

# Develop confidence and the proper attitude

BY DAVID W. STEWART

Do you believe you can win? The state of your mind more than the state of your strokes and physical condition is what ultimately determines whether or not you are going to win.

It's as simple as saying winners believe they can win and losers don't. The secret to improving your game lies in learning to believe that you can do it. You must develop a self-image to reach your maximum potential.

When you have to make a shot to win an important point, you must have the confidence that you can hit it.

When you have match point against you and it is your opponent's serve, you must have the confidence that if the serve is hit to your strength you can hit it as if it was the first point of the match, or as if you were practicing with a friend.

Each player has his own method for achieving confidence, but regardless of how you achieve it, you must have it to improve your level of play. When Jimmy Connors returns serve, he literally attacks the ball.

His return of serve is more dangerous than his serve. The faster the surface on which he plays, the better his return of serve. We all would like to

return serve like Connors and we can, within our own levels of ability, if we have the confidence.

WHEN YOU position yourself to return serve, you can't be thinking about what you are going to do if your opponent gets his first serve in to your backhand. With that kind of thinking, you are going to lose.

One way to go about achieving confidence is to practice hitting a certain kind of shot until you believe you can do it. Set an ultimate goal for yourself such as 100 consecutive backhand cross courts. That probably sounds like a tall order, but it's not if you set your first

goal at 25 and then work up to 100.

When you reach your goal, you're going to be brimming with such confidence that the next time you have a situation that calls for a backhand cross court, you are going to hit it like you owned it.

Confidence — that's what you need and you must have it to win.

I have a friend who, just before an important match, will go and sit quietly by himself. He will visualize winning his match.

He shuts everything else out of his mind except the court on which he is going to play. He sees himself hitting winners and serving aces until he hits

the final winner and jumps over the net victoriously.

THIS MENTAL exercise might sound childish or neurotic, but you might be surprised at its effectiveness. Start spending five minutes each day imagining yourself locked in combat with your opponent.

Every time he rushes the net, with a shot to your forehand, pass your opponent down the line.

When a ball is hit to your weak backhand, respond with a defensive lob or a careful chip shot. When you have an important point, get the first serve in and fire an ace at least once a game.

Pay special attention to the points you are afraid of and see yourself winning them. This simple mental exercise lays a foundation of self-confidence.

You show yourself that you can do it, but that you expect to be able to do it, but that you expect to be able to do it, but that you expect to be able to do it.

Many people try to emulate a particular stroke of a top professional, especially if it's a shot they find awkward to hit.

Find yourself a mirror and spend a few minutes each day in front of it practicing the stroke. You will find that you will start to groove a graceful stroke.

## Despite losses, Rice still talented

BY BOB GROSS

Brother Rice's Brian Brennan will be a busy man for Al Fracassa's Warriors this season.

Not only is he slated as a starting safety and one of the team's tri-captains, but he'll also be playing quarterback, a position filled last year by Al Slater-Jon English.

"We've always tried to keep a pretty balanced attack," said Rice assistant coach Michael Popson, "so our philosophy this year will be to use more action passes, more sprintout passes to utilize Brian's quickness."

Brennan, while a standout defensive safety and punt returner the past two years, has had limited time at quarterback. His relative inexperience points up what might be a problem for the Warriors if they hope to repeat as Catholic League champs — the team has lost 37 players from last year's squad.

"I think they're very enthusiastic," said Fracassa. "We don't know what we have yet, but we're looking forward to the season."

Probably the place where graduation hit Brother Rice the hardest is the offensive. Of the seven men up front,

only left guard and tri-captain Mark Moore was a starter last year. Split end Charlie Dillon, however, did see action last year as a flanker.

"We have to mature game-wise very quickly," said Popson, "because of our lack of experience."

Popson went on to say the key to a successful season for the Warriors will be "how fast our young people can mature — keeping injuries at a minimum will help."

Members of the offensive line include Bob Fallon at left tackle, Mike Welage at center, Steve Nagengast at right guard, Dan Milan at right tackle and Steve Allen at tight end.

Rice's line is not huge as high school football backs, averaging 6-1, 190 pounds, according to Popson.

The backfield, aside from Brennan, has a lot of experience from last year. Fullback Mike Neff and tailback Jim Browne will run out of both the pro set and the I formation.

Pat Fodale will play flanker.

On defense, opponents sweeping Rice's left side will be seeing double before a Warrior even touches them — identical twins Tom and Tim MacLane are standouts at left linebacker and left defensive halfback, respectively.

Tom Bars holds down the right line-backing spot. Rich Hrdlicka is the strong safety, Jim Ostrowski is the right defensive half, and ironman Brian Brennan is the safety.

Brennan is the only Rice player to play both offense and defense, according to Popson.

"After a while," he said, "I hope no one does."

The Warriors' front five includes tri-captain Tom Cote at left end, Mitch Kanaan at left tackle, Pat Gaunt at middle guard, Mike Johnson at right tackle and Kevin Kennedy at right end.

Both Fracassa and Popson picked Detroit Catholic Central and Redford Bishop Borgess as top contenders in the

race for the Catholic League title. In addition, Popson named Harper Woods Notre Dame as having "excellent size and personnel."

Rice starts off its fall schedule with a game against Lakeshore High School, a team with a score to settle — the Warriors beat Lakeshore in the state football playoffs in 1977 on the way to a Class A football title.

Lakeshore won't be the only team gunning for Rice, Popson admitted.

"I think," he said, "when you've been in the position Brother Rice has been in for the past few years . . . I would say there are teams which come after us more than anybody else."

## Runners, get ready

The Vic Tanny Bloomfield Executive Club and the Total Runner store of Southfield will co-sponsor two running races to be held in Bloomfield Township on Sunday, Sept. 16.

There is an entry fee of \$5 which includes a T-shirt and post-race party.

Any person physically fit to compete may run in either the five kilometer (3.1 miles) or the 15 kilometer (9.3 miles) run.

Medals will be presented to the first 150 finishers in the 15 kilometer run, and to the first 50 finishers in the five kilometer run. In addition, trophies will be presented to the top four finishers in both races for men and women in the 19-and-under age group, the 20-29 age group, the 30-39 age group, the 40-49

age group, and the 50-and-over age group.

Trophies will also be awarded to the youngest and oldest finishers. Former Detroit Lions Mike Lucci and Ron Kramer will be on hand.

Entry forms are available at all Vic Tanny clubs and, at the Total Runner store in Southfield. All entries must be received before Sept. 13.

Race packets may be picked up only at the Vic Tanny Bloomfield Executive Club between noon and 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, or the morning of the races until 9:15 a.m.

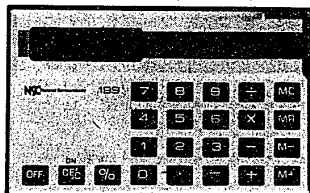
The races will start from the parking lot of the Detroit Bank and Trust building west of Telegraph on Maple Road at 9:30 a.m. Runners should report to the starting line no later than 9 a.m.

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