Wenn Becker zum „Äh“, ausholt, ist Ballestri er schon fertig
Amerikas schnellerer Stenograf, ein Pionier im Tennisport


When Becker starts saying ooh and aah, Balestrieri has already finished. The United States fastest stenotypist, a pioneer in the sport of tennis.

He is the fastest, at least in the United States. When Boris Becker starts saying his oohs and aahs, which have become popular, Peter Paul Balestrieri has already put Becker's thoughts into his machine. Balestrieri doesn't miss anything, no matter, no hissing, and, of course, no statements.

This is the third time the 34 year old New Yorker is attending the ATP Tour World Championship in the Frankfurt Festhalle. Tournament director Zeljko Frunulovic very much does, by no means, not want to do without him.

Award winning stenotypist Balestrieri from Brooklyn is one of the most important links between the top eight tennis players and the fourth estate.

This almost unbelievable process happens everyday - when the crowd of journalists leaves the interview room of the Festhalle, the copies of the press conference have already been released.

Balestrieri's stenotype machine is wirelessly linked to a main computer which is worked on by not lesser quick co-workers of the New Yorker who immediately translate the English text into German and French. Speed is everything. And Peter Paul Balestrieri's slogan is "when all is said, we're done."

In those three years in which speedwriter Balestrieri has been working for the tennis press conferences world-wide, where he has been stenotyping for the press conferences in tennis, he made himself an excellent reputation. The tournament directors of Paris, Bercy, Monte Carlo, New York, Munich, and also Frankfurt appreciate his work.

Balestrieri said sport reporting is 5% of his business. It started 16 years ago in a New York court. The former court stenotypist Balestrieri had a feeling for a profession which he considers always challenging. Three years ago, he added sports to his stenotype reports of court reports, witness' testimony, and indictments.

World-wide Balestrieri was the first stenotypist who discovered this new market. Then as now, the originator of the product Fastscripts says, "I want to be a pioneer. This exciting job seems to be worth it."

The percentage of his business contracts of the whole world of tennis shall be augmented by a percentage of two digits this coming year.

Balestrieri is optimistic - maybe he will be working in the sport of golf one day.

It was just the right point of time when Balestrieri worked for the Virginia Slims in New York for the first time.

"I am ahead of the competitors," knows the man with the fast fingers. He can type 280 words per minute into his machine - an official American record.

Even the top Monica Seles, who talks without taking a breath, doesn't create any problems for the stenotypist.

One of the rare exceptions is his compatriot, John McEnroe. McEnroe is difficult to take; suddenly he interrupts a sentence; switches his thoughts and says something completely different, but also, he says a lot.

Stefan Edberg, the current ATP ranked No. 2 player, did not have much to say after his victory against Czechoslovakian Petr Korda. The Swede is one of the easiest speakers for Peter Paul Balestrieri, who is always trying to better his stenotype system.

It is my dream that one day very soon I may stenotype press conferences simultaneously onto a screen for all the fans to view on the grounds and/or in the tennis stadium.

For the journalists, this dream will already come true at the Grand Slam Cup in Munich this December. "My computer signals will be transmitted directly into the laptops of the reporters who can immediately select what they need for their story."

Balestrieri has learned very fast. Like no other, he knows the tennis jargon. More than 6000 of the always repeated standard words, he has programed.

Becker's oohs and aahs are right at the top.

No doubt - the responsible persons of the ATP Tour World Championship can no longer do without Peter Paul Balestrieri.