

Aztec Tennis Reporter

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How Fund Loss Complicates Life Of Men's Coach

This is all about money.

For personal reasons, the leading donor over the last five years has decided not to contribute to the 2003 San Diego State's men's tennis team.

The loss of an annual



Nelson

\$15,000 donation has complicated John Nelson's life as a coach and offers a rare glimpse inside the world of big league college tennis financing. It's not a pretty sight.

Nelson, now in his tenth season, is scrambling for help.

Over \$50,000 in the hole, he said. This, instead of a usual deficit at this time in the season, which sometimes approaches \$35,000.

Even in an ordinary year, his budget must look like a patchwork quilt. Money from here. Money from there. Nickels and dimes struggling to add up to a nationally competitive tennis program.

First, about \$12,500 arrives from the SDSU Athletic Department, a sum that has risen only slightly over the decade he has spent raising the level of play on Montezuma Mesa.

Then, a hundred dollars trickles in, a gift from the par-

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Aztecs, Clawed by Bears, Wildcats, Stop Waves



Photo by Stan Liu

EYE OPENER: Aztec Katerina Romera focuses on the ball in a 7-6, 6-4 victory over Kelly Chan of Long Beach State.

Welcome to the Animal Kingdom: California's Bears, ranked 10th in the nation, defeated the Aztec women, 6-1, and Arizona's Wildcats, ranked 62nd, outlasted the Aztec men, 4-3, in early season play.

The losses delivered a message: Both SDSU teams will face powerful, scrappy opponents throughout their 2003 schedules.

But there's another message: Aztecs are scramblers. The men upset Pepperdine's 15th ranked Waves, 4-3. Mike Coelho won a crucial three-set victory as he and his teammates won four of the six singles matches.



Coelho

Silvia Tornier, ranked 66th, took California's Raquel Kops-Jones, ranked 12th, to three sets before the Golden Bear prevailed, 0-6, 7-6, 6-4.

After the California match, Aztec Coach Peter Mattera told

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GoAztecs.com: "We came out and played really well against one of the best teams in the nation today. We feel good about the way we played and battled."

The Aztec women opened the season with a 6-1 victory over Long Beach State. With five returning all-conference players, the Aztecs look so strong, said Mattera, that they have the capability to be one of the best teams in the country. By early February, they ranked 25th.

The men's team had been struggling in the weeks before the season opened from the

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Gene Carswell Takes A Breather

Volunteer Assistant Aztec Coach Gene Carswell is taking a leave from his duties with the men's team to receive medical treatment for a heart condition.

Carswell, who receives no coaching salary, and his wife, Lanie, are among the team's staunchest supporters. Last May, they attended the NCAA Championships at College Station, Texas, where he



Carswell

helped coach Oliver Maiberger and Ryan Redondo in singles and doubles. In August, they watched at New York's West Side Tennis Club as Maiberger and Redondo were honored as two of the nation's top intercollegiate players.

A San Diegan who played for the University of New Mexico, Carswell is one of the nation's top doubles players, winning four USTA gold balls in national championships.

In Carswell's absence, Chad Stoloff has joined the team as an assistant coach.

George Husack Takes The Helm

Santa Clara University has named Aztec George Husack (1988-91) as its fourth men's head coach in 20 years. Husack had been an assistant Santa Clara coach, recruiter, fundraiser, and marketing director for seven years. He replaces Sean



Husack

Burns, who resigned to seek an MBA at Trinity College in Ireland. Husack earned an MBA in finance from USF and played satellite tournaments and in the German Club League. He joined Burns's staff in 1995. As an assistant, he established the Silver Racquets, a boosters club, and Netscoop, a tennis newsletter. Last year, the Broncos ranked 55th in the nation.

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The Art of Not Choking

If this was radio, you would hear the alarm and then an announcer: "We interrupt this program to bring you an emergency message."

The emergency message, friends, is that San Diego State's men's tennis is running short of money - very short.

In his tenth year at the helm, John Nelson is dancing on the edge of desperation. He has held down expenses and plugged the holes with his own income as a teaching pro. But now he's reached a crossroads. His team's major annual donor has pulled out for reasons that have nothing to do with Nelson or the team.

Short by \$50,000, Nelson told us: "I don't know if I can raise enough to complete the season." The prospects are bleak in a down economy and within a static athletic department budget.

Yet the team has committed to play in Seattle, Palo Alto, Tempe, and Provo, and

Brother, Can You Spare A Hundred?



Calderon/The Desert Sun

MONEY SHOT: 1957 player seeks funds to ease 2003 debt.

won the right to play in the ITA National Indoor Team Championships in Louisville.

Publishing *ATR* has been my contribution for four years. Now I'm asking you to join me. If you enjoy *ATR*, faithful reader, please donate money

to ease John Nelson's deficit.

Make out a check to "San Diego State Men's Tennis Team." Send it to John Nelson at the Aztec Athletic Center, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182. Specify if it's for scholarships, equip-

ment, travel, or recruiting.

By law, most contributions of this kind are tax deductible. The Aztec Athletic Foundation (same address) can certify your donation for the IRS. Ask the foundation to send you a confirmation letter for your tax files.

Player Gabe Coren's parents, Ely and Ian, have hit the first serve with a \$100 donation.

In appreciation, *ATR* will send them (and you) a copy of Aztec Alex Waske's email diary. It contains remarkable descriptions of many of his most interesting matches in two years on the ATP tour, all written within hours of each contest, recounting many key points with amazing clarity. Waske is generously allowing us to share his unpublished diary to help his team.

Lots of people ask for money. Please give this your consideration. A fine tennis program is at stake. If you write a check today, a fine coach - and a humble publisher - will be eternally grateful. — John Martin (1957)

How the Scramble for Funds Complicates the Life of a Coach

(Continued from Page 1)

ents of a player, \$5,000 from an ex-player, then a few hundred from a series of lessons

Nelson gives. The next day, cash from another lesson.

Everything is tossed into the team kitty to cover travel, meals, equipment,

scholarships, and recruiting. His credit card bills mount.

He hits the road. A visit to a country club yields promises of a fundraiser. The

scramble continues. And each day, there's one more thing:

He coaches a tennis team.

Dear ATR: Gussy's Call on 'Getting the Elbow'

Dear ATR: Re Tom Penner's article ("Tennis Movies: The Spectacle of Losing It All," *ATR* Vol 4, No 3):

Another expression for "hoke" in the 1940s was "getting the elbow" or "he took the pits!" But if you played carelessly, you might have "thrown it," the same as "taking a dive." It has been noticed from time immemorial that the player's weaker stroke or old reliable is the one to psyche out first when the going gets tough and the tough get going - that's "the elbow." And, of course, one played to the opponent's strength to open up the weakness. With ambidextrous Beverly Baker, Wimbledon finalist

1955, one played down the center, down the middle of the court, avoiding the wide hard swats she hit off both sides, one-handed forehands. I'd surmise (that) with today's racquets her velocity would be as fierce as the Williams sisters.

**Gussy Moran
Los Angeles, CA**

The writer competed on the international tennis circuit in the 1940s and 1950s, achieving worldwide renown for wearing lace panties at Wimbledon in 1950. She appeared in the movie "Pat and Mike", discussed in ATR, Vol. 4, No 3.

Dear ATR: Thank you very

much for the splendid review of *Tennis Confidential* (*ATR*, Vol 4, No 4). Frankly, your review is better (meaning smarter) than all the 20 or so I've seen - and much better than all but two or three others.

**Paul Fein
Agawam, MA**

The writer is author of Tennis Confidential and a longtime observer of tennis as a reporter, columnist, essayist, and analyst.

Dear ATR: Keep up the great work on Aztec tennis. It's always interesting.

**Jeanne Doyle Garrett
San Diego**

Aztec Tennis Reporter

Editor: John Martin 202-232-5959
Archives: Jeanette Rolfe (SDSU)
Copy: Martin Schram; Circulation: Susheel Gulati (SDSU) Sumner Bouldin, Jimmy Earle, Ruud Dorenbos, Desmond Fitzgerald, Katherine Fitzhugh, Alexandra Van Selm, Linda Walters, Floyd Walters, Mike Wussow (Washington, DC); Contributing Photographer: Claire Martin (New York).

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To subscribe, comment, seek a correction, or request back issues, please write to John Martin, *ATR*, 1528 Corcoran St., NW, Washington, DC 20009. Or email:

aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com

San Diego State Coaches:

Peter Mattera (W) 619-594-6505

John Nelson (M) 619-594-5084

www.aztectennisreporter.com

Where Are We Now? The Great Search (1922-2003) Continues



AZTECS ATTACK: M.A. Laird Hillier, left, and Patti Tibbetts play WTT Regional Championships in Las Vegas.



FAMILY: Scott, Andy, Lauren, and Mary Alice



Photos Courtesy M.A. Hillier

HANDS ON: Hillier assists in JAWS (Junior Athletes in Wheelchair Sports) .

M.A. Laird Hillier (1973-76)

Mary Alice Laird (1973-76) plays World Team Tennis (4.5) tournaments and helps run the USTA's US Open Wheelchair Championships at Barnes Center (200 competitors from 19 countries) while holding down her day job as a recreation therapist for San Diego Parks & Recreation, where she worked for 25 years. Her daughter,



Lauren Sparks, is an SDSU honors student. Her son, Andy Sparks, 16, plays football and is student vice president at El Capitan High, where she coaches the girls tennis team (left). She met her husband, Scott Hillier, at a U.S. Davis Cup match at the San Diego Sports Arena in 1989. He is vice principal of Pershing Middle School in La Mesa.

Aztecs, Clawed by Bears, Wildcats, Stop Waves in Early Tests

(Continued from Page 1)

surprise departure of a top competitor, Valentino Pest of Germany.

The son of a Croatian tennis pro, Pest decided in December to pass up a final season at San Diego State and join the professional tour.

Pest reached the quarterfinals of the 2001 National Intercollegiate Indoor Championships. Losing him definitely will hurt, said Coach John Nelson.

But Pest's departure was less disruptive than it might have been because it came just as Armando Carrascosa of Mexico was transferring from Baylor University. Carrascosa attended high school in California and was ranked nationally when he competed in the 2001 U.S. Open juniors.

Carrascosa is a player, Nelson said, indicating that the newest Aztec competes fiercely. His presence could help fulfill Nelson's forecast that the team will be the best in

SDSU history. By early February, it ranked 30th.

In one sign of strength, two Aztecs, Ryan Redondo and Felix Hardt, reached the quarterfinals at the Sherwood Invitational in Los Angeles, which included players from USC, UCLA, and Cal Berkeley.

Redondo and Oliver Maiberger lost in the doubles finals to Prakash Amritraj and Daniel Langre of USC, 8-4.

Against Pepperdine, the Aztecs lost all three doubles matches and appeared headed for another defeat. Then Maiberger outgunned Diego Acuna, 7-5, 6-2, Redondo stopped Pedro Rico, 6-2, 6-2, and Carrascosa defeated Alexis Radifson, 7-6, 6-2. Coelho clinched the victory with a 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 triumph over Ali Fehmi.

Coelho (Coelho) did a great job for us, said Nelson. A San

Diego native, Coelho was placed in the lineup at the last minute. We really came through, Nelson said.

Pepperdine Coach Adam Steinberg said "San Diego State was mentally sharper and that proved to be the difference."

Against Arizona, the Aztecs led, 2-0, winning the doubles point and first singles. Maiberger defeated Whi Kim, 6-4, 6-2. Redondo beat Paul Werken-tin, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5.

But Hardt lost to Carl Hagman, 7-6, 7-6, Daniel Jung to Colin O'Grady, 7-6, 4-6, 6-3, and Gabe Coren to Roger Matalonga, 6-0, 2-6, 6-2.

The Aztec men play the Washington Invitational in Seattle, the ITA National Indoor Team Championships in Louisville, tackle Stanford and Arizona State in away matches, then host Florida State, Yale, Princeton, and Harvard.

The women were to face UC Irvine and Cal Poly (SLO) before flying to Hawaii for a doubleheader against Hawaii and Santa Clara Feb 21-22.

Led by the five all-conference players, Tornier and Indra Erichsen of Germany, Lindsey Hedberg of Texas, Katja Karrento of Finland, and Katalina Romero of Mexico, the women face USC, Washington, Washington State, Rice, TCU, Princeton, and Purdue, then play seven matches in the Mountain West Conference.

Against overmatched Long Beach State, Tornier and Hedberg lost only one game each in singles victories. Erichsen defeated Alanah Carroll, 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 and Karrento defeated Lindsey Marvel, 6-3, 6-2. Aztec Patricia Graf, also a transfer from Baylor, forced 49er Claudia Argumedo to a third set, losing 6-1, 4-6, 6-4.

Up and Running in the Animal Kingdom

2003 San Diego State Tennis Team Schedules

Women

Sat Jan 25 Long Beach St at SDSU Noon
 Sat Feb 1 California at SDSU Noon
 Sat Feb 15 UC Irvine at Irvine TBA
 Sun Feb 16 Cal Poly SLO at SDSU 10 AM
 Fri Feb 21 Hawaii at Oahu 3 PM
 Sat Feb 22 Santa Clara at Oahu 10 AM
 Fri Feb 28 USC at Los Angeles 1:30 PM
 Fri Mar 7 Washington at SDSU 2 PM
 Sat Mar 8 Washington St at SDSU Noon
 Tue Mar 11 Rice at SDSU 2 PM
 Fri Mar 14 TCU at SDSU 2 PM
 Mon Mar 17 Princeton at SDSU 2 PM
 Wed Mar 19 Purdue at SDSU 2 PM
 Thu Mar 20 New Mexico at SDSU 2 PM
 Fri Mar 21 Air Force at SDSU 2 PM
 Fri Mar 28 UNLV at Las Vegas 2 PM
 Sat Mar 29 Colorado St at Las Vegas 10 AM
 Sun Mar 30 Wyoming at Las Vegas 10 AM
 Fri Apr 4 BYU at Provo, Utah Noon
 Sat Apr 5 Utah at Salt Lake City Noon
 Tue Apr 8 Pepperdine at SDSU 2 PM
 Wed Apr 16 USD at USD 2 PM
 Fri Apr 18 Oregon at SDSU 2 PM

Men

Fri-Mon Jan 17-20 Sherwood Invitational: Players from USC, UCLA, Cal, Pepperdine, and San Diego State in Los Angeles All Day
 Sun Feb 2 Arizona at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Sat Feb 8 Pepperdine at Malibu 1:30 PM
 Sat-Sun Feb 15-16 Washington Invitational: SDSU, Clemson, Tulane, Washington at Seattle All Day
 Mon Feb 17 Stanford at Palo Alto 1:30 PM
 Thur-Sun Feb 20-23 National Intercollegiate Indoor Team Championships at Louisville All Day
 Thu Feb 27 USD at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Tue Mar 11 Florida State at SDSU 3 PM
 Wed Mar 12 UCLA at Los Angeles 1:30 PM
 Sat Mar 15 Arizona State at Tempe Noon
 Thu Mar 20 Yale at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Sat Mar 22 Princeton at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Wed Mar 26 Harvard at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Fri Mar 28 Air Force at SDSU 1:30 PM
 Sat Mar 29 New Mexico at SDSU 1:29 PM
 Sun Mar 30 UNLV at SDSU 10:00 AM
 Fri Apr 4 BYU at Provo, UT Noon
 Sat Apr 5 Utah at Provo, UT Noon
 Sun Apr 13 UCSB at Santa Barbara Noon



Peter Mattera
Women's Coach



John Nelson
Men's Coach



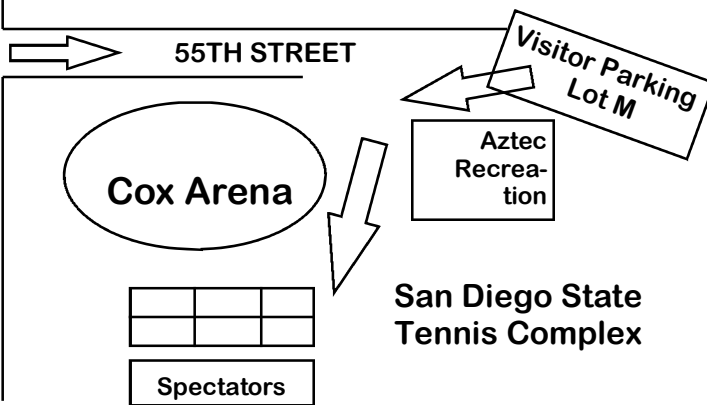
Susheel Gulati
Assistant Women's Coach



Larry Willens
Volunteer Coach

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ATR's Map to the Matches



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Founder-Editor: John Martin