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Tennis Industry

January 2018 / Volume 46 / Number 1 / \$5.00



2017

CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS

pg.27

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2017
CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS

Our annual awards honor the people, businesses and organizations that are making a difference in the tennis industry.

p.27

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The Heroes of Our Sport

We need to recognize, honor and—most of all—support those who put it all on the line for tennis.

I've noticed something encouraging in recent years: More groups seem to be spending more time acknowledging the many good things people are doing in this industry.

This became evident to me over the past few months, as we were preparing this issue, which honors Tennis Industry's Champions of Tennis. This year, we had a flood of nominations for our annual awards. It was gratifying to see so many individuals, organizations and companies stepping up to honor those they feel are doing amazing things to help this sport and industry move forward.

There were many incredibly moving nominations of passionate and dedicated people who wanted to share all the great things our sport has to offer. The difficult part for us is that we can only pick one winner for each of our awards. But the fact is, all of these nominees are winners, and we hope to continue to share many of their stories in future issues.

“*People are putting everything at risk for this industry. What are we doing to make sure they don't lose it all?*”

When we started our Champions of Tennis awards in 2000, I felt we as an industry simply weren't recognizing the true, unsung heroes of this business. As the popularity of Tennis Industry's national awards grew, a

couple of USTA sections told me they also wanted to congratulate award winners who resided in their sections. So last year, we decided to run “congratulations” ads. The response was tremendous. This year, it's even bigger, and we thank those companies and USTA sections that stepped up to honor and support their award winners.

But more importantly, I see all this as a sign that we in this industry realize the value of recognizing, honoring and—most of all—supporting those who are on the front lines when it comes to growing tennis—and who, in many cases, may be putting it all on the line.

When I attended the NEXT Generation workshop in Orlando in October, a number of people came up to me and expressed concern about the state of this industry. “People are putting everything, even their houses, at risk for their tennis business,” one person told me. “What are we doing to make sure they don't lose everything?”

I realize that simply giving out awards to grassroots tennis providers isn't going to solve our industry's larger challenges. But my hope is it will make more people in positions of influence realize that what truly matters in this sport isn't all the big-ticket distractions that seem to pull us away from our mission. What matters are the thousands of people who continue to put it on the line to grow this industry.

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Industry News

Information to help you run your business

PRO TOURS

Oracle Launches Four New U.S. Pro Tournaments



Oracle Corp. will launch four new professional tennis tournaments in the U.S. in 2018—two men's events and two women's events—in conjunction with the ATP and WTA.

The Oracle Challenger Series will consist of two ATP Challenger Tour tournaments and two WTA 125K Series tournaments. The tournaments will take place as combined events from Jan. 20-28 at the Newport Beach Tennis Club and from Feb. 24-March 4 at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden. Each event will pay equal prize money, for a total of \$150,000 per tournament.

The top two male and female Americans with the highest accumulated points at the events will be awarded

wild cards in their respective singles main draws at the 2018 BNP Paribas Open, held March 5-18 at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden.

Player participation in the Oracle Challenger Series will be determined by ATP and WTA rankings and procedures used for similar tournaments.

"Tennis players in the United States need more chances to compete at home and more chances to earn a living from the sport," says Oracle CEO Mark Hurd. "Oracle is committed to American tennis and these events are designed to provide opportunities for players to make meaningful gains in both prize money and ranking points on their home soil. We hope to continue to grow the number of events annually in the years ahead."



Frank Swope

Swope Heads USTA Florida's Tennis Management Division

• Industry veteran Frank Swope has been named director of tennis management for USTA Florida and will lead the new division aimed at partnering with municipalities to manage and improve public tennis facilities across the state.

Swope brings more than 30 years of experience as a USPTA pro and facility manager/director, most recently as director of tennis operations for the five-star BallenIsles Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

"Frank's experience in all aspects of facility management make him an excellent choice for this position," says USTA Florida President Robert Hollis.

"The new Tennis Management Division can really make a difference," Swope adds. "I'm pleased and excited to have the opportunity to work for the section in a capacity that enables me to grow the game, enhance public programs and facilities, and contribute to the sport I love and have been a part of for many years."

Prior to joining BallenIsles in 2010, Swope served as the director of tennis at The Club at Mediterra in Naples, Fla., for five years. At both BallenIsles and Mediterra, Swope recruited, hired, trained and managed all tennis staff, and oversaw large pro shop operations and all tennis programs.

Ashaway MonoGut ZX Video Features MRT John Gugel

• Ashaway Racket Strings has released a stringing how-to video featuring USRSA

Congratulations

Ajay Pant

TennisIndustry
2017
Person of the Year



Master Racquet Technician John Gugel, which details stringing procedures to get the best performance from Ashaway MonoGut ZX and MonoGut ZX Pro tennis strings. The video is available on AshawayUSA.com.

A professional stringer for over 40 years, Gugel has a diverse background ranging from tour stringing to designing and marketing his own racquet. He was named Stringer of the Year by *Tennis Industry* in 2012.

"MonoGut ZX is extremely durable; very stable in tension; easy on the wrist, shoulder and elbow; and has very high elongation, which generates tremendous energy on return and makes it easy to generate spin," Gugel says.

Laserfibre's New Native Tour Co-Poly is Made in U.S.



• Laserfibre LLC has introduced the first co-poly tennis string to be manufactured in the U.S. The company says its Native Tour string represents a new direction for string manufacturing.

"The industry has long thought that a monofilament polyester string could not be made in the U.S. due to the extreme cost of the machinery required to produce such high-quality string, as well as the associated costs of labor. We are very excited to now have a solution," says Laserfibre CEO Curt Dailey.

Native Tour is the seventh product added to the Laserfibre line. "Our goal is to broaden competitive options for today's players. And, ultimately, we'd like to see the majority of our product offerings made in America," Dailey says. Visit Laserfibre.com for more.

COURTESY LASERFIBRE

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Arthur Quinn

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 Dar Walters

Jan Dowse Award
 Jim McCarvel

David Freed Award
 Christian Wright

Jon Messick
 Leadership Award
 Angela Emery



2017 HALL OF FAME
 PHYLLIS LOCKWOOD – COLORADO
 RON OSBORN – IDAHO
 HARRY JAMES – UTAH

Top-Selling Racquets at Specialty Stores

January-September 2017 vs. 2016

Units	2017	462,940	
	2016	483,373	
	% change vs. '16		-4%
Dollars	2017	\$72,335,000	
	2016	\$71,798,000	
	% change vs. '15		+1%
Price	2017	\$156.25	
	2016	\$148.53	
	% change vs. '16		+5%

Top-Selling Racquets at Specialty Stores

By year-to-date dollars, Jan.-Sept. 2017

• Best Sellers

1. Babolat Pure Aero (100) 2016 (MP)
2. Babolat Pure Drive 2015 (MP)
3. Wilson Pro Staff RF 97 Auto 2017 (MP)
4. Wilson Blade 98 (16x19) CV (MP)
5. Babolat Pure Aero Team 2016 (MP)

• "Hot New Racquets"

(introduced in the past 12 months)

1. Wilson Blade 98 (16x19) CV (MP)
2. Wilson Blade 104 2017 (MP)
3. Wilson Burn 100 CV 2017 (MP)
4. Babolat Pure Drive 2018 (MP)
5. Wilson Triad Five 2016 (MP)

Top-Selling Tennis Shoes at Specialty Stores

By year-to-date dollars, Jan.-Sept. 2017

1. Nike Zoom Vapor 9.5 Tour 2015
2. Asics Gel Resolution 7
3. Asics Gel Solution Speed 3
4. Nike Zoom Cage 2
5. K-Swiss Hypercourt Express

Top-Selling Strings at Specialty Stores

By year-to-date units, Jan.-Sept. 2017

1. Babolat RPM Blast
2. Wilson NXT
3. Wilson Sensation
4. Luxilon Alu Power
5. Luxilon 4G

(Source: Tennis Industry Association)



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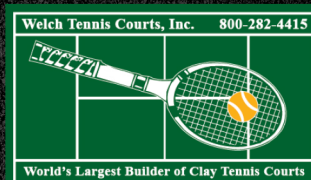
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TENNISWEAR

Prince Announces First Lifestyle Apparel Collection

Prince has launched lifestyle apparel in collaboration with Dyne, a menswear brand inspired by active, tennis and urban lifestyles. Dyne x Prince features a seven-piece apparel group with cross-functional fabrics and details, including sensitive eco-stretch jersey, laser perforation for ventilation, taped seam construction, waterproof zip hand pockets, and reflective logos. Follow @PrinceSports on social media for more.



Prince has released a seven-piece lifestyle collection.

Award Winners Named At USTA Conference

- The USTA honored award winners in October at the Next Generation: Tennis Innovation Workshop in Orlando.
- CTA of Year: Columbus (Ga.) Regional Tennis Association
- Eve Kraft Community Service Award: Hollis Smith
- Janet Louer Junior Team Tennis Organizer of the Year Award: Debby Caldwell
- NJTL Chapter of the Year Award: East Palo Alto (Calif.) Tennis & Tutoring

France Picks Tecnifibre X-One Ball for Davis Cup Final



France, the home team in the Davis Cup final versus Belgium held at the end of November, chose the Tecnifibre X-One as the official ball of the match, which was played in the city of Lille. Tecnifibre, which has a partnership with the French Tennis Federation, was also the "official supplier" of the 2017 Davis Cup final.

The X-One ball is the official ball of numerous ATP 250/500 tournaments, including Marseille, Rotterdam and Gstaad. It is manufactured in a factory jointly owned by Tecnifibre and Bridgestone.

Selkirk Sport Introduces Amped Pickleball Paddles

Pickleball paddle manufacturer Selkirk Sport has introduced the Amped series, a made-in-the-United States collection of four paddles that Selkirk says combines revolutionary technology with enhanced features that promote increased power, better ball control, and a larger sweetspot.

Amped series paddles—the Epic (suggested retail, \$130), Omni, S2 and Maxima (each with a suggested retail of \$150)—are equipped with a FiberFlex Fiberglass face and patent-pending thicker X5 polypropylene core. Available

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People Watch

- ▶ Peter Wright, the University of California at Berkeley men's tennis head coach, has been selected as the 2017 recipient of the ITA Meritorious Service Award, presented by ConantLeadership.
- ▶ Martina Hingis has announced her retirement from professional tennis. The 25-time Grand Slam champion, who held the world No. 1 ranking for 209 non-consecutive weeks in singles, made her WTA tour debut 23 years ago.
- ▶ In recognition of their lengthy and steadfast support of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, Hope "Happy" van Beuren and Christopher Clouser have been appointed Life Trustees of the HOF.
- ▶ Moore Park in Miami hosted a 90th birthday celebration for Bobby Curtis on Oct. 21. As part of the celebration, the City of Miami unveiled a proclamation hailing Curtis, and the park unveiled a plan to rename the clubhouse to honor its former director. Curtis, who organized a Florida Junior Team Tennis program that was eventually adopted nationwide by the USTA, got his start teaching tennis at Moore Park in the 1950s.
- ▶ Paula Hale, J.W. Quick and George "Doc" Simkins Jr. will be inducted into the North Carolina Tennis Hall of Fame in February.
- ▶ Ann Koger, who retired in 2016 after 35 years as head women's tennis coach and associate athletic director at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, was honored with the Women's Sports Museum's inaugural Trailblazer Lifetime Achievement Award.
- ▶ USTA New England has hired Susan Riordan as a Tennis Service Rep in Connecticut and Karen Didricksen as a part-time TSR in Vermont.
- ▶ Kimberly Schoeffel has joined the Har-Tru sales team as the sales rep for the Southeast territory. She will be taking over from Harriet Lambert, who plans to retire this summer after 44 years with Har-Tru.



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in four popular pickleball paddle shapes, the paddles are equipped with a Selkirk ComfortGrip and a series of unique color options (Sapphire Blue, Ruby Red, Fire Opal Orange, Emerald Green and Amethyst Purple). Visit Selkirk.com.

Vulcan Grip Co. Introduces "Custom Logo" Overgrips



• Vulcan Grip Co.'s new line of racquet grips is being expanded to include overgrips with custom logos. Vulcan says the new product is ideal for brand promotions, especially for college and high school tennis teams, country clubs, racquet clubs, academies, camps, tournaments and special events.

The company produces custom logos on two types of white overgrips: the light-tacky Vulcan Max Tour and the dry-absorbent Vulcan Max Cool.

Overgrips are packed in 50-count decorative clear plastic counter displays. Suggested retail is \$2.99 per overgrip. Minimum order commitment is 300 overgrips. Call 800-826-6373, contact sales@vulgangrips.com or visit vulgangrips.com.

USPTA Honors Members During National Conference

• Rick Macci and the late Harry Hopman were inducted into the USPTA Hall of Fame in October during the Next Generation: Tennis Innovation Workshop, which was presented by both the USPTA and USTA in Orlando.

Other USPTA award recipients honored at the Next Generation event include:

- Todd Upchurch of Charlotte, N.C., who earned USPTA Master Professional status.
- Anthony DeCecco of Exton, Pa., was named 2017 Alex Gordon USPTA Professional of the Year.
- Fernando Velasco of Austin, Texas, who received the 2017 George Bacso Lifetime Achievement Award.
- Dale Evans of Berkeley, Calif., who received the USTA/USPTA Community Service Award.

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- Sales Rep of the Year -

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- **Juan Selle of Rome, Ga.**, who received the USPTA Industry Excellence Award.
- **Tom Sweitzer of Orlando, Fla.**, was honored with the USPTA Star Award.
- **Sheila McInerney of Tempe, Ariz.**, was named Steve Wilkinson College Coach of the Year.
- **Glenn William of Midtown Athletic Club in Rochester, N.Y.**, was honored as the Large Facility Manager of the Year.
- **Kevin MacDonald of the Claremont Club and Spa in Berkeley, Calif.**, was named Small Facility Manager of the Year.
- **Jack Michalko of Phoenix** received the USPTA President's Paul Waldman Award.

PTR, Evolve9 Focus On Keeping Girls in the Game



Evolve9's Mike Barrell (left) and Parkkonen

• PTR has been named the official education partner of Girls Tennis Network (GTN), a program developed by Evolve9 to help tennis coaches and facilities keep girls involved the game. The program focuses on giving coaches the skills to retain female players ages 8 to 12 by providing drills, games and activities.

PTR and Evolve9 will offer one-day GTN workshops to PTR members throughout 2018.

"This will be the first of many new partnerships with experts from around the world to bring the latest developments in coach education to the PTR network," says PTR Director of Education Brian Parkkonen.

Head Penn Partners With TGA Premier Tennis

• Head Penn Racquet Sports announced a partnership with TGA Premier Tennis in which Head Penn will supply its premier performance tennis balls and "Ten and Under" tennis equipment such as balls, nets, cones, lines and targets for TGA's programs. Penn balls will also become the "official tennis ball" of TGA Premier Tennis.

COURTESY PTR

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The U.S. Fed Cup team celebrated its first title in 17 years.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

U.S. Wins First Fed Cup Title Since 2000

The U.S. Fed Cup team won its first Fed Cup title since 2000 and 18th title overall, defeating Belarus, 3-2, on Nov. 12 in the World Group Final in Minsk. The U.S. will begin its title defense with an opening-round match against the Netherlands Feb. 10-11 in Asheville, N.C.

In the final, American No. 1 and world No. 10 CoCo Vandeweghe became the first American since the World Group format was instituted in 1995 to win all six Fed Cup singles matches in one year. She also is the first player to win the maximum number of Fed Cup singles rubbers in a year since Petra Kvitova in 2011, and is just the ninth player to achieve the feat since 1995. Vandeweghe is now 7-3 in Fed Cup singles play. The U.S. team is now 18-11 in Fed Cup finals.

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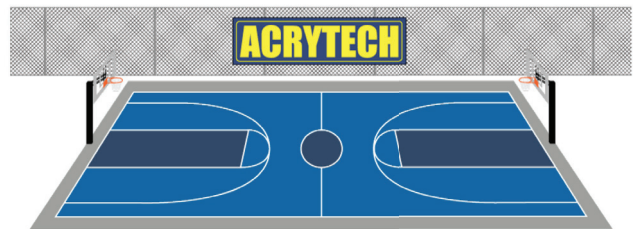
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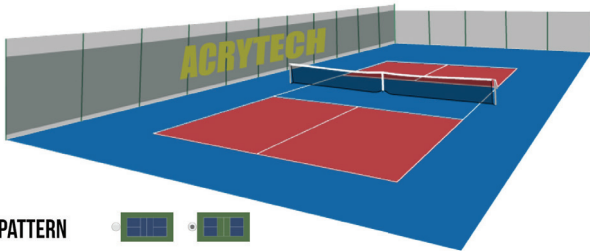
Gray

Premium colors

Actual colors may vary slightly due to differences in computer monitors.

Pickleball

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PATTERN

INNER COLOR

OUTER COLOR

Bright Red

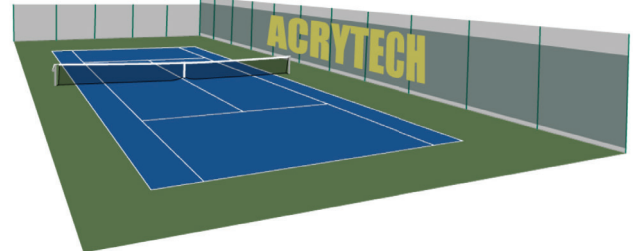
Light Blue

Premium colors

Actual colors may vary slightly due to differences in computer monitors.

Tennis

Mix and match colors to make your dream court!



INNER COLOR

OUTER COLOR

Standard Blue

Competition Green

Premium colors

Actual colors may vary slightly due to differences in computer monitors.

Short Sets

► In an escalation of its move into tennis and sports broadcasting, Amazon acquired the U.K. rights to the US Open, securing exclusive coverage for the next five years for an estimated \$40 million. This summer, Amazon won the British broadcast rights for the ATP World Tour.

► Dunlop, in a multi-year agreement with GF Sports LLC, will be the official ball, racquet and string for the New York Open, a new ATP tournament that will take place Feb. 11-18 at the NYCB Live Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Uniondale, N.Y.

► The Tennis Teachers Conference will return in 2018, taking place in New York

City Aug. 24-27—the weekend before the US Open begins.

► The USTA Foundation has named its largest scholarship fund in honor of former USTA Board Vice President Don Tisdell, who passed away in September. The Donald Lawson Tisdell College Scholarship Fund will provide \$10,000 scholarships annually to as many as 32 high school seniors.

► Tennis Channel has added Hall of Fame coach Nick Bollettieri to its roster of tennis professionals. Bollettieri will provide motivational tips, answer viewer questions via "Ask Nick" videos, write weekly articles for TennisChannel.com and sister

site Tennis.com, and will contribute on air and to *Tennis* magazine.

► The U.S. Davis Cup team will travel to Serbia for a World Group first-round tie Feb. 2-4. The U.S. squad, which was eliminated by Australia in April's quarter-finals, is unseeded in 2018, while Serbia is seeded seventh.

► My Game Solutions, an online community for players, coaches and facilities, has launched a sponsorship program for youth players in the New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania area that provides apparel, equipment, and even transportation to attend a national tournament at no cost. Visit mygamesolutions.com.

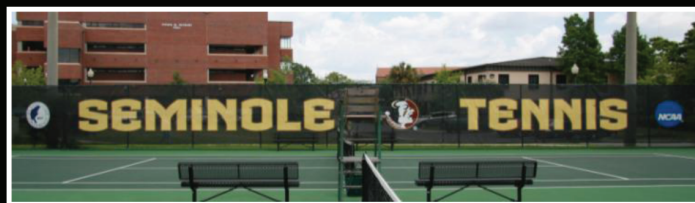
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Made of our exclusive **VIPOL® Matrix** it outperforms other windscreens because 50% more micro-fibers are woven into it. Virtually tear-proof and the highest puncture resistance available. *Tuffy Windscreen features DOUBLE LOCK -STITCHED finishing to assure that its sides and corners do not unravel, a problem with conventional chain-stitched windscreens.* It's impossibly durable, and it hangs beautifully.

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See website for complete list.

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Letters Voices of the Readers



► CERTIFIED TEACHING PROS

Thank you for Denny Schackter's well-organized, timely and relevant article "Be Certifiable" (Your Serve) in the Novem-

ber/December issue. I agree with all of Denny's points, and it's for those reasons that I have kept up my USPTA certification, even though it is not my main career. I have encouraged my son, who is a banker, to keep up his certification for the same reasons.

Please keep up the good work.

*Peter J. Plaushines
Oconomowoc, WI.*

As a follow-up to "Be Certifiable": for many years, PTR has offered PTR on Campus to attract college-age coaches to our game. PTR on Campus makes membership and certification affordable for 4.0 and above players ages 16 to 22.

Now, if we could just get more clubs to

make their compensation packages competitive to keep them in the game....

*Peggy Edwards
Director of Communications, PTR*

► TENSION INSIGHTS

When I read the November/December issue, I came cross the "Tension Conventions" story by USRSA Executive Director Bob Patterson. It was very informative, and I'm sure industry members will appreciate all the insights provided. What's more, it was a marvelous read.

*Mark Winters
Sherman Oaks, Calif.*

We welcome your letters and opinions. Please email them to info@tennisindustrymag.com.

Congratulations to our Tennis Industry Magazine honorees:



MISSOURI VALLEY



*PTR Member of the Year
Larry Haugness
Springfield, Missouri*



*Youth Tennis Provider of the Year
Mark Platt
St. Louis, Missouri*

Wilson Debuts All-Black Pro Staff with Countervail



• Wilson has released the first Pro Staff racquet to feature Countervail (CV) technology, which the company says maximizes a player's energy, reduces muscle fatigue and shortens recovery time.

The all-black Pro Staff 97L CV and light weight 97L CV are engineered to bring a new dimension of "texture" to racquets through state-of-the-art paint finishes, chrome touches, and laser engraving, according to Wilson. Suggested retail for each model is \$239. Visit Wilson.com.

PTR Names Master Of Tennis Graduates

- The following recently achieved PTR Master of Tennis certifications:
- MOT-Performance**
- Ed Duffy, Delray Beach, Fla.
- Dr. Doug Eng, Medford, Mass.
- MOT-Adult Development**
- Tom Ruth, Bluffton, S.C.
- Linda Van B. Stafford, Villa Hills, Ky.

USPTA Celebrates 90th B-day

• The USPTA celebrated its 90th birthday recently at its National Headquarters in Orlando, Fla. Originally known as the U.S. Professional Lawn Tennis Association, the organization was created on Sept. 23, 1927, when a group of tennis professionals gathered in New York City.

USRSA Names New MRTs, CSs, and PRAs

- **Master Racquet Technician**
- Gregory Duerk, Myrtle Beach, SC
- Athanasios Georgaklis, Australia
- Graham Howe, Myrtle Beach, SC
- Carlos Puchol, Sunnyvale, CA
- Paul Sarsam, Tempe, AZ
- **Certified Stringer**
- Jerred Mace, Spokane Valley, WA
- Michael Matthews, Huntsville, AL
- David Morales, Baton Rouge, LA
- Jake Taylor, Medical Lake, WA
- **Professional Racquet Advisor**
- Trent Harner, Chadds Ford, PA
- Michael Marotta, Fayetteville, NC
- **MRT-Racquet Customization Specialist**
- Jorge Simono, Brazil

Ray Wendeln, Sun City, AZ

- **MRT-Tournament Stringing Specialist**
- Roger Gough, Davis, CA
- David Hall, England
- Jorge Simono, Brazil
- Ray Wendeln, Sun City, AZ

'PHIT America Month' In May

- To help get more Americans physically

active, PHIT America is launching PHIT America Month. This national event will promote and encourage millions of Americans to Get Moving in May 2018, while growing sports and fitness participation. PHIT America Month is open to all Americans and most of the programs offered will be free. Contact alliance@phitamerica.org for more.

COURTESY WILSON

Retailing *Tip*



TREND WATCH

Easy Does It

Keep the shopping process and your inventory control simple with a good-better-best approach to merchandise.

BY JAY TOWNLEY

Consumers expect outstanding shopping experiences from the retailers they do business with, whether they are brick-and-mortar, online, big-box or omnichannel. While technology is important, particularly web and internet connectivity, the real secret to providing an outstanding shopping experience is making the whole shopping process simple, and making it easy to do business with you as a specialty tennis retailer.

Keeping the shopping process simple means maintaining a good-better-best merchandise selection that is easy to display, explain and sell. An added advantage of this approach is that it makes it much easier for your sales as-

sociates, in particular your part-timers, to make conversions, engage in step-up selling and close more sales.

At the bottom of the list, in the “good” category, you want to select a quality product. The step up to “better” should include logical additional features and/or functions at a higher price that supports the value of the step-up. Finally, the top category selection needs to have even more value in the form of features or functions that support the idea—and the price—that the product is truly “the best.” This logical approach makes it easy to merchandise, present and display products, including the preparation of point-of-sale material, price signage and tags.

The whole reason merchandise displays exist is to interrupt shoppers and

get them to stop, look at the product being displayed, and be engaged by the point-of-sale material. This interruption gives you the opportunity to explain the step-up features and value proposition. If the customer misses the merchandise display and starts talking with you or your staff first, take them to the display and ask them what they’re looking for, what their tennis experience and expectations are, and what their lifestyle objective is. Demonstrate the features and value functions of the products, and always explain the differences in the product selection within the simple good-better-best selection.

Of course, you can’t sell what you don’t have in stock, and keeping your merchandise selection simple also means you can stock in depth, rather than stocking broadly. This will give you better inventory control and purchasing efficiency. It will also mean improved customer service, because you will have in stock what customers want, when they want it.

Online merchandising often uses a long-tail, or “endless-shelf” approach to give online shoppers a large selection. You can still use this virtual approach, but we suggest this be an option that is implemented for you by a third-party provider who will be responsible for fulfillment and inventory. Your commerce-enabled website should be a mirror image of your simple good-better-best in-store product selection and merchandising.

One challenge to implementing this simple approach may be your suppliers and manufacturer sales reps. A good-better-best strategy that works and is profitable for your specialty tennis store isn’t always in their best interests. But you need to crunch the numbers and look at the long-term success and profits for you and your business.

Product selection within merchandise categories is just one area where your store can make the shopping experience simple—and in the process, make it easy to do business with you. ■

Jay Townley is a partner in the retail consulting firm Gluskin Townley Group (www.gluskintownleygroup.com).

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5

Externally Accredited Pathways to Certification

3

Specialist Programs

3

Master of Tennis Programs

PTR Certification and Education Workshops are the most successful training courses for tennis teachers and coaches. More than 300 PTR Workshops are conducted on five continents each year. All are led by specially trained PTR Clinicians.

10 & Under

Jan 6 San Antonio, TX
Jan 13 Macon, GA
Feb 24 Safety Harbor, FL
March 3 Pinehurst, NC
March 24 Wheaton, IL
April 14 West Harrison, NY
July 14 Virginia Beach, VA
Oct 6 Cincinnati, OH

11 to 17

Jan 6 Cary, NC
Jan 6 Houston, TX
Jan 21 Huntsville, AL
Jan 27 Oceanside, CA
Feb 4 Virginia Beach, VA
Feb 10 East Lansing, MI
Feb 16 Hilton Head Island, SC
Feb 24 Virginia Beach, VA
March 3 Folsom, CA
March 24 Safety Harbor, FL
April 28 Norfolk, VA
May 5 Fargo, ND
May 12 Cincinnati, OH
June 16 Virginia Beach, VA
June 16 Colts Neck, NJ
Aug 19 West Harrison, NY
Aug 31 Cincinnati, OH

Adult Development

Jan 11 Irving, TX
Jan 20 Rochester, NY
Jan 20 Worcester, MA
Feb 22 Irving, TX
March 31 Cincinnati, OH
May 19 Colts Neck, NJ
May 19 Waynesboro, PA
May 22 Irving, TX
June 9 Eden Prairie, MN

Senior Development

Feb 11 Hilton Head Island, SC

Performance

Jan 20 Midland, MI
Jan 27 Weston, FL
Feb 3 Waynesboro, PA
Feb 24 Peachtree City, GA
April 7 Virginia Beach, VA
April 28 Philadelphia, PA
June 30 Cincinnati, OH
Aug 4 Virginia Beach, VA



For the most up to date list of PTR workshops, call or visit
843-785-7244 • www.ptrtennis.org



PTR News



PTR Partners with Hungarian Tennis Association



(l-r) Anne Pankhurst, PTR Education Consultant; Dan Santorum, PTR CEO; Attila Richter, Hungarian Tennis Association General Secretary; Gabor Pelva, Hungarian Tennis Association National Team Head Coach; Gabor Juhász, Sports Director; and Brian Parkkonen, PTR Director of Education.

PTR and the Hungarian Tennis Association signed a multi-year partnership agreement. As an Official Continuing Education Partner of the HTA, PTR will conduct educational workshops for Hungarian tennis coaches. The two groups will collaborate to host an annual Tennis Coaches Symposium in Budapest featuring top speakers from around the world.

PTR Signs as Official Education Partner of Girls Tennis Network

PTR was named the Official Education Partner of Girls Tennis Network (GTN), a program developed by evolve9 to help tennis coaches and facilities keep girls in the game. The program focuses on giving coaches the skills to retain young female players ages 8-12, by providing drills, games and activities delivered through the six core principles of the GTN program. GTN was successfully launched at the Women's Tennis Coaching Association (WTCA) Conference held in August 2017, in New York City.



Mike Barrell, evolve9 Director and Brian Parkkonen, PTR Director of Education

PTR Coaching App Now There's an App for That!

A brand new coaches app will launch in February at the PTR International Tennis Symposium on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. PTR recognizes the growing use of technology by coaches on court, as well as the need for an all inclusive coaches app.

In app development, PTR's main goal has been to ensure user experience is rich in functionality, while not sacrificing quality.

Coaches will now have a tool for reviewing live technical parameters, including player database, lesson planning, a video capturing tool and video analysis exporting.

"We want coaches to always think of PTR for the latest in coach education while giving them the tools to deliver the highest quality product on court," said Brian Parkkonen, PTR Director of Education. "The PTR app will be the latest tool in continuing to accomplish that mission."



ACE Program Growing Diversity in Tennis Coaching

ACE, an acronym for Advancing the Commitment to Education, is a PTR initiative that serves as a vehicle to add diversity to our community of tennis coaches. The primary mission of ACE is to increase the number of certified tennis coaches of color in the USA.

The ACE Program has been as a catalyst for thousands of successful tennis coaching careers. Arthur Ashe called it, "The most comprehensive training program for tennis teachers."

So how does it work? PTR provides each new ACE coach with a \$100 scholarship to put toward membership and certification workshop costs. PTR works with other organizations to provide additional funding to drive the cost down even further, making our accredited education more available to coaches and communities who may lack the funds to invest in coaching education.

In 2017, PTR achieved its goal to have 33% of the total member base be coaches of color. PTR was able to reach all time highs in Hispanic/Latino, Asian American and African American coaches.

Looking onward to 2018, PTR's ACE Program will continue to make strides in growing the number of under represented coaches in the tennis industry. To achieve this, PTR is expanding its reach by making all of the organization's certification workshops available to coaches who qualify for ACE scholarships. Whether the workshops are in large cities or more rural communities, PTR is proud to promote, educate and certify coaches from all walks of life.

For more information, contact Marc Stingley at marc@ptrtennis.org



For information about PTR events, membership, education and certification

www.ptrtennis.org
843-785-7244

PTR Better & Stronger Under Leadership of

Roy Barth



As Roy Barth concludes his three year term as President of PTR, we want to acknowledge the progress made during his time at the helm.

Benefits

- PTR increased member benefits with Penn tennis balls and HEAD Strings, as well as offering free subscriptions to Tennis Gate for online teaching tools for player development and to OrangeCoach, the world's leading tennis coach employment and recruitment service.
- Commissioned a Coaches App to debut in early 2018, and a Symposium App to be introduced at the PTR International Tennis Symposium this February.
- Barth spearheaded the new PTR Mentorship Program that will be launched this year.

Education

- PTR's education and certification pathway improved exponentially, and is poised to continue that momentum, ensuring an unequalled coach education curriculum.
- PTRTennis.tv was launched offering a convenient and free way for members to fulfill continuing education requirements.

Firsts

- PTR reached several milestones including topping the 16K member mark. This number combined an international record of 6K and a USA high of 10K. In tandem, PTR served members in 127 countries, another all time high.
- Marc Stingley was hired as PTR's first Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator. PTR met its goal of 33% of USA members are coaches of color.
- Celebrating its 40th Anniversary saw the induction of Arthur Ashe to the PTR Hall of Fame, followed by Billie Jean King, in 2016, and in 2017, Dr. Louie Cap.
- PTR opened a satellite office in Orlando, Florida.
- Barth revamped and improved PTR's internal budget process.

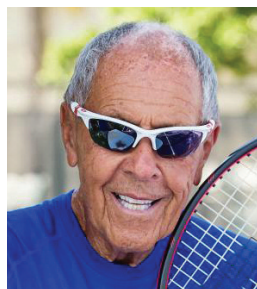
Partnerships

- PTR expanded its reach by signing formal partnership agreements with the following tennis federations and associations: Tennis Europe, Mexico, Hungary and Bulgaria.
- Mouratoglou Tennis Academy and PTR entered into a partnership wherein PTR provides coach education, while the academy serves as a European hub for PTR.

PTR members worldwide thank Roy Barth for his devoted service and focused diligence to make PTR better and stronger.

International Tennis Symposium

February 13-16



Nick Bollettieri and Judy Murray join the impressive line up of presenters at the PTR International Tennis Symposium in February.

International Tennis Hall of Fame inductee, Nick Bollettieri is known for cultivating top talent, including Andre Agassi, Boris Becker, Monica Seles and Jim Courier. Bollettieri Tennis at IMG Academy has been associated with Anna Kournikova, Mary Pierce, Marcelo Rios, Maria Sharapova, as well as Serena and Venus Williams.

A former player, Murray was Captain of the British Fed Cup team from 2011-2016. An advocate for female coaches and players, her organization Miss-Hits encourages girls to play tennis. In addition to her presentation, Murray's Miss-Hits course will be offered during the Symposium.

For complete speaker list, detailed information and registration, visit www.ptrtennis.org or call 843-785-7244.

PTR Mentorship Program

One of the most challenging concerns aspiring young coaches face is to identify and navigate a career path within our industry. Many have the skill set and passion to be successful, but lack the resources to guide them through their early years. PTR aims to connect younger coaches with mentors who have proven track records in successful program and staff development and business acumen.

This connection will truly be an enriching experience for each mentee, as they learn from someone who has previously been down the same path. Best practices, pitfalls and networking are all focal points of the program.

A dedicated session during the upcoming International Tennis Symposium will provide mentors and mentees with details on how to get involved.

PTR is committed to help cultivate the next generation of industry leaders. The PTR Mentorship Program fulfills a vision of the organization's founder, Dennis Van der Meer.

Spring TennisFest

More than 150 college and university tennis teams will descend on Hilton Head Island in March for the annual PTR Spring TennisFest.

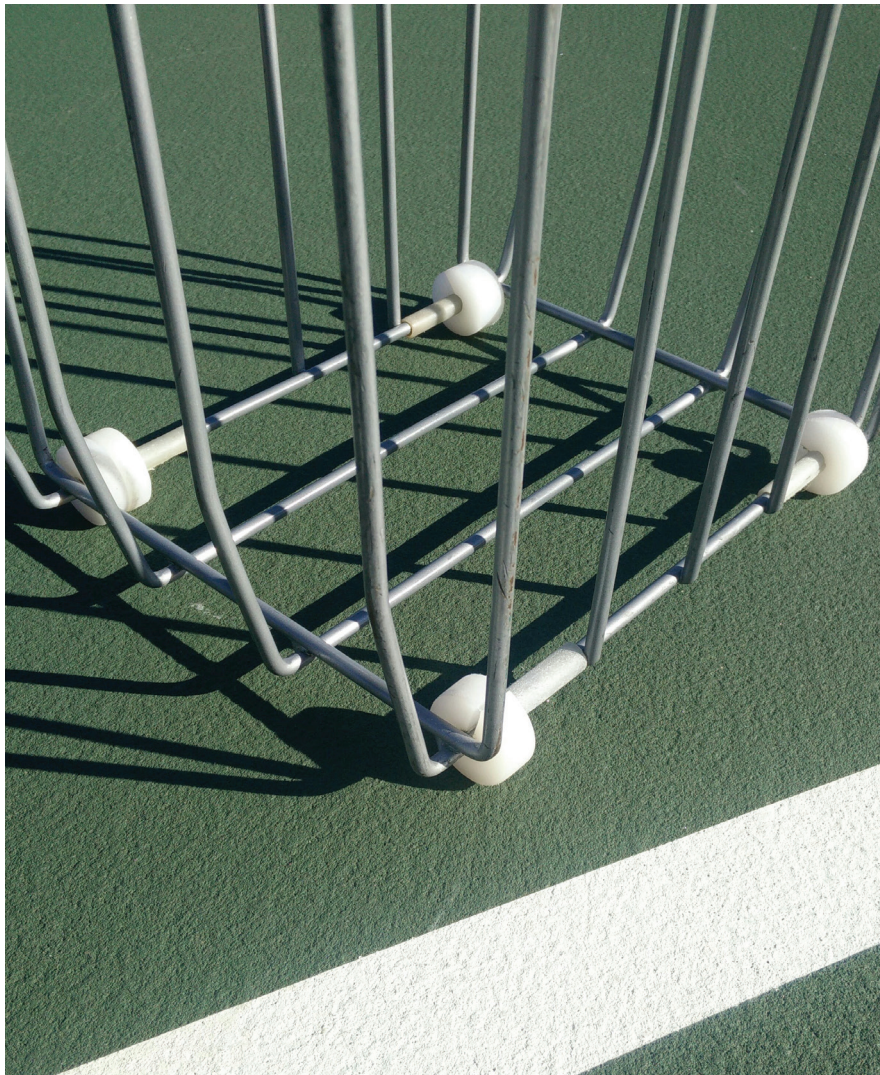
www.springtennisfest.com





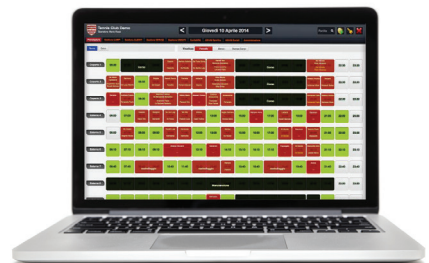
NEW PRODUCTS

BUSINESS BOOSTERS



2/ Sports Bra

Cheata Trotter Bra offers maximum support and freedom from bounce, and gives women a sleeker, smaller profile. The rear-zippered top with convenient pull tab and low-position band can be worn as an inner foundation bra or as a stand-alone. State-of-the-art Stretx performance compression moisture-wicking fabric and technology encourages comfort and better posture.
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3/ Management Software

Wansport.com is a simple yet comprehensive cloud-based platform for sports center management. It contains modules for booking tennis courts and lessons, academy management and programming, as well as functions for tennis directors and coaches, and encourages participation by players through the facility's social network. ■

Have a new product for tennis players or the tennis business? Contact Cynthia Sherman at cstennisindustry@gmail.com.

Tennis Marketplace

These new products can help your players and your business.

1/ Ball Hopper Wheels

Save and Rolls Tennis Hopper Snap-On Guard Wheels offer maximum protection for tennis hoppers and court surfaces. One-time installation is easy and requires no further maintenance. The wheels enable faster ball pick-up and prevent broken basket bottoms and corners. Pricing varies depending on the size of the order. Set of four wheels to equip one hopper is \$7.99 for the Save & Roll Lite, and \$11.99 for the Save & Roll Classic.
www.zubric.us • paul@zubric.us

2018 TENNIS INDUSTRY EVENT CALENDAR



2018 January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	①	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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2018 February

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2018 March

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2018 April

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2018 May

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27	⑳	29	30	31		

2018 June

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Event Date	Location	Event Name
January 15- 28	Melbourne, Australia	Australian Open
January 29	TBD	Davis Cup First Round
February 10-11	Ashville, NC	Fed Cup by BNP Paribas Opening Round
February 13-16	Hilton Head Island, SC	PTR International Tennis Symposium
February 23-25	Napa, CA	ASBA Winter Meeting
March 2-6	San Francisco, CA	CMAA World Conference
March 4-7	Denver, CO	NIRSA Annual Conference & Recreational Sports Exposition
March 5-18	Indian Wells, CA	BNP Paribas Open
March 6-7	Washington, D.C.	SFIA National Health Through Fitness Day
March 7-8	Kansas City, MO	ASBA Regional Meeting
March 16-19	La Costa, CA	USTA Annual Meeting & Conference
March 19-April 1	Miami, FL	Miami Open
March 21-24	San Diego, CA	IHRSA International Convention
March 31-April 8	Charleston, SC	Volvo Cars Open
April 2	TBD	Davis Cup Quarterfinal
April 8	Charleston, SC	Tennis Industry Innovation Challenge
April 8-11	Charleston, SC	TIA Tennis Owners & Managers Business and Innovation Conference
April 12-14	Orlando, FL	Tennis On Campus National Championships
April 21-22	Various	Fed Cup by BNP Paribas - Semifinals
May 28- June 11	Paris, France	French Open
July 2-15	London, England	Wimbledon
July 21-22	Newport, RI	Hall of Fame Induction Weekend
July 23-29	Atlanta, GA	BB&T Atlanta Open
July 31-Aug. 6	Stanford, CA	Bank of the West Classic
Aug. 6-12	Montreal, Canada	Rogers Cup (Men)
Aug. 6-12	Toronto, Canada	Rogers Cup (Women)
Aug. 13-19	Cincinnati, OH	Western & Southern Open
Aug. 20 - 26	Winston-Salem, NC	Winston-Salem Open
Aug. 20- 26	New Haven, CT	Connecticut Open
Aug. 24-27	New York City	Tennis Teachers Conf./USPTA World Conf.
Aug. 27	Forest Hills, NY	Mylan World Team Tennis Finals
Aug. 27	New York, NY	TIA Tennis Forum
Aug. 27-Sept. 9	Flushing Meadows, NY	US Open
Sept. 1-3	New York, NY	USTA Semi Annual Meeting & Conference
Sept. 14-16	TBD	Davis Cup Semifinals
Sept. 21-23	Chicago	Laver Cup
Sept. 25-27	Indianapolis, IN	NRPA Conference & Expo
TBD	TBD	PTR Directors of Tennis Conference
Nov. 10-11	TBD	Fed Cup by BNP Paribas - Finals
Nov. 11-18	London	Nitto World Tour Finals
Nov. 23-25	Geneva, Switzerland	Davis Cup Final
Nov. 30-Dec. 4	Scottsdale, AZ	ASBA Technical Meeting
Dec. TBD	Naples, FL	ITA Coaches Convention

Dates subject to change. ○Holidays

2018 July

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2018 August

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2018 September

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2018 October

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2018 November

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2018 December

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23	24	⑳	26	27	28	29
30	⑳					

□ Industry Events □ Grand Slam Tournaments □ US ATP Masters 1000/WTA Premier/WTT Event/Special Event □ US Open Series Tournaments □ Davis Cup/Fed Cup/Olympics



TOM Conference Features Top Speaker Lineup

The fifth annual TOM Conference, which will be April 8-11 at Wild Dunes Resort in Charleston, S.C., will feature many top experts and consultants in the tennis industry and outside of the sport. Presented by the TIA, the TOM Conference targets tennis owners, managers and industry decision-makers with a focus on innovation, growth, business leadership and development.

TOM Conference Speakers to Date:



Tim Bainton



Nick Bollettieri



Doug Cash



Doug Conant



Casey Conrad



Jolyn de Boer



Randy Futtly



Dr. Jack Groppe



Michael Harper



Feisal Hassan



Murphy Jensen



Michele Krause



Greg Lappin



Michael Mahoney



Delaine Mast



Craig Morris



Ajay Pant



Scott Schultz



Jordan Schwartz



Butch Staples



Stephen Tharrett



Emmett Williams



Mike Woody



Dan Zeman

Among the presenters at this year's conference will be Doug Conant, the founder and CEO of ConantLeadership; Stephen Tharrett, the co-founder of ClubIntel, owner/president of Club Industry Consulting and former president of IHRSA; and Emmett Williams, president of MyZone. Also on the agenda is Tim Bainton, founder of Blue Chip Sports Management; Life Time National Tennis Director Ajay Pant; Genesis Health Clubs Director of Tennis Mike Woody; Midtown Athletic Clubs National Tennis Director Butch Staples; and Exercise Physiologist Dan Zeman.

Legendary coach Nick Bollettieri; former pro player Murphy Jensen, the coach of World TeamTennis's Washington Kastles; PHIT America founder Jim Baugh; and Tennis Industry Health & Wellness Advisor Dr. Jack Groppe also are slated to speak.

Other speakers include USTA General Manager of Community & Youth Tennis Craig Morris, speaking on the Net Generation initiative; Midtown Athletic Club Vice President & General Manager Michael Mahoney; USTA University Managing Director Scott Schultz; and Cardio Tennis Global Education Director Michele Krause.

The TOM Conference will have educational sessions (CEU credits are available from PTR and USPTA), a Resource Center, an "Innovation Challenge," best practices roundtables, leadership and facility management sessions, presentations on equipment and technology, networking sessions, future of tennis and technology applications, digital and social media discussions, and more.

The TOM also will feature on-court demos and discussions for short-court forms of tennis such as POP Tennis, paddle, pickleball and padel. In addition, Tennis Industry magazine's Champions of Tennis winners will be recognized. The first day of the TOM Conference also will be the finals at the nearby Volvo Car Open women's tournament on Daniel Island, S.C. Visit TheTOMConference.com.

TOM Conference Specialty Courses

Specialty courses be offered at the TOM Conference, starting at 1 p.m. on Sunday, April 8. The courses, offered at a nominal additional fee, include:

- Marketing & Sales Intensive Session, by Casey Conrad
- Hands-On Digital Marketing Campaigns, with Charlie Ruddy and other TIA Tech Partners
- Advancing Your Career Path, with Jim Bates, Doug Cash and Greg Lappin
- Legal Aspects of Running a Club, with Jordan Schwartz



For more information and to register for the TOM Conference, visit TheTOMConference.com. or contact 843-686-3036 or info@tennisindustry.org.

TOM to Spotlight On-Court Educational Equipment Demos

A new feature at the 2018 TOM Conference will be On-Court Equipment/Retail Demos. On the afternoon of April 9, manufacturers will be on court to offer equipment education and demos, so attendees can learn about and try different products—so that they can properly fit their customers with the correct racquets and strings and learn about products for other racquet and paddle sports. In addition, attendees can interact with and see new product in the Resource Center, which runs throughout the April 8-11 conference.

Charleston Gears Up to Host Third 'Innovation Challenge'

Visionaries with new, innovative products, software or services designed to grow the sport and business of tennis with players, consumers and fans can submit their pitch in the "Tennis Industry Innovation Challenge—2018," a unique competition that will take place at the 2018 TOM Conference held at Wild Dunes Resort in Charleston, S.C.

Through Jan. 1, companies and individuals can complete a short Tennis Industry Innovation Challenge application at TheTOMConference.com describing their new, innovative product or service. There is no charge to apply.



On Monday, April 9, finalists from the online application process will have the opportunity to present their new product or service to a panel of judges—and in front of an audience of tennis industry leaders—in a "Shark Tank"-

like competition. The Innovation Challenge will again be moderated by Carlos Salum, president of Salum International Resources and the tennis industry liaison to the SportsCouncil Silicon Valley (SCSV).

Innovation Challenge finalists will receive media exposure through the TIA leading up to the TOM Conference. The winner will receive \$1,000, a national press release to thousands of news outlets with a potential reach to millions of consumers, coverage in Tennis Industry magazine, a one-year TIA membership, and additional exposure through industry marketing and social media channels.

Sponsored by the TIA, this will be the third edition of the Innovation Challenge. The first competition was held at the TOM Conference last March and was won by Tennibot (tennibot.com), a robotic tennis ball collector. The second Challenge, held in August in New York City during the 2017 US Open, was won by In/Out (inout.tennis), a line-calling device that fits on any netpost.

To register for the Innovation Challenge, visit TheTOMConference.com.

Nationwide 'Play Tennis Month' Planned for May

Plans are in motion for Play Tennis Month, which will be the month of May and is expected to include thousands of tennis programs and events around the country, with a goal of helping jump-start the industry and get people moving and playing tennis, the No. 1 sport for a long and healthy life!

"Play Tennis Month is designed to be an umbrella to promote the sport and the health benefits of tennis," says TIA Executive Director Jolyn de Boer. "Thousands of tennis programs and events throughout the U.S. in May are expected to link into Play Tennis Month to help 'get America moving' in support of PHIT America."

Helping to set the stage for Play Tennis Month will be the "world's largest Cardio Tennis lesson," currently planned for April 20 at the USTA National Campus in Orlando. This record-breaking USPTA event will benefit PHIT America and the USPTA Foundation, and is supported by the USPTA, TIA, USTA and Tennis Channel. The Cardio Tennis event is expected to lead many players and non-players to consistently hit the courts to stay healthy and fit, taking advantage of Play Tennis Month programming in their local areas starting in May.

Play Tennis Month events will include many fund-raisers to benefit PHIT America GO! Grants, which provide funds for physical education in schools, including supporting Net Generation equipment and curriculum. PHIT America is also looking to pass the PHIT Act, which is designed to get more people active and moving, including through tennis.

Play Tennis Month also ties in with PHIT America Month, which has more than 30 sponsor companies and organizations, including the USTA and TIA. Stay tuned for more details about Play Tennis Month in May and the record-breaking Cardio Tennis lesson in April. Visit PlayTennisMonth.com.



INDUSTRY GATHERING

USRSA WORLD CONFERENCE

Continuing Education

Top racquet techs gathered at the inaugural USRSA World Conference to share experiences and expertise.

The first USRSA World Conference is in the books and, by many measures, was a great success. In early October, racquet technicians came to the USTA National Campus in Orlando from across the U.S. and around the world to learn from some of the top technicians in the industry.

After a welcoming reception at the host hotel on the first evening—where attendees each received three bags full of samples of the latest strings and grips, along with other merchandise from sponsors—there were two full days of presentations and workshops held at the new USPTA Headquarters.

“We were honored to be the first

group to utilize the training room at the state-of-the-art USPTA Headquarters,” says USRSA Executive Director Bob Patterson. “I cannot say thank you enough to USPTA CEO John Embree, Fred Viancos and the entire USPTA staff for their hospitality and allowing us to share their great space.

“We also could not have pulled off this conference without the help of Chris Michalowski, Scott Schultz and the great staff from the USTA, whom we were privileged to work with at the USTA National Campus.”

The Saturday and Sunday agenda was packed with seminars and workshops on racquet fitting, machine buying and maintenance, frame customization, racquet service for indoor sports, mas-

tering racquet techniques and tournament stringing skills.

“Our team of presenters are some of the best and most knowledgeable in the industry,” says Patterson, referring to John Gugel, Mark Gonzalez, David Hall and Tom Parry.

“We took a team approach, and while each leader was responsible for certain workshops, all were present and contributed to every workshop with their expertise and experience.”

Following two days of intensive workshops and presentations, the USRSA conducted a total of 17 certification exams at the USTA National Campus Building on Monday. Exams ranged from Certified Stringer (CS) and Master Racquet Technician (MRT) to the very first MRT-Tournament Stringing Specialist (MRT-TSS) and MRT-Racquet Customization Specialist (MRT-RCS).

For the MRT-TSS exam, technicians were given a random scenario of stringing two pairs of racquets under conditions they could likely encounter at a tournament stringing room. The applicant did not know what they would encounter until they were handed the racquets and the accompanying work orders. Applicants had to complete all four racquets to the exact specifications of the work order within 100 minutes.

For the MRT-RCS exam, technicians were asked to customize two pairs of racquets to given specs with some particular instructions, as they would likely encounter when customizing racquets for discerning clients. The pass rate for both exams was well above 50 percent, with four technicians becoming the first to earn the designation of MRT-TSS and two of those also earning the designation of MRT-RCS.

“These Specialist certifications are limited to those who have already earned the MRT designation,” Patterson says. “They will only be offered at a few locations around the world and only a couple of times a year.

“The first exams accomplished what we wanted, which was to offer a means for the most elite technicians to further set themselves apart by demonstrating their knowledge and skills to achieve these specialized certifications.” ■

For more information about continuing education and future seminars, presentations and certification exams, visit www.racquettech.com.



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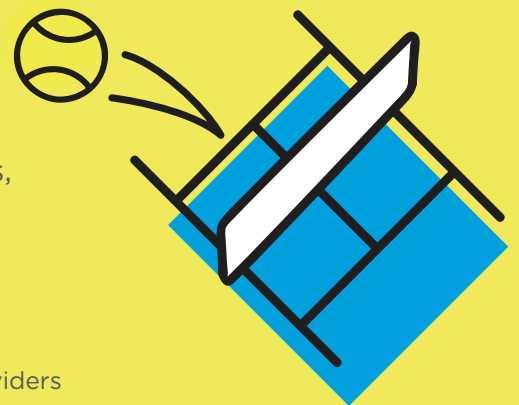
FOOTWORK: 8
TEAMWORK: 10

LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE OF TENNIS

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PRESENTS

CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS

2017

This is the 17th year that Tennis Industry has named our Champions of Tennis, which recognize the unheralded heroes who go above and beyond in helping to make a difference in our sport and in the business of tennis. We hope their stories and service are an inspiration to all of us to continue to move this industry forward.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

AJAY PANT • MICHELE KRAUSE • FIVE STAR TENNIS • DELAINE MAST • STURTEVANT'S • COOPER CREEK TENNIS CENTER
COMPETITION ATHLETIC SURFACES • STAN OLEY • JANE GAMBLE • ADVANTAGE KIDS • RAY WENDELN • RITA GLADSTONE
ANNETTE & JIM BUCK • PATSY T. MINK CENTRAL OAHU REGIONAL PARK • ART QUINN • CITY OF IRVINE • MARK PLATT • A'S & ACES
TOM CONFERENCE • SOCIAL NETS • USTA NORTHERN • LARRY HAUGNESS • FERNANDO VELASCO • USTA NATIONAL CAMPUS



CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS

PERSON OF THE YEAR

Ajay Pant

People in the tennis business come and go, like in every industry. Then there are the long-termers, those who feel so dedicated to tennis and passionate about this sport that they can't see themselves doing anything else. They feel an obligation to help this sport to grow—and they're good at doing it.

This is Ajay Pant.

"I feel incredibly lucky," says Pant, who in March became the national tennis director for Life Time, based at the company's headquarters in Minnesota. "My whole career has been spent with people who have made a difference: Arthur Ashe, Nick Bollettieri, Alan Schwartz, the Junior Tennis Champions Center—and now here at Life Time."

Pant is another shining example of someone who has helped to make a difference in this often mercurial industry, where he's been a calming influence, focusing in on matters that truly help to grow tennis. His knowledge, experience and steady guidance are what make him Tennis Industry's 2017 Person of the Year.

"We're fortunate to have someone of Ajay's caliber and integrity in this industry," says Jolyn de Boer, executive director of the Tennis Industry Association. "He has an unrelenting focus on excellence and achievement."

At Life Time, which has 129 locations in the U.S. and Canada, Pant oversees 26 facilities that currently offer tennis, a number that



is expected to increase next year. Life Time currently has 268 indoor and outdoor courts, and is the largest operator of indoor tennis facilities in the U.S.

"Life Time is investing heavily in tennis," Pant says, in part because Life Time founder and CEO Bahram Akradi—TI's Person of the Year in 2014—is a "tennis fanatic."

"Bahram understands that the consumer tennis spend at Life Time is three to four times that of non-tennis areas of our clubs," Pant notes, "and the length of a tennis membership is at least three times more than non-tennis people."

"Ajay is bringing more youth to the game, making the process of learning and playing easier for all ages with new programming and education, and ultimately, changing the way the indus-

try approaches tennis as a whole," says Life Time EVP and COO Jeff Zwiefel.

"His work ethic is unparalleled," says Ray Benton, CEO of the JTCC in Maryland, where Pant was SVP of operations for five years before moving to Life Time.

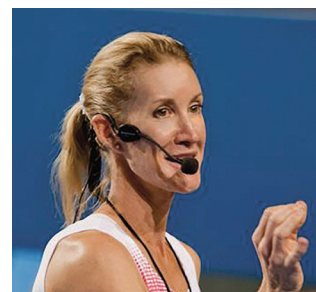
Pant, who is a longtime volunteer, also is a sought-after presenter. He's one of only 10 teaching pros globally designated as Master Professional by both the PTR and USPTA.

When it comes to growing this sport, Pant says, "We're focusing on so many distractions right now. We need to focus on what we do, which is getting more people playing."

—Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

"We need to do a better job of teaching our tennis pros that they need to be accountable for growing the game."



TENNIS INDUSTRY SERVICE AWARD

Michele Krause

If you've been to most any tennis industry event, chances are you've met Michele Krause. She's been promoting this sport for decades. Krause, the Cardio Tennis Global Education Director, was the first person hired to manage Cardio Tennis when the program was created in 2005.

Under her guidance, Cardio Tennis now has more than 2.12 million participants, up 16.7 percent from 2015 to 2016, according to the Physical Activity Council, which ranked CT No. 1 in year-over-year growth of 118 sports and activities.

For her dedication to tennis and to managing and growing a key industry program, Krause is our 2017 Tennis Industry Service Award winner.

"Michele is a tireless ambassador and has helped the TIA advance the awareness and adoption of Cardio Tennis as a driver of participation," says the TIA's Jolyn de Boer. "She's a true superstar in this industry."

—Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

To get top results, you need to be persistent, consistent and relentless, while never giving up your passion for tennis.

PRIVATE/COMMERCIAL FACILITY OF THE YEAR

Five Star Tennis

Hiring teaching pros with character and delivering valuable participation opportunities are, according to Five Star Tennis President Robin Henders, touchstones of the Plainfield, Ill., club. They are also guiding lights that attract word-of-mouth acclaim—as well as the foundation for Five Star Tennis being named TI’s 2017 Private Facility of the Year.

Opened in 2014 with five indoor hard courts, Five Star has expanded to 11 courts and currently has more than 1,000 members. The facility features energy-saving LED lighting and PlaySight Smart-court technology, and players and fans can watch the action from court level and upstairs seating.

Activity is constant at Five Star, with recreational play, individual and group lessons, juniors working through ROG play, high-performance junior development, men’s, women’s and mixed USTA adult teams, and a full calendar of social events. “The more diverse the program offerings, the more likely members are to stay with you long-term,” says Henders.

“Five Star Tennis has been a model of excellence in serving all levels of the game,” notes Michael Hughes, manager of USTA Adult & Sr. Competition. “They’ve developed forward-thinking and innovative programs to ensure there are extensive opportunities for players to engage in the sport.” —*Kent Oswald*

Tip for Success

Whether at the club or during a club-sponsored trip, tie in a social aspect so people see your facility as more than just a place to play.



SALES REP OF THE YEAR

Stan Oley

“Listen, care and be different,” says Stan Oley, the product marketing specialist for Playmate Ball Machines. “I’m not sure a lot of people do that in this industry.”

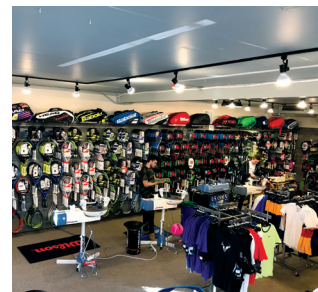
This “three-prong system” for dealing with customers has served Oley well in his 22 years with Playmate, and has helped to make him TI’s 2017 Sales Rep of the Year.

Oley, a USPTA Master Pro, has been a certified teaching pro for nearly 30 years, amassing numerous honors along the way. He’s also been a presenter at national and divisional events.

An ace at selling and servicing ball machines, Oley knows his product can have beneficial effects well beyond the court. He created FBT60, or “Fit By Tennis in 60 Days,” which is a tennis/fitness program combining nutrition and a series of ball machine drills.

“Stan is an indispensable member of the Playmate family,” says Anna Norris, CFO of Playmate-Metaltek, “and we are so grateful for all his hard work and dedication.” —*Peter Francesconi*

Tip for Success
Listen to people and offer “extreme service” to give them what they want.



PRO/SPECIALTY RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Sturtevant’s

Big changes took place this past year for Sturtevant’s, the Bellevue, Wash., tennis and ski retailer. There was no lessening, however, in the connection with both customers and manufacturers, which leads to Sturtevant’s recognition as TI’s Pro/Specialty Retailer of the Year.

Colorado-based Christy Sports bought the company in September 2016, a month before a move to the new flagship store. But neither the purchase nor the move changed the retailer’s well-established essence.

“Their overall business approach is to stock the best high-end inventory, and lots of it,” explains Erik Lange, Western regional sales manager for Head Penn. “Their employees are extremely knowledgeable in everything they offer.”

“Almost every day a customer walks in and runs into a friend and they have a few laughs,” says Tennis Manager Corey Tam. “Sturtevant’s feels more like a social hangout at times instead of a business.” —*Kent Oswald*

Tip for Success
Reach out to the community by using social media, servicing all levels of play and cooperating with other retailers.



CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS



BUILDER/CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR

Competition Athletic Surfaces Inc.

The old axiom, “The more things change, the more they stay the same,” might be especially apropos for tennis court construction. While construction techniques and surfacing materials have evolved, the sport itself holds true to tradition.

This combination of evolution and tradition, says Lee Murray, president of Competition Athletic Surfaces of Chattanooga, Tenn., is how his company has operated, and has led to it being TI’s 2017 Builder/Contractor of the Year.

Murray went into the sealcoating and paving industry after college and migrated into tennis and track. Four decades later, he is still creating the best athletic surfaces possible.

“I don’t think a lot of us realize how much we’re contributing to people’s wellness,” Murray says. “You’re creating spaces for people to do something healthy.”

—Mary Helen Sprecher

Tip for Success

The secret to longevity in this industry is streamlining your operation and running as efficiently as possible.



GRASSROOTS TENNIS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Delaine Mast

You can say Delaine Mast is responsible for “countless” people in the tennis family, or you can try to put a number to it. Billie Jean King did the latter when Mast received the USTA’s 2016 Eve Kraft Community Service Award, explaining, “She has gotten over 1 million people involved in tennis. She is a total champion for tennis!”

Mast’s USTA honor is one of many she’s earned from a wide range of tennis organizations. That and more are why Mast is our 2017 Grassroots Tennis Champion.

Mast played for the University of Tennessee, then coached at George Washington University. In 1986, she began a 30-plus-year coaching career at McClaskey H.S. in Lancaster, Pa., and has spent the same number of years with World Team Tennis’ recreational league.

“It’s all about relationships and making a difference in people’s lives,” Mast says. “I always listen to others first to see where their passion is.” —Kent Oswald

Tip for Success

The thinking, dedication, exercise and fun of tennis make the sport one of the best change agents for the life of anyone.

MUNICIPAL TENNIS FACILITY OF THE YEAR

Cooper Creek Tennis Center

The Cooper Creek Tennis Center in Columbus, Ga., was recently honored as one of the best facilities in the U.S. through the USTA’s Facility Awards program. This year, it is also TI’s Municipal Facility of the Year.

The center, which opened in April 2017 at Cooper Creek Park, features 39 clay courts, 16 post-tensioned concrete DecoTurf courts, a clubhouse, restrooms and offices. Some of the courts utilize PlaySight technology, so players and coaches can analyze games and create videos from practices.

The \$9.5 million cost of the center was funded through the Columbus Regional Tennis Association (CORTA), Columbus State University and the city. The center is now the home of the CSU men’s and women’s tennis teams, as well as the home base for the 2,300 CORTA members.

Judy Pearce, executive director of CORTA, has worked on the development for Cooper Creek since 1993. “One of the many wonderful things about Cooper Creek is all these different surfaces in one place to accommodate players’ preferences,” she notes.

“Cooper Creek has kept the sport at the forefront of its community,” adds Kurt Kamperman, USTA chief executive for Community Tennis. “Facilities like Cooper Creek help us to grow the game at the grassroots level.” —Cynthia Sherman

Tip for Success

Embracing USTA initiatives and programs will help in reaching out to players of all ages and abilities, and will build the tennis base in a community.



COURTESY COMPETITION ATHLETIC SURFACES, USTA MIDDLE STATES, COOPER CREEK TENNIS CENTER/CORTA

TENNIS INDUSTRY'S
2017 PERSON OF THE YEAR

AJAY PANT



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
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CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS



STRINGER OF THE YEAR

Ray Wendeln

As a high-school tennis player, Ray Wendeln worked at a tennis club and strung racquets. Then, while attending Arizona State University, he started working at Tennis Cabana in Sun City, Ariz. Soon, he became a business owner himself, with a Tennis Cabana store of his own.

“We now have two full-service tennis specialty retail locations in the Phoenix area and pride ourselves on our stringing service and customer service,” Wendeln says.

Wendeln became a U.S. Racquet Stringers Association Master Racquet Technician three years ago, and recently he entered the world of tournament stringing at the Miami Open and US Open.

This past October, at the USRSA World Conference in Orlando, Fla., Wendeln became one of the first MRTs to earn both of the new certifications: MRT-TSS (Tournament Stringing Specialist) and MRT-RCS (Racquet Customization Specialist).

“Ray is the perfect example of what it takes to be successful in tennis retail today,” says USRSA Executive Director Bob Patterson. “He puts his customers first and works hard to foster long-term relationships. He does everything he can to continue to learn. He is very deserving as TI’s 2017 Stringer of the Year.” —Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

Make service, and serving your customers, the cornerstone of your business.



CTA OF THE YEAR

Advantage Kids

Based in Gilmanston, N.H., and covering New Hampshire’s Lakes Region, Advantage Kids (formerly called Lakes Region Tennis Association) has been serving young players since 2002.

What started as a hobby for retired academic Bob Ronstadt has evolved into New Hampshire’s largest CTA and NJTL, recently expanding its programming to the state’s most populous regions and serving more than 300 youngsters.

“Tennis was critical in my development, socially and professionally, and I want to give that back in a meaningful way that’s sustainable,” Ronstadt says.

To serve as much of the state as possible, Advantage Kids has partnered with local parks & rec departments as well as Boys & Girls Clubs.

“We are lucky to work with such a great CTA, as Bob and his board and volunteers are extremely dedicated,” says Eric Driscoll, USTA New England TSR for New Hampshire and Maine.

—James Maimonis

Tip for Success

Have a strong board, and in particular, have a prime mover—someone willing to do a little more than everyone else.



TENNIS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

Jane Gamble

True advocates for tennis are nothing if not persistent. And TI’s 2017 Tennis Advocate of the Year, Jane Gamble of Paducah, Ky., certainly fits that description.

Gamble’s most recent project—raising money to add bathrooms to the six courts at Bob Noble Park—started with her first email to the city in 2005.

“I’ve worked through three different mayors,” she says, “but now it’s really happening.”

Gamble’s service to the sport runs deep. She’s currently on the USTA’s CTA Committee and is co-chair of the Community Advocacy Task Force. She’s a former USTA Southern board member and president of USTA Kentucky. Last January, she was inducted into the state’s Tennis Hall of Fame.

“Jane moves the needle when it comes to advocating for tennis at the local level, not only in words, but with action,” says Jeri Ingram, chair of the USTA CTA Committee. —Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

When it comes to advocating for tennis on the local level, persistence pays off.

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The promotion is available for the installation of new courts, conversion of existing above-ground-watered clay courts, and/or conversion of hard and synthetic courts. Use of the HydroCourt® underground watering system as marketed by Har-Tru® is required. The promotion is only available on courts purchased through authorized HydroCourt® installers. All three HydroCourts® must be purchased from the same installer and the installer must pay Har-Tru, LLC in full for all materials, accessories and supplies associated with the installation. Requests for the free HydroCourt® Package must be submitted on behalf of the owner by the authorized HydroCourt® installer performing the installation. It will be paid by Har-Tru® in the form of a rebate to the installer. Installer is responsible for freight, sales taxes and import or export duties. Participation in the program will entitle the owner to receive a one-time, 10% discount on qualifying court equipment and accessories ordered with and for use on the three courts. Equipment and accessories must be purchased through the authorized HydroCourt® installer performing the installation and ship with the HydroCourt® Package.



CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS



WHEELCHAIR TENNIS CHAMPIONS OF THE YEAR

Annette and Jim Buck

Annette and Jim Buck are Southern Californians who share a lifelong commitment to the game, with wheelchair tennis their primary focus.

Jim, a longtime member of the Southern California Tennis Association's board, and Annette, SCTA's director of Adult & Senior Tennis before retiring last year, received the ultimate wheelchair tennis accolade from the USTA in 2010, the Brad Parks Award.

In an effort to "put wheelchair tennis on the map," the Bucks have served as wheelchair tennis instructors, but have made an even bigger impact developing innovative clinics and programs. For their nearly 30 years of passion in helping to expand the sport, the Bucks are TI's 2017 Wheelchair Tennis Champions of the Year.

Their leadership led to the formation of the annual US Open Wheelchair Tennis Championships, considered the foremost wheelchair tournament in the country.

—Mark Winters

Tip for Success

Think big and always give back to the game, in every way you can.



JUNIOR TENNIS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Rita Gladstone

It's an understatement to say that Rita Gladstone, TI's 2017 Junior Tennis Champion of the Year, is competitive. Whether it's besting her husband on the tennis court or establishing the very best practices for junior tennis, the former WTA circuit player has high standards.

That's what the USTA saw when they were looking for someone to lead programming at the new USTA National Campus Nemours Family Zone, and to create a learning lab for teaching and growing junior tennis.

"The permanent, stand-alone 36- and 60-foot courts, give children an opportunity to develop skills and play independently at a faster rate," says Gladstone, who with fellow USTA National Campus staff test junior formats and teaching methods.

Gladstone has received numerous awards and accolades, but they've all added up to what she calls a dream position: developing leading-edge training and coaching. Countless juniors have benefited. —Rick Vach

Tip for Success

Use Net Generation to engage players, parents and coaches.

PUBLIC PARK OF THE YEAR

Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park

Named after the first Asian-American woman elected to Congress, the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park is a 269-acre public park that has become a gathering place for players of all sports.

The complex, which is operated by the City and County of Honolulu, is home to Hawaii's largest tennis facility with 20 hard courts, which includes two stadium courts, 12 lighted courts and eight courts with blended 60-foot lines. The tennis center is open to the general public at no cost to individual users.

Considered the "tennis hub" for the state of Hawaii, the park plays host to many prominent tennis events including NCAA matches, US Open Qualifying Playoffs, the WTA Hawaii Open and USTA Sectional Championships. Every week, the Patsy T. Mink Tennis Center also is the venue for the USTA's Play to Learn group tennis lessons, where youngsters and adults alike are introduced to the sport.

"The partnership between the City and County of Honolulu and the USTA Hawaii Pacific Section is a great example of a successful public-private partnership," says Ron Romano, the section's executive director. "The end results directly benefit Hawaii's tennis community."

—Christine Nip

Tip for Success

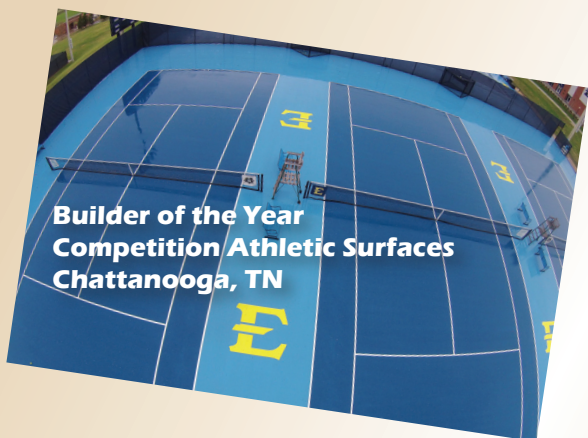
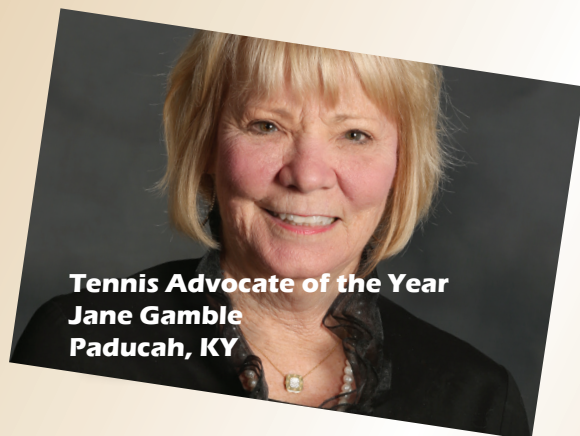
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CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS



PARK & REC AGENCY OF THE YEAR

City of Irvine, Calif.

For the last 14 years, Steve Riggs has been the tennis director for the city of Irvine, Calif., overseeing one of the top city-run tennis programs in the country. Riggs is in charge of 91 public tennis courts (all with lights) at 19 facilities, including the brand-new, 25-court Orange County Great Park Sports Complex. On weekends, he also oversees 31 courts at four high schools.

“At first, I wasn’t happy about having all these neighborhood parks,” Riggs says. “But for customer service, it’s actually better. It’s easy for kids, for instance, to get to nearby courts.”

The courts are free to play on, but Riggs says programming brings in about \$1.8 million from lessons, clinics, leagues and tournaments.

“As a city-run program,” he says, “we’re lucky to be in a strong tennis community.”

That’s why the city of Irvine’s Community Services Department is TI’s 2017 Park & Rec Agency of the Year.

Riggs is quick to credit the 24 full-time teaching pros for the success. “Our program is built on our pros,” he says. “If they don’t do a good job, then you don’t have a good program. I have a great staff—many have been here for many years—and they make it all go.” —Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

Hire excellent tennis teaching pros and treat them fairly. They’ll not only stay with you, but they’ll make your programs shine.



HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR

Art Quinn

Art Quinn is a familiar face at Cherry Creek High School in Greenwich Village, Colo. A former varsity tennis player, he’s been coaching the boys’ tennis team for the past 12 years.

Cherry Creek has more than 3,600 students—and as many as 225 players try out for and stay involved in the tennis team, making it one of the largest no-cut programs in the state.

“We are a challenge-match-driven team,” Quinn explains. “Those who are willing to put in the time will get to play.”

“It takes a lot of passion and dedication to make all the pieces work,” says USTA Colorado E.D. Fritz Garger. “In addition to running such an impressive program, Art is supportive of Colorado tennis in general and steps up time and again to help.”

“We strive for excellence and for well-rounded participants,” Quinn says, “which is a tribute to their parents and other coaches, as well.” —Wendy Anderson

Tip for Success

Have fun, work hard, act right and play well. If you can do all of that, then help those around you to do it, too.



NJTL OF THE YEAR

A’s & Aces

There are times when treasure can come from tragedy. That is the story of this year’s NJTL of the Year: A’s & Aces of New Orleans.

The organization emerged in 2008 after Hurricane Katrina as a small after-school program. It has since grown into a year-round service organization for more than 1,000 students.

“While every child participates in the three pillars of our programming—academic support, life-skills and tennis—our support is tailored to each individual’s needs,” explains Executive Director David Schumacher. “Key components are quality, affordability and access for all.”

The mobile program, which hopes to soon establish a home base, partners with elementary schools during phys-ed periods. It is also provided with facilities for after-school, weekend and summer “literacy and tennis camps” from the city, Dillard University and the University of New Orleans.

—Kent Oswald

Tip for Success

Use tennis as the “hook” to get children involved and to retain them in academic and life-skills programming.

COURTESY STEVE RIGGS, USTA INTERMOUNTAIN, A’S & ACES



GRASSROOTS TENNIS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Delaine Mast



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Billie Jean King, Ilana Kloss & the World Team Tennis Family





CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS



INNOVATIVE TENNIS EVENT OF THE YEAR

TOM Conference

The fourth annual Tennis Owners & Managers (TOM) Conference, presented by the Tennis Industry Association, took place last March in Orlando, Fla., attracting nearly 300 facility owners, managers and others in the industry. And true to form, the conference delivered new and innovative presentations, panels and products, including a Future of Tennis Forum, blue-ribbon health and wellness panel, POP Tennis exhibition, and the inaugural “Tennis Industry Innovation Challenge.”

These forward-reaching features made TOM Conference TI’s 2017 Innovative Tennis Event of the Year.

“Our goal is to provide future-thinking content and tools to help tennis businesses better engage their community, and as a result grow their business and the sport,” says TIA Executive Director Jolyn de Boer. “We look forward to presenting the fifth annual TOM April 8 to 11 in Charleston, S.C.”

—Cynthia Sherman

Tip for Success

New and innovative topics and presentations keep the audience engaged and enthusiastic for promoting and growing tennis.



YOUTH TENNIS PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

Mark Platt

St. Louis, Mo., has a rich tennis history, but no one may be more successful in getting people on the court than Mark Platt. And it’s Platt’s dedication to teaching youngsters that makes him TI’s 2017 Youth Tennis Provider of the Year.

Platt created Beginner’s World Tennis in St. Louis in 1984 to encourage new tennis players and promote team tennis leagues and community events. More than 30 years later, it’s not uncommon for more than 1,000 people of all ages to participate in Platt’s programs and events at over 25 facilities throughout the St. Louis area. This summer, Platt’s programs will include at least 10 Junior Team Tennis squads. Beginner’s World Tennis has a staff of 10 who teach tennis and run all types of programming.

Platt’s long history in tennis includes receiving one of the USTA’s highest honors, the Eve Kraft Community Service Award, in 2004.

—Andrew Robinson

Tip for Success

In addition to providing tennis instruction, facilitate social networking to help keep players in the game.

ADULT TENNIS PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

Social Nets

Launched in 2014, Social Nets is a USTA Northern California tennis program designed for young adult players ages 18 to 39. The program is all about having fun playing tennis, meeting new people and hanging out with friends on the court.

Social Nets was created because “our 18- to 39-year-old age demographic only had two options for league participation: Adult 18 & Over and Combo leagues,” explains USTA Northern California Adult Tennis Specialist DeDee Winfield.

“Social Nets gives millennials more opportunity to play during the first quarter of the year instead of having to wait until spring.”

The Social Nets program includes the Social Nets Series (league), Social Nets Parties (one-day events), and Drop-Ins.

“I was worried that I wouldn’t find any players around my level, but I did,” raves one Social Netter. “I had really good, competitive matches and made some new friends too. I’m so glad I joined the Social Nets Series.”

USTA NorCal continues to reach out to millennials by offering even more opportunities to play, including a new Fall league for 18- to 39-year-old players.

—Mylene Mukhar

Tip for Success

Keep in regular touch with players, and always have something special they can look forward to at events.



COURTESY TIA, USTA MISSOURI VALLEY, USTA NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



find yourself in the game

FLORIDA

Tennis Industry Service Award

Michele Krause

Junior Tennis Champion of the Year

Rita Gladstone

Sales Rep of the Year

Stan Oley, Playmate

Public Tennis Facility of the Year

USTA National Campus



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Park & Rec Agency
of the Year

**JIM &
ANNETTE BUCK**

CITY OF IRVINE



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



CHAMPIONS OF TENNIS

PUBLIC TENNIS FACILITY OF THE YEAR

USTA National Campus

Anyone involved in this industry has heard about the USTA National Campus, which opened a year ago in the Lake Nona area of Orlando, Fla. The facility has 100 courts and houses the USTA's Community Tennis and Player Development divisions.

If you've been lucky enough to visit the National Campus, you know that a simple recitation of its stats—such as the 20 Team USA/League hard courts, 32 Har-Tru courts, 16 Family courts, 12 Collegiate courts and 26 Smart Courts—doesn't do it justice. It's an impressive facility spread across 64 acres, offering playing, training and educational experiences for recreational players, competitive players, coaches and spectators. And because this state-of-the-art complex is open for all players and potential players, it is TI's Public Tennis Facility of the Year.

"What I've seen here since we opened last January is an incredible energy for the sport," says USTA National Campus General Manager Tim Cass.

As of November, the facility had hosted 80 events, with Cass estimating court occupancy for the first 10 months at about 60 percent, and continuing to grow. Cass oversees about 30 full-time employees, but the USTA itself has about 200 employees based on site.

"We work together in all areas on a daily basis," Cass adds, "and that's very uplifting, energetic and motivating."

—Peter Francesconi

Tip for Success

Deliver memorable experiences for players, fans and your employees.



PTR MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Larry Haugness

Larry Haugness of Springfield, Mo., has a passion for not only making players better on the court, but also for making the teachers who train those players better. It's for such dedication and service that Haugness is named TI's 2017 PTR Member of the Year.

Haugness has been a PTR member since 1989 and continues to be a PTR National Workshop clinician.

"The PTR is so personable and family-oriented, which makes it easy to stay involved with the organization," he says.

Haugness, who currently serves as president of the USTA Missouri Valley section, retired this year as community tennis director at Cooper Tennis Complex in Springfield. However, he continues to work toward leading other teaching pros to reach their potential.

"Larry has played a key role in the growth of tennis," says PTR CEO Dan Santorum. "He has a tremendous amount of passion for this sport." —Andrew Robinson

Tip for Success

This is a people business. You have to have a passion for tennis and for helping people to thrive.



USTA SECTION OF THE YEAR

USTA Northern

The tagline for USTA Northern says, "We are small, but mighty." The accomplishments that back up the saying are why Northern has been selected as TI's 2017 USTA Section of the Year.

Several new programs were introduced for all ages and ability levels, beginning with the Stars & Trophies 10U Youth Progression Pathway for ages 7 to 10. Team Northern is a new high-performance program for ages 11 to 14, while World Team Tennis gives 12- to 18-year-old intermediates competitive opportunities.

Tennis in Your Parks offers lessons for beginning adults or those returning to the game, while Matchline placed 827 new players in USTA League teams. Outreach events have included Girls & Women in Tennis and Net Generation Forums.

"When employees are encouraged to think out of the box," says the USTA's Todd Carlson, "there are no limits to the great ideas that can grow the game."

—Cindy Cantrell

Tip for Success

When staff members genuinely love this sport, their efforts to promote and develop the game speak for themselves.

COURTESY USTA, PTR, USTA NORTHERN

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Jeff Williams, Publisher



USPTA MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Fernando Velasco

Being named TI's 2017 USPTA Member of the Year is the most recent in a long list of honors for Fernando Velasco—and it's not even the only award he has received this year. In October, he earned the USPTA George Bacso Lifetime Achievement Award for volunteerism on behalf of tennis teachers.

Velasco, a member of the USPTA National Board for 11 years, was instrumental in translating the USPTA Certification Exam into Spanish. With more than 40 years in tennis management, he is currently the executive director of the Capital Area Tennis Association and a part-time teacher at the Polo Tennis and Fitness Club in Austin, Texas.

"Fernando has contributed so much to the game of tennis," says USPTA CEO John Embree. "He is a lifelong member of the USPTA who has dedicated himself to being a 'pro's pro.' No one represents the ideals of the USPTA, or personifies what it means to be a tennis-teaching professional, better than Fernando Velasco."

"I'm honored and proud, but also very humbled to be recognized by my peers," Velasco says. "I'm blessed to be in the company of these great USPTA pros and leaders who have made me the person I am today, on and off the court."

—Cindy Cantrell

Tip for Success
Always try your best,
and if that's not enough,
redouble your efforts.

APPAREL
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Whether playing indoors or outside, beat the chill and keep your game hot with the right tenniswear.

BY CYNTHIA SHERMAN



1 / Adidas / adidas.com / 800-982-9337

Adidas Z.N.E. Hoody (suggested retail, \$150; men's shown, also available in women's sizes) boasts a two-layer lined hood and funnel-neck construction, with moisture-wicking Climalite fabric in a cotton/poly/elastane double-knit, along with side-zip pockets. Adidas also offers the Melbourne shorts (\$55) in similar fabrication and matching colors, with elasticized waistband and inside drawcord.

2 / Fila / fila.com / 410-773-3000

Fila's Set Point Men's Jacket (\$90) and accompanying pants (\$70) in lake blue/black/white are comfortable and performance-driven, with pinhole mesh textures and deep pockets. The jacket features rib-knit cuffs, hem and neck; the pants feature mesh side panels, striped knit tape on side seams, bottom leg zippers and user-friendly pockets. Both pieces sport Fila's iconic F-box logo.

Matching tops and leggings from Adidas and Tail will keep you warm when you take the court in the cooler months.

A. Determination bomber jacket



B. Termination tight



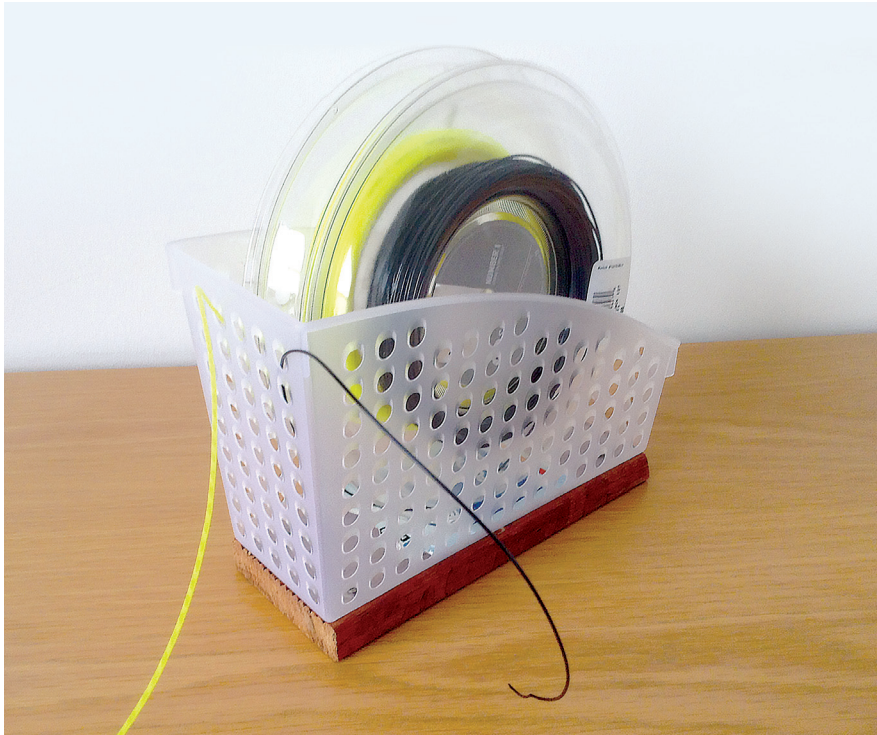
3 / New Balance / newbalance.com / 800-595-9138

New Balance keeps the cold out with the Determination black bomber jacket (\$160; women's shown, also in men's sizes) in a laminated knit with fleece back, 2-in-1 bonded kanga pocket and zippered hand pockets. The matching Termination tight (\$110), in two color options, features a Versa Flow waistband for breathability, with knit piecing at the knee and mesh piecing at upper and bottom leg.

4 / Tail / tailactivewear.com / 888-906-1341

Tail's sharp-looking warm-ups for women are highlighted by the zip-up Dover jacket (\$69) in a brushed space-dye dot-mesh jersey and rated UPF 50. It is featured in a micro polyester-spandex comfort blend. The complementary Danvers legging (\$63) comes in a compression-performance jersey with pockets, also UPF 50, in a polyester-spandex blend. ■

Tips & Techniques



Reel good tip

When removing string from a reel, you often put the string reel on the floor and pull out the string, sending the reel rolling all over the place. Pulling slowly can help keep the reel in place, but under tournament conditions, where speed is paramount, slow is not the answer. Plus, at any rate, you still have the reel on the floor.

At home, I mount my reels on a horizontal rod, but I've come up with a different solution for stringing on location. I purchased a couple of inexpensive office file boxes with slots on the back, each wide enough for two reels side by side—which works out perfectly for hybrid stringing. I then attached a heavy wood base at the bottom of the file boxes to keep them from moving around during use.

Once the reels are inside, I thread the string out the back of the file box. Even after cutting off the portion I want, the remainder of the string stays threaded through the back of the box for the next time. It's a simple solution.

5 sets of Laserfibre Native Tour string to:

Sam Chan, MRT Australia

Getting a grip

To handle slippery strings, I use mountain-climber's tape. There are different brands available, but I prefer the 3/4-inch Magic Finger Tape by Evolv (evolvsports.com), which sells for \$6 for two 30-foot rolls.

I wrap the tape around my index fingertip and thumb tip on my right hand, and wrap the index finger of my left hand to weave. With a little practice, it doesn't take long to wrap your fingers.

I now weave cross strings much faster with no string slippage, and the tape leaves no residue on the strings, the racquet or your fingers. Also, wrapping my fingers has the additional benefit of preventing calluses, and seems to reduce or even prevent sore fingertips.

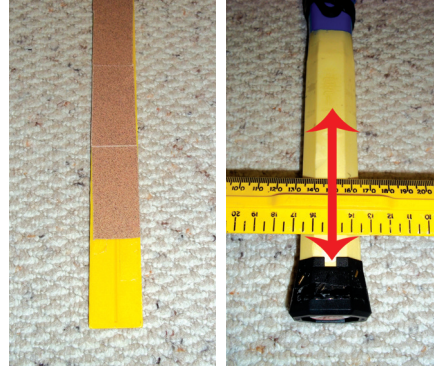


5 sets of Pacific Poly Power Pro string to:

Bruce Baltrusitis, Fresh Meadows, N.Y.

For stringing on location, threading the string through the spine of a stable file box can help keep a reel in place.

Grip size reduction



Sanding down a grip by hand yields inconsistent results because your hand is not flat. If you use a sanding block to sand down the grip, the center of the grip will be shaved down more than near the top or bottom of the grip. In essence, by going back and forth with a sanding block, you are double shaving the center, because no matter how far down or high up you sand, there is always sandpaper contact near the middle of the grip.

To eliminate this problem and ensure a consistent, sanded surface, I use a 1-foot ruler. I apply double-sided tape to the back of the ruler and attach a strip of sandpaper. Then I simply hold both ends of the ruler and place it on top of the grip and push and pull it all the way up and down the grip to get a nice, flat shave. I do an even number of strokes for each bevel, making sure to blow off the residue and change the sandpaper when it gets worn.

5 sets of Gamma Ocho string to:

Brandon Luu, CS
Vancouver, BC

Tips and Techniques submitted since 1992 by USRSA members for this column have been gathered into a searchable database on www.racquettech.com, the official website of the USRSA. Submit your tips and techniques to Greg Raven greg@racquettech.com.

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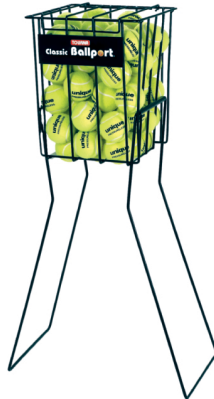
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String Playtest



EQUIPMENT

Diadem Evolution 1.30

BY GREG RAVEN

Diadem Evolution is a monofilament string constructed of premium polyamide (nylon) and fused with a silicone-based coating to increase feel, snapback, power and playability.

Evolution is available in 15L gauge (1.35 mm), 16 gauge (1.30) and 17 gauge (1.25 mm) in Azure, Blue, Black and Natural. It is priced from \$5.75 per 40-foot set (\$9.95 retail).

For more information or to order, contact Diadem at 844-434-2336, or visit diademsports.com. Be sure to read the conclusion for details about getting a free set to try for yourself.

In the Lab

We tested the 1.30-gauge Evolution. The coil measured 40 feet, 11 inches. The diameter measured 1.30 mm prior to stringing, and 1.22 mm after stringing. We recorded a string-bed stiffness of 75 RDC units immediately after stringing at 60 pounds in a Wilson

Pro Staff 6.1 95 (16 x 18 pattern) on a constant-pull machine.

After 24 hours (no playing), string-bed stiffness measured 66 RDC units, representing a 12 percent tension loss. Our control string, Prince Synthetic Gut Original Gold 16, measured 78 RDC units immediately after stringing and 71 RDC units after 24 hours, representing a 9 percent tension loss. In lab testing, Prince Synthetic Gut Original has a stiffness of 217 and a tension loss of 11.67 pounds, while Diadem Evolution 1.30 has a stiffness of 135 and a tension loss of 18.86 pounds. Evolution 1.30 added 13.5 grams to the weight of our unstrung frame.

The string was tested for five weeks by 23 USRSA playtesters, with NTRP ratings from 4.0 to 6.0. These are blind tests, with playtesters receiving unmarked strings in unmarked packages. Average number of hours playtested was 30.1.

Diadem Evolution has a bit of coil memory, but installation is a breeze.

One playtester broke the sample during stringing, one reported problems

Playtester Ratings:

Ease of Stringing

(compared to other strings)

Much easier: 3

Somewhat easier: 13

About as easy: 5

Not quite as easy: 2

Not nearly as easy: 0

Overall Playability

(compared to the string played most often)

Much better: 0

Somewhat better: 7

About as playable: 8

Not quite as playable: 6

Not nearly as playable: 2

Overall Durability

(compared to other strings of similar gauge)

Much better: 2

Somewhat better: 5

About as durable: 11

Not quite as durable: 5

Not nearly as durable: 0

Rating Averages

From 1 to 5 (best)

Playability: 3.7

Durability: 3.3

Power: 3.4

Control: 3.4

Comfort: 3.9

Touch/Feel: 3.4

Spin Potential: 3

Holding Tension: 3

Resistance to Movement: 2.9

with coil memory, none reported problems tying knots, one reported friction burn, and one reported other problems.

On the Court

Our playtest team found Diadem Evolution to be very comfortable, ranking it 13th overall of the 198 strings we have playtested to date for publication. Our team also found Playability to be excellent, and Touch/Feel and Power to be well above average. Overall, Diadem Evolution ranked above average.

No playtester reported premature fraying or peeling, one reported buzzing, and five reported notching. Four playtesters broke the sample during the playtest period, one each at 12, 21, 31 and 38.5 hours.

Conclusion

Diadem Evolution excels in the four main categories that most players value when seeking a nylon string.

If you think Diadem Evolution might be for you, fill out the coupon to get a free set to try.

Playtester Comments

“This string had excessive coil memory during stringing. However, it is an excellent playing string.” 4.5 male all-court player using Babolat Pure Aero strung at 57/57 pounds CP (Babolat Origin 17)

“Great-feeling string that is very comfortable and soft. The string did stretch some, which caused tension loss over the course of several matches. However, it was still playing fine in the 15th hour of play. By far, one of the easiest strings I’ve ever installed. A string I could switch to permanently right now.” 6.0 male all-court player using Wilson Ultra strung at 50/50 pounds CP (Luxilon 4G/Wilson NXT 17/17)

“This was an interesting string to play with. If it is a poly monofilament, it is the softest poly ever. Or is it a firm, slippery multifilament? Whatever it is, I want another set to

use in a hybrid. This color is the best blue I’ve seen. I might not switch to it, but I will most certainly carry it in the shop for customers.” 5.0 male all-court player using Babolat Pure Strike strung at 52/52 pounds CP (Babolat RPM Blast 17)

“Good string for a beginner or lower intermediate player with a shorter swing pattern.” 4.0 male all-court player using Prince Warrior strung at 55/55 pounds CP (Prince Tour XP 17)

“Overall the string played well, as it provided good feel and the level of comfort was good. The one negative was that it lost tension quickly during play.” 5.5 male all-court player using Head Instinct strung at 57/57 pounds LO (Head Sonic Pro 16)

“I liked this string. I got a little buzzing as play went on, which may have come from the knots. The string had good feel, but it did lose tension fairly

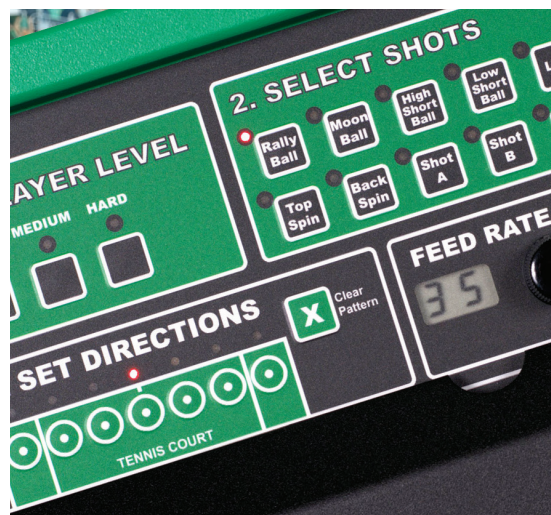
quickly as play went on. I would buy this.” 4.5 male baseliner with moderate spin using Wilson Ultra strung at 52/52 pounds LO (Wilson NXT 17)

“After three hours of play the four center mains had to be straightened continually. Love the color of the string and received many comments expressing similar sentiments.” 4.0 male all-court player using Wilson RF 97 strung at 54/54 pounds CP (Klip Natural Gut/Luxilon Spin 17/17) ■

FREE PLAYTEST STRING PROGRAM

Diadem will send a free set of Evolution 1.30 to the first 500 USRSA members who cut out (or copy) this coupon and send it to: USRSA, Attn: Diadem String Offer, 310 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd. North, Suite 400, Birmingham, AL 35203 or fax to 760-536-1171, or email the info below to: stringsample@racquettech.com. Offer expires Jan. 15, 2018. Offer only available to USRSA members in the U.S.

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INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Good News is Out There

ACSM's annual survey contains key trends the racquet sports industry needs to embrace.

BY MARY HELEN SPRECHER



When the American College of Sports Medicine published its forecast of fitness trends for the upcoming year, it's likely that many in the racquet sports industry did not take notice. That would be a shame, because the report, formally called the Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2018, contains some interesting tidbits for our industry.

Published each fall, the centerpiece of the survey is a list of 20 trends the ACSM believes bear watching in the fitness industry. These are the trends that stand to change the landscape of our industry. All we have to do is be ready.

The first trend that caught my eye was **Fitness Programs for Older Adults**. These are the baby-boomers

and older participants—block-time club users, league players, seniors and super-seniors. And they're driving the market with their spending—on travel, tournaments, shoes, apparel and equipment—which outpaces the millennials (who get most of the attention).

As a side note, those of us over 50 have seen our share of trends come and go. We remember the tennis boom in the 1970s and the racquetball explosion of the '80s. We've taken up those sports and others since. We're still looking for a challenge. Are you looking for us?

Here's another trend from ACSM: **Pickleball**, that amazing sport that's heavily tied to seniors (but is actually being played by all ages), has continued its upward growth trajectory. And let's face it, pickleball will continue to increase in clubs, at least in part

because it's embraced by senior players. Consider embracing it no matter what.

The ACSM identified something else that is going to be a huge driver in fitness in the coming year: **Sport-Specific Training**. If your club offers non-tennis racquet sports like badminton, squash or pickleball, maybe it's time to craft specific training programs for those sports, too. It could lead to increased income, new enthusiasm for the sports and even further buy-in among members.

Glancing through the ACSM list, it was easy to note other trends that could help our industry:

Group Training: Who doesn't want to work out with friends? Being accountable to getting to a class or group on time—in other words, being a part of a team—is a huge driver for many people. It's why Cardio Tennis is thriving and people love playing in doubles leagues.

Exercise and Weight Loss: Many people start exercising on Jan. 1 but drop out later. Why? It needs to be fun. Can we agree that activities like Cardio Tennis and pickleball are fun, and help bring people together in pursuit of a common goal? Pursue them.

Outdoor Activities: It's easy to say this term simply means cycling or running, but in reality, this is anything that gets people outdoors—often to a park or public facility where they'll see your programs. Make them fun, make them visible and you'll get participants.

When we really dig into the ACSM report, there are plenty of reasons for the tennis industry to be encouraged. Let's take advantage of them. ■

Mary Helen Sprecher is a contributing editor of *Tennis Industry* and the managing editor of *Sports Destination Management* magazine.



We welcome your opinions. Please email comments to info@tennisindustrymag.com.

HAPPY

NEW

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WHAT'S

2010

WHAT'S NEXT?

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

John R. Embree, USPTA Chief Executive Officer

After almost three years of a singular focus of constructing our new worldwide headquarters and the subsequent relocation to Lake Nona, it is time to take stock on where we are as an association and look to the future. As 2017 comes to a close (and what a year it was!) we don't have the luxury of taking a deep breath and resting on the laurels. We must look ahead and keep pushing the envelope.

Toward that end, I am pleased to be able to present to you a variety of initiatives that are on the docket for the next 12 months:

USPTA Leadership Academy

Owing to the hard work of our Education committee, we will be hosting a two-and-a-half-day seminar this summer here in Lake Nona for directors of tennis and head professionals who want to be fully versed in the management aspects of his/her job. With over 18 modules of business, human resource management, conflict management, leadership, presentation skills and much more, this initial pilot program is designed to raise the standards of those who seek to enhance their marketability for management positions within the industry or just become more proficient in their current roles. Additional details will be forthcoming but this should be the first of many such courses that the USPTA will offer going forward.

Website overhaul

While our current site has been functional for several years now, the fact is that in today's marketplace, it has to be responsive and mobile friendly. It is not satisfactory to expect our existing template to shrink to the size of a tablet or phone and be attractive to the millennial generation that does everything from their phone. Thus, we have engaged the firm who revamped *TennisResources.com* to complete the redesign of our corporate website. Look for it to be rolled out by the middle of 2018.

Testing app

It is safe to say that the way we process our test results (with manual forms and via the mail) is dated. With today's technology, our testers ought to be able to take a tablet on court, enter the data immediately into our system from remote destinations and submit the results of the tests that they have administered immediately. That day

is coming. Our National Head Tester, Sid Newcomb, rolled out a pilot platform during the Tennis Innovation Workshop in October to all the head testers during their meeting to rave reviews. By early 2018, we will be actively initiating this program.



Titlest Performance Institute

I have mentioned this initiative on previous occasions but it is about to come to fruition.

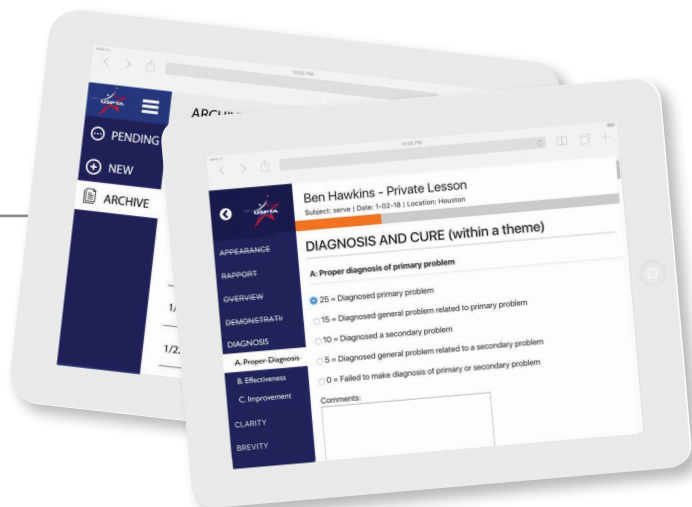
Dr. Greg Rose and his team from Oceanside, California are in the process of completing the curriculum for a level 1 certification for fitness trainers, medical providers and USPTA professionals to help design fitness regimes to help prevent and reduce tennis injuries so that your clients can stay on court longer and perform at their peak.

There will be certification courses offered in six cities starting in early 2018. Stay tuned as the details for this exciting initiative are determined.



PHIT America Month

We all know about the inactivity pandemic that exists in America today. In an industry-wide effort to raise awareness as to how vital movement is to one's health long term, we will be invigorating the old Tennis Across America in May with the





The Grand Hyatt will host the 2018 Tennis Teachers Conference, leading up to the US Open.

largest Cardio Tennis event ever held with the goal to burn a minimum of one million calories in one nationwide kickoff event. After that, we will look to host cardio events or other introductory tennis sessions at over 2,000 facilities across the country. Participants will be asked to make small donations to PHIT America so that PE programs can be given grants to run programs in schools across America, so we can get kids more active and healthier.

Tennis Teachers Conference in NYC

We are going back to New York for our World Conference in late August of 2018. With the completion of the strategic transformation of the BJK NTC (new Louis Armstrong Stadium with a roof) and the 50-year anniversary of Open

Tennis, it will surely be a “must do” event.

I hope that you agree that these are important endeavors that will show our commitment to technology, education, and engagement. Each of them will make a difference to our association, our constituents, and the sport in general. Lastly, I want to thank the board from the last two years for all of their hard work on behalf of the association. Under Chuck Gill’s leadership, we accomplished a great deal, most notably the move to Lake Nona but also the establishment of the continuing education requirement. Now, a new board of directors under the guidance of President Gary Trost begins a two-year term assuming the leadership mantle for the association. I look forward to working with this outstanding group of leaders until December of 2019. ✨



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THE FUTURE IS SO BRIGHT

Gary Trost, USPTA President

It is a great honor to be the president of this wonderful association. While we celebrate our 90th anniversary, I don't know if there has been a more exciting time to be a member of the USPTA. The possibilities that we can accomplish in the future are endless.

Build it and they will come. The USPTA owns the land and building just across the street from the Home of American Tennis, the USTA National Campus. Just this purchase and move alone separates us as the innovators in tennis certification and the commitment to the future. Sitting alongside the world's premier tennis facility, with the best American professionals and juniors training year around, offers our association unprecedented visibility as well as the invaluable opportunity to work collaboratively with leaders in the tennis industry.

The technology is out of this world. Lake Nona's infrastructure is built with the highest quality fiber optics on the planet and our National Headquarters was built with the latest technology. All of our computers and hardware were replaced with the latest state-of-the-art equipment to give our staff the tools to provide the service that our members deserve.

Our National Staff is qualified, diverse, and service oriented. The talent pool at Lake Nona is very high and the new staff is exceptional in every department. The way they have bonded and excelled during the very tough move into the new building, dealing with the effects of Hurricane Irma, and the huge success of the Next Generation Workshop is a tribute to their skills and our leaders.


The board of directors will have five new members for the first time since inception and the Executive Committee will also have several new

presidents and regional vice presidents. I am confident that these leaders are committed to the membership and will excel in their new roles. Our division structure distributes programs and also represents members within your region. This may be our greatest strength and difference with any other organization.

Where does this take us in the future? I know that we have gone through a transition period, but we must get back to growing our



A U30 promotional video was shot in Lake Nona this past fall.

membership. Beginning with our U30 initiative, we must continue to make the tennis-teaching profession relevant to every young aspiring tennis professional so they will want to be a part of the USPTA. With our extensive library of education opportunities at TennisResources.com, and multimedia team, we will enhance our education to new heights that cannot be paralleled. This is what our association does best: we certify and educate the best tennis-teaching professionals in the world. This is why the future is so bright. 

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SERVE LIKE AN ACE

WHY A GOOD SERVER CAN BE COMPARED TO AN ACE BASEBALL PITCHER

By John Maas, USPTA Elite Professional

All-Star pitchers like Clayton Kershaw and Justin Verlander will earn a home in Cooperstown because of their ability to keep opposing hitters off-balance with a variety of pitches. Today's elite tennis players are able to do the same thing to opposing returners by pounding a variety of nasty serves. For example, Roger Federer and Pete Sampras, two of the best servers in the history of the game, were able to dictate matches by excelling in a variety of serving categories.

The primary strategy for a successful server is to not give the returner the same serve point after point. Sampras was a master at not only using his unbelievable power, but also his intense kick serve to keep opponents guessing with timing and retuning strike zones. Federer excels at spot serving which is a strategic variation of pace, spin, and placement to utilize the entire service box to garner both free points and short balls for his five-star forehand.

Both Grand Slam Champions won a staggering percentage of their service games because they not only used a variety of serves, but also because they had a game plan on where and how they were going to serve the ball before they even released the toss. They consistently wrote a script in their head before the hands began the play. With advanced players, a particular serve could be scripted for a free point, an ace or perhaps to generate an approach shot or to open up the court for a favorite groundstroke pattern. The strength versus weakness match up is also frequently in the server's mind just as an elite baseball



Justin Verlander

Photo credit: Alex Bierens de Haan, Houston Astros

pitcher knows the batters strike zone weakness.

A good server, if possible, should have a variety of serves such as a flat serve, slice serve, and kick serve. In addition, the server should ideally be able to hit those serves out wide, into the body or down the T. Furthermore, a polished server must use their serves in a premeditated game plan in order to keep their opponent off balance. Even if you only possess a flat serve, make a conscious effort to direct your serves to different parts of the service box by opening and closing your front shoulder. Hold your tossing arm up longer and the serve will drive toward your opponent's backhand side if right-handed players are involved in the match. If you are interested in developing a spin

serve, make sure you use the continental grip, stay turned, and hit up and out.

Spin on all strokes makes direction easier as the ball will clear the net at a higher margin and with more control. In addition, spin will create a slightly different bounce for your opponent thus creating a different strike zone. This is crucial in order to prevent the returner from attaining a rhythm on their returns.

As most club tennis players know, the serve is the most difficult stroke to master and often times the least appealing stroke to practice. However, with guidance from your pro and practice you can learn the variety that our idols possess. Remember, the server holds the ball first and therefore has the first crack at dictating the point. If you are able to sequence and execute your serves, you will receive plenty of "free points" which will lead to several "strikeouts." ✨



John Maas is a USPTA Elite Tennis Professional and an USPTA Elite Platform Tennis Professional. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and played #1 Singles and Doubles for the tennis team. He currently is the head tennis professional at Quail West Golf and Country Club in Naples, FL and was previously the director of tennis at The Millbrook Club in Greenwich, CT and head tennis professional at the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, FL.



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THREE MISTAKES THAT CAN MAKE YOUR SERVE SLOWER

By Ken DeHart, USPTA Master Professional

In the previous article, John Maas discussed ways players can become great servers like Roger Federer or Pete Sampras. But what about recreational players? Did you know that there are also ways for a player's serve to become slower? Here are three mistakes that can make your serve slower:

Mistake #1

Not having a target. All ball sports require having a target, somewhere to throw, and hit or kick the ball to. "In the court" is not a good target for intermediate or advanced players. The mind needs more definition to recruit the correct muscles to direct your serve to a selected target.

The five tactical priorities of serving:

- Get the ball in play
- Control the direction
- Determine the depth
- Choose the spin
- Select the speed

All five of these priorities apply to all level of servers – they just get more specific as the players skill level increases.

Tips for beginners (2.5 and up)

1. Get the ball over the net.
2. Direct the ball into the appropriate deuce or ad court.
3. Depth is not a key component at this level.
4. Spin is best achieved by striking the side of the ball to cause the ball to have a side-spin that will help the ball come down into the court.
5. Speed is not as important at this level but will be at the next two levels.



Mistake #1 is not having a Target.

Tips for Intermediates (3.0-4.0)

1. Get the ball over the net at various heights.
2. Divide the service courts in half-length wise and direct your serve to the left or right of the deuce or ad court to your opponent's forehand or backhand.
3. Depth becomes more important at this level. Preference is deeper into the service box so opponents cannot move forward to attack your serve. An occasional short serve is a good change of pace to keep your opponent off balance.
4. Spin comes into play big at this level. The spin helps to keep the faster serves in the service court. The spin means the opponent must know how to handle the spin as it contacts their racquet to avoid an error.

5. Speed is a key factor here – but too many players try to serve too fast for their ability to control the serve. Vary the speed to keep the opponent off guard like a good baseball pitcher. Vary the speed, spin, and location to be successful.

Tips for Advanced (4.5-5.5)

1. The percentage of first serves put in play becomes critical at this level. Don't give your opponent too many looks at your serve – especially the second serve. Hitting a second serve at this level puts huge pressure on the server and allows the returner to be more aggressive.
2. Direction is huge here and becomes very specific. Short and wide to the deuce court, fast and into the body or up the center to the "T" are



Mistake#2 Too Much Grip Pressure

- important decisions. Variety is very important to keep the receiver guessing as to the location you will use.
3. Depth is a determining component here and needs to be used in conjunction with direction when serving. Anything short will usually result in the server being put on defense or losing the point outright.
 4. Spin is essential to make the serve “heavy,” keep the ball in play as serve speed increases, and to make the ball move around as the opponent receives it.
 5. Speed is usually quite high (90-130 mph) but speed doesn’t matter if it is not in play, in the right direction, with the right depth and confusing spin to put pressure on the receiver.

Mistake #2

Too much grip pressure. Most players try to grip the racquet handle tighter to make the serve go faster.

- Actually, the opposite is true. The more relaxed the grip pressure the faster the racquet can be accelerated toward the ball.
- The hand needs to be able to accelerate the racquet head faster than the hand could normally move.
- On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the most relaxed and 5 being the tightest, the grip tension should be around 2-3 for the best speed on your serve.



Mistake#3 Not practicing.

- Try serving while holding the grip with only two or three fingers and the thumb. You will feel the natural acceleration of the serve motion.

Mistake #3

Not practicing. Your serve will not get better by itself.

- It is the most important shot in your game.
- It starts every point.
- Taking a few practice serves before you start to play will not help your serve get better.
- It is your first chance to put the ball in play the way you want it to be introduced.
- It is one part of the game you can practice by yourself.
- How can your serve get any faster without taking a lesson and hitting the practice courts?
- When practicing ground strokes – instead of dropping the ball to start the point, hit an easy spin serve to start each point. This way you are always practicing your serve and return as you practice working on your ground strokes. Don’t wait to the last part of practice to practice your serve. Practice in increments all throughout your practice session.
- Hit the courts to practice improving your most important shot in your game. 🌟



Ken DeHart is a USPTA Master Professional and director of player development at the Almaden Valley Athletic Club in San Jose, Calif. DeHart is a three-time USPTA Career Development award winner, four-time USPTA Divisional Pro of the Year, USA High Performance Coach, a member of the Wilson Premier Advisory Staff, and a member of the United States Tennis Writers Association.

IANNI CLAIMS SECOND INDIVIDUAL SURFACE CHAMPIONSHIP

HARD COURT CHAMPIONSHIPS IN AUSTIN WRAP UP 2017 SURFACE CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

The USPTA Surface Championship Series ended with the USPTA Hard Court Championships that took place Nov. 3-5 at the River Place Country Club in Austin. Participants competed for the chance to win \$10,000 in prizes across five divisions during the tournament. The USPTA Surface Championships gives USPTA-certified Professionals an opportunity to showcase their playing skills and earn prize money. The tournaments are open to all USPTA-certified Professionals in good standing.

Stefano Ianni of Miami wrapped up the 2017 season by capturing his second Men's Open Singles title and the Men's Open Doubles title for the fourth consecutive year at the Hard Courts. On the women's side, Alice Ramirez captured the Women's 45+ Singles and Dave Luedtke took home his first Men's 55+ Singles title.

Ianni ends his USPTA Surface Championship season with three titles in 2017. Overall, Ianni has won 13 titles while competing in the USPTA Surface Championship Series. Below are the results from the three-day event. 🌟



Rudy Obregon (left) with Stefano Ianni

2017 USPTA HARCOURT CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Men's Open Singles

Stefano Ianni (Miami) def. Rudy Obregon (San Antonio, Texas) 6-1, 6-1

Men's Open Doubles

S.Ianni/R.Obregon def. James Daly/Mario Jakovljevic (Tyler, Texas) 6-4, 7-6

Women's 45+ Singles

Alice Ramirez (Grapevine, Texas) def. Patricia Harrison (Tyler, Texas) 6-1, 6-3

Men's 55+ Singles

Dave Luedtke (Waco, Texas) def. Rick Workman (Ormond Beach, Florida) 6-1, 6-0

Men's Open Singles Consolation

David Robbins (San Antonio, Texas) def. Mikolaj Caruk (Wichita Falls, Texas) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3



Alice Ramirez



David Luedtke



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INTRODUCING THE 2018-2019 USPTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Beginning January 1st, the 2018-2019 board of directors will take office and serve the association. Gary Trost, Feisal Hassan, and Chuck Gill will be returning to serve on the board as president, first vice president, and immediate past president. In addition to Trost, Hassan, and Gill, the USPTA welcomes four new members to the board of directors. Cari Buck, Mark Faber, Bill Mountford, and Richard Slivocka will serve as vice presidents during the 2018-2019 term. A fifth board member, replacing Alan Cutler, who resigned in October, will be named in January.



Cari Buck



Mark Faber



Bill Mountford



Richard Slivocka

Vice President Cari Buck

Growing up in a tennis family, it only makes sense that Cari Buck has spent most of her professional career in the tennis industry, from court maintenance as a teenager at the family tennis club in Cape Cod to her current position as the director of marketing and communications for the USTA Southern California Section. Buck has held numerous other positions throughout all areas of the tennis industry including teaching pro/tennis director (in Massachusetts, Florida, Hawaii and California), inside sales for a tennis apparel company, operations at two ATP events (LA Open and Tennis Channel Open) and marketing manager/client services at Tennis Channel where she worked for nine years. A USPTA Pro for over 21 years, Buck has served on both USTA and USPTA National Committees and has won many awards and accolades for her work and service in the industry.

Vice President Mark Faber

Mark Faber is an USPTA Elite Professional and is the director of tennis at Twos Athletic Club in Toledo, Ohio. He has been a USPTA member for more than 20 years and is the past president of the Midwest Division. Since graduating from Methodist University in 1994, he has been involved in many facets of the tennis industry. Not only does he serve as the director of tennis, he has coached high school tennis for 24 years is co-director of a major charity event, started a school morning tennis program and serves on various USTA Midwest and National Committees and project teams. He has been recognized for his efforts as USPTA Ohio Pro of the Year, USPTA Midwest and National High School Coach of the Year, USTA/USPTA Community Service Award winner and TIA High School Coach of the Year. He is married to Lisa and they have two children Gabi and Christian.

Vice President Bill Mountford

Bill Mountford is a USPTA Elite Professional and the senior director of racquets for Chelsea Piers Connecticut in Stamford, Connecticut. His service to the USPTA includes being a member of the executive committee for multiple terms, a division president, and chairing USPTA National Committees. He has spent his professional career working in the tennis industry and was mostly recently with the United States Tennis Association, where he was charged with overseeing junior tournaments and junior competition in the US. Before that, he worked in market development with emphasis on establishing the foundation for the growth of Youth Tennis / 10 & Under Tennis initiatives and collegiate tennis. Mountford also worked overseas for another national governing body, the Lawn Tennis Association in Great Britain, and prior to that was the director of tennis at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. Bill and his family reside in New Canaan, CT.

Vice President Richard Slivocka

Richard Slivocka, a native of Wichita, Kansas, has been a USPTA Elite Professional since 2001. He is the director of tennis at Prairie Dunes Country Club in Hutchinson, Kansas. He has served the USPTA in many different capacities since becoming a USPTA member 16 years ago. He has served on the Executive Committee and National Awards Committee, has been Missouri Valley Division regional vice-president and president, and other various positions in both the Southwest and Missouri Valley Divisions. Slivocka has been recognized throughout the tennis industry for his outstanding teaching, speaking, and contributions to the game. Slivocka has received many honors and awards throughout his coaching and playing career including USPTA Missouri Pro of the Year-2005, USPTA Kansas Pro of the Year-2011, USPTA Missouri Valley 35's Player of the Year-2012, USPTA Missouri Valley Player of the Year-2013, and USPTA Missouri Valley Professional of the Year-2015. ★

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USPTA FOUNDATION CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL 2017



USPTA Foundation Update

Innovation and constant improvement are the hallmarks of a good tennis program. Like good tennis programs, the USPTA Foundation has innovated and improved to make us a better organization.

In 2017 the Foundation:

- Created a disaster relief fund to help our members who have suffered from the effects of hurricanes and most recently the fires in California. The Foundation is working jointly with the National Staff and Executive Directors of Florida, Southern, and NorCal divisions to pinpoint our members and provide relief.
- Simplified the grant application process. The application itself is online and can be found at USPTAFoundation.org. USPTA members can now go online and fill out the grant application form.
- Created a gift donation ladder that

recognizes all USPTA members who have made tax-deductible contributions.

- Made it easier to support and donate to the Foundation through PayPal.
- Achieved a “Silver” GuideStar rating for our commitment to financial transparency.



All USPTA members can access our financial tax records and bylaws by going to our website.


Who has the Foundation supported:

To date, the Foundation has awarded over \$125,000.00 to over 70 programs that reach across the country, including Inner City Tennis Foundation (Minneapolis), Harper for Kids (San Francisco), First Serve OKC (Oklahoma City), Northwest Wheelchair (Oregon), and ACEing Autism (California).

We also honor our veterans by providing grants to Tennis Thanks the

Troops programs in Washington D.C and Orlando organized and run by USPTA members have the Foundation’s support.

How you can help the Foundation?

Awarding grants to qualified programs our members organize is only half of the picture. The USPTA Foundation is responsible for raising funds through fundraisers, tax-deductible donations from our members, and most recently linking the USPTA Foundation to AmazonSmile. Please consider giving a tax-deductible donation to your USPTA Foundation thru the PayPal link found at USPTAFoundation.org. Link your Amazon regular or prime account to the USPTA Foundation by clicking on the Foundation website. 

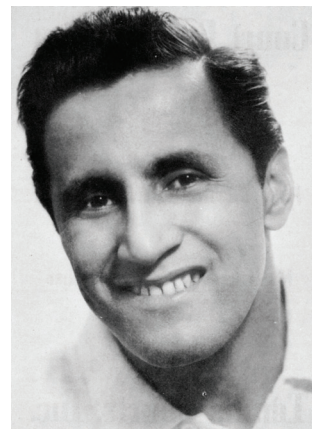
REMEMBERING USPTA HALL OF FAMER PANCHO SEGURA

USPTA Hall of Fame coach and player Francisco “Pancho” Segura passed away on November 18 at the age of 96. Segura was a leading tennis player of the 1940s and 1950s, both as an amateur and a professional. In 1950 and 1952, he was the World Co-No. 1 player. He was born in Guayaquil, Ecuador, but moved to the United States in the late 1930s.


When he was 17, he won several titles in Latin America and caught the attention of University of Miami head coach Gardnar Mulloy, who offered Segura a scholarship to play for the team. Throughout his collegiate career, Segura captured the NCAA Singles Championship three straight years in a row from 1943-1945. After college, he

played on the amateur circuit and became a singles semifinalist four times at the U.S Championships and a runner up in the men’s doubles and mixed doubles twice in major tournaments during the 1940’s.

During his professional career, he is recognized as the only player to have won the U.S. Pro Tennis Championship title on three different surfaces (which he did consecutively from 1950-1952). In 1962, Segura relocated to Southern



California and became a successful tennis-teaching professional and coach. Segura started his tennis-teaching career as the tennis director at the Beverly Hills Tennis Club and later moving to San Diego to become the tennis director at LaCosta Resort and Spa in 1970. Segura joined the United States Professional Tennis

Association in 1946 and was widely credited with helping develop eight-time major singles champion Jimmy Connors. He was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1984. 

WHAT TO DO WITH THE NON-DOMINANT HAND?

INCORPORATING THE NON-DOMINANT HAND INTO YOUR FIVE STROKES

By Jimmy Royalty, USPTA Elite Professional

Whether you are right or left handed, the non-dominant hand is equally important. In most cases, it counterbalances the dominant side. The non-dominant hand is the catalyst for balance throughout the entire shot. For the sake of this article, we will assume that you are a right-handed player.



The One-Handed Backhand

On the one handed backhand slice, the left hand goes toward the back fence after making contact. Thus, keeping the right and left hand on the same plane. This is not the case for the topspin backhand. On the topspin backhand, the left hand will stay closer to the left hip. This allows the right arm to follow through. If you take the left hand back toward the back fence, it prevents any follow through. Therefore, it is okay for the left hand to go toward the back fence when slicing.

The Forehand

On the forehand, the non-dominant left hand counter balances the right. As you start your hip and shoulder turn, the left hand helps guide the racquet back. At this point, the hands start to separate. The most important aspect is that as they separate the hands should be on the same plane throughout the stroke.

Think of it like downhill skiing. You need your arms in similar position to maintain balance and control. The same goes for hitting a forehand. That left hand being up and level with the right keeps stability throughout the shot. This also goes for the follow-through. You see Serena catching the racquet with the left hand and you see Federer finish with his left hand just beneath his right elbow. The non-dominant hand is what is balancing the right side.

The Two-Handed Backhand

On the double handed backhand the left hand is the dominant hand. The left hand does a majority of the work. The right hand stabilizes the left and is just along for the ride.


We do a drill at the academy to accentuate this. We have the player hit left-handed forehands from the service line. This will force that non-dominant hand to get involved. We then add only the right hand's index finger and thumb. The left hand is still the one working as the player is barely holding onto the racquet with the right hand. We then have them go full throttle and use both hands. This drill gets that left side to work and eliminates any fighting going on between hands.

The Volley

When volleying it is important to keep the hands in the same vicinity. You should pretend you are handcuffed and cannot separate them a great deal. When you are moving to volley the ball, focus on keeping the hands close. This will give you added control and stability. Another great tip is to put your left hand on the edge of the racquet. When you turn to hit a volley, it will instantly turn the hips and shoulders.

The Serve

The left side is so important when attacking the serve. Not only does the left side start your motion as you toss the ball, it also is what puts you into a good set to launch position. In your set to launch or trophy position, we look for that left arm/hand to be up toward the ball. This left side rotates the hips and is what forces a good load with the legs. At contact, the right arm is replacing the position of the left arm. The shoulders are rotating like bicycle pedals, one over the other.

In closing, the right arm could not possibly do its job if it were not for the non-dominant left side. There are several things you can do to engage and improve your non-dominant side. You can pick up tennis balls left handed, eat left handed, and even brush your teeth with the left hand. 



Jimmy Royalty has worked in the tennis industry since the mid 1990's. As a USPTA Elite Tennis Professional, he was Indiana Professional of the Year in 2001 and 2005. Since 2010, Jimmy has been a head tennis coach at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida. He has traveled worldwide performing clinics and coaching ITF players.

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USPTA MEMBERS AWARDS & NEWS

Frank Swope was named director of tennis management of USTA Florida. He has been a USPTA professional for more than 30 years and most recently worked as the director of tennis operations for BallenIsles Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens. While at BallenIsles, Swope recruited, hired, trained, and managed all tennis staff and oversaw large pro shop operations and all tennis programs. He also has served on the USPTA Florida board in which he served as both the treasurer from 1997-2001 and president from 2002-2003 of the USPTA Florida Division.



Chad Anderson was named the Section 8-2A Assistant Coach of the Year. He has assisted the Brainerd girls team for five years. Anderson played collegiate tennis at Gustavus Adolphus College and became a tennis-teaching professional at Madden's Resort in Brainerd, Minnesota after college.



Lorena Martin was named director of high performance for the Seattle Mariners. Martin will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the Mariners physical and mental training approach of players and staff, including oversight of the entire organization's medical, strength and conditioning, nutrition and mental skills departments. She previously worked as the director of sports performance for the Los Angeles Lakers where she worked closely with the coaching, medical and strength and conditioning staff as well as management to ensure data driven methodology aimed at injury prevention and athletic performance.




Tomas Gonzalez (left) was named director of tennis at Kingsmill Resort in Williamsburg, Virginia. Before joining Kingsmill, he worked for the Philadelphia Country Club and the Country Club of Virginia, where he developed the club's junior, platform and high-performance programs as well as ladies league teams. He also served as the men's and women's assistant tennis coach at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where he played in college. During his career, Gonzalez achieved a national ranking of No. 3 in Chile's Junior International Tennis Federation before playing at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Throughout his playing career, Gonzalez was also the hitting coach for many top 100 ATP World Tour and WTA players.



Fred Drilling (top right), Richard Johnson (top left), Jimmy Parker (top center) and Larry Turville (bottom) all competed in the 2017 ITF Super Senior World Team Championships Oct. 14-21 at the USTA National Campus.



Drilling won the Men's 75 division doubles alongside Michael Stewart and the Mixed Doubles with Donna Fales.

Johnson and Parker went on to win the doubles for the Men's 70 division. Turville was a part of Team USA, who defeated Austria to win the ITF Super-Seniors Britannia Cup for the Men's 65 division. 



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EXAMS, UPGRADES & PTCA I

4 Credits for PTCA I Segment Exams, Upgrades & PTCA

- Jan. 6 - 7 Mountlake Terrace, WA
- Jan. 6 - 7 Aurora, IL
- Jan. 12 - 13 Montgomery, TX
- Jan. 13 - 14 Boca Raton, FL
- Jan. 26 - 27 Fridley, MN
- Jan. 28 - 29 Stanford, CA
- Feb. 8 - 9 Centennial, CO
- Feb. 10 - 11 Alpharetta, GA
- Feb. 12 - 13 Orlando, FL
- Feb. 17 - 18 Huntington Beach, CA
- Feb. 17 - 18 Boston, MA
- Feb. 18 Hilton Head Island, SC
- Feb. 22 Mission Hills, KS
- Feb. 24 Eau Claire, WI
- Feb. 24 - 25 Horseshoe Bay, TX

Exam reservations must be made at least 21 days prior to the dates listed. Each date includes an exam, upgrade. PTCA I is included in the two day exam. Exam cancellations must be received no later than 14 days before the exam, or a cancellation fee will be charged accordingly.

Applicant: late cancellation fee – \$95; failure to cancel – application fee is forfeited. Certified members: late cancellation fee – \$25; failure to cancel – \$25 plus the upgrade fee is forfeited. Registration for another exam will not be accepted until cancellation fees are paid.

USPTA requires all certified members to earn 6 credits of continuing education in a three-year period.

(International members, recreational coaches and those 65 or older are exempt.) The time period coincides with the date you completed the certification exam or reinstated your membership. Please login to My USPTA to check your Professional Development Program end date.

If the requirement is not met, you will have your membership suspended. To help you meet that goal, USPTA provides hundreds of hours of education every year in the form of conferences, workshops, webinars, DVDs and more. TennisResources.com is an excellent resource for free education opportunities. In addition, the Coach Youth Tennis website offers six free online courses that earn a 1/2 education credit each.

Upon completion of the sixth course, you will receive 3 bonus credits (one-time only), bringing the total to 6 credits and completing the continuing education requirement. (you do not need to complete the online workshop unless you are completing your USPTA certification) Go to coachyouthtennis.com for more information.

CARDIO TENNIS


- Jan. 12 Cardio Tennis Training Course
Level 1
Nichols Hills, OK
- Jan. 13 Cardio Tennis Training Course
Level 2
Wichita, KS
- Jan. 29 Level 1 Training Course
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WEBINARS

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PLATFORM TENNIS

- Jan. 14-15 Ross, CA
Lagunitas Country Club
- Feb. 25 Garden City, NY
GardenCity Country Club
- Mar. 19-20 Golf, IL
Glenview Club

2018 USPTA DIVISION CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Division Conferences - 6 Credits

- January 26-28 Northern
Lifetime Fitness & Athletics
Fridley, MN
- January 27-28 Northern California
Taube Tennis Center
Stanford, CA
- February 10-11 Intermountain
Lifetime Fitness;
Centennial, CO
- February 5 Hawaii Division
Maui, HI
- February 22-24 Missouri Valley
Kansas City Country Club
Mission Hills, KS
- February 22-25 Texas
Horseshoe Bay Resort
Horseshoe Bay, TX
- February 25-26 Midwest
Columbus Marriott
Columbus, OH
- March 1-4 Mid-Atlantic
Army Navy Country Club
Arlington, VA
- March 4 San Diego
La Jolla Beach & Tennis Club
La Jolla, CA
- May 5-6 Eastern/New England
National Tennis Center
Flushing, NY
- May 17-19 Southern
TBD; Atlanta, GA
- May 18-20 Southwest
La Camarilla Racquet, Swim & Fitness Club
Phoenix, AZ
- May 30-June 3 Florida
Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress
Orlando, FL
- June 1-2 Pacific Northwest
Yakima Tennis Club
Yakima, WA
- August 22-23 USPTA World Conference
Grand Hyatt
New York, NY
- April/May Southern California
TBD
- November Middle States
TBD

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