

Blood doping

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not the same type can also cause problems. An immune response can occur in which antibodies from both the donor's blood and the athlete's blood form and attack red blood cells.

Antibodies from the donor's blood would attack the blood cells of the athlete and vice versa. "It would be like a little war," Cox says. A person can die from using blood that is a different type.

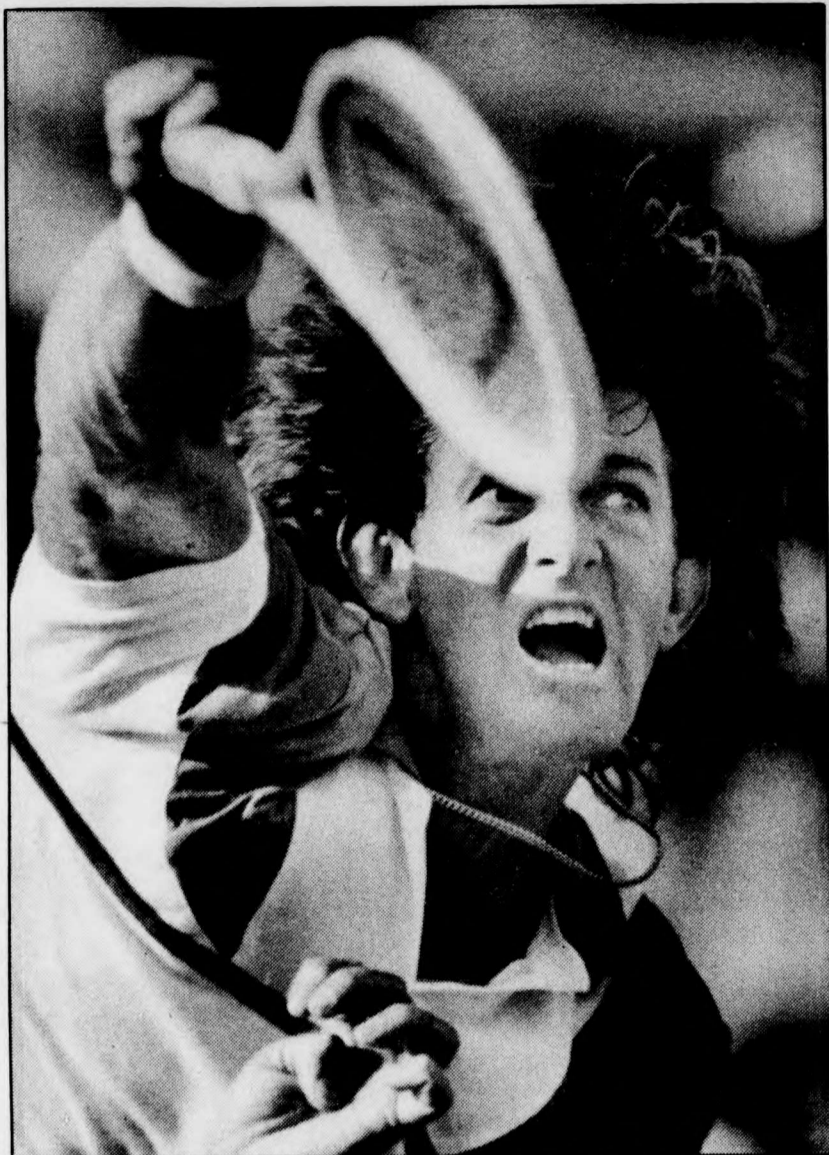
"Maybe the person has a communicable disease that you're unaware of"

Cox points out that problems can also arise from improper storage of blood. If equipment is not properly sterilized and the blood not properly frozen, bacteria can get into it and could cause infection. The blood could also degenerate.

"If you store it in a regular refrigerator, the red blood cells would start to form cracks and break down," Cox says. Athletes using degenerating blood would essentially be injecting dead cells into themselves. This would not pose a major health risk and the body would probably just excrete it; however, the athlete could not receive any benefit from the blood boosting and would still run the same medical risks as from new blood.

Only the Red Cross, which stores blood for transfusions, has access to glycerol freezing, a storage technique in which the blood can be stored "for an indefinite period of time," says Cox.

(Canadian Science News)



Clockwise from the left: Kevin Curren demonstrates his wicked serve, Mark Woodforde uses the two-handed approach and Jimmy Connors shows his age.

Player's Challenge 88

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