

MIND OVER STROKES

By STUART ROWLANDS

It's the third set and 6-7 in the tie-break. It's been a tough match and maybe, just maybe, you have the tools to finally beat your opponent.

You know you have been working hard on your game -- hundreds of forehands, backhands and volleys day after day and even hitting the gym as well -- all those sit-ups and wind sprints just to get you to this moment.

But now comes the hard part. "Can you focus on the here and now can you be calm in your mind?"

If you can, then you win!

But the chances are that without proper preparation you are not going to be able to do it.

Never mind. Help is on the way. Florida has a secret resource not written about in the travel brochures.

His name is Dr. Nick Dewan and he teaches Eastern Mind Body synergy a 5,000-year-old meditation experience. By profession Nick is psychiatrist with an international reputation; by inclination he's a formidable tennis coach.

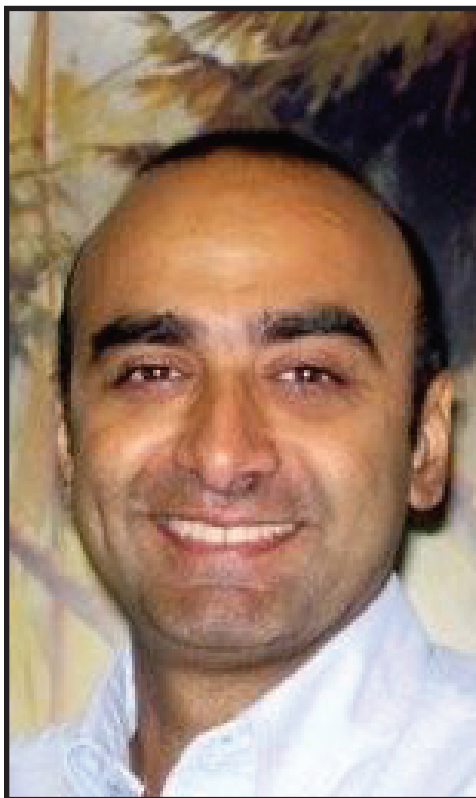
To all those spiritual buffs who seek transformational experiences in their everyday life, Dr Nick seems to be a tennis version of mind-guru Deepak Chopra.

In fact, Dr. Nick is one of the most respected psychiatrists in the world and a cutting edge technology researcher, which has included developing the world's first PC-based point-of-care outcomes management system for psychiatric hospitals.

But tennis is his passion, and all throughout his career he has embraced tennis and tennis players of all skill levels as a resource for understanding the functions of the mind.

"Whether it's panic attacks, healing from major surgery, winning a tough tennis match or just calming the mind, it's all inside you, and with the proper techniques you can overcome or at least live better with even serious illnesses," says Dr. Nick. "For long-term physical and mental health-care we have been brought up to consider medicine as the catch-all for what is ailing us or holding us back from the answers we all seek.

"The current addiction to illegal and



Dr. Nick Dewan

pharmaceutical drugs and performance enhancers such as steroids in all forms of sports are just the tip of the iceberg. And it really doesn't have to be so the answers are all within us."

Dr. Nick was born in Bombay (now Mumbai) India, the youngest son of physician and India's top-ranked badminton player.

In 1968 the family moved to Ohio where his mother practiced medicine and his father got into computers. Medicine was always in Dr. Nick's future but tennis was his life, so he played his way through college in Dayton, Ohio, and coached tennis while completing his medical school in Toledo, Ohio, and medical residences at USC and San Diego State Universities in California.

"I started to develop my meditation theories while exploring the competitive mind sets of football, basketball and tennis players while at San Diego State and coaching tennis camps in Guadalajara, Mexico," says Dr. Nick, "A key part of my findings was that those athletes who may not have been

the most talented but were willing to train their minds were the most successful.

"From those early findings I was able to begin research into the most effective techniques of calming the mind and found that the original mantras and visualizations first discovered by yogis and holy men in India literally thousands of years ago are demonstrably more effective and better for you than modern methods which place too great a focus on superficial behaviors."

Through the years Dr. Nick has imparted his techniques to literally hundreds of tennis players, including touring pros. He's not at liberty to discuss names but he says his theory holds true and that it's not always the most talented who make it to the "big shows" such as Wimbledon or the US Open but the pro who is willing to use mind techniques when the going or playing gets tough.

Now in private practice in Clearwater, Fla., Dr Nick keeps his hand in the tennis game by being the mind skills coach for both tennis and golf at the prestigious Saddlebrook Resort in Wesley Chapel.

At least once a month he can be seen explaining the art of calming the mind to groups of young golfers on the range at Saddlebrook's Arnold Palmer Golf Academy or conducting one-on-one sessions with tennis players either on the resort's courts or in an adjacent classroom. If your tennis game needs help and a booming serve and volley game isn't getting the job done, maybe Dr Nick can add that final component that will leave your opponents literally "in the dust" or in this case clay. You can reach Dr. Nick at 727-723-0779 or his web site www.drnickdewan.com.

Stuart Rowlands is a Welsh-born writer living in the Hollywood Hills in California and the former head of Global PR for IMG the world's largest sports management company, where his duties included coordinating Bjorn Borg's media appearances at Wimbledon. His consulting clients have also included the Nobel Peace Institute and Peace Prize, the Quebec Tourist Board, the Government of Ghana, Island Records and Honda's international motorcycle racing programs.