

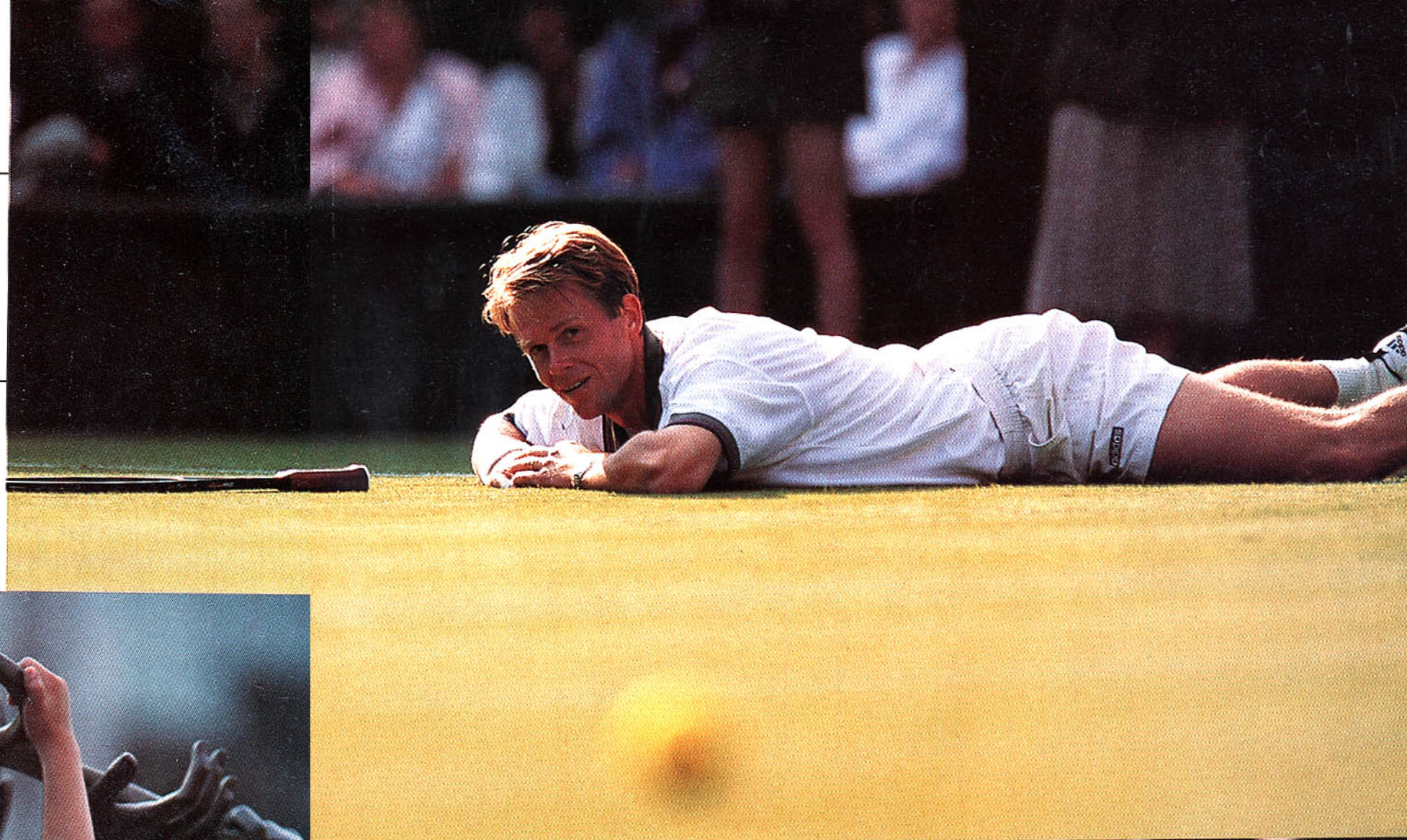
The Best in
TENNIS

pro
game

Shooting Stars

BY CHRIS NICHOLSON

10 WORLD-CLASS
PHOTOGRAPHERS SHARE
THEIR FAVORITE IMAGES AND
THE STORIES BEHIND THEM



THERE'S MORE TO A GREAT TENNIS PHOTO THAN JUST A PRETTY image; there's the historical importance of the moment captured, the technical obstacles overcome to produce the picture, and the nuances of fate that helped make the photo memorable. No one but the players comes closer to the game than the photographers, whether they're sitting in 120-degree heat at courtside or standing on the bleacher tops and aiming through the peephole of a 600mm lens.

We asked the world's premier tennis photographers to show the game through their keen eyes by sending us their best photos from the past decade. On average, these men and women have been shooting tennis for 19 years and spend 22 weeks a year on the road. Here's what they had to show.

Spontaneity befriended **Carol Newsom** when she took these photos of a playful girl at the French Open and a retiring **Stefan Edberg** at his last Wimbledon (above). Sometimes photographers need to pose photos, but, Newsom says, "I believe that if I keep my eyes open, I'll find a shot. Sometimes you just feel the magic."

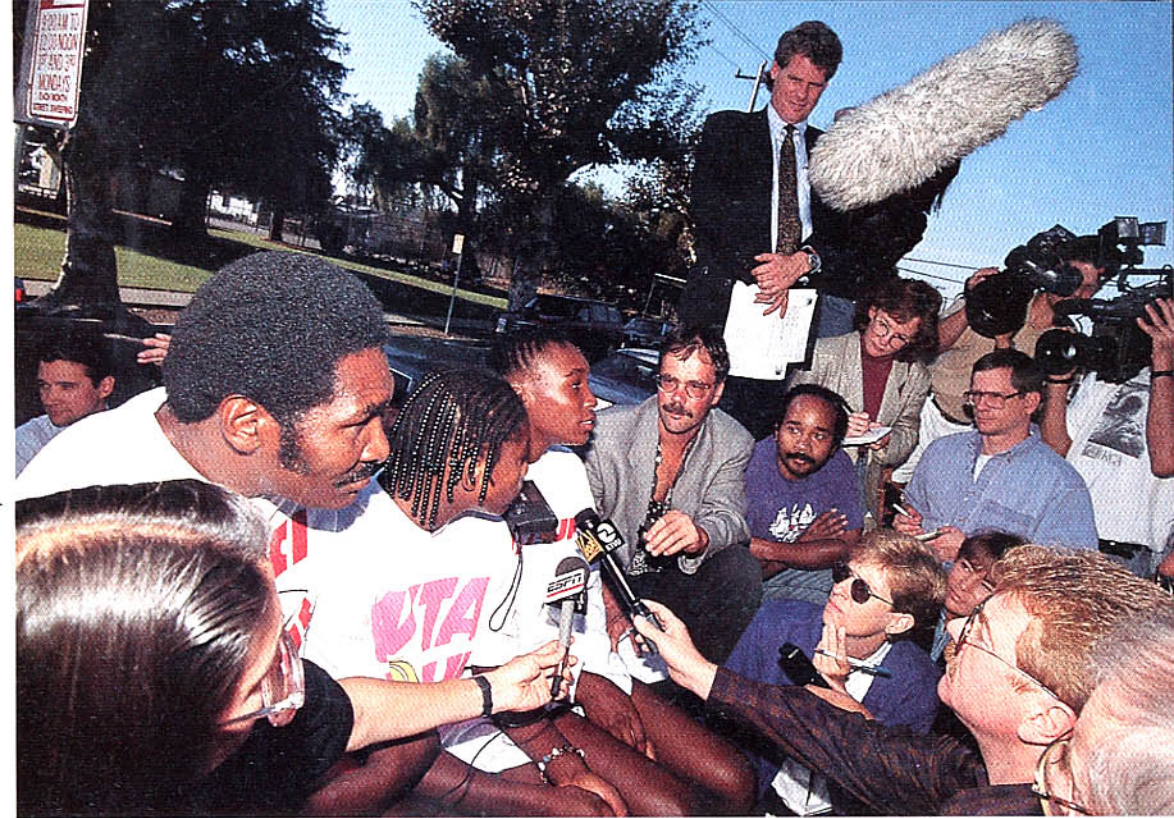
Of the thousands of **Monica Seles** photos in **Michael Cole's** file, he says, "I don't have another remotely similar to this picture (from Wimbledon in 1989). If the dress had not flown up, it would have been a nice action shot. However, because the dress did lift, ballerina-like, it makes this shot a bit special."





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In Oakland in October 1994, Gus Bower felt something important happening in front of his 20mm lens at Venus Williams's first press conference. "I always thought that was a historic image," Bower says. "It shows everybody encroaching upon her with their microphones and video cameras. It shows that she was important, for this to be handled as it was."



Caryn Levy shot Martina Navratilova at the 1987 Lipton through the net, which would have thrown off modern auto-focus equipment. And when Becker (left) stepped into the light at Wimbledon in 1988, "it was kind of a fluke," she says, "being in the right place with the right lens at the right time."

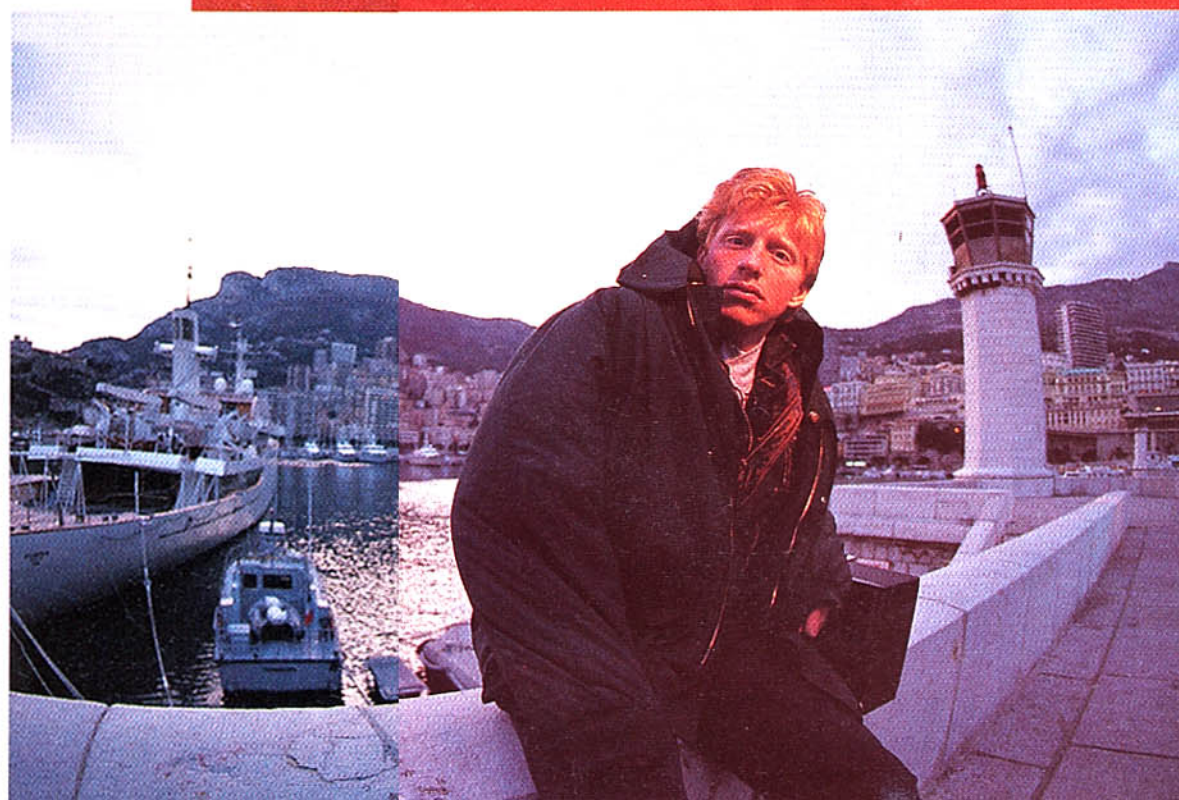




Michael Baz values his friendship with many players, which inspired him to get the perfect shot of Jim Courier's first major tournament win at Indian Wells in 1991 and allowed him to photograph Yannick Noah in a private moment in 1995. "I don't usually take pictures of (the players) when we're just hanging," says Baz of the Noah photo. "But in this case, the light was perfect. So I said, 'Yannick, you'll never get your picture taken in better light than this.' And he said O.K."



Tennis has inherent variety; it's played in different cultures, on different surfaces, which leads to different feelings from different photos. Gary Prior says the clay at the French Open—where he shot Arantxa Sanchez Vicario (above) in 1996—"shows a bit of grit. Clay has that sort of feel to it."



Paul Zimmer photographed his close friend Boris Becker in 1986 as the sun set on a cold night in Monte Carlo. "He was so relaxed, and it shows how he likes to be photographed," Zimmer says. "He wants to have a different face, a James Dean face. He doesn't smile, but in a certain way he has a positive face."



Knowing Andre Agassi always played the baseline on big points, Steve Szurlej realized he'd need a clear view of the backcourt to capture Agassi winning his first Grand Slam event at Wimbledon in 1992. "(Knowing your subject's game) increases your odds of getting that type of picture, that incredibly intense moment," Szurlej says.

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Fred Mullane observes that emotional photos—like Nathalie Tauziat at the 1995 French Open—are most often captured in late rounds of tournaments, when every point is crucial to players looking for a breakout. "With that comes all the passion and the desperation, realizing, 'This may be my one chance.' All that adrenaline just starts boiling out."

Clive Brunskill hungers for the unusual, explosive tennis moments often provided by aggressive, emotional players—like Michael Chang at the 1994 French Open. "I just like that sort of offbeat moment," he says. "But for every one of those, you end up shooting maybe three or four months of normal stuff."

