

What's the Big Difference? Transcript

By Mike Romeo

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(Background music)

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hobby.

Narrator- Tennis. It's a sport played professionally, and as a common hobby. It is a sport played to relax, as well as a way to vent some anger. It is a place to build dreams, as well as tear them down. Those who succeed can become professional players, other keep tennis as a

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Narrator- What is the difference between a casual player, who plays because they like tennis and feel like playing; someone who considers it a small part of their life, compared to a professional player

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begin?

Narrator- What is the difference between a professional, who plays tennis for money, plays to be at the top, and plays because it's the majority of their life compared to a casual player. True enough, there are plenty of differences right there, but at what point did these two types of players become so different; when did it all

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Narrator- For many, it started in their childhood days when almost everything was a game. In this picture there are 3 kids. there is a possibility one might become a professional player one day, but what separates that one child from the others? In order to investigate this question, I have interviewed 3 different coaches, all with

different tennis experiences from the time they started to how they are now.

Coach of Mountain View High school's tennis team was my first interview to figure out this question

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Frank- I started playing tennis in 1974. I got introduced to it in the police academy in Modesto and it was part of the recreation that everyone had to play sports. Tennis was introduced and that was my real first exposure to it and I just caught on to it right and got my self a racket in a short period of time. By 1976 I started playing

matches

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Frank- I kept Playing all the way through the 90s and then I got involved in coaching other sports because my kid was in grammar school. And then I was asked to coach over at Blach and was asked to coach basket ball. So I stated doing basket ball, both boy's and girl's and

then volley ball boy's and girl's, so I coached at Blach for 2 years. And so I saw in the town crier: Coach Wanted Mountain View High School a couple weeks in a row and I said ooh oh looks like nobody wants the position, maybe it's for me. So I called up here at the school and talked to Dan Navaro and he said come on in I'll talk to you. So I went the next day and met him and he said "jobs yours."

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Narrator- After talking to a few of his players, I found out that many don't believe that Coach Frank is a successful coach. Some call his ideas and teaching style "odd" or "strange" and although I wasn't able to catch it on tape, Coach Frank knows this to.

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Narrator- But despite what his players think of him, he continues to teach them as he has, making a few adjustments along the way. And whether his players believe it or not, they do grow and develop their game

around him.

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Frank- There has to be initially an attraction to this game, there has to be a attraction there's something inside you that connects and that's what draws you here everyday,because you wana come here, you wana improve, you wana do your best, and there are a few

around like that that you can count on.

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Narrator- Although I didn't really know much about Coach John Sevali, I had heard rumors that he had once been a a prodigy player and had become a professional player, but quit for whatever reason. Sure enough, it was true.

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John- I was in I think 7th grade and the basket ball coach at my grammar school played tennis also and took me out on the courts. I started out with novice tournaments, my first was at Los Altos High School and it was a thanksgiving day tournament. And then I just

kinda of got into it and played alot.

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John- Whether or not a student continues, they could have burn out, they could have other sports or activities they find more important, they could be say a teenager with a social life that could be more important, academics you know school has to come first, right, injuries. It's really their choice and it should be their

choice (whether to continue tennis) not their parents' hopefully, it's theirs.

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John-I think everyone has to work hard t it, if they want to be a pro, because there are so many people out there that are working hard, right, and their going to pass you up, regardless of how much talent you have.

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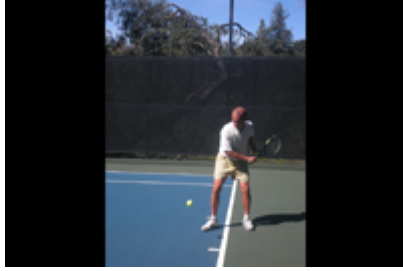


Narrator- After hearing from both a casual and a past professional player, I thought it was time to go as high as I could, which led me to Coach Sandy Major.

Sandy- I began playing tennis when I was 2 years old. My dad was a coacha dn he just started me on ball

hitting games with wooden paddles and then rackets at a very young age. I did it just to hang around him I think.

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Sandy- He didn't really want me to start competing right away, so for the first 2 or 3 years I didn't even know how to keep score. And then when I was about 8 or 9 years old I started playing tournaments. Got good young and was the best player in the east (coast). I grew up in New York, started playing national tournaments when I was 11. I was in the top 10 in the juniors in the United States. Then I get a scholarship to Stanford, played 4 years there, and won the NCAA for the first time; Stanfords first title was when I was there. Then about half way through college, tennis became a professional sport, it hadn't before that, so it became a realistic thing to actually go out and play professional tennis, which I did after I graduated from Stanford. Then I played 13 years professionally.

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Sandy- I was ranked as high as 7 in the world for singles and 3 in the world for doubles. I always knew I would teach, but I didn't know I would play to a high standard professionally

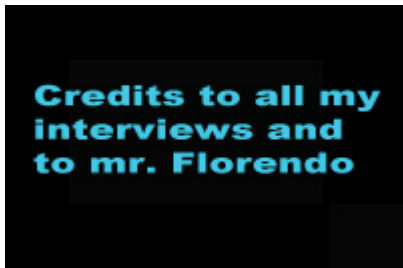
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Narrator- A main thing between these players was the age they started, but another thing was that different was the amount of time they were actually around tennis. Frank just played it sometimes because he enjoyed it, but Sandy played it all the time to be with his dad. The main thing that was present was the amount of

time put into tennis, whether it was for development or not.

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Credits- Thanks to Sandy Major, John Sevali, Frank Smyth, and Mr. Florendo