

Aztec Waske, Rebuilding Playing Career, Adds Coaching Hats

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. - Leaning forward on the sideline, Alex Waske watched his client, Michael Berrer of Germany, forge a three-set victory in a BNP Parisbas Open first-round match.

An All-American at San Diego State in 2000, Waske squinted in the sun, trying, perhaps, to peer into his own future.

After eight years as an

ATP competitor and nearly four years of protected ranking due to an arm injury, Waske accepted Berrer's offer of a coaching job at the major tournaments.

There is nobody out there who can read the



Alex Waske

game as well as he does," said Berrer, who recalled telling Waske at least five years earlier that "he's a great coach."

"I've had three elbow surgeries, and it's killing me not to play again," Waske said, "but I need to pay my rent

and need to live."

To generate income, Waske has opened Schuetler-Waske Tennis University in Frankfurt. Rainer Schuetler is a touring pro and former Waske doubles partner.

One of the academy's services is called the College Assessment Center.

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Aztec Tennis Reporter

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Will Gridiron, Hoops Success Translate To Aztec Tennis?

In the Madness of March, San Diego State's basketball team completed the most remarkable season in its history, winning 34 of 37 games and reaching the NCAA Sweet Sixteen.

The "Aztecs should be remembered as one of San Diego's best teams ever," read a San Diego Union-Tribune headline.

In December, the Aztec football team gained enormous respect for the university with its best season (9-4) in many years and a Pointsettia Bowl victory over the U.S. Naval Academy.

Now comes the hard part.

Can this example of success energize the Aztec tennis program? Will more of the nation's top junior players begin looking to Montezuma Mesa? Can Aztec tennis coaches capitalize on this

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Streaking, Aztecs Hit Some Bright Spots



Aztec Tennis Reporter Photos

WIN: Julia Trunk aims her backhand against Washington on February 5. She won deciding fourth point against Pepperdine on March 9.



SPIN: Giovanni Vaglietti, left, defeated Evan Urbina of BYU on April 9. Javier Pulgar upset Henry Fowler of Rice in 3 sets on February 28.

Women Surprise Pepperdine, Men Defeat Princeton

San Diego State's women's tennis team forged an 8-match winning streak and captured 11 victories in 13 matches by early April as play began in the Mountain West Conference.

The burst of Aztec success eased the distress of losing six of seven matches in a season of ups and downs.

The Aztec winning streak began in early March with a stunning upset of 30th ranked Pepperdine. The 4-3 victory came at the end of the day in a final match between the teams' two top players.

Aztec Julia Trunk defeated Anamika Bhargava 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 for the winning point against the Waves.

The Aztec women defeated Sacramento State, ranked 42nd, in mid-March.

In early April, against a tenacious Wyoming, ranked 68th, Alicia Aguilar won the decisive fourth point, defeat-

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Aztec Waske, Rebuilding a Playing Career, Adds Two Coaching Hats

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Waske examines the skills of players seeking American university tennis scholarships. The center serves a German company which helps connect athletes in all sports with U.S. universities.

"We check them through every stroke. We have them play a set. And we do a fitness test with them. We evaluate them."

Waske said his role is to be an honest broker.

"Obviously, I'm not going to overrate them, because I want to be fair to everybody. They come to me and I give my honest and straight answer.

"Let's say, Rice University's interested in this guy. I know Rice is ranked 25 or something. So I know, okay, the player has to be that good," he said.

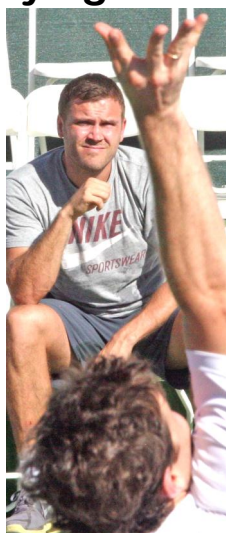
His recommendation might read: "This guy is good enough to play number three on your team and I think that his serve could get much better with a lot of work."

Waske might add: "He's not fit, but you can get much more out of it if you practice hard with him.

So in the beginning, I think he can play three, but he's a potential top player for you."

Between 2000 and 2007, Waske earned more than \$1.2 million in ATP tournament prize money.

Sidelined in late 2007 after an injury that surfaced during the U.S. Open, he retains a protected ranking, which expires in September, 2012. On his return, he has seven months to



Aztec Tennis Reporter

SERVE: Coach Waske watches Michael Berrer.

defend his ATP world rankings in doubles (30th) and singles (200th).

Waske has occasionally ventured back on tour, winning two rounds of doubles at the 2009 French Open and capturing a doubles championship at the 2008 Aachen Challenger, both times with Michael Kohlmann of Germany.

"I love the sport and I want to stay in the sport," Waske said, "and I think my body is still good enough to compete, at least in the doubles."

As a coach, Waske draws on three mentors in Germany, including Gideon Hilb, who began teaching him at age 12.

But he hasn't forgotten his Aztec roots.

"Obviously I'm using a lot of the things that I've been taught by John Nelson and Larry Willens, the Aztec volunteer men's coach.

Nelson, he said, alerted him to his talent.

"He was the first person ever believing in my tennis. He saw big things in me. He was the first one calling me that morning when I first broke the top hundred," he said.

Nelson left SDSU in 2003 to coach at Hawaii. He called Waske "the most loyal player I've ever coached."

"Well, what can I say," Waske said. "I send everybody that's talented, I send to John Nelson because I believe so much in him. Morally, he must be the best person in the world," Waske said. "I'm a big fan of his and if I didn't have a father, I wish he would be like John."

Ex-Collegian Somdev Devvarman's Rise Accelerates at Indian Wells

Partial transcript of Somdev Devvarman press conference at BNP Paribas Open after he upset Marcos Baghdatis and Xavier Malisse. At Virginia, he won the NCAA Singles Championship in 2007 and 2008. Born in Assam, India, and living in Austin, Texas, he ranked 72nd in the world on April 11th.

Q. When you saw (John) Isner break into the top 25, a guy you beat in college, did you say, I should be around there at this point?

DEVVARMAN: Well, yeah, absolutely. I mean, it's completely different with John, because he has, I mean, you know, he's 6'9" and he serves the way he does. For me I'm not 6'9" and I don't serve like John.

So it's a little different. But when you see other guys from college doing well, you know, Benny Becker, there is Kevin Anderson, who of course is also very tall. But, I mean, Jesse Levine was doing really well at the time, too.

You know, I was still in college. Definitely gives



Aztec Tennis Reporter Photo

GRITTY: Somdev Devvarman, former University of Virginia Cavalier, in upset of Taylor Dent at the 2008 Legg Mason Classic in Washington, D.C.

you the kind of belief, you know, feeling where, yeah, sure, you know, these guys are doing it. I can too. So when you come out on tour for the first time you're just a little bit more excited. You're a little more self confident. When it comes to the close parts of matches, you always believe you can do it. So I think that's what made the difference for me.

Q. Do you feel like there's another wave of guys coming out of college that are making a statement in the pros?

DEVVARMAN: I mean, to be completely honest, like I think it's gone down a little bit...In the 90s there was so many, and

then even in early 2000. I feel like the Bryans are doing well. There was Alex O'Brien, a bunch of guys from Stanford. Even Brian Vahaley of Virginia broke into the top 60.

Q. Really none of those guys went past the top 50.

DEVVARMAN: I mean, yeah, but you were talking about top 50 in your profession. It's not the easiest thing to do.

— ASAP Sports Transcripts

Aztec Tennis Reporter

April, 2011

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This is the 48th issue. To comment, correct, or subscribe, email aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com. Editor: John Martin (1957 men)

Where Are We Now? The Great Search (1922-2011) Resumes

Nguey Lay: My brother and I have started our own company (Schrobsdorff Construction) in San Francisco. We manage properties for the family and do our own contracting. My girlfriend and I also own a clothing

Steve Adamson: I'm tennis director at the Pacific Beach Tennis Club. (We're beginning a major renovation; come and look!) My wife, Noelle, represents Gamma. Our two kids play tennis. I captained a 2006 San Diego team with Eric Faulk and Bobby Hrdina.

Eric Faulk: I'm in my seventh year as a firefighter and paramedic in San Diego. I teach college students EMT at Miramar College (prospective firefighters, nurses and doctors). I'm getting married April 22 to Carrie, a school teacher (grades 6-8)

Alex Waske: I'm coaching on the ATP tour and operating a tennis academy in Frankfurt. We've had 70 students in 7 months; we board 10-15 players. I'm working back into physical condition to rejoin the ATP tour. I hold a protected doubles ranking of 30th in the world. My dad thinks I'm wasting my tournament earnings on surgeries but I refuse to give up. I want to play! Tennis is my passion.

Ryan Johnston: I'm a deputy sheriff in Reno (Washoe County) operating our Detention Response Team, a SWAT-type unit for inside the jail, high-security transport, and protection. I teach martial arts (John Nelson got me started). Before this, I was head men's tennis coach at University of Nevada, Reno for seven years. Loved it, but decided to move on. Andrea and I have two daughters, Haley, 7, and Morgan, 14. Tennis players? No, they're swimmers!

1998 Aztec Men's Tennis Team

John Nelson: I coach the University of Hawaii Warriors. We've won three Western Athletic Conference titles in the eight years I've been here. I coached the Aztecs from 1993 to 2003 (we got to the NCAA Sweet 16 in 2000, thanks in part to Alex Waske; he's the most loyal player I've ever coached).

nis, but I'm surfing a lot.

Doug Young: My teammates don't know where I am. Do you?

who played college basketball at Hope International University. Tennis? Too busy!



Bobby Hrdina: I started my own real estate company, First Sovereign

Sean Walker: I'm out of touch. Know where I am? Tell ATR!

Kolo Rosenthal: I'm painting, teaching tennis, and, yes, surfing. I'm in my 10th year lifeguarding, too. Since it's seasonal, I travel a lot. Last year, I surfed Puerto Escondido in Mexico (below, right) My mural of a surfing beach is always visible in South Mission Beach by the jetty (below, left). I painted and signed it in 2005. (It's on a sidewalk electrical cabinet, part of an urban beautification program).

Michael Kossoff: I'm regional director of tennis for five of the thirteen Sportime clubs in the New York area. After my freshman year at SDSU, I transferred to Bowling Green; we won the conference twice, and I hold the second most victories in school history. Then I started coaching. I married Jill 2 years ago (no, we did not meet on a tennis court).

Frank Morgan: I'm a senior vice president in charge of strategic trading (commodities) for Interconn Resources, a natural gas marketing corporation based in Houston. I come out of retirement every year to play in the World Oilman's Tennis Championship at the Houston Racquet Club. I won it the first three times I played (I was by far the youngest then), but I've been playing less tennis lately so my results have decreased dramatically!

Stefan Khudic: I'm managing partner in my real estate services firm, EdgeCore, (offices in San Diego, Orange County and Los Angeles; 11 employees, going up to about 15). I'm getting married in April to Lisa. Tennis? No, I've switched to boxing (a great two-hour workout five early mornings a week). Lisa boxes, too. Her father just moved to Houston, so I hope to see Frank Morgan when we visit.

Capital, at the end of 2009. We buy, rehab, and resell distressed properties in San Diego. I still teach a little tennis. I've worked with Bradley Klahn of Poway (and Stanford), and Vania King. Married? Kids? No, a girlfriend and a puppy.



Aztec Sideline Coaching: The Fine Art of Persuasion on the Run



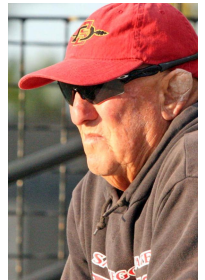
Aztec Tennis Reporter photos

ADVICE: Top, from left, Jeff Thomsen counsels Hunter Nicholas, Holly Bagshaw makes a point for Emma Cioffi, and Gene Carswell whispers to Tim Schulz van Endert. Below, far left, Julia Trunk listens to Lindsay Gamp; Peter Mattera, center, conveys a concept to Sierra Ellison, and Larry Willens evaluates a strategy.



The 90-Second Classroom

During team matches, Aztec tennis coaches patrol courts to shout encouragement (‘‘Go on Tim!’’, ‘‘Go Alicia!’’) and decide the best advice to give in the 90 seconds when players change ends (‘‘Extend the points; keep the ball in play.’’) That’s when they coach - fast.



Streaking, Aztec Men’s and Women’s Teams Hit Some Bright Spots

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ing Simona Synkova, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

But it was the Aztecs’ two nationally ranked doubles pairs, Roxanne and Sierra Ellison and Julia Wais and Alicia Aguilar, who paved the way by winning the doubles point.

The Ellison sisters started the season ranked 27th in the nation but bounced to 58th when an ankle injury kept Roxanne off court for nearly five weeks. They climbed to 28th before falling back to 44th, then 51st, then 69th.

Wais and Aguilar, ranked as high as 46th in mid-February, provided a dependable second doubles presence, clinching vital doubles points.

In April, the Aztecs lost to city rival USD, 6-1, then beat New Mexico, 6-1, and Texas Christian, 5-2.

The team’s national ranking bounced around the 50s and 60s, rose to 44th, dipped to 47th, then edged up to 46th.

Coach Peter Mattera praised his team as ‘‘solid and deep.’’ He said it had made ‘‘a great start.’’ in Mountain West play: ‘‘Like our chances.’’

After winning their opener against UC Riverside, 7-0, the Aztec men endured a nine-match losing streak, dropping SDSU out of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association’s top 75 team rankings.

In mid-March, the Aztec men upset Princeton, ranked 53rd, by 5-2.

Giovanni Vaglietti, Javier Pulgar, Tim Schulz van Endert, and Juan Guillermo Florez won singles victories.

The Aztecs then bowed to Purdue (67th), East Tennessee, TCU (74th), and New Mexico (51st).

After defeating Air Force, 6-1, Coach Gene Carswell said: ‘‘It was nice to finally reel in a victory.’’

He forecast ‘‘more to come.’’ The team responded, defeating Utah, 6-1.

A 5-2 loss to 36th-ranked BYU put the Aztec record at 4-14 on April 9.

In 2010, the men ranked 50th, the women 57th in the final ITA standings.

For San Diego State match results, go to www.goaztecs.com, select sports (or schedules), then click on men’s or women’s tennis.

Appraisal: Will SDSU Football, Basketball Success Translate to Aztec Tennis?

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growing realization that San Diego State University is serious about excellence in athletics?

If so, Aztec tennis could return to the glory of the 1980s and 1990s, when the women frequently ranked in the top 20 (finishing fourth in 1984); and of 2000, when the men gained the NCAA Sweet Sixteen.

This will take resources — espe-

cially difficult at a time of state and campus budget austerity.

Still, Aztec tennis fans hope a portion of the financial success of the football and basketball teams will benefit tennis, which produces no revenue and has lost two coaching positions to budget cuts.

The two biggest sports clearly have bills to pay: salaries to raise to keep good coaches, facilities to

repair, upgrade, and maintain, expenses to meet.

But consider what will happen if there’s money to share with the Olympic sports, including tennis:

The pride felt in the fall and early spring will expand and flow throughout a remarkable San Diego State athletic department that is rising to proper recognition after years of struggle. — J.M.