

A date with Agassi

The date 12-12-12 was lucky for students of Aditya Birla World Academy who got to interact with one of the finest legends of tennis Andre Agassi who visited the school.

Students quizzed him about his relationship with tennis, his success, the skills of the game and his foundation. Agassi's dignified honesty in giving tips and advice charmed the entire audience.

Evidently, he said that he regretted that he never finished grade school, having dropped out after grade IX so that he could devote all his energies to tennis. He inspired the students to give their best in life. Struggles, rivalries and difficulties are inevitable and in a way, necessary, he said. Agassi

advised students not to give up when faced with failure since failure is an experience from which one can learn a lot. Rivals need each other to push one another. He spoke of his arch rival, Pete Sampras as being such a sharp contrast to him, yet it was important to play with him to push his own skills to a greater level. Agassi said that he always has an eye on the opponent's style of playing so that he could strategise his game to his advantage. According to this, ace tennis player, the biggest pressure was not from his father or coach or opponent, but from himself to per-



Ace tennis player Andre Agassi interacts with students

form better than the last time. Is it any wonder, he was nicknamed 'The Punisher'?

When asked about his success as a tennis player, Agassi in all modesty, distinguished between accomplishment and success. He claimed to be accomplished in achieving so many victories but questioned his success. Success is when one is content and genuinely satisfied with one's achievements. Agassi confessed he hated tennis but he 'pushed' himself to do his best which is why he won so many championships. He claims his real success was when his dream to set up a school to educate all those under privileged children, deprived of a good education, became a reality.

Today, this dynamic tennis star firmly believes he is successful. His code of respect imparted to every child in the Foundation teaches them to respect authority, respect their colleagues and peers, respect rules and respect oneself. He said his ingredient for success is in the belief 'knowing that being a winner is not as important as being happy with the knowledge that you have done the best you possibly can. Each time, you need to push yourself a little more to be a little better than before. That is the pressure you impose on yourself - not to win, but to do your best'.

These motivating words did not fail to encourage students to do everything it takes to do their best.