



Senior Tennis Times

Newsletter of the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.

Jan-Feb
2010

Oh no! No more fun?

Did you know that about **300** of our members have not yet sent in their membership renewal? **Strange, but true!** If you haven't renewed, bad things will happen:

- No more tennis, starting January 1.
- No more tennis socials
- No more newsletter
- And unless you renew soon, you won't be in the membership Roster.

If you've lost the renewal we mailed to you, get a new renewal form on our website: www.seniortennismn.com, click Membership. Or call Ronnae Wagner 952-938-5785.

Give a gift of love (tennis)

By Dottie Gardner, new members chair

The Holidays are now over. Here we come, 2010, with tennis racket in hand. Do you have kids who are now turning 50? **Give them a gift membership.** Do you have a friend or sibling over 50, 60, 70, 80, or 90 who can still hold a tennis racket? **Give them a gift membership.** It's a great racket at \$25.00 a year! You will **love, love, love** it!

How to do it? Download a membership form from our website www.seniortennismn.com—click Membership. Or call Dottie Gardner 612-827-4918. Then fill out the form with the giftee, and get them to sign. Send in with a check for \$25.

Ads in this newsletter

Ads help pay for printing this newsletter, and therefore help keep your dues low. You can help sell ads! If you know any person or business with services or products our members would be interested in, contact that person. Have them call the newsletter editor for details. Ad rates are on page 2, as is the contact info for the editor.

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Tennis Events

By Bob Busch

With this first column of 2010, we extend our best wishes for a **Happy and Healthy New Year—keep swinging!** In this holiday season we **thank** those who contribute to the game we love:

- The many volunteers who deliver the St Paul Urban, InnerCity Tennis and Fred Wells Tennis and Learning programs. Volunteers fill vital roles in the delivery of these programs. There is a larger need for volunteers in January and February because many volunteers go south for the winter.
- The many contributions to the October **InnerCity Tennis** event and the December **Fred Wells** and **St. Paul Urban Tennis** event. Participation at both major fund-raising events should help fund the 2010 programs.
- STPC Captains for coordinating play during the year. We seem to have more seniors participating at the local level and contributing to the significant growth in the sport of tennis.

Tennis Popularity

Jack Nicklaus, the golf legend, said recently that tennis

(Tennis events—continued on page 8)

Upcoming Events

January Tennis Mixer

Saturday, January 16, 2010, 6:00-9:00 PM

PublicIndoorTennis.com

Details and signup on page 5. Spring Lake Park is a convenient location for those of you in northern suburbs

Gopher Tennis Mixer

Sunday, February 14, 2010, 4:00 to 6:00 PM

Baseline Tennis Center, U of M

Details and signup on page 7.

March Tennis Mixer

Saturday, March 13, 2010, 6:00-9:00 PM

Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center

Details and signup on page 9.

Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.
A nonprofit corporation, P.O. Box 5525
Hopkins, MN 55343
On the web: www.seniortennismn.com

Senior Tennis Times

The Senior Tennis Times is published ten times annually by and for the members of the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.
Club Founder: Jack Dow

Board of Directors

President: Charlie Robbins.....952-934-0209

Vice President: Rod Johnson.....763-588-2107

Secretary: Joan Thomas651-249-6992

Treasurer: Marv Schneider952-975-1895

New Members:

Dottie Gardner.....612-827-4918

Renewing Members:

Ronnae Wagner952-938-5785

Events Directors:

Carol Brant612-627-0464

Mary Ann McGuire.....612-929-2038

Minneapolis tennis schedules:

Rod Johnson763-588-2107

Tournaments director:

Mark Mudra.....952-833-1469

Paul Joyce952-927-8782

Steve McCue.....651-216-8029

Shirley Pratt.....651-291-1493

Other positions

Advisor: Mary Kaminski612-781-3271

St. Paul tennis schedules:

Thue Rasmussen.....651-917-0075

Director of Training: Roger Boyer

Ass't Director: Percy Hughes612-866-1102

Percy's email: percychjr@msn.com

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster

David Sommer

3657 17th Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55407-2805

Phone: 612-276-1313

David's email: dsommer7@usiwireless.com

Advertising

Send by email or USPS to the newsletter editor by the 15th of the month for publication the following month. Please send all payments to the newsletter editor.

Ad rates (first month/additional months):

Full page (7.5x10).....\$165/135

Half page (7.5x4.9)110/85

Half page on back cover.....125/100

Quarter page (3.7x4.9).....70/50

Eighth page (3.7x2.4)45/30

Business card special.....30/20

Horizontal strip ads: \$55 first two inches; \$20 each additional inch. Vertical: \$75 first two inches; \$25 each add'l inch.

4-line ad (members only).....\$10

2-line ad (members only) First three months: free, then \$5/issue.

Membership information changes, newsletter delivery problems, etc.,

can be made by writing Senior Tennis Players Club, P.O. Box 5525, Hopkins, MN 55343

or email to Ronnae Wagner: howard5326@aol.com

Membership total: ??

Jan-Feb 2010,

Volume 23, Number 1



Court fees increase

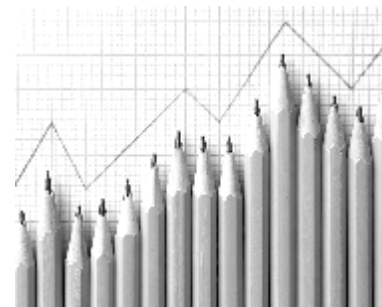
By Marv Schneider, STPC Treasurer

On Thursday, November 12, 2009, the Board of Directors of STPC (Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.) voted to raise the court fees (amount paid by members taking lessons and drills) effective January 1, 2010.

Background. Since the beginning of STPC nearly 30 years ago, the Club has paid professional instructors to teach tennis to members of STPC. During the summer months, the lessons and drills are held outdoors and there is no cost involved for court usage. During the winter months (September through April), the classes are held indoors at several local tennis clubs and the clubs charge STPC court costs for use of

the courts during the lessons. These court costs ranged from \$13-\$18 per hour in 2006 and the players taking the lessons paid \$5 each to cover the cost for 1½ hours of play. This year the court cost ranges from \$20-\$24 per hour and \$5 each per student is not sufficient to cover this cost.

The fee is being raised from \$5 to \$7 per student for 1½ hours of play, effective January 1, 2010. This is still a bargain! This applies to drills at Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center, Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center, Williston in Minnetonka, and PublicIndoorTennis.Com in Spring Lake Park.



As a non-profit organization, the Senior Tennis Players Club gratefully accepts donations, memorials and estate gifts.



Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the STPC is to provide tennis playing opportunities to people 50 and older for their mental, physical, and social well-being; and to support the growth of tennis.

Newsletter Submissions

To help make the newsletter as correct as possible, please submit all items in writing only, by mail or email. The deadline is the 17th of the month for publication the following month. All material submitted for publication is subject to editing. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope if you want materials returned.

Send your submissions to: David Sommer, 3657 17th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55407-2805.

Email: dsommer7@usiwireless.com.

Opinions expressed in articles or letters are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent views of the newsletter editor or the Board or officers of STPC.

Welcome, Mick Johnson

By Percy Hughes

Tuesday, October 6 at Williston Tennis Club, a special lesson was set up for **Michael (Mick) Johnson**, President of Park Nicollet Foundation. **Sue Larson**, one of our former Presidents put this event together, and it was a real winner. Helping were **David Sommer**, our Editor; **Ken Landro**, Past President; **Ronnae Wagner**, membership renewal chair; and **Charlie Robbins**, current President. Sue put this fine lesson together, with yours truly, **Percy**, having the pleasure of being the teaching pro. It was a good lesson for all, and we discovered that Mick had pretty good knowledge of what to do with a tennis racquet, being a racquet ball player. I just made him aware of having a firm wrist for most tennis ball contact, not being as wristy as in racquet ball contact. I saw lots of good mechanics from all of the players (made me feel pretty good about our lessons program).

Subsequently, Mick joined STPC. Welcome, Mick!



Helpers, student, pro: Ken Landro, Mick Johnson, Percy Hughes, Ronnae Wagner, Sue Larson, and Charlie Robbins.



Hey, Mick! With practice, that footwork will improve (too close to ball!). And that looks like a backhand grip—good for racquetball, but not for a tennis forehand. That's why we have lessons!

Thank you, STPC donors

By Marv Schneider,
Treasurer

As the Christmas season draws to a close, we would like to thank those members and friends who made a donation of money to Senior Tennis Players Club (STPC) during the year 2009. This includes:

St. Paul Indoor Tennis Club \$20

Virginia Belford \$10*
Roz Bernstein \$10*
Sally Browning \$10*
Mary Haviland \$10*
Caryl Minnetti \$20*
Marilyn Cuneo \$25*
Helen Jackson \$15*
Howard & Ronnae Wagner \$25*
Jean Bloden \$10
Lynn Geadelmann \$50
Judy Lewis \$15
Jim Holden \$25**

Anne List \$25***

* In honor of Henry Flesh who died on June 29.

** Donated \$5 for each book purchased by STPC members.

*** In honor of Curt Haugesag.



Want ads

These two-liner want ads are available to all STPC members. Your ad is free for three issues. After that, there is a charge of \$5 per publication.

Interested in Head racquets & clothing? Consult Percy Hughes 612-866-1102 for what's best for you.

Expert Racquet service. Fred Jurewicz 952-496-1018 (H); 612-250-3185. *10% STPC discount.*

Handyman: Get that To-Do list taken care of. Basic repairs and maintenance. Friendly, affordable and flexible. SW Metro area. Bob Thompson, 952-929-0844 / rthompson123@gmail.com.



For sale: Condo heaven, relaxing view, ready-to-move-in top-floor 2 BR 2 BA New Brighton. 612-781-3271.

For Rent: 2 BR upper duplex, garage. 1 block from Lake of Isles. On bus. Available now. 612-377-1352

For Sale: 3BR 2.5BA townhome, end unit, lake view, new carpet, dbl gar, pool, tennis. Andy 763-571-3740

Rent Villages FL. Activities for everyone. 2BR 2BA gar. \$1000/mo & up. Avl Dec, May on. 952-935-5670.

Great unique tennis jewelry—Saworski crystal tennis ball pendant, earrings, in birthstone colors. Reasonably priced. Exclusive at Mike Lynne's tennis shop. Miracle Mile. www.mltennis.com.

Health & anti-aging glutathion product. Patent pending by ex-Mayo MD. Videos & Info www.alholter.com.

●● STPC lessons and drills—all levels ●●

Some court locations are subject to change during the season. No reservations necessary.

Location	Day	Time	Skill	Cost	Instructor	Phone
Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center 4005 Nicollet Ave S Minneapolis 612-825-6844	Mon	10:00-11:00 "Owies" Suspended!	All	\$7.50	Dilcia Pederson Call for info on resumption!	612-824-6099
		1:30-3:00 PM Start 9/14/09	All	\$7.00	Dilcia Pederson Duncan Welty	612-824-6099 952-933-8592
	Thu	8:30-10:00AM	All	\$7.00	Percy Hughes	612-866-1102
					Duncan Welty	952-933-8592
					Paul Stormo	952-944-6286
	Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center. 100 Federal Drive, Minneapolis	Tue	11:00-12:30	All	\$7.00	Tony Rodriguez
Williston Fitness & Sports 14509 Minnetonka Drive Minnetonka 952-939-8370	Wed	5:30-7:00PM	All	\$7.00	Duane Ryman	612-865-9517
PublicIndoorTennis.Com 7833 Highway 65 N.E. Spring Lake Park, MN 55432	Fri	1:00-2:30 PM	All	\$7.00	Tony Larson	303-808-7809

Free or low-cost lessons* are offered as part of your STPC membership. New members are encouraged to take advantage of them.

* Lessons are free during outdoor season; they cost \$7 when indoor (to pay for court time). **(See article on page 2.)** You may continue taking lessons as long as you are a member of the club.

●● Private Club Drills Open to STPC Members ●●

Location	Day	Cost	Time	Information
Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center 4005 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis	Tue Thu	\$8.00	9:00-10:00 AM	612-825-6844 Call for reservation.
Williston Center , 14509 Minnetonka Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55345. Call 952-939-8370 to reserve. Members may call 1 week in advance; non-members 4 days in advance. All classes are \$8 members; \$10 non-members.	Mon	\$8/\$10	3:00-4:00 PM	Senior Clinic 2.0-2.5 (starts January 4, 2010)
	Wed	\$8/\$10	8:00-9:00 AM	Senior Clinic 3.0-3.5
	Fri	\$8/\$10	8:00-9:00 AM	Senior "Focused Play & Critique" 3.0-3.5
Baseline Tennis Center. Visit our website and click Tennis Schedule, then click to get a map and parking information.	Fridays: Jan 8, 22 Feb 5, 19 Mar 5, 19	\$15	8:30-10:00 AM	Senior drill for 3.5-4.0 players. Reserve by email to Dana Young: danayoung7@yahoo.com . See story on page 11!

January Tennis Mixer

PublicIndoorTennis.com at Spring Lake Park

Mixed doubles. Rotating partners. 32 players only! You do not need to bring a partner.

Time: Saturday January 16, 6:00-9:00 PM. Play one 90 minute session (either 6:00-7:30 or 7:30-9:00).

Place: PublicIndoorTennis.com—see directions below.

Cost: \$13/person. Guests welcome.

Light snack food and beverages. Bring your own water bottle.

Limited to first 32 who sign up. No refund for no-shows.

You will be notified as to the time you are scheduled to play. Questions? Call Carol Brant 612-627-0464 or Marv Schneider 952-975-1895.

From the North: U.S. Highway 10 to Highway 65 South. Take a left on 81st Avenue. Take a quick right at Buchanan Street (you will see the dome straight ahead of you once you get on Buchanan). Take a right on 79th avenue. Take a left on Highway 65 service road.

From the West: Interstate 694 to Highway 65 North. Take a right on Osborne Road. Take a quick left on the service road (follow service road *around* Biff's to dome).

From the East: Interstate 694 to U.S. Highway 10. U.S. Highway 10 to County 10. County 10 to Highway 65 South. Take a left on 81st Avenue. Take a quick right at Buchanan Street (you will see the dome straight ahead of you once you get on Buchanan). Take a right on 79th avenue. Take a left on Highway 65 service road.

From the South: Interstate 694 to Highway 65 North to Osborne Road - take right. Take a quick left on the service road (follow service road *around* Biff's to dome).

January Tennis Mixer Reservation Form

Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Skill Level: 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

Send check, payable to STPC, and this form by **January 11** to:
Carol Brant 110 Bank St. S.E. #1403 Minneapolis, MN 55414
All players must sign the Release Form below:

RELEASE FORM

I agree that any participation by me in the activities of, or sponsored by, the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc. (STPC), a non-profit organization, including, but without limitation, activities such as tennis lessons, clinics, drills, rating sessions, camps, trips, playing in or attending tennis games, tournaments, groups or social events, shall be at my sole risk; and I hereby release and hold harmless STPC and its officers, directors, members, employees, agents, tennis pros, tennis clubs, courts and facilities used or licensed by STPC, and all independent contactors with STPC (all being "Associated Others") for all claims of damage, whether due to injuries to person or property; to any direction, conduct, scheduling or claimed discrimination, nonfeasance or malfeasance, or otherwise, arising out of, or occurring in connection with, any such activities or conduct of STPC or such Associated Others.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SAVE THE DATE

Tennis Festival of the North

April 9-11, 2010

Eden Prairie High School

Eden Prairie, Minnesota



TENNIS FESTIVAL
OF THE NORTH

There is something for everyone!

On-court and off-court sessions, outstanding speakers, Vendor Fair, equipment demos, team play, player exhibitions, prizes and much, much more!

Fun for the entire family!

For more information, visit

www.tennisfestivalofthenorth.com

in the coming weeks!

Senior Tennis

By Don Knauer

Now this is the story of a group of old men
Trying to capture their youth once again.
We're out on the tennis court morning to night,
From dawn's early rays, thru evening's floodlights.

Some hit with power, some hit with spin.
Some call the ball "out" when it really is "in".
Some have new hips, and more have new knees.
The game sure is fun but it's no longer a breeze.

Our hearings gone bad, so we can't hear a "let".
And our most difficult move is the charge to the net.
Cause when we get there, the ball's over our head,
So we hustle on back, with legs made of lead,

We look up for the lob, and see nothing but sun.
We miss it completely, Boy, isn't this fun?
Our arms now are weary, our elbows are sore.
And what's worse, we can't remember the score.

So, after two hours, we trudge off the court.
In spite of exhaustion, we still love the sport.
And our wives love it too, for what do they care?
We're out keeping fit, and we're out of their hair.

Editor's note: Thanks, Don! Everyone: more poems!

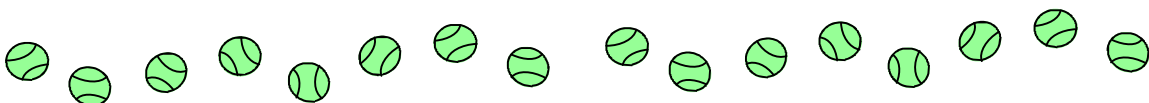
Parkway Cooperative of Burnsville

Independent Living for People 55 and Over

- Units available
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- Ten different floor plans
- Amenities include a Library, Craft room, Great Room, Woodworking shop, Fitness Center and more!

(952) 895-8526

115 E. Burnsville Parkway
Burnsville, MN 55337



Gopher tennis mixer

Sunday, February 14, 2010
3:30 to 6:00 PM
Baseline Tennis Center, U of M
1815 4th St. S.E.



This FREE event is hosted by the Men's and Women's Gopher tennis teams! Meet and play with these student-athletes. Schedule:

3:30 PM. Registration begins

4:00 PM. Group of 30 seniors, three per court with one Gopher. (We're using all 10 courts.) Other 30 enjoy snacks and conversation with Gopher players in the stands.

4:45 PM. Second group of 30 seniors go on courts.

5:30 PM. Exhibition play on two courts by Gopher players.

Only first 60 registrations will be accepted. Sign up, be there!

Parking: There is a lot behind Baseline, on 5th St. Also meter parking on 5th St. If those are full, use the ramp at 4th St. and 17th Ave.

----- Please detach and mail in this registration form. -----

Gopher Tennis Mixer

Name _____ Rating _____ Phone (____) _____

Name _____ Rating _____ Phone (____) _____

I agree that any participation by me in the activities of, or sponsored by, the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc. (STPC), a non-profit organization, including, but without limitation, activities such as tennis lessons, clinics, drills, rating sessions, camps, trips, playing in or attending tennis games, tournaments, groups or social events, shall be at my sole risk; and I hereby release and hold harmless STPC and its officers, directors, members, employees, agents, tennis pros, tennis clubs, courts and facilities used or licensed by STPC, and all independent contactors with STPC (all being "Associated Others") for all claims of damage, whether due to injuries to person or property; to any direction, conduct, scheduling or claimed discrimination, nonfeasance or malfeasance, or otherwise, arising out of, or occurring in connection with, any such activities or conduct of STPC or such Associated Others.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

No cost, but you must mail this form by January 17 to:
Mark Mudra • 5008 Nob Hill Drive • Edina, MN 55439 • 952-833-1469

(Tennis events—continued from page 1)

has become his favorite sport. He, along with millions of others, are hitting the ball more frequently. The USTA's recent survey reveals that more Americans are playing our favorite sport. The survey indicated that over 30 million people played in 2009, representing a 12% increase from 2008 and a remarkable 25% increase in the past six years. It's great to see so many of our members playing during the indoor season at courts coordinated by the STPC.

Spain Wins Davis Cup

The Spanish dominance on clay resulted in their second consecutive Davis Cup title with a 5-0 sweep of the Czech Republic in early December. Spain won its fourth Davis Cup title since 2000 and was the first repeat winner since Sweden 11 years ago. The Spanish team led by Rafael Nadal included talented clay court players; David Ferrer,

Fernando Verdasco and Feliciano Lopez.

The USTA is currently funding a training program for young US talent and coaches in Spain. Some coaching experts believe that the development of basic tennis fundamentals on a clay surface will lead to the development of more competitive players for the USA.

Gopher Tennis

The **best tennis show in town** is about to begin it's yearly run: the

Gopher Men's Tennis	
Fri, Feb 05, 5:00 pm	Louisville
Sun, Feb 07, 10:00 am	St. Mary's (CA)
Sat, Feb 20, 5:00 pm	Drake
Fri, Mar 05, 5:00 pm	New Mexico
Sun, Mar 07, noon	Washington
Fri, Apr 02, 3:00 pm	Penn State
Sun, Apr 04, noon	Ohio State
Fri, Apr 16, 3:00 pm	Northwestern
Sun, Apr 18, noon	Wisconsin

Gopher men's and women's tennis matches. Mark your calendar! All matches at Baseline Tennis Center on the U of M campus. For stories and details, visit gophersports.com.

Gopher Women's Tennis	
Sat, Jan 16, 1:00 pm	Alumni Match
Fri, Jan 22, 6:00 pm	Kentucky
Sun, Jan 24, 11:00 am	North Carolina
Sat, Feb 13, 1:30 pm	Missouri
Sat, Feb 13, 6:00 pm	Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Fri, Feb 26, 6:00 pm	Iowa
Sun, Feb 28, 11:00 am	Princeton
Sun, Feb 28, 4:00 pm	Carleton
Sat, Mar 27, 11:00 am	Michigan State
Sun, Mar 28, noon	Michigan
Fri, Apr 09, 6:00 pm	Indiana
Sun, Apr 11, 11:00 am	Illinois
Sun, Apr 25, noon	Purdue

Foot fault, or naught?

By David Sommer

Serena Williams was fined \$82,500 for her foot fault tirade at the US Open. More recently, Juan Del Potro strenuously objected to a foot fault call in his final against D a v y d e n k o . . . S o m e commentators say linespersons shouldn't call a foot fault on a "crucial" point. Others say it shouldn't be called if it's only a "little" fault. To me, those ideas are absurd: do we really want the linesperson to think "is this a crucial point?" or "how many millimeters of fault is too much?" I say there's a simple rule, which corresponds to everything else a linesman does: call a foot fault if you are sure. Just like: call the ball out if you are sure. From **Friend at Court**: "The Line Umpire should give the Server the benefit of any doubt in calling a foot fault." (**Friend at Court** is the USTA handbook of tennis rules and regulations.)



Those membership rosters

When you renew, you can choose to get your roster in March, May, by Email, or not at all. You **can't** choose more than one. You can also change your roster delivery choice (and anything else about your membership) by writing or emailing the newsletter editor. Explanations:

- The **March** Roster contains everyone who is paid for the current year. (Another good reason to get your renewal in!)
- The **May** Roster is **identical** to the March roster. But it is delivered in May for the convenience of those who are away in March.
- The **Email** Roster is the only version that is updated as new members join. Versions are sent in March, June, and September.

Finally, if you just need to find out if someone is a member of Senior Tennis, you can do so by checking the membership list on our website. Click Membership. For our members' security, this list gives **only** our member's names—no telephone, address, or email. But it is updated whenever there is a change in membership, usually two or three times each month.

Fred Wells March Tennis Mixer

Mixed doubles. Rotating partners. 56 players only! You do not need to bring a partner.

Time: Saturday March 13, 6:00-9:00 PM. Play one 90 minute session (either 6:00-7:30 or 7:30-9:00).

Place: Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center—see directions below.

Cost: \$13/person. Guests welcome.

Light snack food and beverages. Bring your own water bottle.

Limited to first 56 who sign up. No refund for no-shows.

You will be notified as to the time you are scheduled to play. Questions? Call Carol Brant 612-627-0464 or Marv Schneider 952-975-1895.

Directions: The Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center is located 1 mile north of the Minneapolis airport and ½ mile southeast of the Veterans' Administration Hospital on the south side of Highway 55 (opposite Historical Fort Snelling site).

From the West: From the 62-35W interchange, take 62 East. Go approximately 4 miles and take the Bloomington Road Exit (not Bloomington Ave!) Our building is 100 yards ahead on the left side. Parking is on the south side of the building.

From the East: Take 494 West to HWY 5 East, as if you were going to the airport. Go past the airport exit and take HWY 55

West towards Minneapolis. Go ½ mile and take the Bloomington Road Exit. Horseshoe back under HWY 55 and turn right on the south frontage road. You will see the facility 200 yards up and on the left. Parking is on South side of building on the left.

From St. Paul: Take 35E to 7th Street. Take West 7th Street south towards Minneapolis airport. Take 55 West towards Minneapolis. Go ½ mile to the Fort Snelling exit. Horseshoe back under HWY 55 and turn right on the south frontage road. You will see the facility 200 yards up and on the left. Parking is on South side of building on the left.

March Tennis Mixer Reservation Form

Name _____ Rating _____ Phone (____) _____

(You do not need a partner; this is rotating doubles)

Name _____ Rating _____ Phone (____) _____

Send check \$13/person, payable to STPC, and this form by **March 8** to:

Carol Brant 110 Bank St. S.E. #1403 Minneapolis, MN 55414

All players must sign the Release Form below:

RELEASE FORM

I agree that any participation by me in the activities of, or sponsored by, the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc. (STPC), a nonprofit organization, including, but without limitation, activities such as tennis lessons, clinics, drills, rating sessions, camps, trips, playing in or attending tennis games, tournaments, groups or social events, shall be at my sole risk; and I hereby release and hold harmless STPC and its officers, directors, members, employees, agents, tennis pros, tennis clubs, courts and facilities used or licensed by STPC, and all independent contactors with STPC (all being "Associated Others") for all claims of damage, whether due to injuries to person or property; to any direction, conduct, scheduling or claimed discrimination, nonfeasance or malfeasance, or otherwise, arising out of, or occurring in connection with, any such activities or conduct of STPC or such Associated Others.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Advice from the pros

By Frederick C. Klein

Editor's note: Florence Halverson gave me this article. It's old (newsprint was quite yellowed), and I don't know when/where it was published.

Did you know that tomorrow is **Across America Tennis Day**? Well, now you do. It's been so designated by the U.S. Professional Tennis Association to focus attention on what its members do, which is teach people to play tennis. Some of the pros will mark the day by giving away, in the form of free clinics, what they sell. Check your local tennis facility for if and when.

It's hard to respond to such gestures other than approvingly; if you are going to play tennis, you should play as well as you can, and a clinic might help you do that. Certainly, the time is right, it being spring, before the annual optimism of the weekend athlete has been trampled by a summer of reality. Who among us has not resolved at snowy New Year that this year—finally—we will dump our dinky serves for a better one, or improve our impoverished backhands?

But having played tennis for a longish time (22 years), and golf for about the same period before that (I enjoy that game much more now that I don't play it), I've come to believe that sports lessons should be required to carry the same sort of warning that comes on cigarette packages.

It's been my experience that nothing screws up my game like a lesson. The few times I've taken them, it has taken me at least a month to get back to where I was before, by which point I've reverted to earlier, more comfortable patterns.

I don't think sabotage was involved, at least not the intentional kind. Rather, I believe that the pros I consulted honestly sought to earn their fees by trying to correct each of the (many) faults they spotted. But instead of improvement, the result was sensory overload and near-paralytic confusion.

As I see it, the problem is simple: The whit or so that it takes to strike a tennis ball does not admit the recognition of the placement of each of our bodily parts, much less their correction. Bend my knees? Turn my shoulders? Extend my hitting arm? Keep my wrist firm? Follow through higher? I'll try, but the ball zipped past, unhit, about a minute and a half ago.

Teaching pros seem to have in mind an ideal swing, and try to nudge their pupils in that direction. Trouble is, most players in the broad "average" range (and a lot of

quite excellent players, too) are so far from that ideal that we couldn't be nudged there with a bulldozer. Moreover, I suspect that most of us don't really expect to be transformed into Boris Beckers or Steffi Grafs. We just want to play better, even a little bit.

And if we don't expect much, we don't ask much, either. We'd consider a lesson a great bargain if it contained one useful tip, a sort of mantra we could repeat as we step on court. No matter how small our abilities and capacities, few of us couldn't handle that, right?

At the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York last summer, I put this proposition to **Billie Jean King**, who knows as much about tennis as anyone, ever. While she didn't agree with it wholeheartedly (that's probably against union rules), she agreed to play along. Her one tip was this: Hit the ball earlier.

"Earlier?" I said. "Earlier than what?"

"Earlier than you're hitting it now," she replied.

"How do you know I'm not hitting it early enough already?" I countered. "You said you were an average player, didn't you?" she smiled.

And, of course, she was right. I'm trying to hit the ball earlier now, and, when I manage to do so, it usually helps.

That worked so well that I thought I'd toss my net wider and see what other tennis experts had to offer. Either directly or through their representatives, I polled more than a dozen present or former top professional players.

Alas, not all of them took the query seriously. "Give up women!" advised Frenchman **Jean-Philippe Fleurian**. Give up women? Most of us fellas would rather give up tennis. Well, many of us would.

Several players, however, replied thoughtfully, and here are their suggestions:

Helen Kelesi: "Watch the ball. It's something I have to tell myself every point, because it's the most important thing."

Brad Gilbert: "Move your feet. If you get to the ball early enough, you'll have a lot of options about where and how to hit it. If you're late, you end up just 'arming' it, and you're lucky to get it back at all."

Pam Shriver: "Be in the best possible physical condition, both in terms of strength and aerobic capacity. That'll help you to move better and hit the ball more sharply."

(Advice—continued on page 11)

(Advice—continued from page 10)

Arthur Ashe: “Get your racket back. Imagine your racket as a pistol that has to be cocked before you pull the trigger. When the ball hits the court in front of you, your racket head should be at the very end of your back-swing. As the ball continues toward you, your racket then will be in position to move to meet it.”

Pete Sampras: “If you play a serve-and-volley game, get as close to the net as you can before you hit your volley. This allows you to make contact with the ball above net level, which will improve your consistency, accuracy and power.”

Monica Seles: “You should enjoy yourself on court; that’s incredibly important. But to win, you’ve got to play each point all the way.”

Okay, let’s summarize. Hit the ball earlier. Watch the ball. Move your feet. Get in shape. Get your racket back. Get as close to the net as possible before volleying. Enjoy yourself. Play each point all the way.

That’s enough to properly confuse everybody. I just saved you the trouble of taking a lesson. Have a happy Across America Tennis Day anyway.

Editor comment: *I’ve had some successful lessons and some worthless ones. The successful ones were characterized by just a few useful tips, with lots of opportunity to practice. One needs to commit new technique to muscle memory, otherwise you will revert to your old game after a period of confusion. So here’s my Tip for the pro: Watch the student for several minutes before you say anything. Then say just a few words. Example: “on your serve, toss ball high, keep left arm up and eyes up.” Then be sure the student practices many times what you’ve just preached. Pro er by trying to give too much information, and spending too little time confirming that the student got it.*

Mantras: *yes, these help. Everyone needs his own. I use these two: “watch the ball” and “drop down a little as opponent hits.” The former is good anytime—helps to keep focus (literally and figuratively). The latter is especially good when receiving serve. But don’t take my mantras—find your own, and use whenever your mind wanders or you are otherwise messing up.*

Senior drills for 3.5-4.0

By David Sommer

In our Private Club Drills on page 4 we have a variety of offerings, for 2.0-3.5 players. But now **Baseline Tennis Center** is offering drills specifically for higher level players. Pros are Dana Young and Caitlin Burke.

I am excited about this offering, and will sign up for these lessons. Dana Young, the head pro at Baseline, says that if the every-other-Friday proves successful, they will do it every Friday. Schedule of the first six lessons is: January 8 & 22; February 5 & 19; and March 5 & 19. Drills are 8:30-10:00. Here’s from Dana:

“The Baseline Tennis Center was recently named a 2008 USTA Outstanding Facility and I am thrilled to be the new Head Tennis Pro at such an amazing venue. I am a former All Big Ten Player and member of the University of Minnesota Women’s Tennis Team as well as a former women’s assistant tennis coach at the U. I



was the Head Tennis Pro at Interlachen Country Club for three years where I worked with many of the top juniors, beginning juniors and adults of all levels. In 2000, I became the Head Women’s Tennis Coach at the University of Denver. The program was initially No. 8 in the conference and well outside the top 150 Division I programs in the country. By 2006, we were No. 1 in our conference and among the top 40 Division I programs in the country. In 2006, I moved back to Minnesota as my husband accepted the position as the Men’s Head Tennis Coach at the University of Minnesota. I have worked with people of all ages and abilities. I enjoy getting to know each and every individual that I work with and helping each student reach their tennis goals. I look forward to seeing you on the court!”

For more information or to sign up, email Dana Young at danayoung@yahoo.com.

Another 90th

David Brink celebrated his 90th birthday with 65 of his closest friends. Four of them were tennis buddies—left to right: Char Beattie, Sue Larson, Marilyn Thorne, and Hazel Nelson.

Speaking of nonagenarians,

we’re getting so many that we’ve introduced a new age category in our database. Instead of the last category being “80+” we now have “80-89” and “90+”. If you or someone you know is in that exclusive 90+ club, let your newsletter editor know. And congratulations!



Ruttger's Lodge celebration

By Linda Shermock

The Coady tennis group celebrated the end of our tennis season at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge. We have been going for seven years in honor of our dear friend Marilyn Coady. The first annual Coady Tennis

Tournament was held. Winners were Rita Welch and Sally Enstrom. Bottom row: Susan Rosenberger, Rita Welch, Ginny Morse and Joanne Schmid. Middle row: Erlene Herr, Sharon Engel, Linda Shermock, Libby Hargrove, Lois Kukuk, Bonnie Bolton and Jane Tischbein. Top row: Sally Enstrom and Joan Kruse.

