

Lumpkin, Angela. *Women's Tennis: A Historical Documentary of the Players and Their Game*. Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Company, 1981. Pp. x, 193. Appendix, records, note, references, pictures. \$15.00.

Lumpkin's book is based upon her 1974 dissertation done at Ohio State. The thesis is that American women made contributions to tennis through their styles of play, domination of, or success in tournament competition, liberation from the traditionalism in tennis attire and advancing the popularity of the sport. In addition to supporting her thesis, Lumpkin's book also rectifies the omission of women's contributions to tennis in tennis histories and chronicles. In order to identify the contributions that primarily United States women made to tennis, Lumpkin studied the transitions that occurred in women's tennis from 1874 to 1979.

The contribution of women to tennis started in 1874 when Mary Ewing Outerbridge introduced the game to the United States. From this modest beginning Lumpkin chronicles women's tennis to the nineteen seventies. Basically she supports the four points in her thesis through a chronological narrative divided into six periods: (1) Acceptance by Eastern Women (1874-1903), (2) National and International Growth (1904-1923), (3) Californians Domination (1924-1940), (4) American Domination of Wimbledon and Forest Hills (1941-1948), (5) International Farce of Amateurism (1959-1967), and (6) Struggle for Equality (1968-1970). The women players from the different periods come to life through brief biographical sketches denoting their records, style of tennis attire and their appeal to the public.

One of the problems that can occur with a work that discloses new facts and covers a long time span is that an in-depth analysis may not consistently appear throughout the work. The following examples illustrate how Lumpkin's book became a victim of this problem. Her section dealing with the early formative period offers the first example. Lumpkin writes, "[I]nterestingly until 1902 the women's tournament matches were played in the three out of five format as were the men's." (p. 10) The importance of that decision, in the 1970s, on women's claim to equity as professionals was underlined by Lumpkin but she gave no reason as to why the United States Lawn Tennis Association (USLTA) made that decision and whether or not women were involved in the decision process.

The fifth period in Lumpkin's narrative details the story of the change from sham amateurism to professional player. This section offers another example of lack of in-depth analysis. The contributions that women players made in shaping their own future is documented, both during that time and into the final period of the seventies. Lumpkin chronicles women's roles in attempting to equalize purses, enhance publicity, and expand competitive opportunities. Sometimes more information is needed. For example Lumpkin writes that in

1968 Ann Jones threatened not to play at Wimbledon and Bournemouth because of the sparse prize money. Unfortunately the reader is not informed of the result of Jones's threats. Also, on occasion, the reader gets lost in the dates and time elapses of negotiations during the formation of the World Tennis Women's Professional Circuit. But overall the reader gains an understanding of a time when women became serious sport professionals.

Lumpkin is to be commended for introducing material frequently ignored in tennis histories, such as the contribution of black women tennis players. However, this also serves as another example of weakness in analysis. Starting in the 1910s black women players competed under the auspices of the American Tennis Association (ATA), a "colored" tennis association. During the 1920s and 1930s Ora Washington won eight national ATA single titles. This was also approximately the same period in which Helen Wills dominated the all-white USLTA singles competition. The reader is given an in-depth biography on Wills but almost no information on Washington's contributions. Althea Gibson, an ATA champion and the first black woman player to compete in ASLTA competition, was the only ATA woman whose contributions to tennis were documented. Thus while deserving praise for introducing the ATA women, Lumpkin also tantalizes the reader to want to know more.

A comment on the book's format is necessary for those readers interested in a scholarly pursuit of the topic. Both the dissertation and the book contain a lengthy appendix. The appendix serves as a handy reference for the names of winners of major tennis competitions up to 1978. However, the format used by the book publishers for citing references is disconcerting to those readers who like to know the source of material found in the text. Only direct quotes are cited directly. References are listed at the end of each chapter but it is a guessing game as to what material in the text they reference.

Overall Lumpkin achieves her goal of adding to the knowledge of women's contribution to tennis. Specifically she deals with the four points of her thesis in all six periods. It is a book that should be added to sport historians' libraries to contribute to their knowledge of women's participation in the sports world.

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