

Politics Not Far Below Surface at U.S. Tennis Open

By Roger Simon

As a lifetime tennis fan who long ago saw the teenage Jimmy Connors battle a forty-something Pancho Gonzales and has been a mediocre player myself since roughly age seven, I have been glued to my TV this year watching an enthralling US Open.

Regarding my own play, I have been rewarded in my later years with studies from Denmark and the UK revealing tennis to be the best physical activity for longevity. This has kept me still working on my serve as I approach 81. Maybe I'll get it

right someday.



In the interim the game has evolved radically from a gentlemanly sport to a sometimes knock down physical and mental brawl engaged in by, on the men's side, 6' 5" behemoths who would do fine in the NBA and, on the women's side, superbly conditioned athletes often in the 6' range themselves.

In other words, it is a yet greater spectator sport than it was and that, among other things, accounts for the record-

breaking crowds at this year's event—the others being that American men for the first time since 2006 are reaching upper levels of the tournament and, as several have mentioned, the Open is a safer place to be walking around than the streets of Manhattan where an illegal (known locally as a “migrant”) could push a knife in your side.

Which leads back to my topic, the subterranean politics beneath the surface of the tournament. Much, almost all, of the sports press are conventional liberals of the sort I used to be. This includes ESPN (maybe more than just liberal) and the cognoscenti at the Tennis Channel and Tennis.com.

All seem to be fighting battles that were won, justifiably, some time back. The competition takes place at the world's biggest tennis venue—Arthur Ashe Stadium, named, appropriately enough, for the only black player to win Wimbledon, the U. S. and Australian Opens, which he did nearly fifty years ago. The other stadium is named for Louis Armstrong, also obviously black and easily one of the greatest musicians and entertainers in American history, died 1971. Okay, he didn't play tennis, but give it a rest.

Only they don't. Ignoring that the Williams Sisters and now Coco Gauff have been at the top of women's tennis for decades (there are others not quite as eminent) the sports press continues to carry on as if significant barriers are being broken here.

Most recent is the personally winning Frances Tiafoe who is being lauded as the first son of Sierra Leonean (happily legal, though that is rarely noted) immigrants to succeed in professional tennis. I prefer to laud Tiafoe for his creative high-energy tennis. He is battling another American, Taylor Fritz, in Saturday's semi-final where he is likely to be favored, to one degree or another, by press and spectators.

This is all part of the usual racial hoo-haw designed, barely

unconsciously, to preserve racism as a political lever, all the more now in a presidential year with a candidate parading one of her bona fides as she is (possibly?) black. It's all a covert form of identity politics at the Open, amplified, sometimes subtly and sometimes obviously, by the press.

But that's the least interesting (more traditional) aspect of what lurks beneath the surface. More fascinating is the international politics and how it interlocks with the yet more potent issue of sexual politics (known these days as "gender") that affects not only sports, but all our lives.

We have three key players from behind the former Iron Curtain—Danil Medvedev and Andrey Rublev from Russia and Aryna Sabalenka from Belarus. None are allowed to compete under their flags as the Ukraine War rages.

For the Russians—Rublev already lost—Medvedev is the more interesting figure. A clearly high-IQ individual—the great tennis players (see the multi-lingual Novak Djokovic) often are in a sport Robin Williams termed "chess at ninety miles an hour"—Medvedev utilizes the characteristic irony of the brilliant writers of his country, making him able to float above the international fray. No one would think Danil a friend and ally of Vladimir Putin. He already called for peace during the 2023 Wimbledon. (As I was finishing this article, Medvedev fell to world number one Jannik Sinner.)

It is Sabalenka—with Poland's Iga Swiatek (who just lost to American Jessica Pegula), one of the best women's players in the world and current favorite to win the Open—who has been in the crosshairs in more ways than one.

She has been confronted on multiple occasions regarding her opinion of Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko and therefore of the Ukraine War where he is an ally of Putin. For a while she equivocated, saying sports should be outside politics or, according to Wikipedia, "I understand that it's

not my fault.” But lately she has been more outspoken saying “I don’t want my country to be in any conflict, I don’t support war, meaning I don’t support Lukashenko right now.”

But that wasn’t the source of the controversy the evening of Sep 3 during her dismantling of this year’s Olympic gold medalist China’s Zheng Qinwen. [Outkick](#) expressed it well in their headline:

“Aryna Sabalenka’s Coach Rocks ‘XX-XY’ Hat At U.S. Open, Enrages Fans Who Want Men In Women’s Sports”.

This was New York, after all, ground zero, with California, for unexamined bourgeois liberalism. They continue:

“Jason Stacy, the fitness coach of two-time Grand Slam winner [Aryna Sabalenka](#), was spotted wearing an ‘XX-XY’ hat at the U.S. Open. In other words, Stacy supports the idea that transgender athletes – biological men – have no place in women’s sports.”

“The XX-XY Athletics brand was founded by former Levi’s president Jennifer Sey earlier this year with the mission of protecting women’s sports and spaces.”

One can presume Mr. Stacy did not “rock” that hat without at least tacit agreement from Ms. Sabalenka who, like all tennis stars, exercises control over her “team.”

This hat-rocking in the face of liberal New York is an optimistic sign the gender madness that has overtaken the U.S. and Europe is finally peaking. (Europe is already walking back child surgeries.)

Another sign is the revelation by my friend Michael Patrick Leahy through his [Star Network](#) of the previously suppressed manifesto of the transgendered–female-to-male–Nashville school killer. Attendant with this was the reporting of at least of some of the extraordinary variety of drugs administered over

the years to Ms. Hale who presumably “rocked” an estimated 28 trillion (with a t) double x chromosomes denoting female in her birth body.

Did those drugs, not to mention an unknown amount of testosterone, over years put her mind and body on tilt, causing her to shoot six people, three of them children?

Nobody knows, but it’s at least possible. Nevertheless, hardly anyone appears to be genuinely researching these matters because too much money is involved, not to mention various interests invested in the transgender movement with all its not-so-hidden marxist and anti-family implications.

How much does this have to do with biological men in women’s sports? A lot, actually—and not just metaphorically. Whether you believe in God, evolution, or both (they are not mutually exclusive), two sexes—not myriad genders—exist in homo sapiens for a reason, survival of the species. Yes, there are myriad variations we have been recognizing and wisely tolerating as our own from time immemorial, but basics remain basics.

They were being “rocked” on a coach’s hat at the U. S. Open.

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