

WEEKEND SPORTS WEEKEND

I think the mix is still too conservative," said record producer Keith Lentin, sitting in a listening room at Summa Studios on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. "I spent 13 hours listening yesterday, and I realised that we never went over the top. We have to go over the top." "Like how?" asked Chris Seldon, Mats Wilander's friend and collaborator on the record at issue. "What do you want us to do?"

"Listen to this cut from U-2," Lentin said, reaching for the boom box. "Listen to Bono's voice — listen to the aura around it."

"Yeah, but we're not U-2," Seldon muttered.

"I know that. But the point is, we don't sound like an exciting band. We're close, but it's not there. Not yet." Wilander slouched deep in the couch absorbing every word but saying nothing. Later, when Lentin again cued up the Wilander/Seldon song *Story of You* for comparison, Wilander did what he does best on a tennis court. He concentrated. A deep furrow appeared on his forehead, like he'd been hit flat between the eyes with a hatchet. Beyond the sliding doors of the balcony, it was clear, bright, balmy winter day — a perfect day for tennis. All over Southern California, doctors, lawyers and studio chiefs were trying to be tennis players. And in Summa Studios on Sunset, one tennis player — and oh, what a player at that — was trying no less mightily to be a musician.

It's a story of you ... so sweet Me and you ... in the heat it's a story of you ... so sweet We are through ... incomplete. To many tennis fans, the *Story of You*, like the relationship he describes in *Story of You* is incomplete. In 1988, after flirting with the World No. 1 ranking for several years, he came within three victories of recording the first Grand Slam since Rod Laver accomplished thefeat in 1969.

Wilander won the Australian and French and US Open titles, and he reached the quarter-finals at Wimbledon.

Centrepiece: The centre-piece of Wilander's magnificent season was his showdown with (then) No 1 Ivan Lendl in the US Open final. In a breath-taking display of skill, intelligence and determination, Wilander played the match of a lifetime to topple Lendl and wrest away his top ranking. But Wilander's stay at the top was short-lived. For years he had been reluctant to reach the ultimate ranking, knowing that for a man of his disposition the fulfillment of a dream usually meant the death of it, too.

"Mats (placed) more of an emphasis on becoming No. 1 than staying there. His reaction to getting to the top was to up and walk away from the demands and the pressure of the ranking."

"I know people are wondering, 'What happened to Wilander?' But that doesn't bother me. As far as I'm concerned, I haven't really made a serious comeback effort yet. I just wish people would relax, not feel like they have to make a judgement I wish they'd let me do my own thing and not judge me until a decent amount of time has passed."

And just how long is a decent amount of time?

"It's hard to say," Wilander said, shrugging. He smiled ironically as he added, "Probably right after people have stopped asking about what's wrong with me."

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"There's a lot more room for communication in music, but tennis is definitely an act of self-expression, too," Wilander said over breakfast one morning at Ben Frank's, a burger joint on Sunset with decor circa The Jetsons. "A lot of times in a match I'd find

myself wondering what kind of music my opponent would play."

"I've played guitar with John (McEnroe) and his music is just like his tennis. He plays loud, screaming lead guitar. I play music like I play tennis, too. Not flashy, not loud. I do all my composing on an acoustic guitar. And as much as I'd tribute in his native Sweden on the Virgin label. They hope to tour Sweden's club circuit in early '91 with a band as yet unnamed, backed by the same musicians who played on the EP. "I took my hobby and decided to see what would happen if I got serious with it," Wilander explained. "I didn't want to find myself on a tennis court one day, wondering what might have happened if I ever did what I really wanted with my music."

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