



JUNIOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2012

New England Junior Doubles Team Advances to College

By Bree Simmers
USTA New England Communications Manager

The New England weather didn't stop Aaron Revzin (Fairfield, CT) and Nolan Paige (Needham, MA) from becoming outstanding tennis players and one of the best junior doubles teams in the country. Now, with Bronze and Silver tennis balls in their possession, they are quite the dynamic duo.

Their successful partnership began when they were only ten and eleven years old at the Coup de Quebec tournament and they have been playing doubles together ever since. Their most recent success was making it to the 2011 USTA Winter National Championships in Central Arizona, where they took second place winning a Silver Ball.

"From the start, we knew we were playing solid doubles and playing really well as a team," said Aaron. "We knew we had a chance to have a great tournament and we just took it one match at a time. For the most part, we were playing better during each match."

Nolan added, "For our last Winter National Championship, it was special to be able to play doubles together. The Silver Ball was just the icing on the cake."

When asked what makes them such successful doubles partners, both said that their longtime partnership definitely helps.

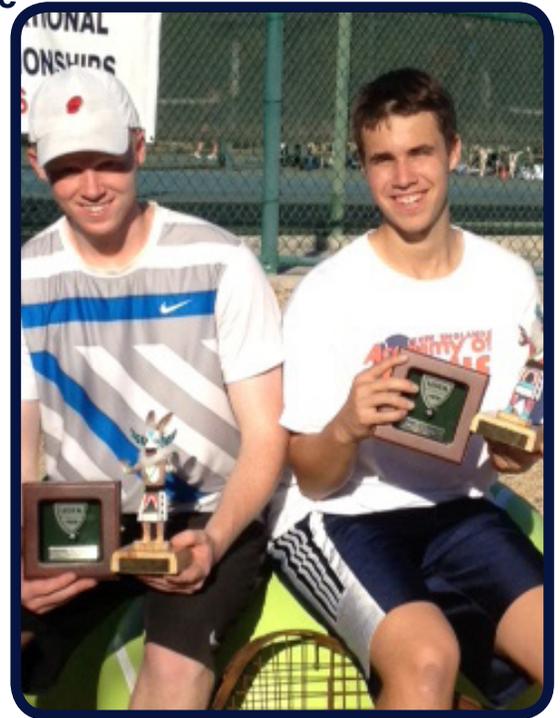
"We've been playing together for a very long time, and we really know what works for us," commented Aaron. "We both care [about doubles] a lot and put a good amount of time into doubles-specific training."

Nolan added that since they have experienced so many competitive moments together, they now know how to tackle those moments successfully. "I have a big serve and Aaron puts away volleys so well. We complement each other."

When asked to reflect back on their USTA Junior Tournament experience, Aaron said his favorite part was traveling around the country and making new friends. Nolan reflected back on his coach, John DeFilippo; mentor, Todd Paul; and trainer, Kevin Gendron, saying that they have gotten him to where he is today.

In the fall, Nolan will be attending Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA and Aaron will be attending Amherst College in Amherst, MA. They are both extremely excited to take the next step in their lives and will both be competing on the school's tennis teams.

For more information about USTA Junior Tournament's, contact David Zeutas-Broer, zeutas-broer@newengland.usta.com



Nolan Paige and Aaron Revzin with their 2011 USTA Winter National Championship Awards

Get to Know Junior Tournament Player: Ellyse Hamlin



Hometown: Fairfield, CT
I first played tennis when: I started in England at age 4
Favorite USTA tournament to play: Intersectionals
Favorite Professional Player: Clijsters
My dream college: Duke
Important life lesson from competitive tennis: To be independent and self-reliant
Favorite cross-training sport: Spinning
Favorite Book: The Hunger Games
Favorite School Subject: World Cultures
Favorite band/singer: Rihanna
Favorite Movie: Bridesmaids
If I could go to dinner with one person: Roger Federer

Also in this Issue:

- ◆ Coaches Corner
- ◆ Things You Need To Know
- ◆ Save the Dates
- ◆ Katherine Willette Leadership Scholarship Essay Winner
- ◆ Find us on Facebook



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COACHES CORNER: Playing The Zones

By John DeFilippo

Director of Tennis Solaris Racquet Club

Now, I don't want you to go out and divide the court into all these different zones. It would get much too complicated. However, I would advise you to focus on only one of these zones at a time. Let's take the Control Center as an example.

When you go out to practice, be aware of when the ball lands in that area. Better yet, if you have rubber targets that lie flat on the court, you can outline the area and see whether it is a good opportunity to take control of the point. You will be amazed at how many more opportunities you will have to attack, and how much better your shot selection will be. Conversely, make a concerted effort to keep your own shots out of your opponent's Control Center.

Remember, by being cognizant of what zone the ball lands in, you will have a better understanding of the correct shot to hit. This in turn will help you cut down on your errors. Not only will your results improve, but your enjoyment of the game will as well.

How many times have you seen players make these mistakes during matches? A ball lands close to the net, and the player runs forward to get the ball, only to hit it into the middle of the net or drive it 10 feet past the baseline. Or a ball lands two feet past the service line, smack in the middle of the court, and the player does not use the opportunity to take the offensive. How about seeing a player try to hit a winner off a ball that lands inches from the baseline?

It's as if these players were oblivious to where and how the ball landed on their side of the court. The shots they chose to hit were inappropriate considering their position on the court or were too risky or difficult for the situation, and they lost the opportunity to take control of the point.

These mistakes are not limited to club players. Quite the contrary, many of the top young pros are guilty of the same poor decisions. To help you make better decisions in shot selection, and better recognize when opportunities present themselves and don't present themselves, I have broken down the court into various zones:

1. NEUTRAL BUILDING ZONE

This is the area that is with-in four to five feet in front of the baseline. You are not going to hit many winners from this position. You should either try to neutralize your opponent, or hit a building shot to elicit a weak reply to get into a better position.



2. CONTROL CENTER

This is the area right in the middle of the court. Up and back, it begins just inside the service line and extends back to about five or six feet from the baseline. From side to side, it extends about five feet in either direction from the center service line. When your opponent hits a ball into this area, you should look to take control of the point if not win it outright. Obviously, what you do depends on the height and pace of your opponent's shot, but a ball landing in this area is generally an opportunity to put yourself in the driver's seat.



3. HEIGHT ZONE

This area starts from a few feet inside the service line and extends right up to the net. The number one factor here is the height of the ball when you reach it:

- A) Offensive position
-If the ball is above the level of the net.
- B) Building Shot
-If the ball is at or slightly below the level of the net. You hit this with the intent of setting up an opportunity to win the point on the next shot.
- C) Neutralizing position
-If the ball is well below the level of the net.
- D) Defensive position
-If you are struggling just to get to the ball.



4. CREATIVE ZONES

The creative zones are the sections of the court to the left and right of your Control Center. When you get a low quality shot in this area, you have the opportunity to be creative. By creative, I mean you have three primary options: you can hit down the line, deep crosscourt, or at a sharp angle to open up the court. Any one of these shots can hurt your opponent and put you in a position to end the point on the next shot.



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

*A roving umpire or tournament director may overrule a player's line call only when in direct observation of that one court. The roving umpire or tournament director may not overrule as a result of a player appeal.

*E-mail your questions about junior competition to David Zeutas-Broer
zeutas-broer@newengland.usta.com

SAVE THESE DATES

APRIL 15TH
USTA NEW ENGLAND
COLLEGE DAY

*FOR HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS & SENIORS

JUNE 22ND-24TH

NEW ENGLAND LEVEL 7
CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

*LEVEL 7 TOURNAMENT PLAYERS

JUNIOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

2011 Katherine Willette Leadership Scholarship Essay Winner

By Graham Alrutz
USTA New England Junior Tournament Player

The following essay titled "Graham! Come out.", written by Graham Alrutz of Middleton, CT, and was awarded the 2011 Katherine Willette Leadership Scholarship Award.

During my initial WTT singles match, I fell behind, and my coach immediately pulled me, substituting one of my teammates into the contest. How can coach take me out of this set so early? I'll break back, I thought. I want to finish the match. It's mine to win or lose, and I want to win for my team!

I'm not ashamed to write that I was stunned, confused, frustrated, and a bit hurt by my coach's decision, but, why did I feel those emotions? Coaches of other sports constantly run players into and out of games, exploring different match-ups. It's not personal. It's a game. Still, I was embarrassed to look at my teammates. When I got to the bench, however, they all gave me high-fives and pumped me up.

Then, I noticed my replacement was playing this opponent way more aggressively than I had been. This was a better match-up. I started talking to my replacement and shared with him what I had learned early in the match. With each point he played, I cheered louder and louder, because I understood that his success was really our success — our team's success.

During my second match, my opponent's coach pulled my opponent. Suddenly, in the middle of a set, I'm playing a lefty instead of a righty, a backboard instead of a hitter. And this isn't practice. Every game counts. Later that afternoon, our coach, wanting to save a teammate physically for the next set, put me in to finish. WTT players have to learn to adjust. Quickly. Play every point as if it were your only point.

On-court substitutions rocked my world! Never do junior tennis players experience anything even remotely comparable to them. They have forever changed the way I will compete. In addition, I began watching the points differently. Really watching. What works? What doesn't? What are the opponent's tendencies? I closely observed, so I could step in and play if called on. I closely observed, so I could coach and cheer my team.

WTT's coed teams and on-court coaching are awesome. Junior Tennis tournaments are lonely affairs, completely lacking the camaraderie of team sports, which I constantly witness in my friends' basketball and football games. Even in USTA Zonals, high school, or college tennis, players (though ostensibly parts of a team) are still completely responsible for their individual singles or doubles matches! In USTA, high school, and college tennis, a player wins FOR his team. In World TeamTennis, a player wins WITH his team.

After one day of competition in the Junior Nationals in San Diego, I learned a vital life lesson through on-court substitutions: the team is larger than any individual part of it. This is a lesson tennis players do not routinely have the opportunity to acquire. So, thank you, Billie Jean King, for giving me, a native of the USTA tournament jungles, this enlightening opportunity. I will be forever grateful for being a member of The New England Shrimps!

In 2009, World TeamTennis started a new scholarship program to recognize Katherine Willette who has helped run the WTT Junior Nationals Tournament in San Diego for over fifteen years. The scholarship annually awards \$300 to one male and one female attendee of WTT Junior Nationals. Winners are chosen based on essays that they submit which demonstrate a variety of lessons learned, friendships made, and the impact of the co-ed team format on the individual player and his or her team.



Mr. and Mrs. Willette with essay winner Graham Alrutz

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Code: JOIN2PLAY

*FOR NEW MEMBERS ONLY



NEW ENGLAND

Tournament players interested in more doubles play and team play experience - check out JTT!