

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

By Robert L. Miller



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

APRIL 09, 1984

Associate writer Barry McDermott remembers the first time he saw Andrea Jaeger, at the junior Orange Bowl tournament in 1978. She was 13—all of 80 pounds, barely 5 feet tall—and was tearing up the 18-and-under field while her mother sat, says McDermott, "like Madame Defarge knitting on the sidelines as her daughter lopped off the heads." Not long after that he wrote a story about her (SI July 9, 1979). "A fantastic tennis player," he says today, "but she was just a kid."

For this week's article on Jaeger (page 34), he spent eight days with her and her parents exploring why she, once the relentless competitor, has recently been bafflingly losing matches she should win. "I came away sympathetic to her situation," says McDermott. "She's still a little kid, but she lives in an adult world. Her perceptions of herself and the world's perceptions of her are completely different."

There are no easy answers, he says, to Jaeger's problems. "What's happening," says McDermott, "is that she has traded at least part of her childhood for tennis, and now she's wondering if she made a good deal. Lori Kosten quit tennis because she didn't make it. Andrea may decide to quit because she did."