- 6—The Daily Collegian Wednesday, June 22, 1977



Connors' injury to his right thumb didn't keep him from defeating Englishman Richard Lewis yesterday. Connors took the court amid the vocal protests of British fans after he failed to attend the Parade of Champions ceremonies on Monday.

Evert in easy first round **Connors cool at Wimbledon**

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — Jimmy Connors ignored the boos and hisses of British tennis fans yesterday and easily won his first match in the Wimbledon tournament, untroubled by his injured thumb.

The American left-hander overcame Richard Lewis, a big, loose-limbed Briton, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

Meanwhile, in the women's bracket, top-seeded Chris Evert began defense of her title with an easy 6-0, 6-3 triumph over American Ruta Gerulaitis. Secondseeded Martina Navratilova, the former Czech now living in the United States, and third-seeded Virginia Wade of Britain also won first-round matches.

The booing the top-seeded Connors received when he stepped onto center court was believed unprecedented from the normally sedate fans at Wimbledon. It followed Connors' failure to take part in a Parade of Champions Monday to celebrate the centenary of the world's most famous tennis tournament.

The All-England Club accused Connors of discourtesy and said it would not give him a commemorative medal which had been struck for past champions. Medals were presented to 43 other Wimbledon winners



The booing began when Connors walked onto the court with his opponent. It was renewed, louder, when he went to

his baseline to start hitting up. Connors did not pay it the slightest heed. As the match went on the mood of the 15,000 fans melted a little and his best strokes were applauded. But he got only a mild ovation at the end.

His injury — a cracked bone in his right thumb — appeared not to affect his grip on his two-handed backhand. Lewis hit a number of fine strokes and

exchanged service breaks in each of the

first two sets, but he was erratic. Connors got sharper as the match wore on and never looked like he was in danger of losing.

splint on his thumb, said afterward the injury did not worry him.

As for the row over the champions' parade, Connors said: "I had an appointment with my doctor, and that's the truth. When I arrived in the dressing room the champions were going out oncourt. It was Rod Laver's turn to go next. I looked at him and . . .

Connors stopped and shook his head.

Asked if he would apologize to the All-England Club, Connors said: "That's a pressure question. I will have to sit down by myself for two minutes and think about it.'

More than 50 Wimbledon champions were invited to a lunch and to the parade. Ten were absent and sent apologies, but the club said Connors did not even reply to the invitation.

John McEnroe, an 18-year-old from Douglaston, N.Y., scored the day's best victory, a 6-0, 7-5, 6-4 success over veteran Egyptian left-hander Ismael el Shafei

Harold Solomon, the U.S. Davis Cupper who excels on slow clay and usually skips Wimbledon, played his first match on grass for 21/2 years. It may be his last for a while. He was Connors, who wore an orthopedic beaten by Steve Docherty of Portland, Ore., ranked No. 47 in the United States. Dennis Ralston, 34-year-old Bakersfield, Calif., star, edged Trey Waltke of

St. Louis, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 9-8. The Wimbledon fans, who are turning the clock back a lot this week, saw Ralston play exactly the same kind of tennis as when he appeared in the final here 11 years ago.

