



Game, Set, News

USTA Community Tennis Association Quarterly Newsletter

Winter 2011 Edition



Texas Tennis Matters— Emphasizing Diversity and Inclusion

In keeping with a recent marketing/membership theme of “Texas Tennis Matters,” USTA Texas emphasized diversity and inclusion when presenting its Community Tennis Development Workshop this fall. Representatives from varied CTAs around the Section were treated to special sessions and exciting speakers to assist them in planning their 2012 programs to include more and different populations.



Committee Chairs, Carlos Turic (Wheelchair) and Henry Cox (Adaptive Tennis), joined forces to give a session on providing programs for those with physical and challenging disabilities. Special guest speakers included Denise Castelli, an amputee who earned a spot as a ball girl at the 2011 US Open, and Dennis Ralston, a former Wimbledon champion and Davis Cup member and captain, who continues to teach tennis despite having lost a leg similarly to Denise. Their inspirational and moving talks on overcoming adversity resulted in the highest ratings on the post-meeting survey. Mr. Ralston, in fact, received the only standing ovation in the long history of the conference. Denise expressed the philosophy of both of them when she said her goal in life now was to change the way the world views disabilities.



USTA Texas hopes that its CTAs will adapt the wealth of material presented at the workshop to use tennis to make a difference in the lives of the disabled, returning military, as well as the many diverse and minority populations throughout its Section. In Texas, it matters that tennis is for everyone!



Connecting Players to Adaptive Tennis Programs

The USTA would like to promote and develop recreational tennis opportunities for players with differing abilities and circumstances. By identifying adaptive tennis programs in your area, we hope to connect players with special circumstances to the programs designed for those players through our USTA web network. In order to be included in this effort, please [click here](#) and tell us more about your Adaptive Tennis program.

Adaptive tennis includes programs that work with individuals with developmental, psychiatric, physical or environmental disabilities. The USTA supports these programs, providing grants, equipment and resources for specifically tailored programs that provide fun, fitness and a positive social experience for participants. Visit the [Adaptive Tennis](#) page of the USTA website for more information.

Tennis – Truly The Sport of a Lifetime



This past fall the Savannah Area Tennis Association (SATA) hosted the USTA Georgia Super Senior State Championships at the Landings Club in Savannah. 677 participants competed over a beautiful weekend in the 60 and over

and 70 and over divisions. All of the teams had compelling stories but one team was particularly inspiring. The 3.0 (70s) team from Savannah, calling themselves the Cutter's Point Shea's Belles, emerged as State Champions. This team was sponsored by Cutter's Point Coffee in Sandfly, Georgia, and played in memory of Nancy Shea, a team member who passed away last December from ovarian cancer.

These ladies exemplify the wonderful benefits of lifelong tennis, being part of a team that gives them not only an active, physical lifestyle, but also camaraderie and lifelong relationships and support. The oldest player on the team, Betty Boy, competes well at 84 years of age. Pat Stewart (captain) and Marceline Preston (co-captain) are 82 years young. Other members are Gill Perry, Jackie Timms, Barbara McGinty, Sally Dayton and Gloria Stahle. Marceline plays four days a week and says they are called the "wily seniors" because they play with their head as well as their legs. We can all learn some lessons from "Shea's Belles". To learn more about adult/senior tennis [click here.](#)



Chris Reynard: Continuing Top Athletics Through Age Group Tennis

A burning competitive desire inspired Chris Reynard to BEGIN playing tennis at the age of 40 and ultimately become a Gold Ball winner in age group tennis within a 16 year period. In addition to his success on the court, Chris notes that it is the personal fulfillment and relationships off the court which have been just as significant for him.

Growing up as an African/American youngster in Slidell, Louisiana outside of New Orleans, Reynard was not a tennis player as blacks were not welcomed at the country clubs where tennis was primarily played. He excelled in school and in traditional sports like football, basketball, track and baseball. Chris joined the Navy right out of high school and spent four years learning to fly helicopters. Afterwards, he received a basketball scholarship to North Texas State University, graduated in four years and then went on to play professional basketball in Brussels, Belgium. After his basketball career ended, he joined the

US Coast Guard where he spent 18 years. Living in Northern Virginia now, he is a pilot for Jet Network, a private jet company, where he flies Gulfstreams and other luxury jets for corporations and individuals.

When Chris was 40 and came home with cuts and bruises from playing pick-up basketball with guys half his age, his wife Bianca said it was time for another sport. Tennis became his sport of choice because it allowed him to constantly test himself against others his own age, gave him an athletic outlet where he was in control of his own success or failure and he could play when he wasn't working. At the outset, he set personal goals, the highest being a gold ball in singles. While he just won a *silver* ball in the 2011 National 55 Clay court singles championships, he also won a *gold* ball this year in the National 55 Grass court doubles championships.

Notwithstanding his amazing and quick success on the court, Chris says that the most

gratifying part of playing age group tennis are the friendships he has developed all over the country. He enjoys being with his peer group of top tennis players, as they travel together from city to city throughout the year, from both the competitive and personal aspect of being with each other.

Chris Reynard is a leader on and off the court. His exemplifies the highest ethics and moral character which have endeared him to his fraternity of tennis players. When Chris is not working or training, he devotes much of his time to teaching his two granddaughters, Mykaela and Trinity (both 9), to be champions on the court and in the classroom. Chris is a great example of how today's senior athletes have a wonderful outlet in age group tennis to continue to pursue their competitive desires and also, develop meaningful relationships with friends and family.

Succeeding in Junior Team Tennis Programming!

The Shakopee Tennis Association (STA) in Shakopee, Minn., under the direction of current President Dave Forbes, has built itself on a “global programming” approach. Founded in 1994 by Tom Stenson, the Shakopee Tennis Association has beginner youth lessons, Jr. Team Tennis, Adult programming and Winter Jr. Team Tennis, but it is summer Jr. Team Tennis (JTT) which has become the backbone of this small-town organization.

Back in '94, Stenson was looking to develop a program where kids from Shakopee, which is located 20 miles southwest of Minneapolis, as well as the surrounding areas, could come together during the summers and have fun playing tennis in a safe and supervised environment. Each year, his program, which was truly a grassroots team tennis program, grew by word of mouth. In 2000, Stenson was thinking of retirement and soon looked for parents to cultivate the program he started. That group, which included Zack Zastrow and Forbes, recognized many of the on-court pieces were in place, but needed to develop an administrative infrastructure which included becoming an official Community Tennis Association and a 501(c)(3). It also included forming a Board of Directors and marketing to the masses by hiring a company named BT Media to handle its web site, registrations and e-mail communications. The group also engaged the late- Mark Johnson to take its on-court offerings even further. They hired 3-5 high school or college-aged instructors and put a program-

progression plan which still exists today.

All participants in the summer program must start by taking lessons with kids of similar age and ability levels the first year. This group plays three days a week, and by the end of the seven-week session, the kids have typically progressed to an advanced beginner or low intermediate level. The following year, the kids enter the Jr. Team Tennis stage of the program where they either drill or compete in match play Monday-Thursday for two hours a day. The kids are also encouraged to play in one or both of the Level 7 Junior Tournaments hosted by the Shakopee Tennis Association to ready themselves for future match play and to compete at the JTT Area or Section Championship. In 2011, the STA had 420 kids participating in the beginning lessons and JTT programs; fielding 11 JTT teams, including a 10 and Under team.

Still promoting Stenson's vision from '94, the Shakopee Tennis Association continues to focus on the social aspects of tennis with the primary objective being FUN! Since implementing USTA Jr. Team Tennis in '04, Shakopee has only fielded intermediate level teams at Area and Section Championships and has never made winning the primary focus. As Forbes said, “If these kids are still playing at age 40, then we know we have succeeded because they liked the game and decided to make tennis their lifetime sport.”

But like any program doing all the right things, success soon follows and the Shakopee JTT program is no exception as for the first time in history, it had a 14U team qualify for the 2011 JTT Intermediate National Championships in Arizona. The team finished an impressive seventh at its initial Nationals, but Forbes admits his biggest thrill was watching the group work together in raising over \$11,000 in only six weeks to fund its trip. The players and their parents were able to engage the entire community by putting on a golf outing, holding a silent auction and soliciting individual sponsors.

The STA continues to put those fundraising skills to good use as it readies for the next project – building an indoor tennis facility in Shakopee. The group has formed an eight-person steering committee and identified a potential 12-acre parcel of land. It is now working with USTA National and other CTAs in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area in drawing up plans for the proposed facility which would have eight indoor courts, nine outdoor courts, six 36-foot courts, classrooms, a computer lab and community meeting space. The STA is also in the final stages of developing its capital campaign with hopes of proposing everything to the Park Board, and then the City Council, in early 2012.

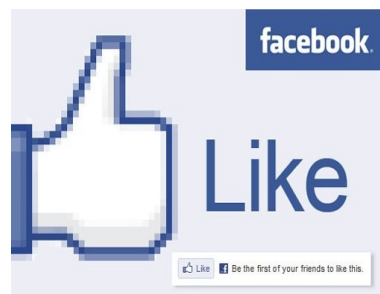
Learn more about the [USTA Junior Team Tennis Program](#).



2012 CTA Registration Renewal is Now Open!

Registration is free. To register or renew:

- 1) Visit <http://ct.usta.com/ctanjtl> (or copy paste url into your browser).
- 2) **Login:** Login using the username (email address) and password you created when you submitted your registration this year. If you forgot your password, use the “Forgot Password?” link on the login page.
- 4) **Submit:** In order to renew your registration you must complete all of the required blank fields, indicated by a red asterisk. Complete the form with accuracy and integrity. Do not forget to “Save as Draft” periodically as you go through the form. Click “Submit” when the registration is complete. Note: Some information was pre-populated from last year’s registration form. You may update/change any information on the form, but you *must* update all of the blank, required fields before submitting. You will need to know up-to-date 2011 participant information when completing the form. For your convenience, you may access your 2011 registration by clicking the magnifying glass icon in the menu of your registration, then selecting “2011”.



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The next edition of *Game, Set, News* will be released in March Thank you for your continued commitment to growing and developing tennis!

Questions? Email us at cta@usta.com