



# Senior Tennis Times

*The 50+ tennis experience*

April 2013

## May reminder: do the Dow!

**By Dottie Gardner**

Save the dates, **May 6-9 at the Reed Sweatt Tennis Center**. Four days of fun for only \$13.00!

In 1996 Jack Dow created the tournament at the end of the indoor season.

This year we promise fun, food, entertainment and very competitive tennis.

Check with your captains and this *Newsletter* for applications—the deadline is April 29. The format this year is 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 sections; men's doubles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles.

**Captains!** You're in a contest to see which captain can get the most players to participate. The winner will receive as a prize next year's membership *free!*

Let's end the indoor season with a blast and make the Dow a warm-up for tennis outdoors. (You know in Minnesota, weather permitting!)

## Annual Celebration & Hughes Clinic

What an end to indoor and start of outdoor seasons! Besides the Dow Round Robin, we have the Annual Celebration and the Hughes Clinic. Don't be overwhelmed—do it all. Then enjoy our beautiful Minnesota spring/summer with outdoor tennis.

## On the inside

Three events—info & signups—see “**Upcoming events**” this page.

**P.2:** Tip from a pro

**P.5:** About **Neal Hagberg**, our speaker/entertainer for the Annual Celebration

**P.7:** About **Florence Halverson**, still active at 94. Also some great *tennis quotes*.

**P.9:** A classic article “Advice from the pros” including Billie Jean King, Pete Sampras, Arthur Ashe....

**P.11:** Preliminary Spring/Summer Schedule. **Captains! Please review and report corrections!**

**P.15:** A classic L. Jon Wertheim article “Degree of Difficulty”—why we play this really hard game.



## Tennis events

**By Bob Busch**

Don't delay, sign-up today for our annual **Jack Dow Round Robin** tournament. Our only Senior Tennis Players Club tournament of the year is scheduled for May 6-9 at RSFTC and offers men's, women's and mixed doubles. A USTA membership is not required—everyone can play against players at their own level of play. **Ken Landro**, former STPC president, is tournament director and has a committee comprised of experienced Dow participants who will provide a fun tournament at a price you cannot pass up. You may play up to 2 events at only \$13 per event. See the registration form included in this newsletter (page 10).

### Tennis benefits youth

In early March the USTA announced the results of a study by “USTA Serves,” its national charitable foundation. It was the first nationwide study focused on high school students to analyze the educational, behavioral and health benefits to youth who participate in tennis. **Don Sabo**, PhD, the principal investigator, helped compile the evidence that shows young people

*(Tennis events—continued on page 5)*

## Upcoming events

### Jack Dow Round Robin

May 6-9. Details and signup page 10

### STPC Annual Celebration

May 11, 11:00-2:30 at Town & Country Club  
**Important! All members (not just captains) are invited.** Info and signup page 6

### Hughes Clinic

May 13, 9:00-noon, Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center. Details page 8

### Life Time Clinic

June 10, 8:00-10:00 AM, Life Time 98th St  
Details in May newsletter

## Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.

A nonprofit corporation, P.O. Box 5525  
Hopkins, MN 55343

On the web: [www.seniortennismn.com](http://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.

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David Sommer.....612-276-1313

### 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 additional inch.

2-line ad (members only), first three months free, then \$5/issue. Additional lines \$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 [dsommer7@usiwireless.com](mailto:dsommer7@usiwireless.com).

April 2013, Vol. 26, #3

Membership total: 1181

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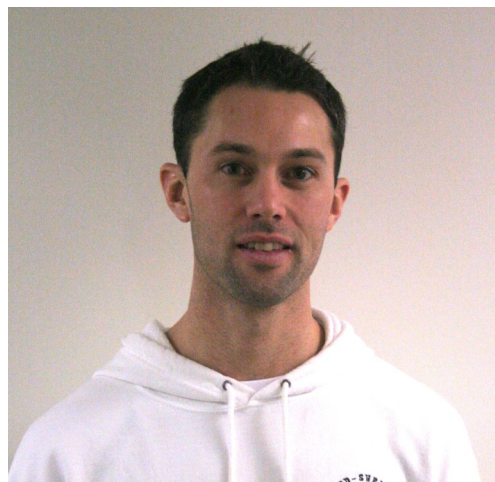
## Tip from a pro

By Kyle Buchmeier, USPTA, Reed-Sweatt pro

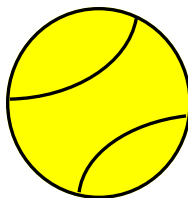
For all those serve and volley players out there, this one's for you. When approaching the net, remember, it's not "where" you are on the court it's "when" you need to split step or be ready for that next shot.

I find too many players at all levels try to get themselves all the way to the service line by the time their opponent returns the ball, but so many times they aren't quite ready to return it back. When you hit your serve and come in, be sure to prepare yourself for the next shot as the ball bounces on your opponents side or as they are striking the ball. That way you can allow yourself plenty of time to react to the ball and even change directions according to the location of their shot. Even if you stay back on their return and like to hit a ground stroke before you come in, be sure to have that same mentality.

So remember, it's always "when" not "where" you are as you prepare for your opponents' shots.



***As a non-profit organization, the Senior Tennis Players Club gratefully accepts donations, memorials and estate gifts. Please send to Senior Tennis Players Club, P.O. Box 5525, Hopkins, MN 55343.***



### 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 15th of the month for publication the following month. All material submitted for publication is subject to editing. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want materials returned.

#### **Send your submissions to:**

David Sommer, 3657 17th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55407.  
Email: [dsommer7@usiwireless.com](mailto:dsommer7@usiwireless.com).

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

## Mark's corner

### By Mark Mudra



Two additional free summer drills were approved for our members: we will now have free classes Tuesday 8:30-10:00 AM at Donaldson Park in Richfield and Saturday noon-1:30 in Spring Lake Park. Plus we continue our usual six free summer outdoor classes: two weekend, two evening, and two morning. Look for upcoming details on these free lessons that begin in May on our web site.

Mark your calendars: Hughes Clinic, May 13, 9-12 AM (Reed-Sweatt); Lifetime Clinic, June 10, 8-10 AM (Life Time); Kaminsky Clinic, July 15, 9-11 AM (Public Indoor); Babolat Clinic, August 12, 9-11 AM (Baseline).

All four clinics feature two hours of tennis, all levels of players welcome, for only \$12.50. The pros will move to your court showing tips on serves, return of serves, volleys, and ground strokes. You'll improve your game, have a great time, and get a free lunch. Sign-up sheets for all four are on the STPC web site.

We have expanded our rent-a-pro program, where for \$35/hour you can work with an STPC professional outdoors. (This is a win/win program since \$10 goes back to STPC and \$25 goes to the pro.) Now we offer courts/pros on south/north/city locations and multiple

times. These can be group or individual lessons beginning outdoors April 15. Details on our website. Click Lessons.

Open House Tennis Saturdays: two hours of tennis at Life Time 98th street, April 13, 2:00-4:00 PM. Open to all STPC members, all levels of players for only \$7.00. You don't need to be a member of Life Time. There will be courts for 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 and 2.5 players. The last open house had over 60 STPC players attending.

Some exciting news from Life Time—the Bloomington South group has grown to over 45 STPC members. Beside playing seven days a week, two classes, free use of a ball machine, free fitness classes, and instructional level class, we also are in the process of setting up for this group an elite summer senior league that will play Edina, Bearpath, Wayzata, Golden Valley and other country clubs. Visit our website for more details and information on the Bloomington/STPC offer.

Skill for April (see Lessons, page 4): work on advanced doubles strategy and compare to singles strategy.

This month's fitness tip is to add olive oil to your diet. The main type of fat found in all kinds of olive oil is monounsaturated. Olive oil helps lower your risk of heart disease; helps lower your total cholesterol; helps normalize blood clotting; and benefits insulin levels and blood sugar control, which can be especially helpful if you have type 2 diabetes.

Questions? Contact me. [markmudra@aol.com](mailto:markmudra@aol.com)

## 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.

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

**Time for a Spring project?** Bathroom update, kitchen, paint, tile, lighting/electrical, plumbing. High quality attention to detail. Home improvement specialist. Eric Ostergaard, 612-710-7055 [ericostergaard@yahoo.com](mailto:ericostergaard@yahoo.com)

**Snowbird returnees alert:** 2BR/2BA furn condo in E. Blmgt. \$1200/mo (util incl). 6 mo rental. 612-243-1300.

**2 Greek homes** 3BR 2.5BA near Nafplio. €770-€994/wk. MN owner Sally Howard. Details [greekhomes.net](http://greekhomes.net).

**Buddy Holly memorabilia.** Books, records, pictures. If interested call 952-888-7855.

**Personal Gardener**—garden help in Bloom., Edina, Richfield, S. Mpls, etc. Lee Peterson 952-270-9472.



## WOW needs players

### By Audre Sautter

WOW (Women on Wednesdays) is looking for additional players at the 2.5 to 3.5 level to join their league. Team play will be on Wednesday mornings in Crystal or New Hope this coming summer (June, July, August).

Call for further information: Kim Fernelius 612-554-3750, Ginny Bergman 763-785-1350, or Audre Sautter 612-209-1547.

	<b>Taylor Home Maintenance</b>
	<b>SERVING THE TWIN CITIES AREA</b>
	<b>ALL YOUR HOME MAINTENANCE ISSUES, TO DO LISTS, &amp; REMODELING NEEDS—WE DO IT ALL, IN &amp; OUT. LET ME KNOW YOUR QUESTIONS.</b>
	Call Scott Taylor
<small>* Senior Tennis Member References Available</small>	Phone: 928-710-8333 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Mtn1775@gmail.com">Mtn1775@gmail.com</a>





## Senior Tennis Players Club Indoor Lesson Season

### *The 50+ Tennis Experience*

Lessons and drills—September through April—All levels

No reservations needed—show up and play.

Cost \$7, except where noted

#### SENIOR TENNIS PLAYERS CLUB

Day	Location	Time	Instructor, Phone, Email
Mon	<b>Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center</b> 4005 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-825-6844	1:30-3:00 PM	Dilcia Pederson 612-824-6099 dilcia.pederson@innercitytennis.org
			Duncan Welty 952-933-8592 idwelty@q.com
Tue	<b>Life Time 98<sup>th</sup> St – only open to Life Time Tennis Pass Members. FREE!</b> 952-830-7900	9:00-10:30 AM	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 <a href="mailto:markmudra@aol.com">markmudra@aol.com</a>
	<b>PublicIndoorTennis.Com.</b> 7833 Highway 65 N.E., Spring Lake Park, MN 55432. 763-231-3109	1:00-2:30 PM	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 <a href="mailto:markmudra@aol.com">markmudra@aol.com</a>
Wed	<b>Baseline Tennis Center</b> , 1815 4th St SE, Minneapolis, 612-625-1433 (will rebate \$2.50 to cover parking)	9:30-11:00 AM	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 <a href="mailto:markmudra@aol.com">markmudra@aol.com</a>
	<b>Williston Fitness &amp; Sports</b> , 14509 Minnetonka Drive, Minnetonka 952-939-8370	5:30-7:00 PM	Duane Ryman 612-865-9517 <a href="mailto:dhrtennis40@hotmail.com">dhrtennis40@hotmail.com</a>
Thu	<b>Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center.</b> Coaches Dilcia, Duane, & Duncan rotate with Paul Stormo	8:30-10:00 AM	Paul Stormo 952-944-6286 pjstormo@aol.com
Fri	<b>Life Time 98<sup>th</sup> St – only open to Life Time Tennis Pass Members. FREE!</b> 952-830-7900	9:00-10:30 AM	Mike Johnson or his staff
	<b>PublicIndoorTennis.Com.</b> 7833 Highway 65 N.E., Spring Lake Park, MN 55432. 763-231-3109	1:00-2:30 PM	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 <a href="mailto:markmudra@aol.com">markmudra@aol.com</a>
Sat	<b>Life Time 98<sup>th</sup> St. Special!</b> Open to all STPC members these dates: 4/13/13	2:00-4:00 PM	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 <a href="mailto:markmudra@aol.com">markmudra@aol.com</a>

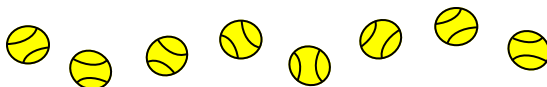
### ●● Private Club Drills Open to STPC Members ●●

Location	Day	Cost	Time	Information
<b>Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center</b> 4005 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis	Tue Thu	\$11.00	9:00-10:00 AM	Call 612-825-6844 for reservation.
<b>Williston Fitness Center</b> 14509 Minnetonka DR. Minnetonka, MN 55345	Mon	Williston member \$10, non-member \$14	3:00-4:00, 2.0-2.5	Call front desk to sign up: 952-939-8370
	Wed		8:00-9:00 am, 3.0-3.5	
	Fri		8:00-9:00 am, stroke & play	

#### April skill: Advanced Doubles play

- Doubles strategy will be compared to singles strategy

- Australian
- Formation
- Poaching
- Drifting-active net person
- Lobbing -Offensive and Defensive
- Signals



(Tennis events—continued from page 1)

who participate in tennis get better grades, devote more hours to study, attend and graduate from college and have lower suspension and expulsion rates. The study validates the mission of the high level inner city youth programs we have in the Twin City area. To date, “USTA Serves” has awarded more than \$15 million in grants and scholarships to people and programs throughout the country to provide at-risk and underserved youth with greater opportunities to succeed. Our local programs have received some of the USTA funding. For more detail on the findings of this study go to [www.USTASERVES.COM](http://www.USTASERVES.COM).

### **Nancy Akpan of ICT**

USTA Northern News in February included a feature on Nancy in connection with their celebration of Black History Month. Nancy is employed by InnerCity Tennis and is actively involved in programming to promote the game of tennis. She moved to Minnesota from Nigeria when she was 12 years old and is now a certified USPTA teaching professional. She has been coaching since 2007.

### **National Champions—3.5 Men**

Congratulations to the USTA Northern 3.5 Senior Men’s Team that won the first national title at this level for the Northern Section. Captain **Boy Toy** of Mounds View led his team to the 2012 USTA League Championship in Indian Wells, CA. Team members included Gerald Benson, Woodbury; Dale Chilton, South St. Paul; Tom Glavin,

Gopher men at Baseline	
03/30/13, Noon	Northwestern
03/31/13, Noon	Illinois
04/12/13, 3:00	Indiana
04/14/13, Noon	Purdue
04/21/13, Noon	Iowa
Gopher women at Baseline	
03/22/13, 5:00	Michigan State
03/24/13, 11:00	Michigan
04/05/13, 3:00	Penn State
04/07/13, 11:00	Ohio State
04/19/13, 2:00	Nebraska

Minneapolis; Peter Haan, Hastings; Alan Kranz, Coon Rapids; Richard Milles, Oakdale; Eric Narvaez, St. Paul; Leon Narvaez, Northfield; Frank Spanish, Savage; and Tom Yue, Inver Grove Heights.

### **Gopher tennis**

**Minnesota men**, ranked #66, upset the #14-ranked Washington Huskies 6-1 in early March. Doubles teams Rok Bonin/Juan Pablo Ramirez and Mathieu Froment/Jack Hamburg won their matches 8-6. Domination continued with five singles wins by Viktor Forgas, Mathieu Froment, Ruben Walker, Juan Pablo Ramirez and Leandro Toledo. This win brought their 2013 record to 4 wins and 7 losses. Hopefully, this upset will inspire the Gophers as they enter Big Ten play in late March. **Gopher women** completed February play with four consecutive wins by defeating Northern Iowa 7-0, Carleton 7-0, Mississippi State 4-3, and Wisconsin 7-0. The border battle and Big Ten win over Wisconsin brought their 2013 record to 6 wins and 6 losses and

provided a great start to a tough conference schedule in coming weeks. Be sure to attend one of the remaining home court matches against a Big Ten opponent. Best tennis in town, and it’s *free!*



## **Annual Celebration: Neal Hagberg is guest speaker**

**By Lee Peterson**

We are delighted to have **Neal Hagberg** as our guest speaker and performer at our May 11 Annual Celebration. Neal is director of **Tennis and Life Camps** at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. These camps have been recognized by Tennis Magazine as among the top tennis camps in the country. He, with long-time and very successful Gustavus tennis coach, Steve Wilkinson, developed a philosophy of teaching tennis skills and life skills together. It is a simple and somewhat radical approach that takes the emphasis off winning.

Neal is multi-talented and will share with us through word, story, and song. He is a nationally-known singer

and songwriter and performs with his wife as **Neal and Leandra**. They have performed in 45 states and Canada, in venues ranging from coffee houses to Carnegie Hall.

Neal is a graduate of Gustavus and also received a Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary. He is a USPTA P1 teaching pro. Neal has been involved with Tennis and Life Camps for 32 years—20 years as assistant director and now two years as director. He is the recipient of two prestigious McKnight Artist Fellowships. One was for Performing and one for Composing.

I have experienced Neal teaching on the court, have heard him perform, and have heard him as story-teller. I am personally excited to hear him again. Do come and enjoy our tennis life together on May 11.



# STPC Annual Celebration

- Captains' Recognition & Jack Dow Trophy
- All members welcome!

Saturday, May 11, 11:00 am - 2:30 pm

Town & Country Club • 300 Mississippi River Boulevard N. • St. Paul, Minnesota

## Schedule of Events

11:00 am Social Hour

12:00 pm Luncheon

1:00 pm Welcome, introduction of Board members, Jack Dow Trophy presentation to Bob Busch by Roz Bernstein.

1:25 pm Speaker: Neal Hagberg

2:00 pm Recognition of Captains

2:15 pm Treasurer's report

2:25 pm Closing by Richard Narjes

## Luncheon Menu

*Strawberry and Brie Salad with Poppyseed Vinaigrette*

*Warm Rolls and Butter*

**Entrée~ Chicken Marsala**

*Pan-Roasted Chicken Breast with Marsala Mushroom Cream, Served with Asparagus and Herb Roasted Baby Red Potatoes*

**OR**

**Vegetarian: Roasted Butternut Squash Ravioli,**

*Sautéed Leeks and Forest Mushroom Broth, Asparagus*

**Served Dessert~**

*Chocolate Mousse with Chocolate Curls*

*Regular or Decaf Coffee, Hot or Iced Tea*

## Directions to Town & Country Club

From I94: Take the Cretin Avenue/Vandalia Street exit (exit 237) and turn south onto Cretin Avenue. Turn right onto Marshall Avenue. Turn right onto Otis Ave, then left into parking.

From south suburbs: I494 east to Hwy 5. East across river and exit to Edgecumbe. Follow Edgecumbe to left on St. Paul Ave, which becomes Cleveland by Ford Parkway. Cleveland to Marshall. Turn left onto Marshall. Turn right on Otis Ave. Clubhouse parking is first driveway on left.

From Minneapolis: Take Lake Street east across river. It becomes Marshall. Take left on Otis Ave (one short block from river). Clubhouse parking is first driveway on left.

**Send reservation form by Monday May 6 with check for \$25 payable to STPC to:**

Ronnae Wagner-Garrity • 6085 Lincoln Dr #115, Edina, MN 55436 • 952-938-0374

**Please call to cancel if unable to attend.**

(Cancellations accepted up to **Tuesday, May 7**)

**Captains:** you will receive a mailed invitation—**do not use this reservation form!**

**STPC Luncheon Reservation form for Non-Captains and guests only**

**Saturday, May 11, 11:00 am - 2:30 pm. Cost: \$25 per member or guest**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check for vegetarian

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check for vegetarian

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important: *vegetarian—see menu.***

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# Florence Halverson

**By Felix Perry**

## Does Activity Abate with Age?...NO!

Florence will be 94 in May. She plays tennis three times a week. She is not only the most active nonagenarian, but probably as active as most septuagenarians. She grew up in St. Paul, near Lake Phalen. She began playing tennis at age 14, when she rejected her aunt's options of horse-back riding or golf. She got started with a \$4 racket and one ball. Florence was a graduate in education with a major in math from Macalester College in St. Paul. She taught school with classes in algebra and geometry. Her husband flew aircraft in the U.S. Air Force over the Himalayas, the "Hump" route during WW II, and then worked as an economist in business. She took care of Al for 30 years after he had a massive stroke at age 48. She plays tennis an hour and a half on Monday and Tuesday and an hour on Friday. She is an endless source of balls. A friend, actually her



financial advisor, gave her 90 tennis balls for her 90th birthday.

She is an active person, especially in the facility where she lives, 7500 York, a senior cooperative in Edina. She plays ping pong once a week and claims that she always

wins. Her gentle demeanor belies a competitive spirit. She plays scrabble once a week and her own piano every day. Often, usually once a week, she has an impromptu concert in the lobby with the guy from upstairs who plays a glockenspiel and with a possible guitar or harmonica player joining. She directed a 32-person choir at her residence for seven years.

She enjoyed visiting Barcelona, Spain last year, traveling to and fro by air. A decade, or so ago, she attended the U.S. Tennis Open in New York.

But tennis is Florence's favorite activity. "When I am on the tennis court, I feel good. But, three times a week is enough." Florence's over-all activity level sets a worthwhile target for the rest of us. You can communicate with her at [Floamelia@msn.com](mailto:Floamelia@msn.com).

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## Tennis quotes

Writing free verse is like playing tennis with the net down.

—Robert Frost

Tennis is a perfect combination of violent action taking place in an atmosphere of total tranquility.

—Billie Jean King

I let my racket do the talking. That's what I am all about, really. I just go out and win tennis matches.

—Pete Sampras

I've been playing against older and stronger competition my whole life. It has made me a better tennis player and able to play against this kind of level despite their strength and experience.

—Maria Sharapova

If you can react the same way to winning and losing, that's a big accomplishment. That quality is important because it stays with you the rest of your life, and there's going to be a life after tennis that's a lot longer than your tennis life.

—Chris Evert

Bill Tilden was once asked what was his secret for

winning in mixed doubles. He thought for a moment, and then he said, "I hit the ball at the women first."

When I was forty, my doctor advised me that a man in his forties shouldn't play tennis. I heeded his advice carefully and could hardly wait until I reached fifty to start again.

—Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black

The great thing about playing tennis is that you forget your troubles for two hours, and when you're finished, everything you do is better. Even the beer tastes better.

—Bill Talbert

Sex doesn't interfere with your tennis; it's staying out all night trying to find it that affects your tennis.

—Andre Agassiz

I soon learned it was not a good idea to beat a boy I liked. It's amazing how losing to a girl can turn a guy off. Most fellows consider the girl who is a better athlete a threat. The only men who don't think this way are, in my view, the real men; these are the men who have their own thing, too, and no one can take that away from them.

—Billie Jean King



# Hughes Tennis Clinic & Luncheon

Monday, May 13 • Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center  
Tennis from 9am - Noon • Luncheon Begins at Noon

**96 Player Limit, Register Soon!**



## Information

The Hughes Clinic takes place Monday, May 13, beginning at 9am (**please arrive by 8:45am**) at the Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center (Minnesota Monthly's best of Twin Cities Tennis Facilities in 2012). You'll improve your game, have a great time, and eat lunch too. Nearly 3 hours of lessons and drills with Minneapolis' best instruction staff (according to the US Commerce Association). You will be notified only if the clinic is full.

**Registration:** closes May 1, and there is a limit of 96 players, so sign up now!

**Cost:** \$12.50 for STPC Members, \$15 for guests (**guest free if potential member!**)

**Format:** Three 50-minute segments, men and women - everyone plays!



## Registration Form

Send your check payable to STPC (\$12.50 per member, \$15 per guest) and this form to:

Mark Mudra • 5008 Nob Hill Dr • Edina, MN 55439 • [markmudra@aol.com](mailto:markmudra@aol.com)

**Release Form (all players must sign and date)**

Name	Phone	Skill level
Member:		<input type="radio"/> 1.0-2.0 <input type="radio"/> 2.5 <input type="radio"/> 3.0 <input type="radio"/> 3.5 <input type="radio"/> 4.0
Guest:		<input type="radio"/> 1.0-2.0 <input type="radio"/> 2.5 <input type="radio"/> 3.0 <input type="radio"/> 3.5 <input type="radio"/> 4.0

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 (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

Signature	Date
Member:	
Guest:	





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# 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.

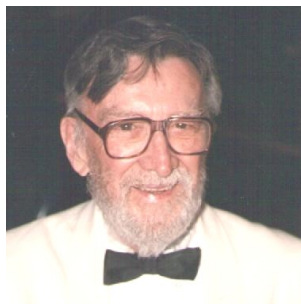
Several players, however, replied thoughtfully, and here are their suggestions:

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 from the pros—continued on page 13)*



# Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc. 18th Annual Jack Dow Tennis Round Robin Tournament

**May 6-9, 2013, 8am-4pm**

Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center

4005 Nicollet Ave. S. • Minneapolis, MN 55409 • 612-825-6844



## Round Robin Rules

- **Fee:** \$13 per event, per person
- Applications must be received by **Monday, April 29**.
- Round-robin format—you will play *at least* three regular sets, or two 8-game pro sets.
- Divisions 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 Men's, Women's and Mixed Doubles.
- All entrants must play at or above their rating as published in the March 2013 Senior Tennis Roster.
- No partner substitution after first set.
- No participant may play in more than 2 events. If in 2 events, one must be Mixed Doubles.
- A first place winner in an event in 2012 automatically jumps to the next rating or *must* change partners.
- Those unable to find a partner *must* state that on the

application. We'll help you find a partner.

- All entrants *must* be current members of STPC.
- **Please check in for your match at least 15 minutes early.**
- **Cancel after close date—lose entire fee.**
- **Schedule:** Men's doubles and women's doubles will be played on May 6-7 (Monday-Tuesday). Mixed doubles on May 8-9 (Wednesday-Thursday). Detailed schedule will appear on our website Wednesday, May 1. It will also be posted at Reed-Sweatt. You **must** appear on the first date and time shown on that posting.
- Medal awards to the top two finishers per category

**More info:** Ken Landro 763-544-9757, Ronnae Wagner-Garrity 952-938-0374, Roz Bernstein 952-938-7698.

## Donations needed!

Entry fees do not cover the cost of this great event. We need donations from individuals and

organizations! Recognition of your generosity will appear in the Senior Tennis Times newsletter.

**IMPORTANT! Keep upper part; send only Application!**



## Application

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Rating: ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Men's Doubles ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0 ☐ N/A

Women's Doubles ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0 ☐ N/A

Mixed Doubles ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0 ☐ N/A

Check one or two events only!

**Partner needed? Write "Needed" for Name in form below.**

1st Doubles Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating: ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Doubles Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating: ☐ 2.5 ☐ 3.0 ☐ 3.5 ☐ 4.0

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Send Application and Check payable to STPC for \$13 per event, per person to:  
Ronnae Wagner-Garrity • 6085 Lincoln Drive #115 • Edina, MN 55436 • 952-938-0374

## 2013 Spring/Summer Court Schedule—Senior Tennis Players Club

Play is usually May-August. Check with captains for start/end dates  
Up-to-date schedule is always on our website: [www.seniortennismn.com](http://www.seniortennismn.com)

### ●● St. Paul Area ●●

For corrections or changes for St. Paul and suburbs call the Area Director:  
Thue Rasmussen at 651-917-0075 or E-mail him at [thueor32@comcast.net](mailto:thueor32@comcast.net)

Location	Day	Time	Cts	Skill	Captains	Phone
<b>Irondale High School</b> Long Lake Road south of Cty Rd H, New Brighton	Sat	8:30-10:00 am	4	3	Jim Vint	651-890-2486
<b>Marthaler Park</b> 1625 Humboldt Ave (across from Police & Fire Depts.), West St. Paul	Tue Thu Sat	9:00-11:00 am	2	2.5-3.0	Bob Class	651-699-8728
<b>Mendota Heights</b> Marie St, between Victoria & Lexington	Tue	7:30-9:00 am	2	2.5-3.0	Carrie Howes	651-406-9583
<b>North Valley Park</b> Hwy 52 So to 70 <sup>th</sup> , left ¼ mile Inver Grove Heights	Mon Wed Fri	8:30-10:30 am	4	2.5-3.5	Jan Machacek	651-455-5236
<b>Roseville Middle School</b> 15 County Rd. B2 E; Little Canada; 2 blocks E of Rice St.	Mon Wed Fri	6:30-10:00 am 5/1 – 9/30	8	3.0-3.5	David Howard	651-353-8564
<b>Skillman Courts, Roseville</b> East of Cleveland on Skillman	Mon Wed	8:00-10:00 am	4	2.5-3.0	Anne Carchedi	651-494-9050
	Tue Thu	8:00-10:00 am	4	3.0	Svetlana Shavzin	651-699-6891
<b>3M Tartan Park</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> Street N between Cty Rds 17 and 15, Lake Elmo. Enter through picnic/sports area. Follow sports complex signs to Pavilion #1.	Mon	9:00-11:00	4	3.0-3.5	Darlene Moynagh	651-436-8927
	Wed	May & Sept			Sandy Barstad	651-777-7582
	Fri	8:00-10:00 am June-Aug			Rudy Jensen	651-738-9152
<b>Walton Park</b> 1584 Hadley Ave N, Oakdale	Tue Thu Sat	8:00-10:00 am May 10 thru October	3	2.0-3.5	Dick Wigfield	651-983-1351
<b>White Bear Lake High School</b> County Rd E and McKnight Rd White Bear Lake	Wed	6:00-8:00 pm	7	3.0-3.5	Shirley Kresko After May, ask Shirley for time	651-399-9431
	Sat	10:00-noon Start April	7	3.0-3.5	Denis Woulfe	651-263-0749

For corrections or changes for St. Paul and suburbs call the Area Director:  
Thue Rasmussen at 651-917-0075 or E-mail him at [thueor32@comcast.net](mailto:thueor32@comcast.net)

## Myths & mistakes

By David Sommer

*Roll racquet over ball for topspin.*  
Even recently I heard a commentator asserting this. Physically impossible, as high speed

photos show. Topspin is generated by low-to-high stroke.

*12-point tie break.* You'll not find this in the Rules. It's a 7-point tie break.

*Guard the alley!* Bad advice! Alley shots are difficult. Guard the middle!

*It's your call.* If I ask for your help on a line call, give me your best judgment. This reply is rude.

*Let's play a let.* No! Call it "in" or "out." If you are uncertain, benefit of doubt goes to opponent.

**●● MINNEAPOLIS AREA ●●**

**For corrections or changes for Minneapolis and suburbs call the Area Director:  
Jon Holmgren at 612-702-7509 or E-mail him at e\_jon\_holmgren@yahoo.com**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Cts</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Captains</b>	<b>Phone</b>
<b>Aquila Park</b> , St. Louis Park Not drop-in. Call Rick.	Mon	7:15-9:30 AM	5	3.5-4.0	Rick Van Doeren	952-897-3888
<b>Augsburg Park</b> 72 <sup>nd</sup> and Blaisdell, Richfield	Mon Wed Fri	8:00-9:30 am	5	Open	Carol Ogden	612-869-9062
<b>Bryant Park</b> 85 <sup>th</sup> and Bryant, Bloomington	Mon Tue	8:30-10:30 am	4	All levels	Chuck Supplee	952-884-2575
	Wed Thu				Irmi Habeck	952-881-6852
	Fri				Bill Kruckeberg	952-926-3397
<b>Brookview Park</b> Hwy 55 & Winnetka Ave Golden Valley	Sat	8:00-10:00 am	6	2.5 – 3.5	Gloria Kumagai	763-377-5602
					Rod Johnson	763-588-2107
<b>Central Middle School, Eden Prairie.</b> Technology Drive and Wallace Rd. Behind the school	Sat Sun	3:00-5:00 pm	7	3.0+	Marv Schneider	952-540-6419
<b>Creekside Courts.</b> 52 <sup>nd</sup> and Morgan S, Minneapolis	Tue	8:00-10:00 am	4	All levels	Jean Murdock	952-941-5362
<b>Donaldson Park</b> 75 <sup>th</sup> and Humboldt Richfield	Mon	7:00-9:00 am	4	3.0-3.5	Ann Barten	612-724-0712
	Wed					
	Fri					
<b>Dred Scott Park</b> West Old Shakopee Rd & Ferry Bridge Road, Bloomington	Mon thru Fri	8:00-10:00 am	5	Open	Robert Ostlund	952-934-6306
<b>Fridley High School</b> 61st Ave & 7th St (park behind Community Ed Building). <b>NOTE:</b> during June-July, play will be at the Middle School courts – north across 61 <sup>st</sup> Ave, just beyond water tower.	Tue Thu	9:00-11:00 am	6	3.0 - 4.0	Connie Metcalf	763-571-3596
<b>Junction Park, Hopkins.</b> Excelsior Blvd & Fairview Ave. Call first, subs may be needed.	Thu	9:00-10:30 am Start June 7	2	3.0+ W	Roz Bernstein	952-938-7698
<b>Holasek Park</b> <b>Call first – subs may be needed</b>	Mon	7:30-9:00 am	2	3.0-3.5 W	Libby Hargrove	952-941-1313
			2		Susan Rosenberger	952-473-7939
<b>Holy Family School</b> 8475 Kochia Lane, Victoria	Tue Thu	8:00-11:00 am	8	Open	Steve Nelson	952-443-2989
<b>Kenwood Trail Middle School</b> 19455 Kenwood Trail (Kenwood Trail & 192 <sup>nd</sup> St), Lakeville	Mon	8:30-10:30 am	4	2.0-3.0	Warren Porter	952-431-5850
	Tue	8:30-10:30 am	4	3.0-3.5	Bruce Abrahamson	952-461-2617
	Wed	8:30-10:30 am	4	2.0-3.0	Rick Specht	952-423-5974
	Thu	8:30-10:30 am	4	3.0-3.5	Bruce Abrahamson	952-461-2617
	Fri	8:30-10:30 am	4	2.0-3.0	Warren Porter	952-431-5850
<b>Lone Lake Park</b> <b>No walk-ons.</b> Call Skip Pederson at 952-831-0684 or sapederson11@earthlink.net	Mon Tue Wed Fri	9:00-noon	4	3.0-4.0 MW	Skip Pederson	952-831-0684
<b>Monterey Courts</b> 36th Street and Monterey St. Louis Park	Mon Wed Fri	June-August: 9:00-10:00 am May, Sep, Oct 10:00-11:00 am	2	2.5-3.0 MW	Captain needed	



<b>Minnetonka Junction Park</b> Excelsior Blvd ½ mile west of Shady Oak	Fri	8:00-10:00 am	2	3.0-3.5	Herb Bacal	612-750-8318
<b>New Hope Park</b> 4300 Xylon Ave N (behind swimming pool), New Hope	Mon thru Fri	8:00-10:00 am	5	2.5 – 3.5	Richard Brandt	612-803-5786 763-533-0579
<b>Parkers Lake</b> County Rd 6 & Niagara Lane Plymouth	Mon thru Fri	8:30-10:30 am	4	2.5 – 3.5	Ed Fischer	763-550-9770
<b>Pershing Courts</b> 48 <sup>th</sup> St & Chowen Ave S, Mpls.	Thu	8:00-10:00 am	4	3.5-4.0 MW	Mark Mudra	952-833-1469
					Jon Holmgren	612-702-7509
<b>Rivers Bend Park in Ramsey</b> 14201 Waco Street	Tue Thu	8:00-10:30 am	4	2.5 – 4.0	Donna Mueller	763-421-8436
<b>Terrace Oak Park</b> ½ mile E of Cty 11 on Burnsville Parkway, Burnsville	Tue Wed Fri	9:00-10:30 am	2	3.0+ W	Ann Listug	952-890-9643
<b>Valley View Park</b> 90 <sup>th</sup> St between Nicollet and Portland, Bloomington	Mon Wed Fri	7:00-9:00 am	4	3.0+ MW	Ken Gjerde	612-827-2073
<b>Team Tennis</b> Organized team play at various west metro locations. Contact coordinator Marv Schneider or any of the team captains for information.	Tue	9:00-11:00 am	4	3.5+ M/W	Don Harnish	651-227-8387
					Barb Lewis	952-944-5779
					Carol Rothe	952-920-4504
					Marv Schneider	952-540-6419
					Ken Lucas	952-474-5676
					Ronnae Wagner	952-938-0374
<b>Women On Wednesday</b> June-August team play. Courts in New Hope and Golden Valley. Call Jane Tischbein or Al Simcoe.	Wed	9:00 am	6	2.5-3.5 W	Jon Weiss	952-220-6510
					Al Simcoe	763-315-0657
<b>For corrections or changes for Minneapolis and suburbs call the Area Director: Jon Holmgren at 612-702-7509 or E-mail him at e_jon_holmgren@yahoo.com</b>						

*(Advice from the pros—continued from page 9)*

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.

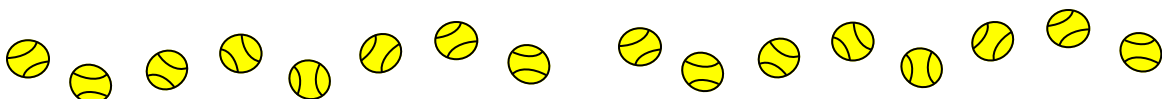
That’s enough to properly confuse everybody. I just saved you the trouble of taking a lesson. Have a happy **Across America Tennis Day** anyway.

**F MINUS** TONY CARRILLO



## STPC new members, renewals, and changes

	Name	Rating	Primary phone	Other phone	Address, Email, Member #
Rnw	Abrahamson, Bruce	M 3.5	952-461-2617		22117 Wagon Wheel Trl, Lakeville, MN 55044 brabraham@integra.net #4
Rnw	Anderson, Louise M	F 2.5	612-333-2713	612-354-0927	560 N 2nd St Apt 104, Minneapolis, MN 55401 louisemarieanderson@yahoo.com #4526
Rnw	Brandt, William E	M 3.5	952-933-5595		7250 Lewis Ridge Pkwy Apt 310, Edina, MN 55439 #172
New	Brotzler, Joseph C	M 3.5	651-455-3811		1509 Stickney Ave, South St. Paul, MN 55075 joe.brotzler@gmail.com #4725
Rnw	Christiansen, Susan	F 3.5	952-946-6976	612-801-8228	7701 Stonewood Ct, Edina, MN 55439 sechristiansen@comcast.net #251
Chg	Cook, Arlyne	F 3.0	952-926-3788	952-897-1947	5604 Abbott Ave S, Edina, MN 55410 ajgutmann@aol.com #4705
New	Cruse, Larry	M 3.0	952-361-6995	612-760-6427	15950 Lundstead Rd, Carver, MN 55315 jmmdcruse@yahoo.com #4724
Rnw	Culligan, Betty	F 3.5	651-698-4660	612-961-7003	1727 Beechwood Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55116 unclebetty@msn.com #288
Rnw	Doble, Julie	F 3.0	952-461-2996	952-484-2278	9395 Birch Lane, Lakeville, MN 55044 tjdoble@integra.com #4566
Rnw	Edgell, Robert	M 3.0	602-279-6937	602-999-2147	1022 E Sierra Vista Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85014 edgell@cox.net #4636
Rnw	Hanson, Lee	M 3.5	612-490-0065		3816 W 137 1/2 St, Burnsville, MN 55337 hanson3816@comcast.net #4513
Rnw	Humphrey, John	M 3.0	952-920-9712		3245 Zarthan Ave S, Saint Louis Park, MN 55416 johnrhumphrey@comcast.net #684
Rnw	Lenling, Ron	M 3.5	952-447-8213		5298 Candy Cove Trail SE, Prior Lake, MN 55372 rlenling@gmail.com #895
Rnw	Lilja, Sarah	F 4.0	612-816-0451	651-748-7585	2392 Timber Ave E, Maplewood, MN 55119 slilja@comcast.net #911
Rnw	London, Jeffrey	M 4.0	952-200-0643		1507 Winnetka Ave N, Golden Valley, MN 55427 jvlondon@yahoo.com #929
Rnw	McCauley, Lonni	M 3.0	763-757-2517		9701 Avocet St NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55433 lonnimccauley@comcast.net #1002
Rnw	Meyer, Keith	M 3.5	612-722-3717		3612 Bloomington Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55407 loulake16@gmail.com #1033
Rnw	Miller, Judy	F 2.5	651-224-1018	651-235-8391	854 Linwood, Saint Paul, MN 55105 jhm828@gmail.com #1039
Chg	Sheahan, Karen Kay	F 3.5	612-414-2739		28 River Woods Lane, Burnsville, MN 55337 kksheahan@comcast.net #1406
Chg	Sheets, Larry	M 3.0	651-646-8479	651-900-4165	1320 Keston St, Saint Paul, MN 55108 larrysheets@comcast.net #4516
Chg	Simcoe, Alverda	F 3.0	763-315-0657	763-516-1753	6040 Creekview Ln N, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443 jeral6040@gmail.com #1421
Chg	Simcoe, Jerry	M 3.0	763-315-0657		6040 Creekview Ln N, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443 jeral6040@gmail.com #1422
New	Smith, Paul	M 3.5	952-380-6529		6950 France Ave S #211, Edina, MN 55435 hipaul101@gmail.com



# Degree of Difficulty

L. Jon Wertheim

**The pros make tennis look easy, but we hackers know what a challenging game it is to master. And that's why we love it.**

FOR ALL THE PRAISE WE LAVISH ON TOP TENNIS PLAYERS, this, perhaps, is the most meaningful accolade: They make it look easy.

We said it of Sampras and McEnroe, Hingis and Goolagong. These days, we invoke that same enchanted phrase to describe Roger Federer. That serve that kicks so severely it should require a turn signal? Like all the great ones, Federer makes it look simple. Then there's the rest of us.

For us, tennis is hard, really hard. Arthur Ashe's longtime coach and mentor, Dr. Walter Johnson, was onto something when he described the sport as "the most challenging endeavor you could imagine." It's easier to pick up a nun than it is to pick up tennis. And while the revolution in racquet-head size 30 long years ago probably made the game somewhat easier to play, we still know the real meanings of those NTRP ratings categories:

3.5—First serve disappears under pressure; lobs often land inches past the net; slices pop up and topspin balls tend to stay low. As in below net level.

4.0—Occasionally bangs shin with serve follow-through; drop shots often land beyond the baseline; kick serve sometimes alights in the flower beds.

I was reminded of how hard tennis is last winter when I wrote about a high school basketball team in Indiana. The team's center was a hockey prodigy who, after suffering a brain tumor, was forced to give up contact sports. So the kid took up hoops in his senior year. At the end of the season, the lucky player secured a full scholarship to play for the University of Indianapolis. I laughed as I tried to imagine anyone picking up a racquet for the first time and, within four months, becoming good enough to land a free ride to college.

Of course, this makes it tough for tennis to attract and hold new

players. It's also tough for the game's marketers. What do you promote, the fact that you might play diligently for five years and still wind up shanking forehands into the cyclone fence as you get humiliated in the first round of your town tournament?

But the difficulty of tennis is also one of the sport's long-term assets. Tennis requires an extraordinary blend of precision and power. You might hit a tennis ball the way Barry Bonds hammers a hanging curve, but it's not worth anything if you can't guide it within the parameters of the court (see: Gonzalez, Fernando). Conversely, you can hit your shots with laser-like precision, but if they lack pop you'll get blown off the court.

Here's another thing about tennis: You can't be a specialist. Baseball pitchers can't hit, football running backs can't throw or kick or tackle, basketball rebounders have trouble dribbling. But in tennis, if you can't achieve a modicum of proficiency in every shot, you'll end up with a ranking like a FedEx tracking number.

Stand by a practice court during a pro tournament and you'll see even marginal touring pros turn the high backhand into a work of art. The struggle to approach that standard is half our fun; we're overwhelmed by a sense of accomplishment when we hit that perfect backhand on the dead run just once. For that split second, it's as if we've gained membership into an exclusive club. Tennis players know why an A in Advanced Aerospace Engineering means more than the top grade in Introductory Shadow Puppetry.



The Vikings, of course, knew the importance of stretching before an attack.

The sport of tennis ought to consider trumpeting, not hiding, its degree of difficulty. That's what gives tennis heft. You want "fun"? Play badminton in your backyard or try the latest video game. You want to start down a road to proficiency that will take years to travel? Play tennis.

Perhaps the slogan of the game ought to be "Tennis: Play It If You Can."

L. Jon Wertheim is a senior writer at [Sports Illustrated](#). He also writes the weekly [Tennis Mailbag](#) at [si.com](#).

[Tennis Magazine, Jan/Feb 2005]

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## Playing the Net

By Bill Cosgrove

(Thursday night tennis, May 17, 2007)



I'd never seen a butterfly on the net,  
Or one that stayed around for long, and yet,  
He flitted and perched right there in front of me,  
Hesitant and fragile, but playful and free.  
No country this, or sport, for aged men  
Alert to contradictions, who will then  
Take wonder at the long chaotic flight  
We each had followed to that single night,  
To those few seconds just before the serve  
When he could make me think that I deserve  
His sudden flash of unexpected beauty,  
And make those seconds serve the solemn duty,  
To play a game—to poach, to put away,  
To win the point, the game, the match, the day—  
As he, without concern, went on his way.  
And I stayed up, and back, to make the play.

(Friday noon tennis, May 18, 2007)

That butterfly died the very next day,  
I saw him lying in the service box.  
What did him in I really can't say,

I suppose it could have been the pox.

Or maybe he collapsed of fright  
As someone, like me, with a mighty groan,  
Whacked at the ball with all his might  
And sent him off to his heavenly throne.

It could have been a bad cold, I s'pose,  
Or a case of severe butterfly gout,  
But I'm not sure they have a nose,  
Much less a foot—which I seriously doubt.

Maybe AIDS did the little guy in,  
As he exercised his sexual preference,  
He could've been part of a wild fly-in,  
Where safe sex was given no deference.

Perhaps a victim of lepidoptera-cide,  
In some mad insect's killing spree,  
Or even butterfly suicide  
Running rampant through his community.

It could've been any number of things  
That sent him off to his reward,  
Hearse-less and on his own lovely wings,  
That being all he could afford.

I really don't know what sent him home,  
But I fear it was my four-meter poem.