



Newk: Life on and off the court

John Newcombe

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Extraordinary stories from both on and off the court...

John Newcombe has always been more than a tennis legend. He is an Australian icon. As a player, he was the world number one, a multiple Wimbledon, US and Australian Champion, a fighter who would push himself to the limit and beyond to win. Yet he never (or almost never) lost his sense of humour or fun. When Newk was on court, even in to-the-death battles with John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg and Jimmy Connors, you could tell he loved playing the game, and that made watching him all the more enjoyable.

He's friends with US presidents and media tycoons (George Bush once famously described him as a 'black-belt beer drinker', his son George W. had one too many with Newk on the night he was arrested for drink driving, Rupert Murdoch bought Ansett and Channel 10 between sets of tennis with him), yet he's also at home in the pub having a beer or three with his mates. He's a larrikin, but he's also a hugely successful businessman in his own right. He's always enjoyed a party, but cares passionately about his family and his country. In a sport where individualism, not to say outright self-centredness, is the norm, he believes that playing in, or captaining in the Davis Cup is the greatest thing a tennis player can achieve. And as a mentor and inspiration to players such as Pat Rafter and Lleyton Hewitt, he has been a crucial influence on the next generation of Australian champions.

Above all he is a brilliant raconteur, and his memoirs are simply unputdownable, filled with gripping tennis drama, deep insights into life, and above all a humour and warmth that Newk's millions of fans will instantly recognise.



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