P.S. to the NEWS
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RELEASE: FEBRUARY 16

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ARTHUR ASHE

Arthur Ashe's two-and-a-half-hour match with John McEnroe in the finals for the Grand Prix Masters, a major tennis tournament involving eight of the world's best singles players, was one of the best television shows of the year.

Ashe is 35 and his opponent is 19. Ashe had been out of competition for over a year because of a foot operation and eye trouble, both parts of the body rather important for tennis. Some thought that injuries and age had eliminated him from top singles competition. But in order to make it to the finals, he had to defeat two excellent players.

Ashe won the first set, lost the second, and had a double match point lead in the third set with McEnroe serving. McEnroe won one point. On the next serve, Ashe returned with a magnificent cross court ace which McEnroe could not touch with his racket. Everyone thought Ashe had won the match.

Then the linesman belatedly announced that McEnroe's serve had been out and the point would have to be played over. Serving a second time, McEnroe ultimately won that third and decisive set.

Always a perfect gentleman, Arthur Ashe did not complain about the strange, delayed ruling against him. He demonstrated again that he is the example par excellence of the courtesy and self-discipline that is supposed to be characteristic of the game of tennis.

Sixteen years ago, my husband and I had the pleasure of watching teenager Arthur Ashe play an exhibition tennis match with the then Wimbledon singles champion, Chuck McKinley, at Washington University in St. Louis. McKinley won, but young Ashe made a splendid showing.

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That was the beginning of a career which made Ashe world famous. He won many tennis tournaments all over the world including the U.S. Open Championship in 1968 and the Wimbledon World Championship in 1975.

Other titles he collected along the way included the U.S. Men's Hard Court Championship in 1963, the U.S. Amateur Title in 1968, and the Australian Open in 1970.

During the decade and a half that Arthur Ashe has been a national and international tennis figure, no misconduct or scandal has ever marred his fine reputation. Some tennis stars have been involved in immoral lifestyles and some in bad-language disputes with umpires and linesmen. Some are notorious for having temper tantrums on the tennis court.

Despite the numerous temptations of all kinds that lie in the path of an attractive and successful athletic star, Arthur Ashe's public and private life has remained exemplary. He is a model for our youth to emulate and a shining example of the conduct every tennis star should strive to attain.

When far away from home in Wimbledon, Europe, Asia or Australia, Arthur Ashe is always a splendid representative of the United States. With good manners and good sportsmanship, he cheerfully accepts all rulings, even when delayed or erroneous.

If Arthur Ashe should ever decide to retire from world championship tennis, he would make an excellent American ambassador, a position where courtesy, tact, and good taste are essential attributes. He would be a good replacement, for example, for UN Ambassador Andrew Young, who often says the wrong thing about Africa, and who failed to condemn or oppose the Communist conquests of Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia.

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