



Mr Nastase: The Autobiography

Ilie Nastase

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The amazing life story of the enfant terrible of tennis in the 1970s and 80s – winner of two Grand Slam titles, three Grand Slam doubles titles and twice a Wimbledon finalist.

It is not an overstatement to say that Ilie Nastase was in part responsible for the explosion of interest in tennis in the seventies. Thanks to his success, his lifestyle, his sex appeal and the controversy that continually surrounded him, Nastase's name was recognisable far beyond the confines of tennis.

Yet, he also had a dark side and he regularly got himself into trouble with umpires and spectators alike. His court-side tantrums and manic questioning of line calls could spiral out of control and, all too often, he found himself fined and disqualified – and making the next day's front pages.

Bjorn Borg had great difficulty adjusting to life after retirement and lost vast amounts of money, while the late Vitas Gerulaitis had a major cocaine problem. Ilie reveals how he helped both of them at a time when their problems were taking a huge toll on their personal lives. He also provides opinions and anecdotes on a host of other characters, including John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors and Arthur Ashe, Henri Leconte, Yannick Noah, Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova.

As a result of his celebrity status, Nastase moved amongst the beautiful people. His book recalls some of his more memorable encounters and experiences, including dancing the night away in New York's Studio 54 and Castel in Paris with the likes of Bianca Jagger and Claudia Cardinale, and bedding some of the world's most desirable women (an Italian countess and a former Miss UK are among his conquests).

For the many sports fans who followed tennis and followed his career, his stories behind the varied headline-grabbing outbursts will prove fascinating and irresistible.

Mr Nastase: The Autobiography Details

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Bilal Murtaza says

Ilie Nastase is a man I would have loved to watch in his prime. I doubt we will ever see a generation of entertainers similar to McEnroe, Connors, Nastase and Borg simply because of the modern day players' code of conduct (both written and unwritten) and the current big four's politeness towards each other.

The book itself is a delightful, light-hearted read for tennis fans. It delves deeply into Nastase's relationship with his partner-manager, Tiriatic, his modest upbringing in Romania, his many female conquests and his topsy-turvy relationship with the All-England Tennis Club. His rivalry with Borg, French Open victories and relationship with Connors are explored well enough though I would have liked to know more about his take on Connors.

It does not contain enough details of his matches to satisfy me, though his hilarious anecdotes more than make up for the lack of ball-by-ball commentary on his matches over the years.

If you enjoyed this book then I highly recommend McEnroe's latest autobiography and The Outsider: A Memoir by Jimmy Connors.

Dragos says

Easy to read book if you love tennis.
