

Our Beginnings

On May 14, 1949 a group of tennis enthusiasts met and held the first organizational meeting of the Florida Lawn Tennis Association in Miami Beach. The leaders at this first meeting, Eddie Herr, Gardner Mulloy, Edward Turville, and Clarence Varner were responsible for establishing the association and breaking away from the Southern Tennis Association.

The sections first operating budget was \$1,150.00. There were less than 40 organizational members and only 500 individual USTA members. The new association's goals were to promote junior tennis, grow the number of tournaments, and increase membership. A highly motivated group of volunteers were instrumental in achieving these and many other goals. Several champions were produced including Chris Evert, Brian Gottfried, Frank Froehling III, Eddie Dibbs, Wendy Overton, Joanne Russell, Jim Courier, Mary Joe Fernandez, Kathy Rinaldi, Jay Berger, Robert Seguso, and Bonnie Gadusek. The association's tournaments grew from 20 to over 850, and organization membership grew to over 700 members, with individual membership exceeding 41,000.



l-r: Gardner Mulloy, Ed Turville & Eddie Herr

The association established its first professional office in 1983 with one full time employee and two part time staff members. By then, the operating budget had grown to over \$250,000.00 with 350 sanctioned tournaments. In 2002, following a period of unparalleled growth in all areas of operation, the Section moved its headquarters to Daytona Beach, Florida. Presently over 600 volunteers are active with the section, teaming with a professional staff located throughout the state, and operating with a budget of over \$2.6 million dollars. The section anticipates continued growth because of population increases and the popularity of tennis in Florida.