"The Challenge of the Sexes," the new CBS-TV Sports series from Mission Viejo, California is off to a flying start. Tennis was the first sport contested in the unique male vs. female competition and the two matches were split. Evonne Goolagong, using an array of brilliant groundstrokes, upset the volatile Romanian, Ilie Nastase 7-5, but tennis's "teen idol," 20-year-old Bjorn Borg, saved the day for the men by beating Briton Virginia Wade, 6-3.

Thirty of the top male and female athletes in the world are competing in twelve different sports. Several of the events have had handicaps assigned to equalize the competitors. In the tennis matches the men received only one serve, played the singles court while defending the wider doubles court and could not rush the net unless forced to do so by their opponents' shots. An overflow crowd of more than 5,000 at Mission Viejo's Marguerite Recreation Center saw what might well have been the beginning of a new trend in tennis. Obviously, with a fair handicap system, women can compete against men on the amateur or professional level.

In "The Challenge of the Sexes," Evonne Goolagong was able to use the wider hitting area so effectively that Ilie Nastase, as he put it, had to "run like hell." Down 3-5, Goolagong staved off match
point in the ninth game and continued to use the alleys to win the last three games and the match at 7-5. Wade, on the other hand, although she had many opportunities and almost brought her match with Borg even at 4-4, did not capitalize on her handicap advantage and lost a tough match, 6-3. In standard mixed doubles play, Borg and Wade teamed to defeat Nastase and Goolagong, 8-6.

"The Challenge of the Sexes" action continues with a host of exciting match ups at Mission Viejo over a four-day period from November 7-10. And based on the results of the tennis, many of the men who thought their task to be an easy one will now have to reassess that position. In golf, Laura Baugh and Janie Blalock will have the advantage of the shorter women's tees in their matches against Doug Sanders and Hale Irwin, who must hit from the championship tees; Don Schollander must swim a 400 meter individual medley while Keena Rothhammer swims freestyle over the same distance; Wyomia Tyus will use her speed and agility over a slightly less difficult obstacle course than Bob Seagren in "The Challenge of the Sexes" version of the track and field championship; sixteen-year-old Jean Balukas picks her game in pocket billiards against the ageless-wonder, Willie Mosconi; Karen Logan does not have to play defense against Jerry West, but he has to cope with her bag of trick shots in the traditional backyard game of H-O-R-S-E. In the rodeo, Sheila Bussey will ride slightly smaller stock than Larry Mahan and in certain events will dismount in a shorter time.

All the other competitions will be on an equal basis. Bowling will feature Judy Soutar and Paula Sperber against Dave Davis and Carmen Salvino; Captain Micki King, USAF, will dive against Ken Sitzberger; Linda Metheny meets Makoto Sakamoto in gymnastics and
In-Sook Na will play Danny Seemiller in table tennis. The skydiving competitors, Dana Engelstad and Joan Williams, were chosen in a national "Challenge of the Sexes" elimination which was held at Perris Valley Paracenter, California.

"The Challenge of the Sexes" is being staged at Mission Viejo, California. A planned community of more than 32,000 residents, located between Los Angeles and San Diego, Mission Viejo was selected because of its location in sunny Southern California and for its exceptional facilities. According to Philip J. Reilly, President of Mission Viejo Company, "Our excellent sports and recreational facilities make Mission Viejo one of the few places in the country capable of handling a major event that encompasses so many varied sports. And, of course, Southern California is the perfect place to watch the best male and female athletes in the world compete against each other for the first time."

The star-studded cast will be taped in action by Trans World International for CBS Television Sports. Plans call for the series to be aired in ten 30-minute segments beginning the first week in February, although a specific time period has not yet been selected. Jay Michaels is the Executive Producer and Tony Verna is the Director.

In addition to the fifteen events being taped at Mission Viejo, Trans World will pick up several winter sports competitions later in the year at Keystone ski area in Colorado.

The unique series is viewed enthusiastically by Robert Wussler, Vice President of CBS Television Network Sports. "Sports audiences are always looking for something new and different. We definitely feel that 'The Challenge of the Sexes' will capture their imagination."

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