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SPORTS

Mac survives as other champs dive

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — Defending champion Michael Stich, out. Two-time champ Stefan Edberg, out. Three-time champ Boris Becker, almost out.

Only one old master, John McEnroe, survived unscathed the coup of champions mounted Wednesday at Wimbledon by slugging young dudes Pete Sampras, Goran Ivanisevic and Andre Agassi.

McEnroe, a three-time Wimbledon winner, inched closer to the semifinals for the first time since 1989 by taking a sweetly played first set from Guy Forget, 6-2, before the match was suspended by rain at 5-5 in the second set.

Forget helped McEnroe by double-faulting on the last two points of the first game. McEnroe showed him the way in the next game with a pair of service winners and a pair of aces to win at love.

For all of the Frenchman's power and eight pre-

vious years at Wimbledon, he seemed a clumsy novice on the grass compared to McEnroe, whose soft, touch volleys and low, sweeping serves are perfect for the surface.

McEnroe never lost service, and lost his temper only once, yelling at the umpire over a call in the second set. The beeper on the electronic eye line machine had signaled a fault by Forget, but the umpire overruled it and called the serve an ace, giving Forget the game and a 3-2 lead.

McEnroe, claiming the umpire had said before the match that he would not overrule the machine, argued for several minutes with him, a Grand Slam supervisor and the assistant referee. The crowd clapped in annoyance during the delay – even McEnroe's wife, Tatum O'Neal clapped and yelled, 'C'mon, John' – while Forget stretched his legs and bounced behind the baseline. Eventually, the umpire's call stood, the machine was shut off, and play continued.

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Ainge heads for Phoenix as free agent

PORTLAND (AP) — Danny Ainge says he will fly to Phoenix on Friday to sign a free agent contract with the Suns.

"I'm very excited about it,"
Ainge said Wednesday. "It was
a family decision, and my wife
and kids helped make it an
easy one."

The Oregonian newspaper said the contract will pay Ainge \$5.2 million over three years.

Ainge, a major contributor as the Portland Trail Blazers reached the NBA Finals this season, became an unrestricted free agent on Wednesday. That meant he could sign with any NBA team and the Blazers would receive no compensation or have a chance to match the offer.

The Blazers hadn't heard official word of Ainge's decision Wednesday afternoon, but Bucky Buckwalter, Portland's vice president for basketball operations, acknowledged the Suns "are offering some pretty attractive things to him."

If Ainge signs with the Suns, it will leave a big hole in the Blazers' roster for a backup to Clyde Drexler. Drexler, Ainge and Terry Porter made up Portland's three-guard rotation in the playoffs.

"If Danny is gone, we've got to go out in the free-agent market and look for other players," Buckwalter said.

Ainge said that he would have preferred to remain in Portland. But Phoenix was willing to offer the 33-year-old veteran a three-year contract, while the Blazers were offering only a two-year deal.

Ainge said the Suns' strong lineup after the acquisition of Charles Barkley had a lot to do with his decision.

"I still believe Portland has a great team and a great chance to win," Ainge said, "but Phoenix does, too. They feel they have a need for me and were excited about the possibility of getting me."

Phoenix president Jerry Colangelo wouldn't confirm the deal was final, but said, "I have talked to Danny Ainge and, in the next few days, he'll be on his way to Phoenix."

Ainge was acquired by the Trail Blazers in a 1990 deal that sent Byron Irvin and two draft choices to Sacramento.