

Clerici, Gianni. *The Ultimate Tennis Book: 500 Years of the Sport*. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co. 1975. Pp. 335. Index, pictures. \$32.00.

Originally published in Italian by Arnoldo Mondadori, this English translation by Dr. Richard J. Wieszell is one of the finest pictorial histories to emerge. Italians have not been overly productive in the field of sport history, though the excellent publication brought out for the Rome Olympics, *Sport Ed Arte*, is not easily forgotten. However, it lacked the literary explanation that much of the photography needed.

Tennis simply has no weaknesses, and is a giant in its field. The photographic research is meticulous, and the author readily acknowledges *Il Tennis Italiano*, *Lawn Tennis*, *Tennis Club*, *Tennis de France*, *Tennis World*, *World Tennis*, and the National Tennis Hall of Fame at Newport for their assistance. Professor Gabrieli of the University of Rome, Professor Pigato of the Catholic University of Milan and Dr. Dennis Rhodes of the British Museum in London, as well as a great number of journalists, players and ex-players and tennis experts contributed to this remarkable book. One of its glories is the reliance on English, French and Italian sources, rare in a sporting history.

The work is divided into four parts: (a) *The Ancients*, covering the Romans, Greeks and archaic ball games, the Arabs and Spaniards, France, England, and the treatise of Don Antonio Scaino da Salo; (b) *The Pioneer of Lawn Tennis*, including Walter Clopton Wingfield and his patenting of tennis, the birth of tennis at Wimbledon, the Renshaws and Mary Outerbridge importing the game to the USA, the Doherty brothers and the beginning of the Davis Cup, and the victories by such as the British and Australians, the rise of the French and the Germans, and the beginning of women's participation; (c) *The Golden Age of Tennis*, highlighting Suzanne Lenglen ("The Goddess of Tennis"), Bill Tilden, Cochet, Lacoste, Borotra, Brugnon, Vines, Crawford, Perry, Wills, Moody, Budge and the war years; (d) *Contemporary Jet Tennis*, dealing with such as Kramer, Connolly, Drobny, Gonzales, Sedgman, Hoad and Rosewell, Pietrangeli and Santana, Gibson, Bueno, Laver, Court, King, Nastase, etc.

Each section is brilliantly done, and the explanations are excellent considering the extent of the photographic coverage. It is, indeed, valuable just for its early coverage of the history of ball games. Some new and valuable materials are presented, particularly from non-English speaking sources. The author has even found a seventeenth century depiction of early ball players in Tasmania, Australia, thus negating the conviction that the only culture in Tasmania surrounded the apple and the potato.

The early section abounds in poetry and translations from Spanish and Latin and French. The development of tennis from simple ball games, to *longue*

paume, courte paume or *jeu de paume* is well handled, and illustrations of early courts near the Louvre, at Fontainebleau, St-Germain-en-Laye, at Périgueux and at Hampton Court demonstrate clearly the nature of the early game and how royal tennis or court tennis eventually led to modern tennis. The visitor to England, incidentally, should make a sojourn to Hampton Court Palace in Surrey where a court of the 1540's is well maintained, and a resident professional can be prevailed upon to give an exhibition, even lessons, on the game as it was played by such as Henry VIII and Charles V.

The book *Tennis* can only be classified as an outstanding contribution to the history of sport, and is recommended for the library of all sport historians. The hope is that each sport will be so fortunate to have its history chronicled in so fine a fashion.

University of Ottawa

Reet Howell