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## Capriati's Comeback Capped at the Australian Open - Ty Tryon's Meltdown

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SPORT AND SOCIETY FOR H-ARETE  
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It was just a year ago that Jennifer Capriati completed her remarkable and inspiring comeback with a victory in the Australian Open. She went on to win the French Open last year, her second grand slam victory, in what was certainly her best year of tennis since the early days before she hit the wall and her career disintegrated.

This week she returned to Melbourne to defend the Australian title as the number one seed. Capriati was never really challenged as she walked through the first several rounds of play. Only in the semi-finals was she extended and then in a three set match against fourth seeded Kim Clijsters. She also had a three set match in the third round but both of her winning sets were accomplished with relative ease.

In the final she faced Martina Hingis, the third seed, and fourth ranked player in the world. It was Hingis whom Capriati had beaten a year ago at the same venue. This time she beat both Hingis and the heat. With the Melbourne temperature at 95 degrees and the on-court temperature somewhere over 100 both players battled the mental and physical fatigue that sets in under these conditions.

Hingis won the first set 6-4 and then cruised to a 4-love lead in the second set. The heat seemed to be taking its toll and Capriati looked like she would fold her tent. She was down 5-3 and in the next few games overcame three match points. Capriati won the set in a tie-break 9-7 during which she again fought off a match point.

In the third set with heat exhaustion closing in on both players it was Hingis who finally melted. Trailing 3-2 she was treated for leg cramps and then came out and lost her service game ending it with a double foot-fault. You could see both the anguish and the fatigue on her face and in her body language.

Although both players had difficulty holding serve throughout the match, it was nonetheless an excellent display of tennis in extreme conditions. It was also a display of the power of the mind over matter, and one of the most remarkable comebacks in the history of the Australian Open.

For Jennifer Capriati it was another comeback to add to her remarkable career comeback, and proof that she is still a major force in women's tennis. Lest anyone think this was a simple case of Hingis folding under pressure, it was not. Hingis was beaten by Capriati with some extraordinary play. There were shots by Capriati in critical situations that were in turn daring in nature and devastating in impact. This was the defense of a title by a champion of considerable stature who would not be denied.

Of a less encouraging character were two other events that displayed the lesser side of sport during the past week. In his first tournament since qualifying for the PGA tour Ty Tryon, an Orlando high school student, whose maturity and modesty seemed to be among his greatest assets, arrived in Phoenix with an entourage of some eleven people over and above his parents. Among his human baggage were two swing coaches, two massage therapists, a sports psychologist and an image consultant.

Any image consultant who would let this happen clearly doesn't understand the golf scene and should be fired immediately. One can only wonder what the veterans of the tour thought of this display of excess. Perhaps not too many people took notice as Tryon played poorly in the first round and failed to make the cut leaving the entourage on display for only a few days. Let's hope Tryon's high school counselor gives him better career advice than he is getting elsewhere.

Could it be the Tryon's image consultant has been watching too much boxing where the entourage is a required piece of equipment?

And speaking of boxing where image damage is an oxymoron, Mike Tyson's latest tirade during the press conference with Lennox Lewis certainly added glory to Tyson's resume/rap sheet. What is most interesting about this affair is the surprise and shock being expressed by some over what happened. Pre-fight fights have become the rule rather than the exception in boxing over the past few years. So when the fists started flying no one should have been surprised, and when Tyson was accused of biting Lewis on the leg we can only assume that this is now a standard part of the Tyson repertoire.

What would be a surprise, and even a shock, would be if the Nevada State Athletic Commission sees fit to deny Mike Tyson a license to fight Lewis. Now that would be big news what with millions of dollars at stake in what is expected to be the biggest money bout in history.

And if the shocking does happen it should be of no great concern as some fair city somewhere will certainly be enticed by the lure of millions and license the fighters and the fight. Already the WBC has announced it is ready to sanction the fight no matter where it is staged. The only thing that could prevent a Lewis-Tyson match is a jail sentence, and that remains a possibility.

So ends another week of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly in sport.

On Sport and Society this is Dick Crepeau reminding you that you don't have to be a good sport to be a bad loser.

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