RANDOM HOUSE eBOOKS

# Coming of Age

Andy Murray

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# About the Book

**‘With Andy, the sky’s the limit…’ John McEnroe**

At Wimbledon 2005, Andy Murray announced himself on the tennis world stage by thrashing star pros George Bastl and Radek Stepanek: a legend was born and Britain had a new sporting hero.

From there, Andy’s rise to the top has been unstoppable: from winning his first ATP title at San Jose in 2006 and deposing Tim Henman to become British Number 1, to beating a host of former and current World no. 1s – including Andy Roddick, Lleyton Hewitt, Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal – Murray has gone from strength to strength. With his triumphant win at Queen’s in June 2009, a storming performance at Wimbledon 2009 – which saw Andy reach the semi-finals for the first time – and his crowning as World Number 2, we have seen Murray reach even greater heights.

But Murray is much more than a truly gifted tennis player: he has changed the face of the British game. His grit, passion and success on court, combined with his ranking as one of the world’s best players, has reignited Britain’s love of tennis and inspired a whole new generation of kids to become tennis fans.

Here, in his updated story, Andy regales us with the highs and the lows, the triumphs and the near misses to show us just how far the boy from Dunblane has come.

# About the Author

Andy Murray was born on 15 May 1987 in Dunblane, Scotland. In September 2004 he won the boys' singles title at the US Open in New York, and that December he was crowned BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year. The following year he became the youngest-ever player to represent Britain in the Davis Cup, reached the third round in his debut at Wimbledon, and broke into the Top 100 at the Thailand Open. In 2006 he won his first ATP title at San José, and ended 2007 ranked number 11 in the world, having won the St Petersburg Open. 2009 saw Andy off to a career-best 45-7 start, capturing four ATP World Tour titles, including becoming the first British player since Bunny Austin in 1938 to earn the title at Queen's Club.

Sue Mott is a freelance sports writer. She was the *Sunday Times* tennis correspondent before going on to become an award-winning feature writer, columnist and interviewer for the *Daily Telegraph*. She has written books, co-presented a BBC TV sports investigation programme and regularly contributes to television and radio. She is an Arsenal supporter but has a very poor backhand.

# ANDY MURRAY

# COMING OF AGE

## The Autobiography

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To all my fans – for all the support you have given me through the good times and the tough times.

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# Chapter One:
# The Two Impostors

KIPLING'S WRONG, BY the way. You can't treat them exactly the same, Triumph and Disaster. I don't. Triumph is clearly better. I have never liked losing. When I was a little boy I'd overturn the Monopoly board in a rage if I was losing – so my gran tells me anyway – but you could say I have matured with age. I understand I'm not going to win every tennis match I play. I come off the court and I'm disappointed, but I don't beat myself up over it. I'm competitive, I want to win, but I'm not an idiot.

I wanted to win that day I stood under the Rudyard Kipling quote at the entrance to the Centre Court at Wimbledon for the very first time in my life. There's hardly a more famous spot in the whole tennis world. You don't even have to look up to know that it's there …

> If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
> And treat those two impostors just the same.

It was my first Centre Court match, at my first Wimbledon, in my first grand slam against a man who had played in a Wimbledon final. Oh, and ten million people were watching on television and I had this massive bag of drinks over my shoulder that was way too heavy to carry.

I had been sitting in the champions' locker room when they came to get me for the match. It wasn't a mistake. I was allowed to be in there because I'd been part of the

Davis Cup squad for Britain, but it was seriously weird being there, with attendants offering you towels and John McEnroe doing stretching exercises on the floor. The walk from the locker room to the court just made things even more unbelievable.

The corridor was lined with framed photographs of all the former champions. Some I would play against one day – and one day surprisingly soon – like Roger Federer and Lleyton Hewitt. One I had already played against, no less a hero than John McEnroe who had deliberately ignored me the first time we met. Some had been runners up, like my childhood hero Andre Agassi – I used to own a pair of pink Lycra and denim shorts thanks to him, which may not be something to boast about. Some I had loved watching on TV like Björn Borg and Jimmy Connors. Others I only knew about from the history books, like Fred Perry, who as everyone knows – because we are always being reminded – was the last British man to win Wimbledon in 1936. That's a very long time ago. Now I was walking down the corridor, listening to 'Let's Get It Started' by Black Eyed Peas on my iPod, reckoning it was probably too soon for me to change all that.

I was eighteen years old – just – and this was about to become the most amazing time of my life. We walked past the back entrance to the royal box. Sir Sean Connery was in there, but I didn't know it at the time. We were led down a set of stairs beside the trophy cabinet, through the main hallway and then, just to maximise the intimidation, they made me stand underneath that famous Kipling sign carved over the doorway.

All the names of all the Wimbledon champions were lettered in gold on the wall next to me. A television camera was pointing at my face and my opponent was standing there with me, obviously much more relaxed than I was, having played on the tour for eight years, an established Top 10 guy. As competitors go, David Nalbandian was a

heavyweight. No one said anything. It took an effort to believe this was actually happening.

I love boxing and sometimes tennis is pretty similar. No one gets punched in the face, but waiting to go on court was like waiting to walk into the ring. The two of us would go out together, but only one of us would survive.

This was my first Wimbledon – my first Wimbledon as a senior professional. I'd played the junior tournament three times before and lost twice in the first round. It wasn't exactly my most successful stomping ground; I'd never played well there. I'd never really played well on grass before. It was only my third senior tournament and here I was, about to play on some of the most famous courts in the world, amongst all the best players, with 14,000 people watching and a huge television audience at home. Two months before that I was playing – and losing – in front of four or five people at a Challenger event in Germany.

That's why that Wimbledon experience was so special in 2005. It was *so* new. I was a schoolboy's age, ranked 317th in the world, I had no experience playing at that level, so going into the tournament my expectations were pretty low. Why wouldn't they be? I'd never done anything at Wimbledon before. This could so easily have been one of Kipling's Disasters.

And yet, by the end of the tournament I'd become a friend of Sir Sean Connery, was being stalked by television crews, had received proposals of marriage and had had my first taste of 'Murray-mania'. It was surreal.

I'd only started practising on the Friday before Wimbledon because I'd twisted my ankle at Queen's. That had caused quite a stir. Because I cramped up two points from winning my third-round match against Thomas Johansson, the Swede who won the Australian Open in 2002, people were saying I was unfit. It had been a good match in many ways for me, but going wide for a ball at 30–

15 5–4 in the deciding set (my coaches will tell you I usually remember every single point I play) I had turned my ankle badly. I seemed to be on the ground for about ten minutes before they decided to do something about it. The trainer taped up the injury, but when I went back out to play I couldn't because the ankle was shot and my legs started cramping badly. I couldn't finish the match and didn't step on any court for another week. I didn't know if I was going to be able to play Wimbledon at all.

When I walked into Wimbledon for my first match there as a professional, I already knew that I was playing first match on Court Two, known as 'the Graveyard of the Champions'. That was all right. I wasn't a champion. I had won precisely two matches in my life on the ATP tour.

It was weird. Many things would be weird this week. First of all I had to get used to being in that main locker room with the stars who had no clue who I was. Normally someone with my ranking, the second lowest in the entire draw, would be in the upstairs locker room with the lower-ranked players – and Andy Roddick, because he refused to go in the main one until he won Wimbledon. I think that's OK for him, if that's how he feels, but being downstairs was a perk I was prepared to take.

It was still very strange. Roger Federer was in there. All the top players were in there – plus John McEnroe, Pat Cash and all the commentators who were going to be playing in the Over-35s tournament in the second week. I felt out of place because no one knew who I was, and I felt them staring at me and thinking: 'What are you doing in here?' Maybe they thought I was a stray ball boy.

These guys were all much older and more famous than I was. I felt awkward. Obviously I knew nothing compared with them. The only thing I could do was keep my head down and not speak unless spoken to. Some people might find that hard to believe when they see me on court, but it's

true. I didn't think it was right to go up to these guys and start acting like we were friends. I was sure they wouldn't like it.

McEnroe, of course, is an icon and everybody loves him at Wimbledon. I wouldn't have said a word to him if we hadn't met before but I knew him – or sort of knew him – because we'd met a few months earlier at an exhibition tournament at the Wembley Arena. It is not a memory I treasure. In fact, it was pretty embarrassing, but at least it broke the ice – almost – with one of the greatest players of all time.

It was a $250,000, eight-player, one-set, straight knock-out, winner-takes-all event at the back end of 2004 and I had no business being there at all. At the time I was just a 17-year-old junior, but Tim Henman had pulled out with an injury and I had just won the US Open Juniors, so I had had a surprise call asking if I would be able to go down and play.

That was another one of those surreal experiences. I was invited to the press conference the day before play started and found myself sitting between Boris Becker, Goran Ivanisevic and John McEnroe, three legends of the game. I was stuck right in the middle, feeling so nervous and so intimidated I could hardly speak.

I was such a nobody, even more than I would be at Wimbledon. It didn't help that I was due to play McEnroe in the opening round and he was taking the match very seriously. I worked this out after the press conference when the photographers asked the two of us to square up and stare into one another's eyes. It was just desperately embarrassing and a little scary.

McEnroe wasn't speaking to me. He wasn't putting me at my ease – which was fine. I didn't mind – but I couldn't believe they were making me do this: a 17-year-old kid doing a boxing stare-out with someone like John McEnroe.

He was loving it. You could tell he was enjoying it and I was just hating it.

Result: he won 6–1. It was the first time I'd played in front of a decent-size crowd and I was so nervous I couldn't play at all well. I hadn't been practising, I'd been taking a break after the US Open and I hadn't even turned professional yet. It was a last-minute call-up and I was playing horribly. It was awful. Being on court with McEnroe was awesome, but feeling so inadequate was just terrible. At the end of it I said: 'Mr McEnroe. It has been an honour to play against you.' Seeing him again six months later at Wimbledon, I didn't know whether to be horrified or pleased.

I'd come straight from junior tournaments and low-grade senior events when no one cared whether you won or lost, except your mother, and the entire audience was one man and his dog. I'd stayed in rubbish hotels, family digs, boarding school dormitories and sometimes you ran out of money for food. Now suddenly I was part of the biggest tournament in the world, staying in the basement flat of a house in Wimbledon village with my mum and my brother and being offered a courtesy car just to drive down the hill to the courts. It was hard to believe. Some days I just walked. It didn't matter. Despite my brief showing at Queen's, nobody recognised me. No one took any notice of me. But after my second match, it changed. That was when it all went a little bit mad.

First, however, I had to survive that opening match, my debut as a senior professional at Wimbledon. I was a bit nervous when I woke up after a decent sleep but I was also really, really focused. My opponent was George Bastl of Switzerland, a good player ranked higher than me – but then everyone was ranked higher than me. The bad news was that he had beaten Pete Sampras, one of the greatest grass-court players of all time, at Wimbledon three years

before. The good news was that I still thought I had a chance of winning.

As I said, we were on Court Two – the scene of his famous triumph against Sampras, who had won Wimbledon seven times – but that didn't worry me. I walked out there with 'Let's Get It Started' on my iPod and it turned out to be quite a theme tune for the week that would change my life.

There weren't many people watching as we started, but the crowd grew as the match went on. I played really well and my serve didn't get broken the entire match. I won 6–4 6–2 6–2 and then I delayed Venus Williams coming on court for the second match because I was trying to sign so many autographs.

That wasn't just me being naïve. It was a promise I had made to myself years before on my first ever trip to Wimbledon as a kid with friends on a minibus from Dunblane Sports Club. I was seven years old and my hero at the time was Andre Agassi. I really wanted his autograph but I couldn't get near him. I had to come away without it and was really disappointed. I promised myself there and then that if I was ever a famous player I wouldn't ignore the kids who wanted my autograph. I'd sign as many as I could. Sorry Venus, I just didn't realise how long it would take.

It was ages before I got back to the locker room. I was still a little amazed to be in there. It was old-fashioned but unbelievably clean. Next to every sink was deodorant and shaving foam – not that I used it. Two locker-room attendants were available to get you towels. There was drinking water, Coke and Sprite. They'd got everything in there. I'd never experienced anything like it in my life.

It wasn't long ago that I'd been in some horrible places in junior tournaments round the world, where the kids don't care where they pee and everything stinks. You'd see insects like large black beetles scurrying about and some of

the showers were just pipes sticking out of a wall, pouring dirty, bad-smelling water. There are no towels and usually no loo roll. You just take one from your hotel. You get used to it. It's fine. But, for this and many other reasons, Wimbledon was a massive culture shock.

That night, after my first win, we went out for a Pizza Express takeaway. We've always joked that my mum's cooking is not the best. Actually it's not a joke. So most nights we ate out or ordered in. I didn't celebrate though. I was obviously really happy that I'd won, but the tournament was so important to me, I just wanted to make sure I was ready for my next match. This one would be a really tough test, against a player with a bit of a reputation for gamesmanship, Radek Stepanek from the Czech Republic. However, there was more to it than that.

Stepanek's coach at the time was Tony Pickard, the former British Davis Cup captain who had famously coached the Swede Stefan Edberg when he won Wimbledon in 1988 and 1990.

Some time before Wimbledon he'd met my mum at a tournament and decided to have a conversation with her about what I was doing at the Sanchez-Casal Academy in Barcelona and why I was playing Futures events in Spain.

'What's Andy doing playing in Spain and not in British Futures events?' he asked her. 'He should be back here, competing at home. It shows fear that he's leaving his country. He will lose locker-room respect if he goes on avoiding British players.'

My mum told him that she just wanted me to be happy and that I was doing very well in Spain. It didn't seem as though he was very impressed.

'I do know the men's tour,' he said, implying that she didn't. 'I used to coach Stefan Edberg.' Then he walked off.

I don't know what he thought when his player and I were drawn against each other in the second round at Wimbledon but word reached us that people in Stepanek's

camp were saying things like: ‘This kid’s got nothing to beat us with. He can’t hurt us.’ I didn’t need the incentive to win at Wimbledon. I’m competitive about absolutely everything. I really wanted to win this next match.

Meanwhile, things were getting seriously weird. People came to watch my practice sessions, which I had never experienced before. I was signing autographs and when I walked into the press conference room for the first time after the Bastl match there were more people in there than had ever stood round the court to watch my matches.

Press conferences aren’t easy. I was quite shy when I was younger and all of a sudden I was being asked to be quite open with strangers who were firing questions at me – and not just about tennis either.

I was asked about my girlfriend. I didn’t even have a girlfriend any more. I’d gone out with a German girl in Spain but that was all over now. Yet – this is how crazy it was – two journalists and a photographer flew over to Barcelona and offered her money to do an interview and take pictures. (She took the money but she didn’t say anything bad.) I couldn’t believe it. This whole Wimbledon thing was amazing. I’d never experienced anything like it and I never expected anything like it. How could I? I’m ranked 300 in the world and there are photographers following me around. It wasn’t right.

So with all that going on, I had to try and concentrate for the Stepanek match that I really, really wanted to win. It was the one I was most nervous for. When I woke up that morning I couldn’t believe it. I had a raging temperature, and was sweating buckets. My mum called Jean-Pierre Bruyere, my physio, and asked what she should do. He suggested a cool bath at some awful temperature so she rushed out to buy a thermometer. I took the bath and sat around with some cold towels on my forehead, drinking lots of water. I managed to practise for a bit with Mark Petchey, the former British player who was helping me on a part-

time basis, and by the time my match was called, I was feeling OK. The next day some of the papers blamed it on a dodgy curry, a pretty wild guess of theirs because I hadn't even had a curry.

The match was taking place on Court One, the court shaped like a bullring that you reach by walking along this underground tunnel that seems to go on for miles. It was quiet and intimidating down there. All you've got for company are two security guards and your opponent. When that opponent is someone like Stepanek, seeded 14th, with loads of experience and coached by the coach of a Wimbledon champion, it was enough to make anyone nervous. I'd never been on Court One in my life, not even to practise, and now I was, officially, the lowest-ranked player left in the tournament.

We walked and walked. It felt like for ever. The butterflies were going and when we finally arrived in the open, I looked around me and the court felt huge. Then the crowd saw me and gave me such a big cheer that the butterflies began to subside and it settled me down a little bit. I looked up at the players' box to see my mum, my brother and Petch, and that settled me down even more. I don't find the support of a crowd intimidating. I like it. It was nice to know they were on my side. They obviously wanted me to win but didn't really expect me to.

The match started and my nerves seemed to melt away. I was ahead all the time. I broke his serve early in every set and he broke me once during the whole match. It really couldn't have gone any more smoothly. I returned well and countered everything he tried. He probably didn't expect me to play as well as I did and at 6–4 6–4 5–3 I had two match points.

The first one he saved with an unbelievably hard diving volley which I hit long because I wasn't expecting it. He saved the next one with a really good pick-up which hit the net and just dropped over on to my side. He walked up and

kissed the net and then walked back to the baseline, pointing to his head like I was choking or getting nervous or something.

I didn't know what to do. I had no experience of tennis at that level and wasn't sure whether players were supposed to behave like that, but in the next game at 30–all I hit a forehand that just touched the top of the net and dropped over. I ran up to kiss the net. Doing the same thing back to him was my way of letting him know that I may be younger but I wouldn't be intimidated.

Winning that match was pretty special. He was the highest-ranked player I'd ever beaten by a pretty long way and when I walked into the press interview room later it was absolutely packed. I was asked about the gamesmanship. I said he was trying to put me off, but in the end he was the one looking silly because he'd lost to an 18-year-old ranked 317 in the world. That got a bit of a laugh.

Later, Petch told me that he shook hands with Tony Pickard in the players' box at the end of the match and said: 'Tough luck.' Pickard just said: 'That was a terrible match. Both of them played badly. It was embarrassing. I can't believe that was on Court One.'

Mark just said: 'I suppose Andy did what he had to do to win,' and left it at that. I didn't get upset; I found it quite funny. This kind of backbiting was typical of British tennis at the time. I'd grown used to some players and coaches not wanting me to win because I was doing well, this was just an extension of the same thing. I knew what he had said to my mum and I thought it was very rude. It was basically someone who thought he knew better trying to tell Mum what she should be doing. I don't mind people offering advice, but only when you ask for it.

I woke up early the next morning, really excited to see what was being said about me. Obviously being in the papers at that time was pretty cool. I was on the back

pages of all of them. However, the thing I found most weird then was the live TV interview, because you couldn't pause to think. There was no room for error. The BBC reporter Gary Richardson was coming round almost every morning to talk to me. We didn't know how to say 'no' in those days. It was irritating the first time it happened because my mum hadn't told me she had agreed I'd do it and I got woken up really early. She'll tell you that I never like getting up in the morning. I'm always at my grumpiest then (although I'm absolutely nothing compared to Jamie). It is not my favourite time of day.

It wasn't all bad. We were staying in the basement of this house in the village and a BBC crew wanted to film me coming upstairs from my flat, and the cameraman taking the shot was walking backwards when he tripped and fell over and smacked his head on the ground. Understandably he then completely snapped at the guy who was supposed to be guiding him. I didn't laugh out loud at the time – I waited ten seconds until I was in the car taking me to the courts. It was awesome. Right up there with one of the funniest things I've seen.

I'd made the third round of Wimbledon. I'd gone from a Court Two nobody to a Court One winner. Next stop the Centre Court against David Nalbandian, a player so famous in Cordoba he had a bus stop and hot-dog stand named after him – but that wasn't his real claim to fame. He was a brutal player, one who could run all day, and a hero in his home country for making the Wimbledon final three years ago against Lleyton Hewitt. He had lost, but he was a huge opponent for me.

I couldn't wait to play him. It was one of the biggest matches of my life and I thought I had a chance.

The morning of the match I was fine. I've always been good at killing time. I just went down to the courts and practised in my 'Ronaldinho' shirt, a souvenir from my time

in Barcelona. I could pretend and say it was just like any other practice, but I'd be lying. There were people and cameras everywhere. Tim Henman had been knocked out in the second round to Dmitry Tursunov, 8–6 in the fifth set, and I was the last Brit left in the tournament.

I didn't feel as nervous as for the Stepanek match, but I think, subconsciously, I was. I just didn't want to understand the situation I was in. Maybe I was trying to blank it. I went to the toilet a lot of times before the match and my legs were heavy, all signs of nerves that I was desperate to ignore.

I've talked about boxing. I love the sport and I really do compare tennis with it sometimes. It's about performing well in front of a big crowd with one man out to stop you. You've got two competitors. You have to beat the other one. You have to come up with a game plan. You've got to know his weakness, your weaknesses. Tennis is hard on the mind as well as the legs. You can go from feeling really comfortable and confident to seeing it all slip away. You've got to be mentally strong. When it starts to go wrong, you have to make sure you don't get angry, don't get annoyed. Actually, now I come to think of it, it's fine to get angry and annoyed. Just don't let it affect your game.

I have had my moments of madness on court. I know that everyone's seen me on TV roaring with frustration or getting pumped up. It's just the way I am. I got defaulted once when I was twelve at the Scottish Junior Championships at Craiglockhart. I was playing one of my brother's best friends and in a moment of frustration I flung my racket towards the chair. It went underneath the fence and just seemed to keep going forever. The assistant referee defaulted me and I had to trudge off the court to pick up my racket. Afterwards I ran off to my mum. I was really upset and wanted her support but she was just annoyed. I thought that was a bit unfair, considering her history. Mum got defaulted when she was a junior and my

gran was so disgusted she drove home without her. My mum had to call one of my gran's friends to come and pick her up. So it's definitely there in the family, the fury, but you've got to keep it under control.

Getting ready for the match, I just tried to stay focused. Tactics, stretching, warm-up, I'd done everything I could to prepare. I wanted to walk out on court with no excuses. If I won I won, if I didn't I had done everything I possibly could to win.

The thing I find most amazing about the whole Centre Court experience is not the stadium, not the crowd but the actual court. It's perfect. The grass is so well cut; the lines are so perfectly drawn. After years and years of junior tournaments, and playing on surfaces like car parks, the courts at Wimbledon are incredible.

The only thing about the court that isn't so good – and I'm not joking – is the bottom of the umpire's chair. You might say I'm nit-picking, but the wheels are black and it looks really ugly in comparison to the rest of the court. The chair is green. The grass, obviously, is green. I don't understand the wheels being black when everything else is perfect.

The main difference though between the Centre Court at Wimbledon and the main stadium court anywhere else in the world is the quietness. You hear the ball being hit so clearly. It sounds so clean. At the US Open, people in the crowd are talking, shouting, arguing, eating. At Wimbledon, if someone opened a packet of crisps at the back, you'd hear it all over the court. It's *that* quiet. It's so silent it's almost intimidating, especially when you know they're all watching you.

Tennis is one of probably only two sports – golf is the other one – where the players get pretty wound up over noise. I actually don't mind that much. I think players need to get on with it more. Obviously, I don't like it when you're reaching up for a lob and then you hear the clicks of thirty

cameras as you're about to hit your overhead, but I don't mind when the crowd shouts out between points. It adds to the atmosphere.

I don't think quiet was the right word that afternoon when I finally stepped on the Centre Court. I don't know exactly how loud it was because I still had my iPod on, but it was loud enough. Luckily, I didn't have to stop and bow to the royal box because they had stopped all that by then. That's a good thing, because I wouldn't have known what to do. I'd never done it before and I'd never met royalty. Well, I'd met the Duchess of Gloucester once, I think, but I didn't have to bow then either.

I walked to the umpire's chair, put down that ridiculously heavy drinks bag and prepared to play the match. It was great that my dad had come down from Scotland to watch me in person, among all the other people supporting me.

What happened next was nearly unbelievable. The atmosphere was fantastic and I won the really long first set in the tie-break. The second set was the best set of tennis I'd played all year and I found myself leading 7–6 6–1. I had loads of chances in the third set but that was when the momentum started to change a little bit. We were playing points of a really high intensity. I had game points in the first three games but suddenly found myself 0–3 down. That's when I decided to give Nalbandian the set. People might not have realised at the time, but it seemed like a good idea to start fresh in the fourth. The trouble is I'd never played a four-set, let alone five-set, game in my life except in the Davis Cup doubles. In the singles, never.

I took a toilet break. One of the security guards had to keep me company. I'll never forget him because all the time we were walking, he was muttering: 'Come on, Andy. Come on, Andy. You can do it!'

The fourth set was really close. I had chances. He had chances. You'd think I'd be nervous at 4–4 in the fourth,

against one of the best players in the world, but actually it was great. I'd never played anywhere near that level of tennis before. Then I had a break point on his serve. He hit a shot on to the baseline. The line judge called it out, but the umpire over-ruled him. I knew it was in – I saw chalk – but it was one of those that you hope the umpire will leave alone. He didn't. I lost the game. I lost the set. It wasn't a mental let-down. It was just inexperience. Nalbandian knew that the most important thing to do was stay solid and make few mistakes. I was more impetuous. I was in too much of a rush to finish off the point.

He broke me early in the fifth set. To be honest, I can't remember much about it any more. I was starting to hurt a lot and I was cold. This was the last match on and it was getting late. Whenever I stood up after the changeovers I was feeling really stiff. My legs were hurting. It was the longest match I'd ever played. My legs and my backside were really sore because of the low bounce of the ball. All that bending. That was when I understood what playing professional tennis at the highest level was all about. I realised that I had the potential to play at that level, but I was still a little kid.

In the locker room afterwards I saw Mark, my coach. We'd hardly worked together for any length of time yet. I didn't really know him that well. Both of us were trying to be brave and hold back the tears. It was really difficult. I apologised to him for losing and he looked quite shocked. He said: 'You've nothing to apologise for. It was a great effort.'

I just sat there for about fifteen minutes by myself, trying to take it all in. Actually, trying to get my legs working again. When I went for my shower I could hardly stand up. My legs buckled. I was absolutely exhausted, but somehow I gathered myself. I went and did my press conference and that was – nearly – the end of my first Wimbledon.

I say ‘nearly’, because I had to come back on the Monday to play in the mixed doubles with Shahar Peer of Israel. She must have wished I hadn’t. I was rubbish. We lost in the first round, but there was a huge crowd round Court Three where we played. They told me later that it was the first time in living memory that an unseeded player losing in the first round of the mixed doubles had been asked to hold a press conference. It was quite a fun conversation. They asked me about all the female attention I was getting. I just said: ‘That’s the best thing about this. It’s great.’

I wasn’t being strictly honest. The Nalbandian match hurt for a few days but looking back on it now, it was the match that made me understand what I needed to do to become one of the best players in the world. It was maybe a good thing I didn’t win. I played really well all week and just lost to a better player who knew how to pace himself. If I’d won in three or four sets, I might not have realised I needed to be much fitter and much stronger.

There was a pretty funny mixture of responses to what I’d done. Jimmy Connors, Boris Becker, John McEnroe and Martina Navratilova said encouraging things, which was nice, but there were quotes in the papers from some former British Davis Cup captains that were pretty critical.

David Lloyd said: ‘For an 18-year-old kid to be getting tired like that on grass is a big worry. Two weeks in a row, at Queen’s and Wimbledon, he got tired. The worst thing in tennis is to have a weakness. Everybody else homes in on it pretty quick.’

Tony Pickard said my temper was a problem: ‘Obviously, nobody has been able to bounce it out of him. Now it will be a hell of a problem to get rid of it. To be doing that shows that when the going gets tough, somebody can’t handle it. He isn’t John McEnroe. He used it to break everybody else’s concentration. Murray is only breaking his own.’

Lloyd also said that Jimmy Connors had gone over the top about me, ‘saying Murray was the greatest thing since sliced bread. He should not have made a comment like that about a kid who didn’t try in the fifth set against Nalbandian. You can’t say he is going to win a grand slam. But because we’re so desperate, he already has a noose around his neck.’

In some ways, they were right. I went away afterwards and tried to grow up fast. I wanted to play at that level. Once you get that sort of buzz from playing the biggest tennis tournament in the world, you want to play that sort of tournament consistently. You don’t want to go back and play in Challenger and Futures events, the lower-ranked tournaments, where there’s no one watching, no atmosphere and not that much fun.

You don’t get Sean Connery phoning you after playing some lowly event in South America. I didn’t know he was in the royal box that Saturday, but I saw it in the papers the next day. Then he called me. I might have thought it was a wind-up but my management company at the time had told me he’d asked for my phone number – and anyway, I recognised his voice. It was just like talking to James Bond.

I didn’t do much of the talking. I just listened to that voice I knew so well from all the Bond films I used to watch. Every Christmas there was a two-for-one offer and I had built up the entire set. Now, suddenly, after three matches at Wimbledon, I’m having a conversation with 007 himself.

I was getting phone calls from James Bond and being followed by the so-called paparazzi. I had gone from being an absolute nobody to finding myself in the papers every day. However, I didn’t confuse myself with a national hero. I just felt as if something had changed. I can tell you the exact moment that that began to sink in. It was when I walked out of our Wimbledon house with friends to have a day’s go-karting the day after the Nalbandian match. There

was a line of white vans with blacked-out windows outside in the street. As our car pulled out, so did they and they followed us all the way to the track. It was like being in a spy movie.

At the beginning of that year I had been really struggling. I'd lost a lot of matches at senior tournaments. I didn't know if I was going to make it. I didn't know if I was good enough. That Wimbledon was where it all clicked. It was like a light bulb going on. I'd started playing tennis when I was three years old, and I'd made a lot of sacrifices over the years. I'd gone to Spain, left my family, and it had been a long, long road – but now I'd just played five sets in the third round of Wimbledon. I'd lost but it was close. I didn't feel I had made it yet, but that tournament was like a payback to me for all the hard times.

Now I had to start working even harder. I had to start spending more time in the gym, being more professional. I was eighteen and still physically under-developed. I was still growing and hadn't put on much muscle. Basically, I just needed to grow up and after that Wimbledon I did.

# Chapter Two:
# But I’m Not Sorry

PEOPLE THINK THAT I’m stroppy, that my mum’s pushy and that my big brother fancied his mixed doubles partner at Wimbledon 2007. It just goes to show how appearances can be deceptive, although I’m not so sure about Jamie and Jelena Jankovic. But that’s his story. My story is that I am not stroppy at all. I can’t remember the last time I had an argument with my mum. I genuinely can’t remember. I never slammed a door, never shouted ‘I hate you.’ I never did either of those things to my parents. I think Mum is the one person who gets me. She understands me really well. I can’t count the number of times I’ve been called a bad-tempered brat, but that is not how it felt growing up. I would say it was relaxed, easy-going, full of sport and loads of fun.

Obviously I can’t remember the very early years too clearly. I can vaguely recollect playing swingball, but I can’t picture a time or place. I have a memory of going to France with Mum and Dad, but nothing specific comes back to me except I can remember a babysitter giving me a little sip of her coffee and I spat it out. I’ve never touched coffee since.

*

I was born Andrew Barron Murray on the 15th of May, 1987, in Glasgow. Only two weeks before, the family had moved to Dunblane, a little cathedral town not far from

Stirling which at the time seemed very relaxed, very friendly and very safe – except at Halloween when Jamie and I and our friends would go out with our pals and throw eggs at people's houses.

I definitely cannot remember a time without Jamie, my elder brother by fifteen and a half months. That's relevant because growing up aged five, six, seven, eight, he was better than me at stuff purely because he was older, stronger and cleverer. It took me until I was ten to beat him at tennis and I've got a funny fingernail to prove it.

We were playing in a national tournament for the Under-10s at Solihull when he was ten, and we both reached the final. I don't remember the match with any clarity, but what I do remember is coming back home with him on the minibus with all the Scottish players – there must have been about fifteen of us – and I was winding him up about beating him. Mum was driving. It was difficult for him to get away from it because I was sitting beside him at the time with my arm lying on the armrest. After about fifteen minutes of this, he'd had enough of my goading. He shouted at me and his fist came down on my hand. I got this huge whack on my finger which went black and blue and I had to go to the doctor's for a tetanus injection the next day. It never did grow back properly. So that was the first time I beat Jamie in competition and that was my return for it.

I was obviously very competitive with him. That was why I started to hate – I still hate – losing so much. My whole tennis career happened purely because, when I was growing up, my big brother was much better than me at most things. He was better in school than me, he was better at tennis than me and even when we pretended to be professional wrestlers, he only ever let me win the Women's belts.

My mum, my first tennis coach, will tell you that when I started playing tennis she thought I was useless. I was only

about three or four and she used to spend hours throwing balls for me to hit. She says I kept missing whereas Jamie could do it right away. It wasn't really until I was about seven that I started to become noticeably better. I had bad concentration, bad coordination and a temper. It was not a good combination.

Gran tells me that regardless of whether we were playing Snap, Monopoly or dominoes, I had to win at all costs. If I didn't, I'd storm off in a terrible huff. I don't believe any of this, but pretty much everyone in the family tells me the same thing. They even tell me that Jamie used to let me win things for a quiet life, but I don't believe that either. Maybe it would have been just to shut me up but I don't remember being that bad.

I suppose I was what you might call 'vocal' on the tennis court when I was young. I have heard stories about me playing at a junior tournament in Edinburgh and the father of the guy I was playing was standing right behind the court, applauding my double faults and cheering when I hit the ball out. I was getting angrier and angrier. Mum and Gran had even started to edge away because they could see what was coming and wanted to pretend it was nothing to do with them.

I suddenly snapped, turned round and slammed a ball into the netting where the man was standing. To all intents and purposes, I was smashing the ball straight at him. Of course, I got into trouble. The match was stopped, the referee was called and Gran said she could hear me, even though she was hiding, announce with some defiance: 'Well, I'm sorry, but I'm *not* sorry.'

Gran and Grandpa played a big part in my life for lots of reasons. One was pure geography. We used to live about 200 yards from the Sports Club at Dunblane where the tennis courts were. Gran and Grandpa lived about 200 yards in the opposite direction. They used to pick us up from school, drive us to training, and feed us tea whenever