

## From Courtside

By David Stewart



# Learning to play smart tennis

Most tennis players do not play smart tennis. Now, you're probably thinking, "what does this guy know — how can he make such a statement?" Watch a few matches and you will agree with me.

Better yet, ask yourself the following questions: What do I do when I'm running wide for shot in the back court? How do I try to hit the return? Be honest — what do you do?

If you are an average tennis player, you attempt to hit the "great" shot from that position. You try to hit a passing shot or a screamer cross court. What happens most of the time? You drive it deep, hit into the net, or your opponent hits an easy shot to the other corner for a winner. This is just one example of not being smart.

Ask the average player what kind of

shot should be hit when you are behind the baseline and off to the side. He or she won't really know what to say. The only thing the player knows for sure is the feeling of being in deep trouble. When the return is hit, they hope a lot of luck rides with it.

IT IS TOO easy to forget your objective of the moment. You need to buy yourself some precious moments to give you the time to return to the homebase position, which is behind the center of the baseline.

Two problems are immediately posed when you are running down the wide shot. First, you are in an awkward hitting position, and that means you won't be able to hit your best shot; second, you are out of court, and if you hit hard, you have even less time to return

to home base, and your opponent's ball will be returned more quickly than usual, giving you even less time to run down the shot.

You might think you should hit the ball more slowly or rush the net. But more than likely you think of blasting your way out of trouble and lose the point.

The answer to your bad situation is the lob. Lobs are probably something you seldom do, if at all. When you lob, you have had memories of losing the point. You remember your opponent's devastating overhead smash, or the lob that landed out. You remember it for days, and the next time you are confronted with the same situation you do not lob.

YOUR OPPONENT MAY have done

just what you feared most. But you have forgotten the number of lobs that were clobbered into the net, hit out of bounds or the number of times your lob landed in and you had enough time to get yourself back to the homebase position and ready for the return.

You want to be effective — that's why you lob. Start thinking of the advantages to a lob. First, it gives you time to return to homebase; second, it slows up your opponent's timing, thus breaking his or her rhythm. Your opponent is moving in for the kill, and you force him or her to change into another pattern. Third, a lob creates a high bouncing ball, and that is never easy to handle. Many players make errors or hit weak returns when handling high bouncing balls.

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## Local athletes receive honors

Several athletes who attended local high schools are now making names for themselves on the collegiate level.

Pat Williams, a graduate of West Bloomfield High School and now in his sophomore year at Western Michigan University, won all three of his wrestling matches at the Michigan Open tournament in Mt. Pleasant.

Williams' performance in the 126-pound weight class helped the Broncos to a fourth place finish in the 12-team tourney.

Another former local athlete now attending WMU, Dave Slasor, helped the Broncos hockey team defeat Notre Dame by scoring a goal in the 6-5 win.

Slasor, a defenseman who stands only 5-foot-8 and weighs 160 pounds, made the team as a walk-on this year and has played in 10 games. A freshman who graduated from Farmington Harrison High School, Slasor has contributed two goals and four assists so far this year.

Western Michigan's hockey squad sports a 10-3 record for the year.

Two former Farmington High School athletes, Joe Brown and Todd Kamstra, each received letters in their sport at their respective schools.

Brown, who attends Grand Valley State College, received his letter for football. Grand Valley finished the season with a 4-3 record, but led the NAIA in passing with a 290.6 yards per game average.

Kamstra won his varsity letter at Hope College in soccer. Kamstra, a freshman, helped Hope finish second in the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association in his sport.

## Park revenue hits new high

Revenues from park-user fees in Oakland County Parks are expected to reach \$1.8 million in 1980 — an 18 percent increase over the nearly \$1.6 million collected in 1979.

These figures are part of a \$3.6 million operating budget approved by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission on Dec. 5.

TOTAL PARK revenue for 1980 is expected to be \$4.5 million, an increase of 5 percent over 1979.

R. Eric Reickel, manager of the Parks and Recreation Commission, points out that total park revenue is expected to increase despite a \$354,000 cut-back in CETA funds.

Addressing the commission, Reickel said, "A lot of discussion and planning must take place early in 1980 to set our direction for the '80s. It appears that if we are to continue to grow, we will have to give heavy consideration to our growth will eventually become 100 percent self-supporting or other sources of funding must be found."

Reickel explained that when the parks system was established in 1965, it hoped to become self-supporting so that tax dollars would not have to be taken from the county's general fund.

Along with park-user fees and charges, Oakland County parks and recreation facilities are also supported by a one-quarter tax mill approved by county voters.

Lewis Wint, chairman of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission, said, "Without the support of the millage, we would not be able to continue to offer and develop quality programs and facilities in Oakland County parks, such as the new Waterford Oaks Tennis Complex."

ATTENDANCE in Oakland County parks has grown dramatically in the past few years with

some 794,000 people using the parks in 1978, and more than 901,000 so far in 1979.

By the end of 1980, some one million people are expected to use the parks.

Facilities in the eight-park system include campgrounds and golf courses, lakes and beaches, as well as cross country ski and snowmobile trails.

The parks also operate a wave action swimming pool, conference and banquet facilities, activities centers and a mobile recreation program.

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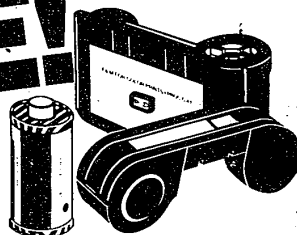
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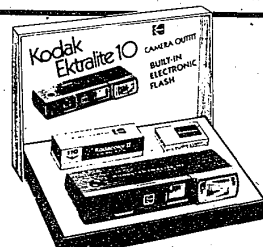
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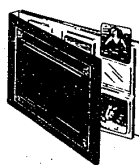
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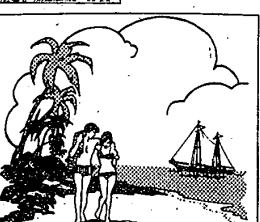
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