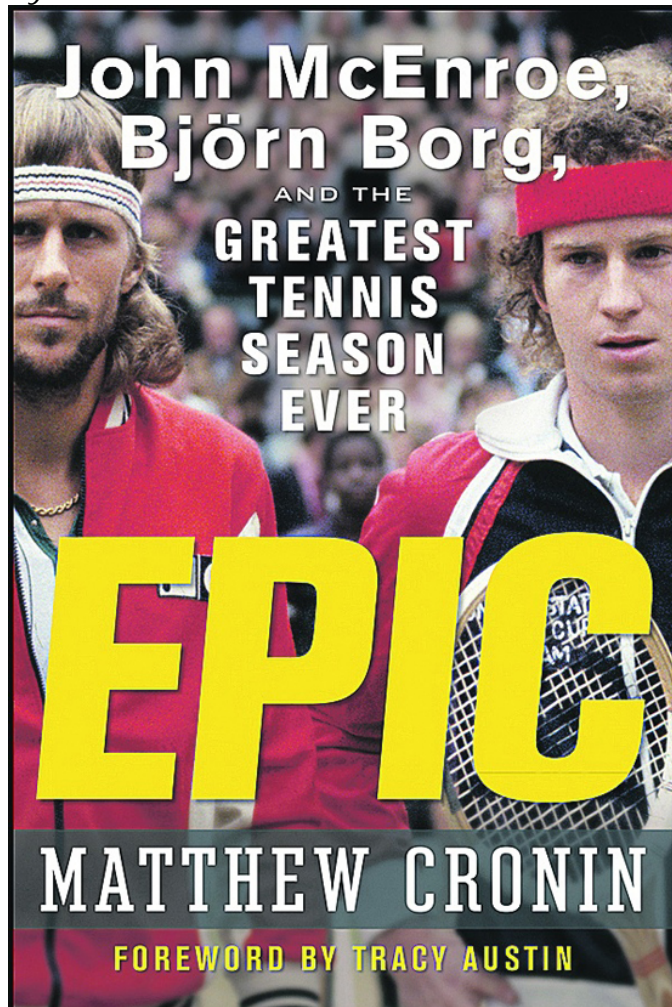


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## EPIC John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg and the Greatest Tennis Season Ever Author: Matthew Cronin

By *Andrea A. Firth*



EPIC

has covered, and will head off to Arthur Ashe Stadium in the borough of Queens in New York City at the end of August to cover the 44th U.S. Open.

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Moraga resident Matt Cronin did the initial research for his first book over 30 years ago. He had played in the last match of his own successful high school tennis career and was enjoying some down time before moving on to college. Like tennis fans around the world, Cronin spent part of the summer glued to the television watching one of the greatest men's tennis rivalries in the history of the game-Borg versus McEnroe.

"It is one of the greatest contrasts in the character and styles of two players at the very top of the game," says Cronin, a veteran tennis writer and radio and television analyst. Cronin's recently released book, EPIC - John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg and the Greatest Tennis Season Ever, takes readers back to 1980 and puts them in the stands to witness, almost point by point, Borg's defeat of McEnroe in a marathon match on Wimbledon's grass courts and the young, brash American's subsequent triumph over the stolid Swede two months later at the U.S. Open.

"McEnroe was this over-the-top, emotional, wild-eyed New Yorker playing Borg, the calm, reclusive Swede who had been dominating the game," says Cronin setting the scene for his story of a tennis match up that stunned the world and attracted many new fans to the game. "McEnroe was immature at first; then he discovers a physical and emotional reserve and takes over the game."

To write the book, in addition to re-watching the matches for hours, Cronin did countless interviews with other players, coaches, friends, family and both Borg and McEnroe. He also researched the era and deftly interweaves the events in tennis with the social and political environment of the time. "The richest material comes from people talking about them," says the author. The book is infused with personal anecdotes that provide an interesting insight to the two tennis greats, both on and off the court, and reveals that the seemingly polar-opposite players shared both a passion for tennis and a friendship.

Cronin recently returned from Wimbledon, the 54th grand slam he