



Tennis Partners: Gene Anderson and Ralph Greene

Of all of the cherished memories of my youth, none ranks higher than that of waking up on Saturday morning to the smell of fresh-baked Swedish buns. Every Saturday, my father would get up at 4 a.m. to bake his locally famous Swedish sweet rolls, and the enticing aroma would waft into my bedroom a few hours later. (Dad claimed that his turning out rolls that were melt-in-the-mouth perfect had nothing to do with the recipe, which was handed down to him by his mother, but everything to do with his speaking Swedish while he kneaded the dough. But I digress.) Dad started the dough at that unholy hour so that the finished product--and a delectable one it was--would be ready to deliver to neighbors and shut-ins in time for their morning coffee.

Me, I've never baked anything to speak of. But when I became a writer, it dawned on me that my articles and poems, written largely between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., are my Swedish buns. (You'll have to excuse me if some of them are half-baked or charred. Sometimes I take them out of the oven before they are done, and sometimes I cook them until they are flavorless briquettes.)

Bernie