

Autumn 2023



Calendar

(dates subject to change due to weather)

11/5 USTA Eastern 2023 College Showcase Day in Mt. Kisco

11/20 Window to apply for LI Regional Grants closes. [Click here](#) to apply

1/27 USTA Eastern Conference (Part 1) in Tarrytown. This event will focus on Regional Council Training

3/23/24 USTA Eastern On Court Conference (Part 2) at BJK National Tennis Center, featuring on-court demonstrations

visit www.usta.com/longislandregion for details on all events

...

follow us on Facebook at [Play Tennis Long Island](#)

On The Ball: News From LI



Recognizing Excellence

The USTA Long Island Region's 33rd Annual Awards Dinner is in the books. A wonderful evening was had by all. Honorees, their families and friends attended the event at the Sea Cliff Manor to recognize local volunteers, players and others for their achievements on and off the court.

Awards were given in categories including sportsmanship, facilities, league play, high school achievements and more. [Click here for a complete list of awardees.](#)

Event highlights include:

Adam Kolenberg received the **Vitas Gerulaitis "For the Love of Tennis" Award**, which honors someone who demonstrates their love of the game through volunteering, supporting programs and helping grow the game. For many years, Adam has brought together a group of players from different backgrounds and ages, driven only by his love of tennis. His contact list of players is endless, and Adam has captained teams from lower NTRP rating levels to the 4.5 level. He runs an organized indoor doubles game in the winter and plans doubles games all year long.

The **Charles Karp Memorial Award for Overcoming Adversity** is given to a tennis player who

has overcome a serious medical condition, disability or other adversity. This year the award went to the **Roslyn High School Boys Tennis Team**. While celebrating winning the biggest match of their season, tragedy struck the team with the passing of two of their players. After some time to regroup, they made the decision to continue and complete their regular season and compete in the



Large School Team playoffs and the Individual Nassau County tournament. Despite losing in the Semifinals to their rival Syosset, the team came down to root for Syosset in the County finals and in the NY State tournament.

Dealing with the tragic loss of two of her team's players, Roslyn Coach **Kerriann Janotte-Hinckley** was a source of great comfort to her team and the community at large. She supported, guided and rallied her team to continue their season in memory of their teammates. She worked diligently to keep the team together and

playing beyond the regular season to provide a safe space to help them work through their grief. For this she received the **Good Samaritan Award**, recognizing someone for doing something above and beyond to help a tennis player, facility or the general tennis community.

Community service has always been an important part of the Long Island Region's charter, and past president Daniel Burgess was passionate about giving back. The **Daniel Burgess, Sr. Community Service Award** is given in his memory. He shared his passion with his community, the kids he taught and the people he met. The award was presented by Daniel's widow, Agnes, to the **Nassau County Police Activity League**. PAL tennis was dear to Daniel's heart and the Nassau County PAL added the sport for its positive health and social benefits for the PAL's participants, many of whom come from underserved communities.

Photos from the evening can be found throughout this newsletter. To see all the photos, visit Play Tennis Long Island on Facebook or our [website](#). Feel free to download and share the photos and tag us on Facebook: Play Tennis Long Island and Instagram @usta_eastern

Scenes from the LI Awards Dinner

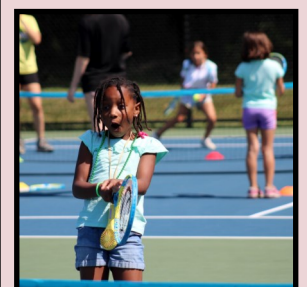


Hundreds of Kids Enjoy Free Summer Tennis

The USTA Long Island Region and [Long Island Tennis Magazine](#) worked together this summer to bring free tennis days to hundreds of children at three separate events.

Groups, organizations, summer programs and others brought children and those with special needs to the events that took place at LuHi Summer Programs, Island Quest and Sportime Hempstead Lake, with 600 participants in all.

Read *Long Island Tennis Magazine's* coverage [here](#). Photos courtesy of Long Island Tennis Magazine.



Long Island Happenings

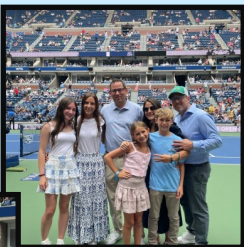
Local Kids Play at US Open

10-and-under players from Christopher Morley Tennis enjoyed a once-in-a-lifetime experience at the 2023 US Open, when the Net Generation Experience allowed them to play on the Grandstand Court. The two dozen kids showed their skills in front of a lively crowd that included their parents, who cheered them on from the stands. The 10 & Under tennis program is headed by Hilary Bressler, who says "The Fall session is off to a great start. CMT is so proud of all our coaches. The program has 180 children and the kids are excited to continue their tennis education."



Hassenbein/Falkowitz Tribute

Drew Hassenbein and Ethan Falkowitz were remembered at a tribute ceremony in Arthur Ashe Stadium during the US Open as their families took part in the opening coin toss.



Commack Teams Visit US Open

Commack High School's Varsity and JV Tennis teams participated in the US

Open Fan Fest. Photos courtesy of Jackie Clark, coach.



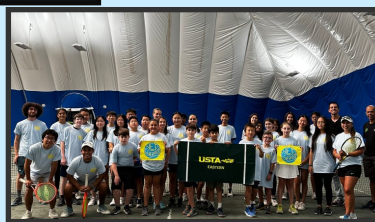
Adaptive Tennis for Kids

Long Island volunteers Sunny and Eddie Fishkind (right), teamed up with Janet Lefkowitz of HERO Tennis to bring the sport to Island Quest Day Camp this summer.



Port Washington Community Tennis

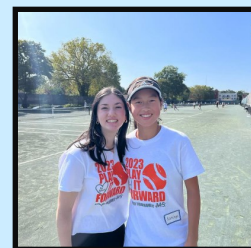
Port Washington's high school tennis team members held their annual free clinic for



members of the community. Head Coach Shane Helfner said: "The Port Washington tennis team knows the importance of giving back to the community... the team invited younger middle and elementary students to come and learn the fundamentals of the game."

Great Neck Tournament for MS

Great Neck North's Katelyn Ho and Eliza Schulman ran the school's 3rd annual Multiple Sclerosis fundraiser. The event raised more than \$6,000—more than double what was raised last year. The money raised will help those with MS and fund research for a cure.



Net Generation Day at LIHRC

USTA Eastern's [Neil Thakur](#) and [Austin Doyle](#) worked with Tito Perez and his staff at Long Island Health & Racquet Club in Setauket to hold a Net Generation Kids Day at the club this past summer. More than 100 kids of varying ages participated in the two-hour event. Activities included competitive play for prizes. All participants received Arthur Ashe Kids' Day hats and t-shirts.



Junior Tennis Foundation holds 36th Annual Hall of Fame Ceremony

Three tennis VIPs with ties to Long Island—Michael Fishbach, Michael Grant and Anne Worcester—were inducted into the Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame during a ceremony held at the River Club in New York City in August. Below, read about their incredible accomplishments in the sport.

Michael Fishbach (Great Neck)

The 1977 US Open: If you know, you know. And if you do know, you'll remember that one of the most sensational and exhilarating storylines (among many) that fortnight came courtesy of former No. 1 Eastern junior Fishbach. Ranked well outside the world's Top 100, the 23-year-old Fishbach showed up to the event with what was dubbed a "spaghetti racquet"—a double-strung contraption that he made himself using nylon strings, adhesive tape and even a cord from a Venetian blind. Its unique design greatly increased the topspin of Fishbach's shots, which mystified his opponents; by the end of his time in Queens, he'd defeated three players in qualifying and upset two-time Grand Slam champion Stan Smith—by an impressive 6-0, 6-2 scoreline, no less—to improbably reach the third round of the men's singles draw. The Cinderella run captivated the public and even caught the eye of Johnny Carson, who extended an invitation for Fishbach to appear on *The Tonight Show*.

Interestingly, Fishbach would actually record his best professional results *after* the event that changed his life, ultimately reaching a career-high ranking of world No. 47 in 1978. Since retiring from the professional circuit in 1982, the Great Neck native has gone on to have a long and rewarding career as a whale conservationist.

Michael Grant (Roslyn)

Former top-ranked Eastern junior Grant had no intentions of becoming a tennis prodigy. In fact, he caught the tennis bug much later than most of his peers, first picking up a racquet at a

day camp when he was around 10 years old. With limited instruction, Grant won a tournament at the camp and "got a little bit hooked," so his mom took him to the Roslyn Racquet Club near their home in Roslyn for a couple of lessons. Over the years he worked on refining his game in the Long Island area, mostly developing his strokes under the watchful eye of local pro Bill Weissbuch. He reached the No. 1 Eastern ranking in both the 16-and-under and 18-and-under age divisions and won the New York State High School Championship in 1973. He also greatly increased his prominence on the national stage, reaching the Easter Bowl final as well as several National semifinals, including the Boys' National Hard Court Championships.

Grant would go on to compete on the professional tour for two years, ascending to a career-high ranking of world No. 88 and collecting wins over top players Jose Luis Clerc and Brian Teacher. Although he effectively retired from the game, he never stopped playing: He hits at the Shelter Rock Tennis Club in Manhasset every morning before heading to work.

Anne Worcester (Syosset)

In 1994, tennis executive Worcester was named CEO of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA), becoming the first woman—and, at just 34 years old, the youngest person ever—to lead a professional sporting organization. Over the course of four years, Worcester helped bring a modern sheen to the house that Billie Jean King built, expanding the sport's international reach and enacting many of the practices and policies that have

shaped the way we view the game today.

A product of two tennis aficionados, Worcester grew up in Syosset with the sport all around her. She played consistently from the time she was just five years old, competing in her club's ladder and serving as the captain of her high school varsity tennis team. She also teamed up with her tennis instructor father to compete in the Equitable Family Challenge, an annual

national parent-child tournament that culminated at the US Open. One year, the pair reached the semifinals of the New York sectional and were just a single match from making the trip to Forest Hills.



Fishbach (at left in photo above), Grant (center) and Worcester (right) pose with their fellow inductees at the Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame ceremony in August.

Proceeds from the event—including ticket sales—benefit the Junior Tennis Foundation (JTF), which helps provide scholarships to junior and adaptive players across the Eastern Section. Learn more about the organization and its work [here](#).

Past USTA President Katrina Adams (with JTF Executive Director Mark McIntyre) hosted the 2023 induction ceremony.



USTA Leagues Update

By Becky Bellino, LI Adult League Coordinator

Fall is in the air, but the summer action is still fresh in our minds!

As usual, August and September were action packed with Sectionals, and Long Island had its fair share of victories.

I'd like to highlight one of these victories by congratulating our 18+ 2.5 Women who WON at Nationals the last week of September! These ladies came together in the USTA format for the first time this past season and dominated from start to finish. Tired of facing off against one another in town leagues, Laura Crain created this Point Set team to play with her friends and enjoy some competition along the way. This competitive nature brought them all the way across the country where they took the top honors. Our region could not be more proud of these women, and I hope this is a start to long and lustrous USTA experience for them all. (See Laura Crain's story on page 7).

While some teams have Nationals in their sights, others have already started their conquest in our tri-level leagues and 18+ mixed. Our 4.5 tri-level leagues have begun and will end just shy of the December holidays. 18+ Mixed Doubles has just started and registration is open until January 15th. Feel free to reach out if you are interested in joining in on the fun!

Finally, our region is trying to gain some traction in the newly created 5.0 tri-level league. It looks like we will run this league for the men with at least two teams participating and, at the moment, there is one team interested for the women. If there is anyone interested in captaining another team, please let me know.

Here is the full list of teams that are heading to Nationals:



2023 Eastern Sectional Winners

18 & Over 2.5 Women Sectional Champions

Laura Crain and Cristina Handal's team from Point Set. Nationals were Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 in Tucson, Arizona

18 & Over 4.5 Men Sectional Champions

Mitchell Low and Amani Siddiqui's team from Long Beach Tennis Center. Nationals were Oct. 6-8 in Surprise, Arizona

40 & Over 3.5 Men Sectional Champions

Adam Moramarco's team from Christopher Morley Tennis Center. Nationals were Oct 6- Oct. 8 in Tucson, Arizona

40 & Over 4.0 Women Sectional Champions

Lisa Newell and Tracy Kleinberg's team from Huntington Indoor Tennis. Nationals are Oct. 27- Oct. 29 in San Diego, California

55 & Over 6.0 Men Sectional Champions

Rob Kronenberg's team from Long Island Health and Racquet. Nationals are Oct. 20- Oct. 22 in Orlando, Florida

55 & Over 7.0 Men Sectional Champions

Daniel Marklin's team from Sportime Kings Park. Nationals are Oct. 27 - Oct. 29 in Orlando

65 & Over 8.0 Men Sectional Champions

Al Silverstein and Ken Luba's team from Christopher Morley Tennis Center. Nationals are Feb. 16- Feb. 18 in Surprise, Arizona

65 & Over 8.0 Women Sectional Champions

Lydia Eitel's team from Sportime Syosset. Nationals are Feb. 16-Feb. 18 in Surprise, Arizona

40 & Over Mixed 9.0 Sectional Champions

Roslyn Chua-Mcalonie's team from Park Ave. Tennis. Nationals are Nov. 3 - Nov. 5 in Surprise, Arizona

If your league team won at Sectionals and you'd like to see your picture in this newsletter, please email a photo to ustaonlongisland@gmail.com



40+ Mens' 3.5 team

Point Set Team Wins National League Championship

The 18+ 2.5 team out of Point Set Indoor Racquet Club in Oceanside, captained by Laura Crain, had an amazing 2023 season, winning the national championship in Tucson, Arizona in September. The following is Laura's recap of Nationals.

“

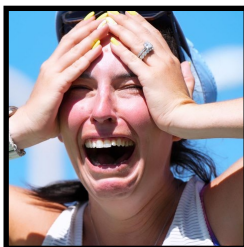
This is truly like a dream. I feel like we had a bit of a Cinderella story going with only six players and no support team. We had some thrilling victories, including a comeback from being down a superset tiebreaker 5 to 9 and winning 11-9 to punch our tickets to the semifinals; even in the finals, court one was down one game to five and came back to bring it to a 6-6 tiebreaker and the win.



Our singles player, Elise Chamberlain, absolutely killed it against so much adversity from the other teams. She

played 2+ hours in the 98° heat in the semifinals. I'm just so proud of my team!

I started the team with the help of my friend, Cristina Handal, who was unable to finish the season after the birth of her daughter. Somehow, back in July we managed to pull off a Long Island playoff win to represent at sectionals. We caravanned to Schenectady and punched our ticket to Nationals.



There were 17 teams at Nationals, with Caribbean, Texas, Northern California and Missouri Valley all favored to win. On Day 1,

we took on Hawaii...we won. Then we battled Southern California. When one court lost, Lindsey Rosenberg stepped up and played through heatstroke in 95 degree heat to help our team while I pulled through on singles. On Day 2, our team kept the ship steady with amazing doubles wins; I couldn't pull off singles but we stayed in the hunt and we won 2/3 courts against Inner Mountain. Despite us beating them, Inner Mountain became our friends, our help, our cheering squad. I am deeply grateful to that team.

In the afternoon of Day 2, we had a final shot for a chance at the finals - down one court, Elise murdered singles and then it was Caitlin Sorohan and me battling Texas and knowing if we lost we had no shot at the semis. We had six players total...

Texas had 10 rested players and a large cheering section. We won the first set, lost the second...time for the tie break...

1-1, 2-2, 3-3... then....it started to slip away...and all of the sudden Texas was up 9-5 and they were one point away from taking away any hope at the semis. And that is why the greatest win we'll ever have is coming back 11-9 to punch our tickets to the semis!!!!

Day 3 Semis & Finals: Caribbean, Nor Cal, Florida, USTA Eastern... We drew 2 seed Nor Cal...and they were as tough as we were told they would be. They had players, they had coaches, they had a huge cheering section....but they didn't have Elise! After Sivan and Marie handily got us one win, Caitlin and I had a tight 5-7, 5-7 loss and it was all down to Elise on singles... her opponent was making such horrible calls against her the refs had to come

over and start overturning them. Despite Nor Cal side coaching, heckling and screaming to their singles player that she was the better player, Elise won in a 2+ hour singles match in the 95 degree heat. Suddenly there we were battling Caribbean for first or second...

In the finals, Elise and I got there first with a win on our court ...Lindsey was in the tightest singles battle there could be against a truly excellent opponent... but was unfortunately losing and it was down to Marie and Sivan....they got the first set making it look easy and then Caribbean woke up...and they found themselves in a 1-5 hole needing to do battle and battle they did! 2-5, 3-5, 4-5, 5-5, 5-6, 6-6...7 point tie break for the national championship 7-4 - WINNERS!!!!!!!!!!

Tears, shock, more tears and equal parts pure ecstasy and exhaustion, we were 2.5 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS.

Nobody thought a small team of six people with no pro, no extra players and no support team could do anything big and maybe it was better that way. The league official told us there was a lot of talk of the big-name teams but he hadn't heard a word about Eastern...until we made them take notice.

”



Congratulations to all the team members: Laura Crain - captain, Elise Chamberlain, Lindsey Rosenberg, Caitlyn Sorohan, Sivan Chapman and Marie Romeo-Gough.



Grants Available

USTA Eastern grants of up to \$500 are available to high school tennis programs looking to increase tennis participation and enhance team support.

Funding can go toward improving program development, supporting additional coaching needs and/or improving junior varsity programs. Schools that can apply should be within the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, PSAL High School teams or the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association.

New teams, coaches currently developing a high school team or teams that support a no-cut policy are also eligible to apply. This grant cannot be used for transportation, memberships or registration fees.

The maximum award is \$500 and applications must be received by November 20, 2023. [Click here](#) for information.

USTA Long Island grants of up to \$500 also are available for tennis programming (not limited to high school programs). For information, [click here](#).

Eastern College Showcase Day

Calling all juniors and seniors! USTA Eastern's 2023 College Showcase Day will be held **Sunday, November 5** at the [Saw Mill Club](#) in Mount Kisco, NY. The annual event offers high school players the opportunity to both

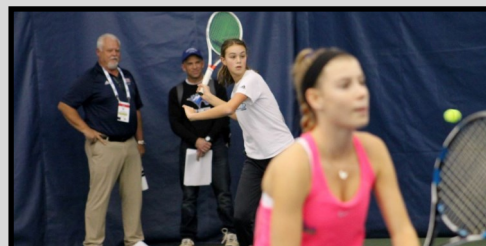


meet with and demonstrate their skills in front of college coaches in attendance.

The day also includes guest speakers

and expert panel discussions that will address many of the questions college-bound students and parents ask about college tennis and the NCAA recruitment process. Register here: [Player Registration](#) or [Coach Registration](#)

New this year, USTA Eastern will host a College Showcase Camp for high school freshmen and sophomores. This event, to be held on the same day as the College Showcase, will be modeled after a typical college practice and will be run by local college coaches. Camp participants are also invited to attend the "How to Get Recruited" session hosted by Scott Treibly and Danielle McNamara. Click here to register: [Camp Registration](#)



USTA Eastern Long Island

Like us on Facebook:
Play Tennis Long Island
Follow us on Instagram:
USTA_Eastern

To subscribe to **On the Ball: News from LI**, please send your email address to:

ustaonlongisland@gmail.com

Visit us at: www.usta.com/longislandregion

USTA Eastern Long Island Regional Council Executive Committee

Michael Pavlides, Regional Director
Jonathan Klee, Past Regional Director
Sunny Fishkind
Tito Perez
Jason Wass
Randi Wilkins

[Neil Thakur](#), USTA Eastern Manager of Long Island Region Schools & Community Tennis

We are committed to the promotion and growth of tennis, the "lifetime sport," for people of all ages and abilities to play and enjoy the game. Through the efforts of volunteers, USTA staff and strategic partners, we are dedicated to the highest standards of integrity, honesty and ethics in developing tennis programs in local communities throughout Long Island. Our mission will be served by having our youth, our adults and corporate partners enjoy the "sport for a lifetime."

On The Ball: News From LI is published quarterly by the USTA Eastern Long Island Region. Written and produced by Jacki Binder. Edited by Michael Pavlides. Founded by Daniel Burgess.