

Sports

A look at spring athletics

On the Double

Sarah Riske and Aleke Tsoubanos Set 'Em Up and Knock 'Em Down.

By NELSON BRYAN

WHEN OPPOSING players stare across the net at Sarah Riske and Aleke Tsoubanos, they would be well advised to remember their Shakespeare—*Macbeth* in particular: “Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and cauldron bubble.” Because in this Vanderbilt duo, women’s tennis coach Geoff Macdonald has cooked up a fiery mixture of power and speed.

Macdonald paired Tsoubanos and Riske three years ago, when Kate Burson and Julie Ditty were setting Vanderbilt records in doubles and singles competition. Early on, he noticed a potent alchemy in the combination of Riske’s and Tsoubanos’s styles of play.

“They seemed to be clicking,” Macdonald says of the early pairing. “They had a lot of chemistry, and their strengths complemented each other. Sarah and Aleke matched up well. Aleke came in as an outstanding doubles player, and Sarah was an accomplished singles player.”

Riske is a senior psychology major from Pittsburgh. She is tall and composed. Tsoubanos is a junior human and organizational development major from Chesterfield, Mo. She is strong and quick. Riske has a strong serve and

volley game with good ground strokes. Tsoubanos has excellent hands and anticipation at the net. “It’s sort of like a setter and a spiker in volleyball,” Macdonald says.

“We’ll set up some plays together,” Riske says, “but for the most part we let each other do what we do best. We really trust each other in that. We know each other’s strengths and weaknesses. Aleke has faster hands than I do, quicker hands at the net. She puts the point away more. I more or less play straight up and make the other team play another ball. Aleke will lob, she’ll drop shot, more touch. She does well off my serve. She moves across the court; she poaches very well.”

“Sarah has a really big serve,” Tsoubanos testifies. “She’s like the meat and potatoes out there. She just plays straight up. She’s very solid from the baseline with solid volleys. I feel like sometimes Sarah does a lot of the grunt work, whereas she frees me up at the net to be more proactive and creative with volleys. She sets me up a lot. I have no complaints about that. I’ll let Sarah do that all day.”

Last fall Riske and Tsoubanos brought home a national title when they won the Riviera/ITA Women’s All-American Championships in Pacific Palisades, Calif. Vandy’s

No. 1 doubles duo went into the championship tournament as the team to beat.

No one did.

“Sarah and I worked together a lot last fall,” says Tsoubanos. “We did a lot of individual work with the coaches and just went out there and did the best we could. It just so happens that we played four really good matches and everything clicked. It was nice. I think a lot of people were speculating as to whether we were going to hold to the honor that they gave us in the preranking, and we did that.”

At the beginning of the spring 2003 season, Vanderbilt beat top-ranked Florida in a dual match, 4-3. Riske won at the No. 1 singles spot, and Tsoubanos won at No. 3 singles. Together they won the No. 1 doubles 9-7. It was the first time in 23 years the Vanderbilt women defeated the storied Florida program.

“It was definitely special,” Riske says of the victory over Florida. “It was one of the high points of my college career. When I came in as a freshman, the seniors always said, ‘Let’s beat Florida; we’ve never beaten them before,’ and it’s been that way every year, with some matches better than others. Last year we had two close ones with them, but we’ve always come up short. That was such a big deal to us. It was so cool to see everyone come through. It felt like we were in the nationals. Everyone just fought so hard.”

“I think we’ve gotten better,” Tsoubanos says matter-of-factly. “At the end of the season, the NCAA individuals and doubles tournament could be really exciting for us.”



NEIL BRAKE



Aleke Tsoubanos and Sarah Riske

DAVID JOHNSON

In Memory of Fred Russell

Fred Russell, L'27, sportswriter extraordinaire, died at his home Jan. 26 after a brief illness. [See obituary on page 77 for more details.] He counted among his acquaintances the finest sportswriters, coaches and athletes of their time. In 1953 legendary sports writer and Vanderbilt alumnus Grantland Rice, BA 1901, wrote a tribute to his friend and fellow Commodore. Fifty years after it was penned, the poem yet pays homage to Fred McFerrin Russell and the days of yore.

"To Fred Russell"
By Grantland Rice
Sept. 2, 1953

*Freddie, the south wind's calling
From far and far away
I see the twilight falling
On hills of yesterday.
I find an old, old yearning
And when I turn to you,
I meet old pals returning
To find a dream come true.*

*Freddie, through joy and sorrow,
Where my fading footsteps fare,
Where will I be tomorrow?
I neither know nor care.*



Fred Russell and Grantland Rice

*Freddie, one cup together,
And here is the final test.
Through stormy or sunny weather,
Through breaks at their worst or best,
Untouched by the staining dollar,
On through to the journey's end,
A gentleman, sir—and a scholar,
But better than all—a friend.*

Quarles, Yoder Win World Championship

Former Commodores Shelton Quarles, BS'94, and Todd Yoder, BS'00, became world champions when the Tampa Bay Buccaneers won Super Bowl XXXVII in January. At Vanderbilt they never won a championship. But after Tampa Bay's victory over the Oakland Raiders, they joined their former teammate, Corey Harris, BS'92, and coach, Woody Widenhofer, in the fraternity of Super Bowl ring owners. Harris earned a ring with the Baltimore Ravens in 2001. Widenhofer garnered four rings with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Quarles, a starting inside linebacker, was one of Tampa Bay's top defenders in the Super Bowl game, making seven tackles. Yoder joined the Buccaneers in 2000 as an undrafted tight end and was active on all Tampa Bay special teams.

*For all that I'll miss in grieving
Where Charon's boat may land,
Is the smile from a pal I'm leaving,
And the friendly grip of a hand.*

*For twenty-five years or longer,
Where time plays a leading part,
I've found the link grows stronger,
In the beating of heart and heart.
I've found the friendship dearer
As the endless years roll by,
And, as night draws nearer,
We wait for the light to die.*

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{Where Are They Now?}



Hutcheson and Bargo in 1970

Ann Hutcheson, BA'71, MD'78, and **Nancy Bargo**, BA'72, brought Vanderbilt women's tennis into national prominence before Title IX elevated the status of women's collegiate sports. In 1970 the doubles partners reigned as Tennessee intercollegiate champions and represented Vanderbilt in the National Intercollegiate Championship in Las Cruces, N.M., for two years. Today Ann Hutcheson Price, former chief medical officer at Nashville's St. Thomas Hospital, is taking a hiatus from medicine and tennis to nurse an injury. She and her husband, Scott Todd Price, BA'71, have two children. Their son, a wheelchair athlete, graduates from Lipscomb University this year, and their daughter is entering Princeton University to play tennis. Nancy Bargo is now Nancy Bargo Anthony, executive director of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. She earned two



master's degrees from Yale and a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She and her husband, Robert, have four daughters, all athletes who play field hockey collegiately at Princeton, Yale and Duke. Thinking back on their days at Vanderbilt, Anthony remarks, "It was fun to be on the bottom floor of emerging women's athletics prior to Title IX."

{Sports Roundup}

Tennis: Men Win First SEC Title

The eighth-ranked Vanderbilt men's tennis team won its first-ever Southeastern Conference Tournament championship, defeating No. 2-ranked Florida April 20 in Oxford, Miss. Second-ranked Bobby Reynolds scored a 7-6, 6-3 (2) victory over 18th-ranked Hamid Mirzadeh at the No. 1 position. Reynolds, a junior, was later named SEC Player of the Year, and Commodore coach Ken Flach was named Coach of the Year. Last year the team finished the SEC regular season with a 1-10 record and a first-round exit at the SEC Tournament, making this season a worst-to-first achievement within the conference.

Cross Country: Brogan Named Marshall Scholar

David Brogan, a Vanderbilt biomedical engineering senior who combines his studies with cross-country competition and community involvement, has been chosen to receive a prestigious Marshall Scholarship. He is one of 40 U.S. students selected this year to participate in the program.



Brogan

Brogan plans to use his scholarship to pursue a master of philosophy at either Kings College of London or Oxford University. He hopes to become a physician and to explore combining medical imaging techniques with surgical practice to develop innovative methods of treatment.

Basketball: Anderson Sets Scoring Record in Season Finale

Senior center Chantelle Anderson set a new Vanderbilt women's basketball scoring record in the Commodores' last game of the season, an 86-85 overtime loss to Boston College in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. She surpassed by one point the record of 2,602 points set by former All-American center Wendy Scholtens.

The team finished the season with a 22-10 overall record, 9-5 in SEC play and ranked 15th in the nation by the Associated Press.

Basketball: Freije Named Second Team All-SEC

Junior forward Matt Freije has been named Second Team All-SEC by a vote of the league's basketball coaches. He was a member of the SEC All-Freshman Team two years ago and earned Third Team All-SEC honors after his sophomore season.

Freije, who scored at least 20 points in eight of the final 12 games, finished the regular season as the Commodores' leading scorer with 17.9 points per game, and he finished second on the team in rebounds with 4.3 rebounds per contest. He ranked among the SEC's best in scoring, field-goal percentage, free-throw percentage, three-point percentage, and three-point field goals made.

In the Vanderbilt record book, Freije is ranked 21st in career scoring (1,247), ninth in career three-point field-goal attempts (326), 10th in three-pointers made (118), and is only one block away from reaching the school's top 10 with 49 career blocks.

Track: Hahn Sets Pentathlon School Record

Josie Hahn, a sophomore from Clinton, Tenn., established a Vanderbilt pentathlon record and finished fourth overall during the opening day of the Southeastern Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships in March. Her 3,892-point total is the highest ever by a Vanderbilt women's track athlete, easily surpassing her own mark of 3,598 points. She set career bests in the high jump and long jump and matched her previous record in the shot put during the performance.



Hahn

Golf: Snedeker No. 1 in Golfstat Rankings

Vanderbilt golfer Brandt Snedeker claimed the top spot in early spring Golfstat rankings with a 69.45 stroke average in 20 rounds. The rankings came on the heels of Snedeker's climb to No. 1 in the nation in the *Golfweek/Sagarin* Poll.

In Vanderbilt's first event of the spring, the senior from Nashville finished in second place and just one shot out of the top spot at the Gator Invitational in Gainesville, Fla., and was named SEC Golfer of the Week.

On the strength of three first-place finishes, Snedeker was atop the SEC rankings since the beginning of the fall season. In measuring stroke averages from team tournaments, he had more than a two-stroke lead over the SEC's second-place golfer with his mark of 69.06 in 17 rounds.

Snedeker is one of 21 collegiate men's golfers who has been named to the watch list for the 2003 Ben Hogan Award. The Ben Hogan Award is presented annually to the top men's NCAA Division I, II or III or NAIA golfer.



Vanderbilt Crew team training on Percy Priest Lake

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEEL BRAKE