

Senior Tennis

TIMES

"Good Morning. This is Jack Dow."

Past President Mandy Johnson forwarded a message from Jack Dow taped the day before his surgery. Jack has had his larynx removed and is working on learning how to communicate either by a mechanical voice box or by the use of his muscles to form words. A tape was made so that he could later hear his natural voice, if he wished to do so.

The following is a text of that tape:

"Good morning, Mandy. This is Jack Dow on July 1, 1990. I don't think I have ever met a more caring, thoughtful and more appreciative group than the Senior Tennis Players Club members. They have been a great source of appreciation for me and a great help in facing some of the comparatively minor problems I have had.

"I will be eternally grateful for the friendship, thoughtfulness and help that the Senior Tennis Players Club has given me. It is a great thing to have in your golden age or declining years--a group of people to help you over the rough spots, even though you have the feeling that you don't deserve it. It's great.

"I would like to mention, while I still have my natural voice, the great experiences I have had, not to say the many great hours of exercise and fun. I look back now on Wimbledon, the U.S. Open and the French Open. All of these great trips were the highlights of my life.

"Please convey these thoughts, if you will, to the club members. I have tried

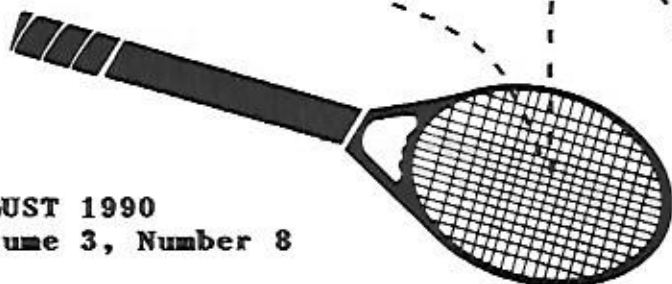
to do so inadequately. Thanks for your time. I will be in touch.

"Goodbye. Jack Dow, July 1, 1990. Hopefully I will see you all again soon. Good Sunday. May you have as great a life as I have had in your so-called golden years. Goodbye, everyone."

IF YOU HAVEN'T JOINED US IN OUTDOOR PLAY,
COME ON OUT!

Summer (outdoor tennis) is much less structured than winter indoor tennis. Almost all of the outdoor tennis is on an open basis. Just pick a place, a day and a time that you like and show up. No reservations, no fees, no subs or signup. Just show up with your racquet, balls, visor and a jug of water.

If you have any questions, call the captain listed in our outdoor schedule. If "captain needed" is shown, volunteer to be a captain by calling Dick Pratt, 433-3583.



AUGUST 1990
Volume 3, Number 8

The Places We Play

Bob Western

SUMMER OUTDOOR PLAY

Breck School

There's a time change for beginner lessons and drills at Breck - Connie Custodio, instructor. These will be held Mondays from 5:30.

Chaska

There's a change of location from Chaska High to the Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska on Fridays from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Stan Furber, 448-4519.

Edina

The temporary facility, Edina Community Center, is not available to us on a reserved basis as there are scheduled programs there. However, STPC members are playing there without challenge from anyone. We had hoped for a speedy completion of the repairs to the Edina Senior High courts, but there is a soil problem of some kind which is delaying completion of the job. We have been told there are courts without planned activities at Webber, Hylands, Utee and Normandale. Good luck.

DOMINO'S TEAMTENNIS TO START IN OCTOBER

Frank Beutel says that Domino's Teamtennis will start at Phalen on Saturday, October 20, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., for seven weeks. Register as a regular or sub by calling Frank at 426-2440.

GOLDEN AGERS

Will all eligible men and women of the Senior Tennis Players Club, 80 years of age and over, please contact BILL WEST at 451-7005 or DICK PRATT at 433-3583 to join the club.

WINTER INDOOR PLAY

Greenway Athletic Club

We will be adding two courts on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. for fall and winter. Do we have a captain prospect?

White Bear Racquet Club

We will be adding a court for Friday mornings at White Bear.

Williston Club

In the fall the cost will be \$3.50 per person for 1 1/2 hours' courttime; \$4.50 per person for 2 hours. Williston first set their fees at twice these amounts, but finally agreed to \$3.50 and \$4.50. The good news is we have been promised better housekeeping practices.

* * * * *

If you have questions or comments, please call Bob Western at 735-5761.

HOORAY!

Ernie Greene becomes a member of our teaching staff for the fall and winter program. Jeff Lowe has moved to Los Angeles, and our great fortune is that Ernie Greene will be taking over his class, starting this fall.

At this point in time, his beginner classes and drills will be Wednesday evenings at Northland. Watch for the next SENIOR TENNIS TIMES for details.

The Coming Indoor Season

By Dick Pratt

It's time to start planning for the next indoor tennis season which starts in October. The September SENIOR TENNIS TIMES will have the schedule for all players who have been playing in previous years. Ideally, all of our members would be playing tennis on a scheduled basis at the various indoor courts; however, we know that we have not yet reached the ideal.

I'm sure there are many members who would like to play, but have not been able to get started. There are some things we should know ahead of time in order to make it happen; such as, who are you? Where would you like to play? What day or days of the week would you hope to play? What time of day?

The tennis clubs give us special rates during the day when most working people are unavailable to play. Without knowing these specifics, along with how many people to provide for, we cannot make commitments to the clubs. Will you please fill in the questionnaire below to help us get you started.

Captains are a vital link in this whole procedure. During the indoor season, if we have many people wanting to play but not enough captains, we cannot play. Someone has to be responsible for a group committed to play at a club. Mail the completed questionnaire as soon as possible to:

Dick Pratt
12080 Lakamaga Trail
Marine-on-St. Croix, MN 55047
433-3583

✂-----
Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Preference of Indoor Facility _____

Day or Days of the Week _____

Time of Day _____

Self-Assessed Level of Play: Beginner Intermediate Advanced Expert

Like to Play with: (Circle) Women Only Men Only Mixed

Will be a Captain: (Circle) Yes No

Level of Interest: (Circle) Regular Substitute

TENNIS TIPS by Percy Hughes

TWO COMMON ERRORS AND HOW THEY CAN BE CORRECTED

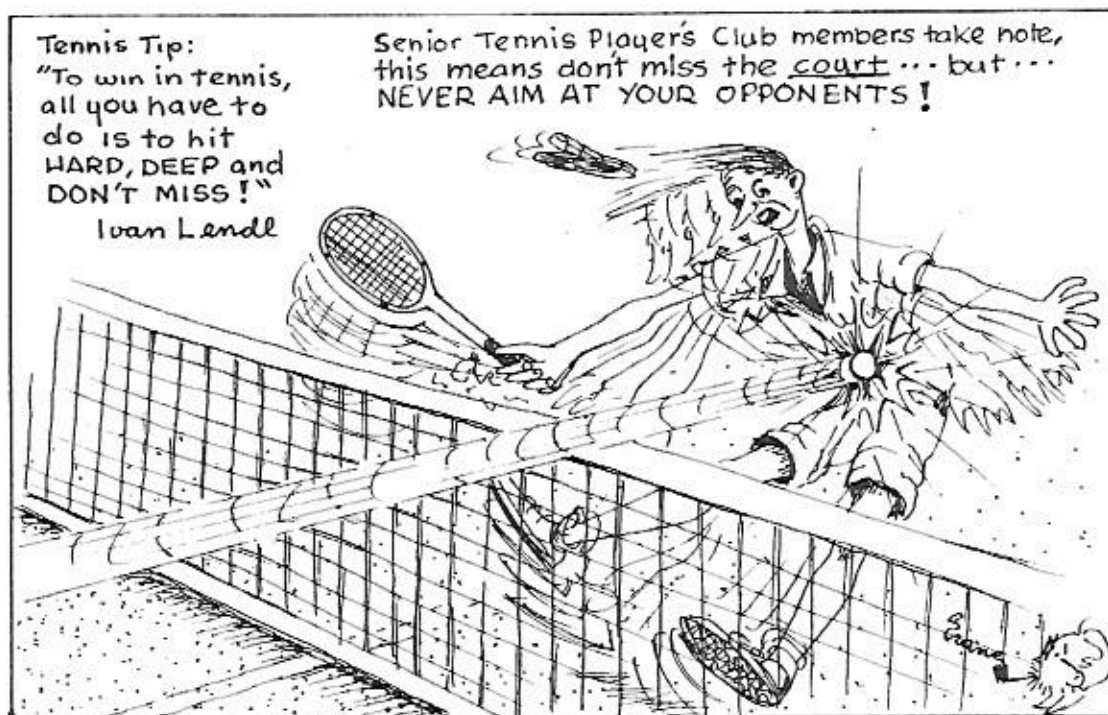
1. Preparing Too Late

If you wait until the ball is practically on top of you before getting ready to swing, the result will be a hurried cramped shot that will sail feebly out of court. The solution? Take your racquet back early. As soon as you realize which side of you the ball is coming, quickly make your shoulder turn, which will help take your racquet back. The time saved will allow you to concentrate on your forward stroke.

2. The Flying Elbow Backhand

What is it? It's what happens when you lift your elbow up and away from your body as your arm straightens to reach the ball. When you do that, the elbow will often leave the racquethead through the impact zone--resulting in weak slicing shots and, sometimes, a bad case of tennis elbow. Solution? Keep your elbow in for solid backhands. Meet the ball squarely just before it reaches your front foot. At impact, your hitting shoulder, elbow, wrist, and racquethead should be on a line.

COURTLY COURTESY / by Frank Evans



Continued from last page
Richard Pratt

fly Corsairs. In August, 1945 while the carrier was returning from its shakedown cruise to Rio de Janeiro, the war in the Pacific came to an end. "Fortunately for me, we never saw any action," Dick said. "We headed back to the states, and I was stationed at Floyd Bennett Field to fly Corsairs from New York to San Francisco, where they were put into mothballs. When all the planes were transferred, our squadron was disbanded and we were discharged."

Dick returned to Minneapolis and took a job with Northwestern Bell and also joined the Naval Reserve. In 1947, he was married, but lost his wife to polio three years later--they had two children. Dick and Shirley were married in 1952; their first child was born in 1953. In the Naval Reserve, he was again flying Corsairs until 1952, when he was recalled to active duty and to Pensacola for eventual service in Korea. Since Dick had three dependents, however, with a fourth on the way, the Navy assigned him to flight instructor duty. The Pratts lived in Pensacola until Dick retired from the Naval Reserve in March, 1955. They returned to northeast Minneapolis and rented a home just a few blocks from where he grew up.

Dick attended the University of Minnesota where he studied for two years. He wanted to stay on and graduate, but family commitments made him decide it was time to go to work. The telephone company welcomed him back and, in total, he worked for the company 37 years.

"At Ma Bell's, you don't work from the ground up, but rather from the underground up," Dick explained. "I started underground routing ducts for cable and pulling cable. I moved above ground to construction, and well above ground to aerial work. Then I moved inside to install telephones. Next, I worked with the directory. From that, I moved into the central office and then into the sales

department selling telephone systems and teletype and data systems. At the time of the breakup of the Bell system, I took an early retirement (January, 1984)."

"I enjoyed my work, but it's really nice to be retired. Now Shirley and I have a little more time for our family. Our two sons and two daughters have a total of 13 children, so we have seven granddaughters and six grandsons. It's wonderful to be grandparents. And it's also great to have time to play tennis, practice on a Technics organ, make new friends and enjoy the activities of the Senior Tennis Players Club."

-Don Ittner



Dick Pratt didn't take tennis seriously until he joined the Senior Tennis Players Club.

Seniority

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Ed Law sent me an article written by Anita Rich of New York City titled "Retirement Benefits." He said it fit him so well (as it does me, too) that he thought many of our members may see themselves in the article. Here are extracts I hope you enjoy as much as I did.....

From my days as a teenager playing tennis on the public courts of New York City to my recent retirement from teaching, I held tenaciously to my rank of perpetual novice. I greeted every new partner with embarrassed apologies: "I don't serve very well. I don't play net. I hope I won't spoil your game." But things are different now. I hold my head high, proffer no excuses, and accept all invitations to play.

Although I'd had lessons here and there over the years, including a week of torture at a tennis camp, the bulk of my training came gratuitously from self-proclaimed pros who constantly reminded me to "Hold the racket like this, stand like that, turn your body and follow through." This catch-as-catch-can instruction, combined with limited practice and playing time, assured me of maintaining my tyro status for almost 40 years. But once I retired and hit my mid-fifties, things began to change.

A major part of my newfound leisure was taking weekly lessons with a friend. We never missed a date with Hector, our unflappable teacher. A bombardment of instructions and corrections were intertwined with a litany of encouragement that flew at us faster than a speeding Spalding: "Straighten your arm, bend your knees, move to the baseline," then, "Go, Evelyn, you can get it," or "What a shot, Anita!"

Spring found me volleying at the net, a spot where only six months earlier I feared to go. I was reaching and stretching for overheads, intercepting potential winners with my new graphite

racket and sending them back with a velocity that defied return. As if by magic, all my moving parts began to function in unison. My groundstrokes, which had been dropping over the net with an uninspired thud, now reverberated off my strings with unbridled joy and landed deep in my opponent's territory. The longer we kept the ball moving, the higher I flew.

Indeed, the exhilaration and sense of well-being that accompanies an hour or two of tennis is my runner's high. And like the addict who must have his fix, I must play at least twice a week without fail. This high has little to do with winning or being better than my opponent. Rather, I delight in moving my middle-aged, soon-to-be decrepit body and in maintaining a connection with my youth. But it's more than that; it's the thrill of learning new skills, of improving upon past performances. I strive to do better than I did the week before: getting to an impossible shot, placing my shots where I want, hitting harder and faster.

With the current focus on physical fitness, it seems all of America is on the run. Those who are not running are race-walking, swimming laps, doing push-ups or working out in the gym. But are they having fun? Their faces, contoured with pain and dripping with sweat, reflect grim determination to achieve a healthy body through exercise. For me, the pleasure derived from a tennis match, either won or lost, is reward in itself. I see the calories burning away as my muscles tone up and my figure returns to a sylph-like state.

My serve has a long way to go, but I'm continuing to work with Hector to develop the speed, placement and power that will one day win points. And as for that element of competition, if doing better than I did before means winning the game, what's so terrible about that?

MEMBERSHIP COUNT as of July 20 - 1470

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Dick Flugum's wife, Evelyn (Eve), died July 5. The Senior Tennis Players Club extends sincere sympathy to Dick and to his son, daughters and granddaughter.

-PAID AD-

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1320 Westwood Hills Road
Minneapolis MN 55426

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