

from court-side
David Stewart

Brash court manners a disgrace to the game

I recently witnessed a match between two of the area's top-ranked juniors and found it to be a disgrace to tennis and all those who play it.

There was such a display of screaming, shouting and bad manners that both players should have been barred from further tournaments for the rest of 1980 — at the very least.

What they needed was a good, old-fashioned spanking from their parents.

Why do parents let their children use such terrible deportment on the court or anywhere else? Is deportment a forgotten word? Does it still have value on the court? Should teenagers be allowed to use such bad deportment?

THIS SITUATION Was created by some of the best tennis players in the world. These stars display some of the worst deportment — and it can all be viewed by youngsters any weekend on television. They are the role models for today's teenagers.

Youngsters watch these champions rant and rave on the court and think it's all right for them, too. They may even think it's part of being a champion.

It isn't — it never has been — and it never needs to be.

Teenagers should be forced to default their matches at the first outbreak or display of poor manners. It doesn't make any difference what is the cause. If in a tournament situation, they should be removed from the court.

When you look back into tennis history, you find that only recently have champions expressed the kind of deportment witnessed on courts today. What makes the situation worse is that parents are letting their children get away with these actions without disciplining them.

DURING THE TWO DECADES that Australian tennis coach Harry Hopman guided his country's tennis program, he produced the greatest dynasty that any country has ever enjoyed. More world champions came from Australia in those two decades than from any country in history.

In the days when the Davis Cup was held in high esteem, Hopman was known to remove players from Cup matches for bad manners. Players that did not learn deportment at home learned it from Hopman or they didn't leave Australia.

Unfortunately, local parents condone such bad displays from their children.

If a junior cannot win using good manners, he or she should not be allowed to play.

There is nothing complicated about the situation. When a player throws a racket, sweats, argues or in any way displays bad deportment, he or she should forfeit the match.

A COLUMN LIKE this should not be written without mentioning the thousands of juniors who compete admirably and bring credit to the game. Most of these players go unnoticed, which is a tragedy. They are taken for granted.

They were taught discipline and deportment at an early age, which leaves them better off than their tempestuous counterparts.

It is all too easy to forget these youngsters, who contribute far more to the game and remember the brash kids who bring disgrace to themselves and tennis.

David Stewart writes a weekly tennis column for the Eccentric newspapers.

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NSSL competition

Woodside outswims Woodbrooke

Woodside Athletic Club of Birmingham passed by 11 double-winners, churned to a 304-287 victory over Woodbrooke Hills Swim Club of Farmington Hills in a Northwest Suburban Swim League (NSSL) meet Thursday.

Three of the double-winners set new team records for Woodside. Molly Ames finished first in the girls' 9-10 50-meter breaststroke in a record 41.34 and also won the 50-meter freestyle (34.38).

Rusty Hibbert established a new team mark in the boys' 9-10 50-meter breast (44.03) and was a winner in the 50-meter free as well (35.84). Kara McGrath shattered the third team record in the girls' 15-17 100-meter free (1:01.65). Her second win came in the 50-meter butterfly (30.27).

Sarah Madden and Jill Hibbert led the 8 and under girls for Woodside, each winning two events. Madden placed first in the 25-meter fly (24.39) and 25-meter backstroke (23.02), while Hibbert won the 25-meter free (18.20) and 25-meter breast (23.21).

JOHN GIRARDOT was a double-winner in the eight and under boys' division, taking the 25-meter fly (21.27) and 25-meter free (20.32).

Julie Wartell won a pair of events in the girls' 11-12 age group. Her firsts were in the 50-meter free (32.53) and 100-meter individual medley (1:23.55).

David McAfee and David Tholen dominated the 13-14 boys' events. McAfee won the 50-meter fly (32.30) and 100-meter individual medley (1:13.31), while Tholen was first in the 50-meter free (30.30) and 50-meter breast (38.61).

For the 15-17-year-olds, Kelly Hibbert won a pair for the girls and Mike Schmidt took two for the boys. Hibbert's firsts were in the 50-meter back (34.38) and 100-meter individual medley (1:14.49) and Schmidt won the 50-meter fly (28.21) and 100-meter individual medley (1:06.38).

WOODBROOKE HAD SIX double-winners in the meet and set five team records. For the 11-12 boys, Scott Stinson set a team mark in the 50-meter breast (40.17) and also in the 50-meter free (30.57).

Jill Andries set a team mark in the girls' 13-14 100-meter individual medley (1:15.16) and also won the 50-meter breaststroke (37.58). Colleen Carey, swimming in the 15-17 age group, took the 50-meter breast in a record (35.88) and won the 50-meter freestyle.

Other record setters were Cindy Cramer in the girls' 9-10 50-meter breast (43.64) and Jim Gasser in the boys' 15-17 50-meter breast (33.84). Jason Wolf took the 9-10 boys' 50-meter fly (41.85) and 50-meter back (40.95).

Kathy Pierog led the 11-12 Woodbrooke girls by capturing the 50-meter fly (35.31) and the 50-meter back (37.22). For the 11-12 boys, Pat Dunigan and Stinson each won a pair.

Dunigan grabbed top honors in the 50-meter fly (35.45) and 100-meter individual medley (1:21.67) and Stinson placed on top in the 50-meter free (30.97) and 50-meter breast (40.17).

Andries won two events for Woodbrooke in the 13-14 girls' division. Her firsts were in the 50-meter breast (37.58) and 100-meter individual medley (1:15.16).

Magic's act holds crowd spellbound

(Continued from Page 1C)

The hold Johnson has over a crowd is phenomenal. From the moment he stepped onto the court with his famous "sore feet" walk, most of the eyes in the house were on him. People were actually engrossed in watching him stretch before the demonstration.

"They watched him play 'horse' — a simple playground game in which one player tries to duplicate shots made by the other from the identical spot on the floor — against Kelsner. They watched him play one-on-one basketball. They watched him lead the break in a three-on-three game."

If Johnson would have stopped to tie his shoelace, people would have watched him.

DAVE SUCHER, a graduate of Southfield High School and the starting center for the Blue Jay basketball team, played in that three-on-three game with Kelsner against Johnson. Sucher said it wasn't quite as big a thrill as was beating Ferndale in regional action — the third meeting between the two schools last winter — but "it's a thrill to be able to play with a guy like Magic."

It was amazing.

Johnson conducted a 10-minute drill, using some of the youngsters from the crowd, in passing and team basketball. The people in the crowd were hanging on his every word as if he were some latter day Red Auerbach.

You could almost hear a dialogue between Johnson and the crowd.

"My whole concept of basketball," said Johnson, "is team."

That's right, said the crowd.

"The reason the Lakers, the reason Michigan State, the reason my high school won the state championship," he continued, "was we were a team — we passed the ball."

You bet, said the crowd.

"My role on the Lakers," Johnson explained further, "is basically to the open man, but it changed in the last game as you did see."

We remember, said the crowd with a collective laugh.

JOHNSON'S WAY with the crowd tends to make people overlook Kelsner's superlative skills. For example, Kelsner was playing one-on-one at one end of the court against Sucher, while Johnson was playing at the other end against Barry Bremer, West Bloomfield's Great Importer. Now Sucher is a good high school basketball player, yet Kelsner was taking him to town in a quiet, workmanlike manner.

Guess who everybody was watching. Kelsner has some pretty flashy moves of his own. He and Earl "The Twist" Cureton of the University of Detroit put on an exhibition of skywalking and dunking that had the crowd roaring.

But the crowd roared even louder when Johnson got into the act with passes to both players for alley ops.

That's no knock on Kelsner — Johnson just plain has charisma.

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