

Sports

Teen-dream Agassi woos crowd in Queen City exhibition

By HANNAH DRUM
Special to the DTH

CHARLOTTE - Tennis fans who went to the Charlotte Coliseum Tuesday night to see a blood-and-guts battle between Ivan Lendl and Andre Agassi — two of the top players in men's tennis — may have been disappointed.

In a lukewarm exhibition match, Lendl, currently the No. 2 player in the world, defeated American teen dream Agassi 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.

There were a few awe-inspiring rallies, the kind that make any real tennis players in the audience twitch in their seats as if they were the ones playing. But aside from occasional glimpses at Agassi's riveting forehand and Lendl's relentless groundstrokes, the excitement wasn't due to the tennis.

It was Agassi. Currently ranked No. 3 in the world, the 18-year-old Agassi is the youngest American ever to be ranked that high. He has six tournament victories under his belt so far this year, second only to West Germany's Boris Becker, and as of November, he has won more than \$627,000 in prize money.

But the Las Vegas showboy's success on the court is being overshadowed by the attention he receives for his electric personality and unconventional image.

Agassi is a magnet, attracting the media, young copycats and admirers — especially the young ladies.

In a post-match interview Tuesday night, Agassi was asked his impression of the oohing, aaahing, and whistling fans who punctuated the two-hour match with cries of "We love you, Andre" and "GO AGGIE!" "They're enthusiastic," he said. "I got a kick out of them. It was fun playing here."

Girls of all ages in the Coliseum crowd of 9,100 swooned over the handsome young man with rock-star length, Clairol-blond locks. Agassi



DTH/David Surowiecki

Andre Agassi is rapidly heading for the top of the tennis world

may know he's the hottest man in tennis today, but contrary to his recent portrayals in the media as a flagrant show-off, he seems to have kept some of his boyish modesty.

One reporter commented, "I think the girls liked you."

An Agassi most would not recognize just blushed and answered, "Yeah, I kinda got that impression."

But the frenzy of the female crowd was not unprovoked.

After players walked onto the court for the pre-match introduction and warm-ups, the 28-year-old Lendl sat reflecting with his bottle of Evian. Lendl was ready to play Agassi, but Agassi was too busy playing the crowd.

Clad in acid-washed jeans and a Bollettieri sweatshirt, Agassi began pulling sweats out of his tennis bag and hurling them to his teeny-bopper fans in the stands. For the grand finale of his pre-game show, Agassi

gave a short strip-tease and tossed his sweatshirt into the crowd. Only then did he seem ready to knock a few balls around with Lendl.

Already becoming a role model for many young tennis players, Agassi could find himself in a precarious position. He seems to be the trend-setter among young American tennis players.

The American tennis brat, a persona which became stylish in the days of John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors, seems to be on the way out. Andre Agassi is on the way in.

Agassi made People magazine's latest list of worst-dressed men, but the retail market and Madison Avenue don't seem to agree.

Dozens of kids rushing the court for autographs after the match had hair a la Andre. Tennis brights are replacing the polite whites on the court. And the trendy Nike denim tennis shorts, now synonymous with Agassi's derriere, are popping up everywhere from public tennis courts

to country clubs.

Is Agassi putting a slight wrinkle in the starched white tennis tradition, or is natty really going ratty?

Regardless of his dynamic, near sex-symbol status off the court, the fact remains that Agassi will be a major force in men's tennis if he stays on course.

After dropping out of school at 13, Agassi went to Nick Bollettieri's Tennis Academy in Bradenton, Fla., a highly regimented tennis camp/school, and he turned pro two years later.

Still, under Bollettieri's wing, Agassi made the semifinals at both the U.S. and French Open this year, and he captured the title at the U.S. Clay Court Championships.

Some say the only barrier between Agassi and a Grand Slam title is a little maturity and more physical strength.

Agassi realizes his body strength and stamina are not up to par with the players who are consistently on

top, especially Lendl. The dour Czech still outplayed Agassi after losing a grueling, 4½-hour, five-setter against Boris Becker in the finals of the Masters the night before the Charlotte match.

"(Lendl's) strong, he can do it," Agassi said. "He could probably play another match like that against Boris tomorrow, then play me the next day and beat me."

Agassi has already said he does not intend to play in the Australian Open in January, the first Grand Slam event of the 1989 season, and Wimbledon is not in his plans either. He says he plans to spend his time off the tour circuit working with weights to build strength in his legs.

Agassi must win a major tournament for his star status to endure, but he can relax for awhile. Even if he does not reach the top spot in the ATP rankings next year, he will remain the American tennis sweetheart as long as he can continue to romance his fans.

Campus Calendar

The DTH Campus Calendar is a daily listing of University-related activities sponsored by academic departments, student services and student organizations officially recognized by the Division of Student Affairs. To appear in Campus Calendar, announcements must be submitted on the Campus Calendar form by NOON one business day before the announcement is to run. Saturday and Sunday events are printed in Friday's calendar and must be submitted on the Wednesday before the announcement is to run. Forms and a drop box are located outside the DTH office, 104 Union. Items of interest lists ongoing events from the same campus organizations and follows the same deadline schedule as Campus Calendar. Please use the same form.

Friday

1 p.m. **Muslim Students Association** will hold Muslim Friday Congregational Prayers in the

Union. All are welcome.

7 p.m. **Baha'i Club** will have an informal roundtable discussion in the Frank Porter Graham Lounge on "The Nature of Reality." All are welcome.

7:30 p.m. **CGLA** will hold its Holiday Party in 208 Union. Please bring something festive to share.

Wesley Foundation will sponsor a Christmas Love Feast in the Moravian tradition. All are welcome to 214 Pittsboro Street for the festivities.

Sunday

4 p.m.

Carolina Tar Heel Voices will have a Christmas concert in the United Methodist Church. The free public concert will be followed by a reception and caroling for all.

6 p.m.

WXYC FM 89.3 will have Northern Hemisphere Live, a call-in talk show, presenting a program on role-playing games and also, of course, Rogelio, the Mayo Man.

Sunday, Dec. 18

2 p.m.

Senior Class and GPSF will have a December Graduates Recognition Ceremony

in Memorial Hall. A reception will follow at 3 p.m. in the Carolina Inn. For more information, contact the Senior Class Office.

Items of Interest

Optometry Admission Test Applications for the Feb. 11 test date must be received in Chicago by Jan. 2. Pick up your applications in 201D Steele or Nash Hall before leaving for the holidays.

Senior Night Out will be Sunday, Dec. 11 at Lionda's Bar and Grill, with food and drink specials.

Delta Zeta Sorority is selling the "Men of UNC 1989 Calendar" in the Pit today. Delta Zeta members will also be selling the calendars.

Goodbye after 2 yrs. of coverage

By LANGSTON WERTZ
Staff Writer

For nearly two years I've sat at computer terminals in the Student Union's DTH offices and banged on keyboards until my fingers calloused just so you readers out there could criticize or adore (hopefully, adore) what it is I've been trying to do.

I've won a lot of things since I began writing for the DTH, but the best thing about my term here was that all of the editors who've served since I've been here — and especially Jean Lutes, who once saluted me in the intra-office newsletter — have let me write lots of columns. And occasionally, I wrote some news stories. Really.

In my short span here I've covered coaches from Dean Smith to Dick Crum, created the "Baby Jay" moniker for J.R. Reid and even got Dick Vitale to utter my famous, "J.R.'s a horse and Danny's (Manning) a pony," line on national television.

I've watched Kathy Wilson nearly break the school's single-game scoring record in a women's basketball game, written about UNC football coaching dramas, and of course, covered the inimitable, ultra-talented Derrick Fenner.

But there are many others deserving of thanks:

■ Kevin Madden, for giving me The Interview last year. But as I give thanks, I must also apologize to Kevin for quoting someone that I shouldn't of. Sorry, "Haus."

■ The guys in the DTH sports office, for putting up with yours truly as he racked your brains while trying to write stories. And a special *gracias* to Christopher Scott Spencer and Michael Mark Berardino for allowing me to be a big-time man who puts in zero hours.

■ The Charlotte Observer, for giving me a place to continue my rantings and ravings, even if I have to start two days after finishing my final final.

■ But most of all, I must thank you, the readers, for actually scanning my junk and occasionally saying, "Hey Wertz, that was a good story. Enjoyed it."

And that's what I've done for two years — enjoyed it — going to hundreds of sporting events, eating all of the free food, listening to Dave Lohse rant and rave all about life, watching J.R. dunk and drop-step on people, listening to Mack Brown joke and jive his way through what could have been a very unfunny football season. But most importantly, I was there — enjoying it — when Dean Smith said he had lit his last cigarette.

Now what more could I ask for? Hope you guys enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed bringing it to you. As they say, it's been fun.

Later.

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