 2 6
79 Rotterdam	GP Carpet	R32	Andrew Pattison	7 5 6 2
		R16	Rolf Gehring	7 6 6 3
		Q	Vitas Gerulaitis	6 1 7 6
		S	John McEnroe	0 6 3 6
79 Cairo	GP Clay	R32	Paul McNamee	6 4 6 2
		R16	Patrice Dominguez	6 4 6 3
		Q	Stan Smith	4 6 4 6
79 Queen's	GP Grass	R64	Alvin Gardiner	7 6 6 2
		R32	Brad Drewett	6 3 6 3
		R16	John McEnroe	6 7 1 6
79 Surbiton	GP Grass	R32	Phil Dent	6 2 6 4
		R16	Mark Edmondson	5 7 3 6
79 Wimbledon	GP Grass	R128	Mark Edmondson	6 7 4 6 6 3 6 2 6 2
		R64	Bjorn Borg	6 2 4 6 6 4 6 7 2 6
79 Columbus, Oh	GP Clay	R32	Chris Kachel	6 3 4 6 6 1
		R16	Rick Fagel	5 7 6 2 7 6
		Q	Brian Gottfried	6 3 4 6 5 7

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
79 Canadian Open	GP Hard	R64	David Schneider	4 6 6 2 1 6
79 Boston	GP Clay	R64	Michael Grant	3 6 6 4 6 3
		R32	Leo Palin	6 3 7 6
		R16	John Lloyd	7 6 6 1
		Q	Jose Higueras	2 6 7 6 2 6
79 U.S. Open	GP Hard	R128	Richard Meyer	6 3 6 4 6 1
		R64	Jimmy Connors	6 7 5 7 Ret
79 Los Angeles	GP Carpet	R64	Victor Amaya	6 7 1 6
79 San Francisco	GP Carpet	R64	Bye	
		R32	Nick Saviano	6 7 6 3 7 6
		R16	Raymond Moore	6 7 6 1 1 6
79 Maui, Ha	GP Hard	R64	Emilio Montano	6 4 6 3
		R32	Haroon Ismail	1 6 6 4 6 4
		R16	Bruce Manson	4 6 1 6
79 Sydney Indoor	GP Hard	R32	Sashi Menon	6 3 7 5
		R16	John Newcombe	4 6 4 6
79 Tokyo Indoor	GP Carpet	R32	Butch Walts	6 3 6 2
		R16	Buster C. Mottram	6 3 6 3
		Q	John Sadri	6 2 4 6 3 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
79 Stockholm	GP Hard	R64	Tenny Svensson	6 1 3 6 6 3
		R32	Andrew Pattison	6 3 6 4
		R16	Wojtek Fibak	7 6 1 6 4 6
80 Birmingham, Ala	GP Carpet	R32	Pat Dupre	6 3 6 4
		R16	Peter Fleming	6 3 7 6
		Q	Vitas Gerulaitis	6 1 0 6 6 4
		S	Eliot Teltscher	6 7 Ret
80 Richmond, Va	WCT Carpet	R32	Heinz Gunthardt	3 6 3 6
80 Rancho Mirage	GP Hard	R64	Butch Waltz	6 1 7 6
		R32	Andrew Pattison	2 6 1 6
80 Rotterdam	GP Carpet	R32	Bernard Fritz	6 4 6 3
		R16	Buster C. Mottram	6 7 6 3 6 3
		Q	Paul McNamee	3 6 4 6
80 Frankfurt	GP Carpet	R32	Jose-Luis Clerc	6 4 6 4
		R16	Tomas Smid	5 7 6 0 6 7
80 Milan	GP Carpet	R32	Antonio Zugarelli	6 2 6 3
		R16	Guillermo Vilas	4 6 6 2 6 3
		Q	Peter Fleming	7 6 6 3
		S	Rod Frawley	6 2 6 0
		F	John McEnroe	1 6 4 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
80 Houston/Rvoaks	GP Clay	R32	Brian Gottfried	6 1 4 6 2 6
80 Las Vegas	GP Hard	R32	Tim Gullikson	4 6 3 6
80 WCT Dallas	WCT Carpet	Q	Ivan Lendl	4 6 1 6 3 6
80 T.O.C.-N.Y.	WCT Clay	R32	Heinz Gunthardt	3 6 7 5 7 5
		R16	Jimmy Connors	6 4 4 6 6 3
		Q	Victor Pecci	6 4 7 6
		S	Vitas Gerulaitis	6 7 6 4 3 6
80 Queen's	GP Grass	R64	Robert Lutz	5 7 6 2 6 0
		R32	Richard Lewis	6 2 6 1
		R16	Dick Stockton	7 6 3 6 10 8
		Q	John McEnroe	2 6 2 6
80 Wimbledon	GP Grass	R128	Jose-Luis Clerc	6 1 6 3 5 7 5 7 4 6
80 Newport, Ri	GP Grass	R32	Colin Dibley	1 6 6 3 6 4
		R16	Ferdi Taygan	6 4 6 4
		Q	Hank Pfister	6 1 6 2
		S	John Sadri	7 6 6 0
		F	Andrew Pattison	6 1 5 7 6 3
80 Boston	GP Clay	R64	Jay Lapidus	6 7 6 4 6 2
		R32	Tim Wilkison	6 1 6 4
		R16	Van Winitzky	0 3 Ret

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
80 Indianapolis	GP Clay	R64 R32	Charles Owens Per Hjertquist	6 3 7 5 6 4 0 6 0 6
80 Stowe, VT	GP Hard	R32 R16 Q S	Tony Giammalva Jimmy Arias Vincent Van Patten Johan Kriek	6 4 6 3 4 6 6 3 6 4 6 3 6 0 6 7 4 6
80 Cincinnati	GP Hard	R64 R32 R16 Q	Robert Hubbard Erik Van Dillen Guillermo Vilas Pascal Portes	6 4 6 2 6 4 6 2 4 6 7 6 6 3 7 6 3 6 4 6
80 U.S. Open	GP Hard	R128 R64 R32	Harry Fritz Eddie Dibbs Brian Teacher	7 5 6 2 6 3 7 5 0 6 4 6 6 2 6 1 7 6 4 6 6 7 2 6
80 San Francisco	GP Carpet	R64 R32 R16	Dick Stockton Sandy Mayer John McEnroe	7 6 6 1 6 0 6 4 4 6 3 6
80 Maui, Ha	GP Hard	R32 R16	Richard Meyer Sandy Mayer	7 5 4 6 6 4 6 2 6
80 Bangkok	GP Carpet	R32 R16	Gene Malin Tom Okker	6 2 6 1 7 5 6 3

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
		Q	Kim Warwick	6 1 6 2
		S	Ramesh Krishnan	6 1 6 4
		F	Brian Teacher	6 3 7 5
80 Santiago	GP Clay	R32	Ricardo Ycaza	6 1 6 1
		R16	Pedro Rebolledo	3 6 2 6
81 Monterrey	GP Carpet	R32	Jorge Lozano	6 1 6 3
		R16	Mathew McDonald	6 1 6 2
		Q	Bruce Manson	7 5 6 4
		S	Johan Krick	1 6 2 6
81 Philadelphia	GP Carpet	R64	Bye	
		R32	Pascal Portes	6 7 1 6
81 Richmond, VA	WCT Carpet	R32	Fritz Buehning	6 4 6 3
		R16	Christophe Roger-Vas	6L 3 6 4
		Q	Ivan Lendl	6 4 4 6 1 6
81 Brussels	GP Carpet	R32	Shlomo Glickstein	6 2 6 2
		R16	Ferdi Taygan	6 1 6 4
		Q	Rolf Gehring	2 6 6 1 3 6
81 Rotterdam	GP Hard	R32	Jan Norback	6 2 6 2 -
		R16	Raul Ramirez	6 7 7 5 6 7

Tournament		Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores		
81	Milan	GP	R32	Ferdi Taygan	4 6	6 3	6 1
			R16	Tim Gullikson	6 3	6 7	6 3
			Q	John McEnroe	3 6	7 5	2 6
81	Frankfurt	GP	R32	Steve Denton	6 3	3 6	6 7
81	Houston/Rvoaks	GP	R32	Ramesh Krishnan	6 3	2 6	2 6
81	Las Vegas	GP	R32	Roscoe Tanner	4 6	3 6	
81	WCT Dallas	WCT	Q	Roscoe Tanner	2 6	6 1	6 2 6 7 4 6
81	T.O.C.-N.Y.	WCT	R64	Bye			
			R32	John Sadri	6 4	6 3	
			R16	Wojtek Fibak	6 4	2 6	2 6
81	Queen's	GP	R64	Tim Gullikson	3 6	7 5	3 6
81	Wimbledon	GP	R128	Jan Kodes	6 0	6 1	7 5
			R64	Brian Teacher	6 4	2 6	2 6 6 2 6 1
			R32	Tim Wilkison	6 3	6 2	3 6 6 4
			R16	Paul Kronk	6 3	6 3	6 2
			Q	Jimmy Connors	6 2	7 5	4 6 3 6 2 6
81	Columbus, Oh	GP	R32	Russell Simpson	7 6	6 4	
			R16	Tim Gullikson	2 6	4 6	

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
81 Canadian Open	GP	Hard		
		R64	David Carter	6 0 6 4
		R32	Hans Simonsson	6 1 4 6 6 2
		R16	John McEnroe	5 7 7 6 6 1
		Q	Steve Denton	6 2 6 2
		S	Eliot Teltscher	6 1 2 6 3 6
81 Cincinnati	GP	Hard	Bill Scanlon	4 6 5 7
81 U.S. Open	GP	Hard	Scott Davis	6 3 6 4 6 2
		R64	Gilles Moretton	7 5 6 3 6 4
		R32	Eliot Teltscher	2 6 4 6 0 6
81 San Francisco	GP	Carpet	Bye	
		R32	Nick Saviano	6 7 6 4 6 3
		R16	Johan Kriek	6 3 6 2
		Q	Pat Dupre	6 3 7 6
		S	Brian Teacher	3 6 6 7
81 Bangkok	GP	Carpet	Larry Stefanki	6 4 6 3
		R16	Rod Frawley	6 3 6 4
		Q	Anders Jarryd	6 7 3 6
82 Delray Beach	WCT	Clay	Paul McNamee	2 6 4 6
82 Richmond, VA	WCT	Carpet	Wojtek Fibak	2 6 6 7
82 Genoa	WCT	Carpet	Paolo Bertolucci	6 2 6 2
		R16	Gianluca Rinaldini	6 2 6 3

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores					
82 USA v Ind Ird	DC	Hard	Q Bill Scanlon S Ivan Lendl		4 6 6 1 6 1 4 6 4 6				
82 Munich-2	WCT	Carpet	R1 John McEnroe R4 Eliot Teltscher R32 Rolf Gehring R16 Peter Rennert Q Johan Kriek		4 6 7 9 5 7 7 5 6 3 7 6 6 2 6 3 1 6 7 5 1 6 6 7				
82 Strasbourg	WCT	Carpet	R32 Peter Rennert R16 Terry Moor		7 6 6 4 4 6 4 6				
82 Zurich	WCT	Carpet	R32 Phil Dent R16 John Fitzgerald		6 4 6 4 2 6 5 7				
82 Houston/Rvoaks	GP	Clay	R32 Jay Lapidus R16 Victor Pecci		6 3 7 5 3 6 7 5 0 6				
82 WCT Dallas	WCT	Carpet	Q Jose-Luis Clerc S Ivan Lendl		6 7 6 2 6 2 2 6 6 4 1 6 0 6 5 7				
82 Wimbledon	GP	Grass	R128 Jeff Borowiak R64 Pascal Portès R32 Roscoe Tanner		6 7 4 6 6 3 6 4 6 3 6 2 6 3 6 2 4 6 4 6 6 4 6 4 3 6				
82 Baltimore	WCT	Carpet	R16 Andy Andrews Q Jimmy Arias		6 3 7 5 3 6 3 6				

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
82 Dortmund	WCT Carpet	R32	Russell Simpson	5 7 4 6
82 Chicago-2	WCT Carpet	R16	Jose-Luis Clerc	1 6 4 6
83 Memphis	GP Carpet	R64	Chris Lewis	6 4 6 7 6 1
		R32	Sandy Mayer	0 6 1 6
83 Kuwait	CH Hard	R32	Christophe Freyss	6 4 7 5
		R16	Stanislav Birner	2 6 7 5 4 6
83 Brussels	GP Carpet	R32	Hank Pfister	6 4 5 7 6 7
83 Rotterdam	GP Hard	R32	Hank Pfister	7 6 5 7 1 2 Ret
83 Houston/Rvoaks	GP Clay	R32	Bill Scanlon	6 3 4 6 1 6
83 Tampa, FL	GP Carpet	R32	Francisco Gonzalez	6 3 7 6
		R16	John Fitzgerald	1 6 2 6
83 Queen's	GP Grass	R64	Todd Nelson	4 6 6 7
83 Wimbledon	GP Grass	R128	Mark Edmondson	3 6 4 6 6 7
83 Newport, Ri	GP Grass	R32	Derrick Rostagno	7 6 7 6
		R16	Brad Drewett	4 6 3 6
83 Columbus, Oh	GP Hard	R32	Christophe Roger-Vas	6L 7 1 6
83 Cleveland	Hard	R32	Harold Solomon	6 3 7 6
		R16	Leo Palin	7 6 7 6
		Q	Martin Davis	3 6 6 1 3 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
83 Stowe, VT	GP	Hard	R32 Vincent Van Patten R16 Danny Saltz Q Paul McNamee S Matt Doyle F John Fitzgerald	6 2 6 1 6 4 6 4 7 5 6 3 4 6 6 3 6 2 6 3 2 6 5 7
83 Ind v Jpn Ezf	DC	Clay	R2 Hitoshi Shirato R5 Tsuyoshi Fukui	6 2 8 6 6 3 6 7 3 6
83 Hong Kong	GP	Hard	R32 Tom Cain R16 David Pate	3 6 6 4 6 2 1 6 1 6
83 Australian Open	GP	Grass	R128 Mark Kratzmann	5 7 2 6 4 6
84 Auckland	GP	Hard	R32 Jerome Vanier R16 Brad Drewett	7 6 4 6 6 4 6 7 6 4 1 6
84 Memphis	GP	Carpet	R64 Steve Denton R32 Eliot Teltscher R16 Jimmy Arias	4 6 6 4 6 3 2 6 3 6 6 1 5 7 6 7
84 Houston	WCT	Clay	R16 Eric Korita Q Sammy Giammalva Jr	6 4 6 4 6 3 4 6 3 6
84 Spring, TX	CH	Hard	R32 Ross Case R16 Richey Reneberg Q John Matke	6 2 6 0 7 5 6 2 6 3 5 7 6 3

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
84 Wimbledon	GP	Grass	S Nduka Odizor F Leif Shiras	6 3 5 7 7 6 7 5 4 6 7 6
84 Newport, Ri	GP	Grass	R128 Hans Schwaier R32 Danie Visser R16 Christo Van Rensburg Q Matt Mitchell S Leif Shiras F Tim Mayotte	3 6 4 6 2 6 6 3 6 7 6 3 3 6 6 3 6 4 6 2 7 5 6 2 6 3 3 6 6 4 6 4
84 Boston	GP	Clay	R64 Pablo Arraya	4 6 6 4 2 6
84 Cleveland	GP	Hard	R32 Glenn Michibata R16 David Pate	6 2 6 0 3 6 3 6
84 Columbus, Oh	GP	Hard	R32 Russell Simpson R16 Hank Pfister	6 4 6 2 6 3 4 5 2 6
84 Cincinnati	GP	Hard	R64 John McEnroe R32 Ramesh Krishnan	6 7 6 2 6 3 2 6 6 4 2 6
84 U.S. Open	GP	Hard	R128 Fritz Buehning R64 Ken Flach	7 5 6 3 6 4 2 6 5 7 1 6
84 Los Angeles	GP	Hard	R64 Bye R32 Sandy Mayer	 2 6 6 7

Tournament		Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores		
84	San Francisco	GP	Carpet	R32	John Llyod	5	7 3 6
84	Ind v Den	WGPO	DC	R1	Michael Mortensen	6	0 6 1 6 2
84	Sydney Indoor	GP	Hard	R32	Chris Johnstone	6	1 6 4
				R16	John Fitzgerald	6	4 7 6
				Q	Anders Jarryd	1	6 2 6
84	Tokyo Indoor	GP	Carpet	R32	Leif Shiras	6	3 6 0
				R16	Martin Davis	6	3 6 0
				Q	Ivan Lendl	4	6 4 6
84	Hong Kong	GP	Hard	R32	Martin Davis	7	6 6 7 6 4
				R16	John Sadri	2	6 7 5 1 6
84	Stockholm	GP	Hard	R64	Steve Denton	7	6 6 4
				R32	Henrik Sundstrom	6	1 6 4
				R16	Guy Forget	2	6 6 7
84	Wembley	GP	Carpet	R32	Vitas Gerulaitis	6	4 4 6 4 6
84	Australian Open	GP	Grass	R128	Bye		
				R64	Guy Forget	3	6 1 6 6 7
85	Lipton Inter	NGP	Hard	R128	Peter Elter	6	3 6 4
				R64	Johan Kriek	4	6 0 6
85	Ind v Itl	IRD	DC	R2	Claudio Panatta	6	1 6 4 5 7 3 6 6 3
				R4	Francesco Cancellotti	5	7 6 4 6 3 8 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
85 Brussels	NGP Carpet	R32 R16	Karel De Muynck Heinz Gunthardt	6 2 6 7 7 6 6 1 3 6 0 6
85 Rotterdam	NGP Carpet	R32	Anders Jarryd	4 6 3 6
85 Milan	NGP Carpet	R32 R16	Steve Meister Anders Jarryd	6 4 6 4 3 6 4 6
85 Atlanta	NGP Carpet	R32	Ken Flach	4 6 4 6
85 Las Vegas	NGP Hard	R32 R16	Jimmy Connors Ken Flach	6 1 7 6 4 6 2 6
85 World Team Cup	Clay	R1 R1 R1	Thierry Tulasne Anders Jarryd Miloslav Mecir	0 6 1 6 0 6 2 6 3 6 1 6
85 Queen's	NGP Grass	R64 R32	Llyod Bourne Pat Cash	6 1 6 4 2 6 3 6
85 Wimbledon	NGP Grass	R128 R64 R32 R16	Jonathan Canter Brad Drewett Yannick Noah Heinz Gunthardt	6 3 6 4 6 4 7 6 6 7 7 6 7 5 4 6 7 6 6 3 7 6 4 6 4 6 1 6
85 Newport, Ri	NGP Grass	R32	David Pate	3 6 4 6

Tournament		Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores					
85	Swd v Ind QF	DC	Grass	R1	Anders Jarryd	6	3	5	7	
				R4	Mats Wilander	8	6	9	7	4 6
85	Canadian Open	NGP	Hard	R64	Wally Masur	6	7	2	6	
85	Cincinnati	NGP	Hard	R64	Henri Leconte	7	6	6	4	
				R32	Marc Flur	3	6	2	6	
85	U.S. Open	NGP	Hard	R128	Mats Wilander	2	6	4	6	4 6
85	Stuttgart	NGP	Clay	R32	Drew Gitlin	6	4	3	6	6 0
				R16	Ivan Lendl	3	6	2	6	
85	Los Angeles	NGP	Hard	R32	John McEnroe	2	6	0	6	
85	San Francisco	NGP	Carpet	R32	Tom Gullikson	7	5	7	6	
				R16	Eliot Teltscher	4	6	7	6	5 7
85	Tel Aviv	NGP	Hard	R32	Amit Naor	1	6	6	7	
86	Czh v Ind IRD	DC	Grass	R2	Miloslav Mecir	0	6	5	7	4 6
				R4	Tomas Smid	6	3	3	6	1 6 2 6
86	Rotterdam	NGP	Carpet	R32	Sergio Casal	6	4	4	6	7 6
				R16	Tomas Smid	4	6	6	7	
86	Queen's	NGP	Grass	R64	Todd Nelson	2	6	6	4	3 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
86 Bristol	NGP Grass	R64 R32 R16 Q S F	Nelson Aerts Tom Gullikson Ramesh Krishnan Tim Wilkison Mark Woodforde Henri Leconte	7 6 6 2 6 2 5 7 6 4 6 4 6 3 6 4 6 4 6 4 6 1 7 6 1 6 8 6
86 Wimbledon	NGP Grass	R128	Wojtek Fibak	1 6 6 3 4 6 3 6
86 Newport, Ri	NGP Grass	R32	Marc Flur	4 6 6 3 4 6
86 Livingston, NJ	NGP Hard	R32	Eric Korita	6 7 4 6
86 Canadian Open	NGP Hard	R64 R32	Jimmy Brown Tim Wilkison	6 4 6 7 6 4 7 6 1 2 Ret
86 San Francisco	NGP Carpet	R32	Jaime Yzaga	6 7 6 3 4 6
86 Ind v SSR WGPO	DC Grass	R1	Andrei Chesnokov	6 1 6 4 6 4
87 Ind v Arg IRD	DC Grass	R1 R4	Horacio De La Pena Martin Jaite	9 7 6 3 6 3 3 6 3 6 6 4 8 6 6 2
87 T.O.C.-N.Y.	NGP Clay	R64	Martin Wostenholme	0 6 1 6
87 Queen's	NGP Grass	R64	Patrick Kuhnén	2 6 2 6
87 Bristol	NGP Grass	R64 R32 R16	Glenn Michibata Christo Steyn Michiel Schapers	6 2 6 2 6 4 6 4 1 6 4 6

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
87 Wimbledon	NGP Grass	R128 R64	Damir Keretic Scott Davis	6 2 6 3 7 5 3 6 0 6 4 6
87 Ind v Isr QF	DC Grass	R2	Amos Mansdorf	6 4 6 4 7 5
87 Stratton MT	NGP Hard	R64 R32	Johan Carlsson Slobodan Zivojinovic	0 6 6 4 7 5 4 6 6 7
87 Cincinnati	NGP Hard	R64 R32	Guy Forget Anders Jarryd	6 3 7 5 6 7 6 1 5 7
87 Ind v Aus SF	DC Grass	R2 R4	Wally Masur John Fitzgerald	1 6 6 3 12 10 6 4 5 7 3 6 3 6
87 Las Vegas	CH Hard	R32 R16 Q S	Rick Rudeen Danny Saltz Paul Chamberlin Michael Chang	6 4 6 3 3 6 6 3 6 1 6 3 3 6 6 1 1 6 6 4 1 4 Ret
87 Swd v Ind F	DC Clay	R2 R5	Anders Jarryd Mats Wilander	3 6 3 6 1 6 2 6 0 6
88 Ygo v Ind IRD	DC Grass	R1 R5	Bruno Oresar Slobodan Zivojinovic	6 3 6 0 6 3 3 6 4 6 4 6
88 Newport, Ri	NGP Grass	R32 R16 Q S	Peter Doohan Derrick Rostagno Peter Lundgren Wally Masur	6 3 6 1 7 6 7 6 6 3 4 6 6 2 6 7 6 7

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
88 Indianapolis	NGP Hard	R64	Michael Robertson	7 5 4 6 2 6
88 Usta Winnetka	CH Hard	R32	Brad Pearce	4 6 7 6 7 5
		R16	Johan Carlsson	6 1 6 4
		Q	Robbie Weiss	7 6 7 5
		S	Jeff Tarango	2 6 4 6
88 Usta New Haven	CH Hard	R32	Morten Christensen	6 4 6 4
		R16	Todd Woodbridge	6 3 6 4
		Q	John Boytim	7 5 4 6 6 4
		S	Maliva Washington	6 1 6 1
		F	Zeehan Ali	6 3 6 1
88 Seoul Olympics	Hard	R64	Henri Leconte	6 4 4 6 4 6 6 3 3 6
88 Usta Las Vegas	CH Hard	R32	Andreas Lesch	6 3 6 0
		R16	Eduardo Velez	7 6 6 2
		Q	Jim Gurfein	6 4 4 6 6 2
		S	Andrew Sznajder	3 6 1 6
88 Detroit	NGP Carpet	R32	Rick Leach	1 6 6 7
89 Seoul	NGP Hard	R32	Gianluca Pozzi	6 3 6 3
		R16	Nicolas Pereira	6 3 6 2
		Q	Brad Drewett	7 6 5 7 6 7
89 Singapore	NGP Hard	R32	Paul Chamberlin	0 6 6 7

Tournament	Surf	RND	Opponent	Scores
89 T.O.C.-N.Y.	NGP Clay	R64	Alex Antonitsch	1 6 1 6
89 Manchester	CH Grass	R32	Nick Brown	6 3 6 7 2 6
89 Bristol	NGP Grass	R32	Andrew Castle	4 6 7 6 6 4
		R16	Kelly Evernden	2 6 4 6
89 Newport, Ri	NGP Grass	R32	Christian Saceanu	7 6 3 6 4 6
89 Schenectady	NGP Hard	R32	Ned Caswell	7 5 6 2
		R16	Jeff Tarango	3 6 3 6
89 Indianapolis	NGP Hard	R64	Olivier Delaitre	6 3 7 5
		R32	Todd Wiitsken	6 7 3 6
89 Cincinnati	NGP Hard	R64	Maurice Ruah	6 2 6 1
		R32	Olivier Delaitre	6 3 7 6
		R16	Boris Becker	1 6 1 6
89 Sydney Indoor	NGP Hard	R32	Darren Cahill	4 6 0 6

Appendix III

ATP DATASHEET

Name : Vijay Amritraj
Born : Madras, India
Birthdate : 14 Dec 1953
Height : 6'4", 1M93
Weight : 190, 86 Kg
Hair : Black
Residence : Madras, India
Wife : Shyamala
Sons : Prakash, Vikram
Plays : R
Prize Money Career (USD) : 1,316,507
Best Career Rank : 16, 07 July 1980
Current Rank : 281
Doubles Rank : 328

Singles titles : 16, as follows:

1986 — (1), Bristol
1984 — (1), Newport
1980 — (2), Newport, Bangkok
1979 — (1), Bombay
1978 — (1), Mexico City
1977 — (1), Bombay
1976 — (2), WCT/Memphis, Newport
1975 — (2), Columbus, Calcutta
1974 — (2), Washington, Beckenham
1973 — (3), Chichester, Bretton Woods, New Delhi

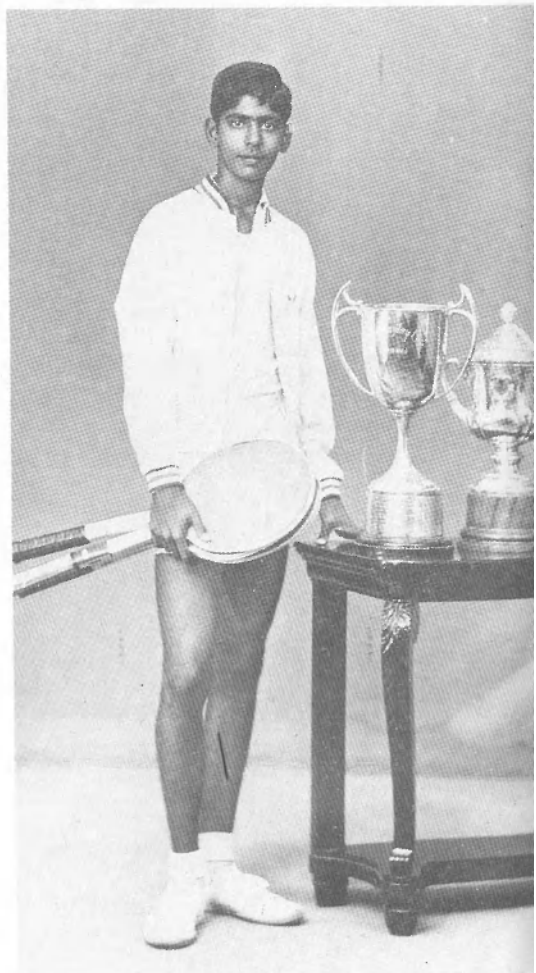
Doubles titles : 13, as follows:

- 1986 — (1), Newport (w/Wilkison)
- 1983 — (1), Newport (w/Fitzgerald)
- 1982 — (1), WCT/Chicago (w/brother Anand)
- 1980 — (2), Rotterdam, Frankfurt (w/S. Smith)
- 1978 — (1), Mexico City (w/brother Anand)
- 1977 — (2), London (w/brother Anand),
WCT/Kansas City (w/Stockton)
- 1976 — (1), WCT/Memphis (w/brother Anand)
- 1975 — (2), Los Angeles, WCT/Atlanta
(w/brother Anand)
- 1974 — (2), Columbus, Bombay (w/brother Anand)

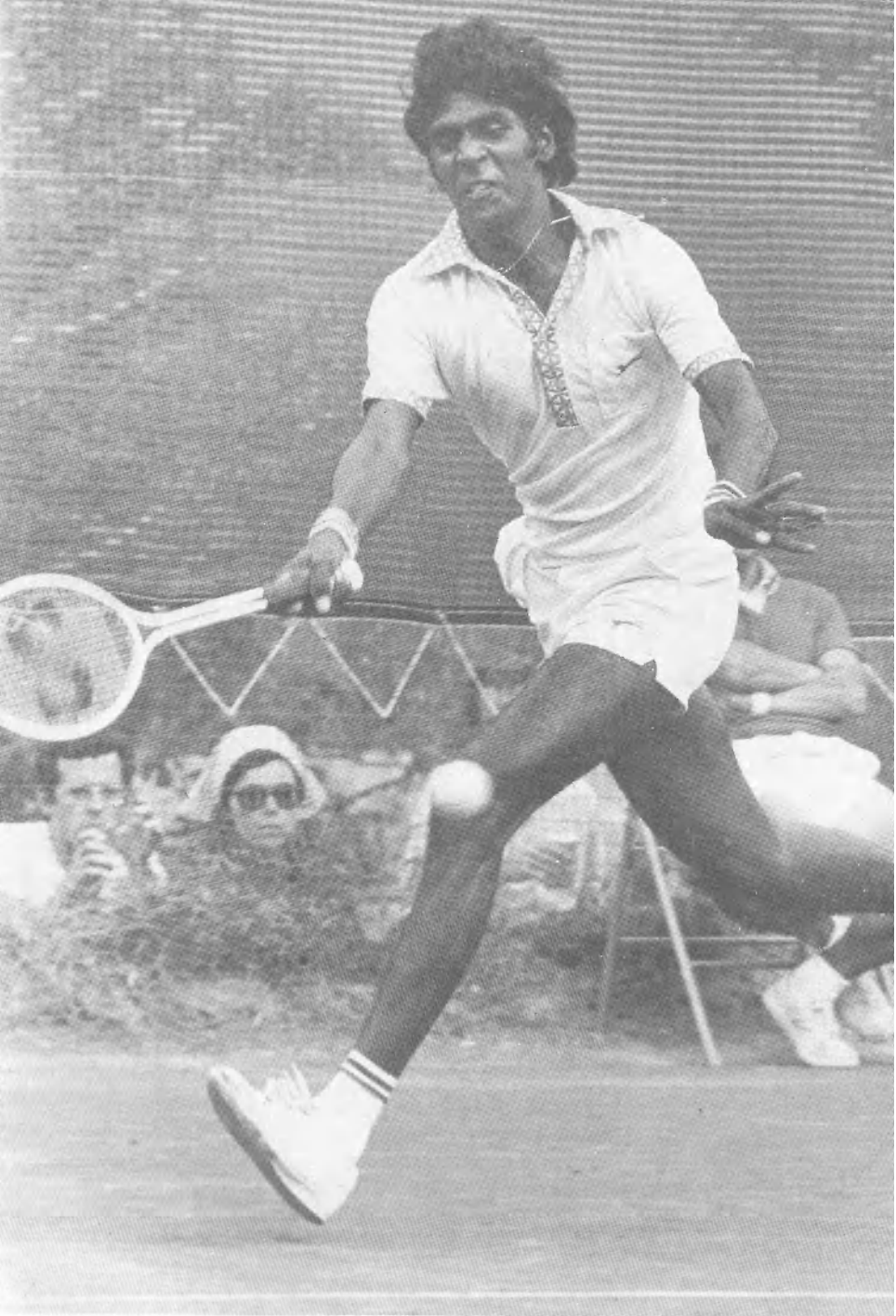


Robert and Maggie Amritraj, Anand, Ashok and Vijay, 1978

First steps, 1954



First victories, Aged 13



The legendary elegance in action, Bretton Woods, 1973



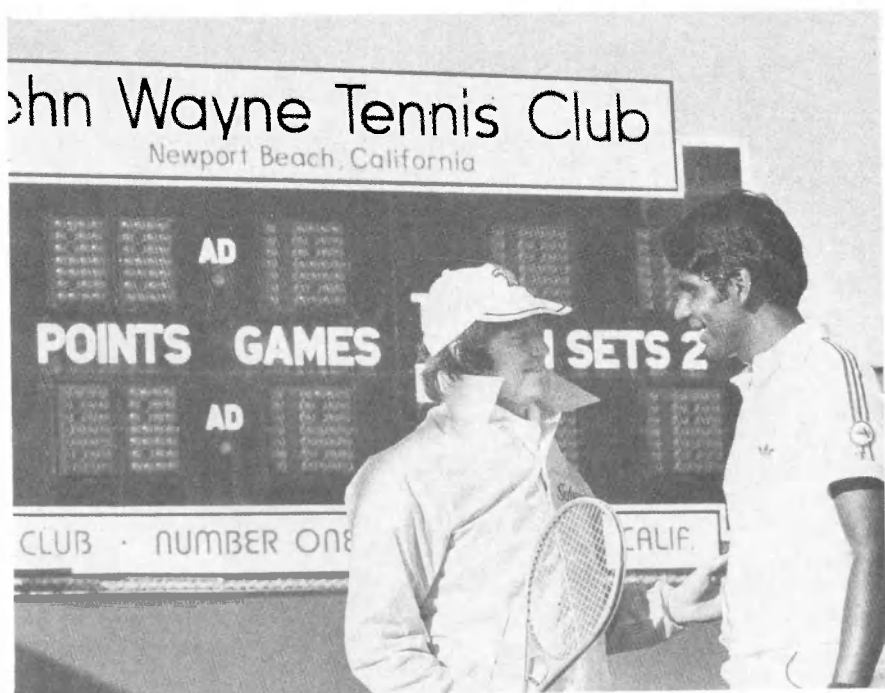
Receiving United Nations Fairplay Award in Paris, 1988

With Australian Champion, Rod Laver, 1973





Partying with Disney Poitier, Ilie Nastase and Ashok



Ray Emerson works Vijay in California



John McEnroe lends support at *Octopussy* premiere in London



Vijay with Roger Moore as James Bond in *Octopussy*

Rajiv Gandhi and torchbearer Vijay at the Asian Track Field Meet in New Delhi



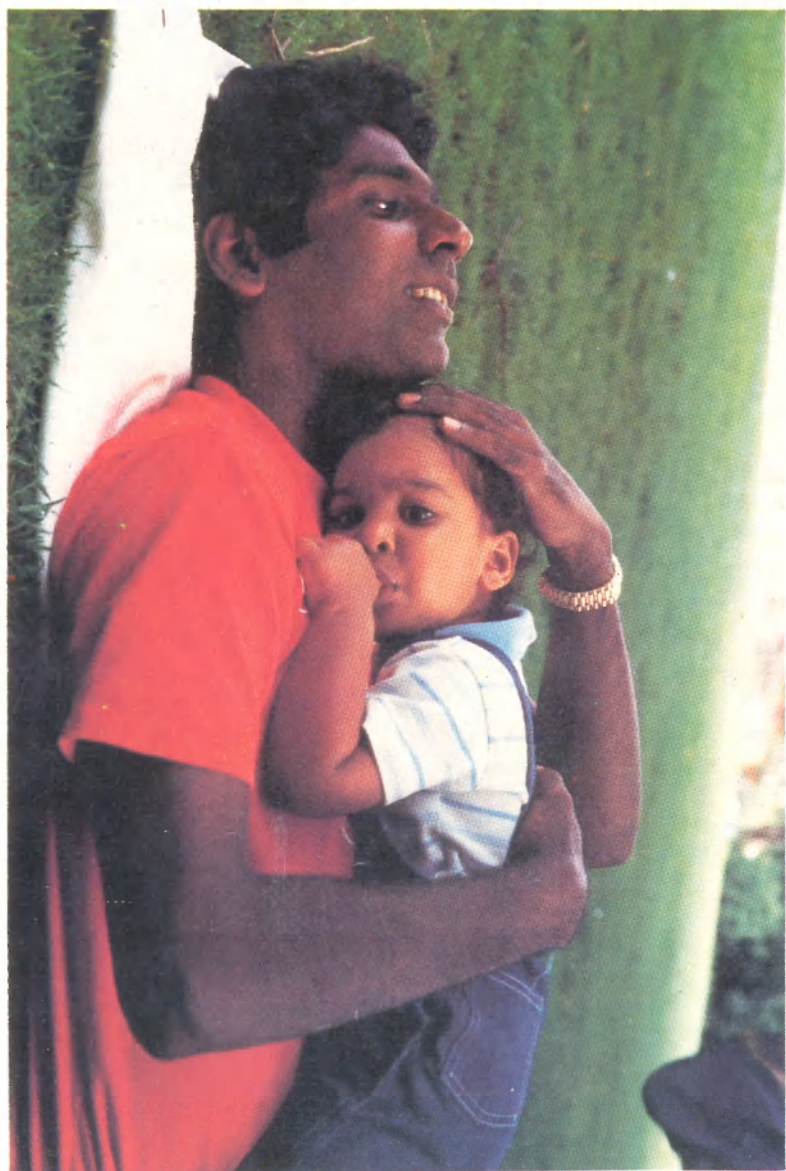


Will Prakash inherit Vijay's winning technique?



A traditional marriage to Shyamala in Madras, 1983

In Hyde Park with first-born Prakash, 1985





Shyamala, Prakash, second son Vikram and Vijay



Friends with Prince Michael of Kent



With American former Secretary of State, George Shultz, Washington DC



Nina Pillai watches a meeting with Duchess of Gloucester



A game with Tom Selleck and Chuck Norris



A visit to the White House, May 1986



Trey Waltke, Vijay, Martina Navratilova, Terry Holliday,
World Team Tennis, 1977



Taking on Chuck Heston



With Sonny Bono, Mayor of Palm Springs



Krishnan, Anand, Vijay, Vasudevan play Indian Davis Cup finals in
Göteborg, Sweden, 1987



Vijay with Jeremy Bates



Vijay with youngsters at Puma Carona Tennis Clinic



Vijay with Hiten Khatau, Director, Puma Carona



“On and off the tennis court, Vijay Amritraj has been charming company for 20 years. His refined, restlessly enquiring mind, imbued by the spirit of laughter, has explored a diversity of interests with a caring zest typical of the man. His book is a bonus for this gifted raconteur’s legion of admirers.”

Rex Bellamy (*The Times*)

“This is the story of one of the finest gentlemen in the sport, a perfect inspiration for others to follow.”

John Parsons (*Daily Telegraph*)

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