

# Aztec Tennis Reporter

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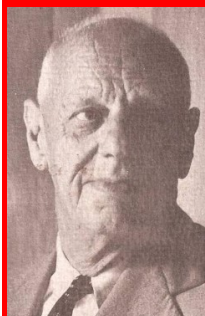
## Aztecs Launching 98th Season, Book 21 Home Matches

### John R. Tunis: Please Call Home

BY JOHN MARTIN

A new California law seems to strike a blow of economic freedom for students who are athletes. As I read it, the law allows college athletes to make money from exhibitions, endorsements, photos, and perhaps even public appearances.

At first, the NCAA worried



that this would compromise their amateur status, but then turned around and endorsed the concept.

Washington

**John Tunis** Post sportswriter John Feinstein argued it's time for students in all 50 states to get paid for their part in college sports.

I wonder what John R. Tunis (1889-1975) would think? Tunis is my alltime favorite sportswriter, sports novelist, and tennis broadcaster. In 1928, with a Harvard degree

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ATRPhotos/John Martin

Nnena Nadozie, left, and Jan Kirchhoff connect in pre-season workouts.

San Diego State's two intercollegiate tennis teams embark on the 98th season of Aztec tennis with matches in January.

The Aztec men open on Jan. 12 at home against Oklahoma State, ranked 22nd last year. The men play UCSD Jan 18th off campus at the Santaluz Country Club near Rancho Santa Fe.

The women open at home against UC Riverside on Jan. 25 and UC San Diego on Jan. 26th.

See page 4 for all Aztec home matchups.

This is the latest installment of an Aztec tennis history that began with the formation of a college men's tennis club in 1922.

This year, with players from across the globe, the two squads are bidding to improve their identical 15-10 won-loss records in 2019.

Coached by Peter Mattera and Nico Vinel, the women are Tamara Arnold of Switzerland, Julia Jordan of Long Beach, Alicia Melosch of La

Jolla and Germany, Cecile Morin of France, Abbie Mulbarger of Woodbridge, CA, Nnena Nadozie of Los Angeles, Agustina Rimoldi Godoy of Argentina, and Mia Smith of England.

The men are Jules Auffray of France, Rafael Gonzalez Almazan of Spain, David Hough of Australia, Jan Kirchhoff of Germany, Ignacio Martinez of Weston, FL, Aaro Pollanen of Finland, Arnaud Restifo of France, Fabian Roensdorf of Germany, Alex Scemanenco of Cardiff-by-the-Sea, CA, and David Traxler of Dallas, TX.

The men are coached by Gene Carswell, Jeff Thomsen, and Larry Willens.

"They look to me to be one of the best men's teams we've seen in probably five years," said Willens, a respected former pro tour coach and admired figure in World Team Tennis.

The men spend much of the season traveling, hosting just eight home matches, starting Jan 12 (Oklahoma St), Feb. 28 (UC Davis), Mar. 5 (SD Christian) and Mar. 16 (Harvard).

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## John R. Tunis, Is California's College Sports Act a Good Idea?

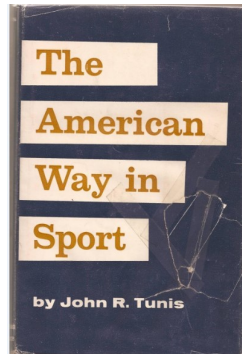
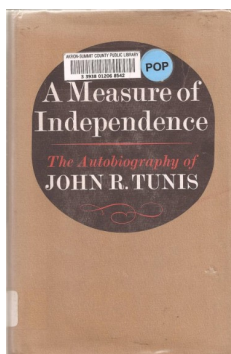
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and study at Columbia Law, he sounded an alarm:

"The plain truth is that highly organized competitive sport is not character-building," Tunis wrote in *Harper's Monthly*.

"Under the terrific stress of striving for victory, victory, victory," Tunis argued, "the player's worst side is too frequently magnified; his self-control is broken down oftener than it is built up."

Tunis identified what he saw as a root cause of abuse. In a 1932 *Atlantic Monthly*, he wrote: "Inter-collegiate athletics and international sport, with the huge superstructures they have built up and the vast sums of money they involve, can never be freed from the intense desire for victory."

Tunis knew sport first hand. He played college tennis at Harvard, covered pro-



### Tunis Argued for Amateurism

fessional baseball and college football for *The Boston Globe* and the *New York Evening Post*. He broadcast tennis for NBC Radio from Wimbledon and Forest Hills.

The result of too much concentration on victory, he argued, was the loss of the love of sport for its own sake. In his day, Tunis's criticism of big-time sports (college and professional) was dismissed as naive and hyper idealistic. (He certainly seemed out of touch.)

But what would he say

about the Fair Pay to Play Act? Would he perhaps be tempted to accept it as a way to salvage some form of compensation for athletes who love their sport?

In 2012, after lengthy reporting, the civil rights historian Taylor Branch proposed paying college athletes a living wage by universities who derive vast revenues from their toil. His idea was scorned as unworkable.

Tunis argued in his 1967 autobiography, *A Measure of Independence*: "Our great sports events mean what the comedies and tragedies of the Greek playwrights meant."

The question today is can we examine our obsession with sports and summon the strength to do something creative and positive?

Could the California law be the start of true reform? If so, I'm sure Tunis would approve. What do you think? Email *Aztec Tennis Reporter* your thoughts.

## In 98th Year, Aztecs Host Alabama, Harvard, New Mexico, USC, Oklahoma State

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The women play 13 foes at home, including Alabama on Jan. 31st and USC on Feb. 21st.

The Mountain West Conference Championships for men are scheduled April 24-26 at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. The Aztec men reached last year's final.

Coach Carswell said his team has vowed to win the title: "We have a solid

group of experienced returners, supported by quality additions to the team. Our strong schedule will push us, while providing opportunities to rise in the rank-

ings. I'm excited."

The women's schedule includes travel for three matches in Las Vegas, on April 11 (UNLV), April 17 (New Mexico) and April 19

(Air Force). The Mountain West Conference Championships for women are scheduled April 23-25 in Tucson, AZ.

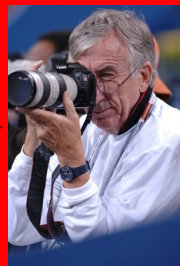
Coach Mattera assessed the prospects for success "The team had an extremely strong Fall season, all eight of the Aztecs are playing at a very high level in both singles and doubles.

"We are all really looking forward to the Spring championship season."

### Aztec Tennis Reporter January 2020

*Aztec Tennis Reporter* is a newsletter created in 1998 for players, coaches, alumni, and friends of San Diego State tennis. Neither the university nor its athletic department is responsible for its content.

This is the 68th issue. *Aztec Tennis Reporter* invites letters. To comment or subscribe, email [aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com](mailto:aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com).



Editor John Martin

**DEAR ATR : LOOKING BACK AND AHEAD AT AZTEC TENNIS MOMENTS**

Dear ATR,

Great articles!

I always love receiving ATR.

Thought you'd like to know that Giovanni Vaglietti and I (graduating class of 2012) are going to be celebrating our 5th Anniversary this November and we just



Roxanne and Giovanni

had a baby girl. We've been together for 10 years. We met our freshman year while playing on the men's and women's teams.

Blessed to have met each other on the courts at SDSU!

**Roxanne Ellison  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA**

**Mind Power: Tennis as Martial Art Translated by an Aztec Hero**

Twenty years ago, San Diego State coach John Nelson guided the Aztec men into the NCAA Sweet Sixteen Tennis Championships in Athens, GA.

In many ways, Nelson's feat demonstrated the power of mind and expectations. He convinced his players they could expect to defeat a Pepperdine team that had already defeated them in the regular season and overconfidently bought its tickets to Georgia.

The Aztecs defeated the Waves, ranked #3 in the nation, and took the trip instead.

Simultaneously, Nelson convinced a young German Aztec tennis recruit, Alex Waske, that he was capable of playing in the World's Top 100 as a professional.

"He was the first person to tell me that," Waske told *Aztec Tennis Reporter* several years later, not long after reaching the Australian Open doubles semifinal and top 100 in singles and helping his German Davis Cup team defeat Thailand.

Nelson's emphasis on the mind as a weapon in tennis and many places in sports



**JOHN NELSON BOOK: MASTERFUL**

comes through in a book he has coauthored with Mark Beede, a lawyer, educator, and tennis teaching pro.

"*Sensei Tennis: Martial Arts (and More!) in the Mastery of Tennis*" appeared in 2018 as Nelson was winding down his career as head coach at the University of Hawai'i. He retired in 2019.

Blessed with an admiring forward by Stanford Tennis Coach Emeritus Dick Gould, the

book is filled with vision, correlating common sense reflections on such subjects as Anticipation, Perception, and Reaction (Chapter 10).

"Tennis, martial arts, and baseball are examples of open-skills perception sports. In each sport, you must anticipate, see and perceive well. Then you need to react quickly to employ skill sets whether in fighting, stroking a tennis ball or hitting a baseball."

Elementary, right?

But consider this one example: the steps needed to bring your body into the most effective mental position as you practice:

"Remember: Mentally "see" or "feel" yourself stroking and reacting correctly in every situation. Imagine yourself committing mentally and physically before, during, and after, to every shot and every point."

*Sensei* means teacher in Japanese. With the aid of Mark Beede, Aztec mentor John Nelson has once again proven himself a master. Together, they implore us: think!

— **John Martin**

# The Aztec Tennis Season: 18 Men and Women, 21 Home Matches



AUFFRAY

GONZALEZ ALMAZAN

HOUGH

KIRCHHOFF

MARTINEZ

POLLANEN



RESTIFO

ROENSDORF

SCEMANENCO

TRAXLER

## 2020 Aztec Men Home Matches

Jan 12 Oklahoma State

Jan 18 UCSD (Santa Luz CC)

Feb 28 UC DAVIS

Mar 5 SAN DIEGO CHRISTIAN

Mar 16 HARVARD

Mar 27 NEW MEXICO

Mar 29 AIR FORCE

Apr 1 CAL POLY

Apr 11 UTAH STATE

Gene Carswell, Head Coach  
Jeff Thomsen, Assoc. Head Coach  
Larry Willens, Volunteer Coach

## 2020 Aztec Women Home Matches

Jan 25 UC RIVERSIDE

Jan 26 UC SAN DIEGO

Jan 31 ALABAMA

Feb 15 CAL STATE FULLERTON

Feb 16 CAL POLY

Feb 19 HAWAI'I

Feb 21 USC

Mar 7 GRAND CANYON

Mar 10 SAN DIEGO

Mar 12 YOUNGSTOWN STATE

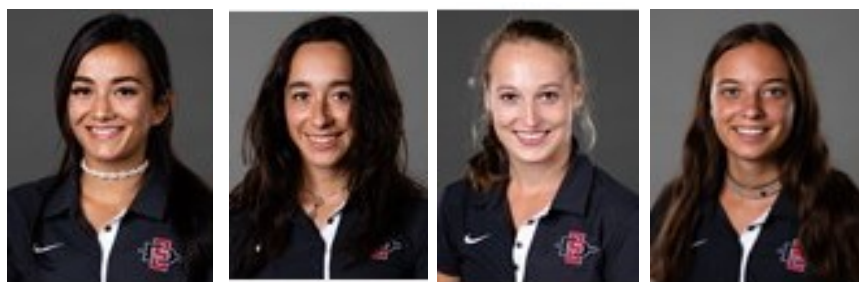
Apr 3 NEVADA

Apr 4 FRESNO STATE

Apr 5 SAN JOSE STATE

Peter Mattera, Head Coach  
Nicolas Vinel, Assoc. Head Coach

## 2020 AZTEC PLAYERS, HOME MATCHES



Arnold

Jordan

Melosch

Morin



Mulbarger

Nadozie

Rimoldi

Gidoy Smith