

Summer 2023



Calendar

(dates subject to change due to weather)

July 11: USTA LI Kids' Day @LuHi

July 18: USTA LI Kids' Day @Hempstead Lake State Park

July 31: Nominations close for USTA LI Awards Dinner

August 1: USTA LI Kids' Day @Island Quest in Wheatley Heights

September 27: USTA LI Awards Dinner @Sea Cliff Manor

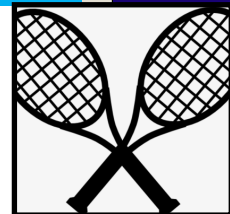
November 20: Window to apply for LI Regional Grants closes. [Click here](#) to apply.

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



Celebrating Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is a key part of the tennis experience, and the USTA Long Island Regional Council takes pride in its effort to foster and recognize exemplary sportsmanship.

At the Nassau County Boys' Individual tournament at Eisenhower Park, Mike Pavlides, USTA LI Regional Director, presented the USTA LI Sportsmanship Award to one participating doubles team and one participating singles player.

"In conjunction, Jay Harris of the John McEnroe Tennis Academy (JMTA) generously provided scholarships to the JMTA College Combine," Pavlides said. "We worked together to link the two, so each sportsmanship honoree also received a scholarship. Making this moment especially meaningful was presenting the scholarships in memory of Drew Hassenbein and Ethan Falkowitz with the approval

of their families. A special 'Coaches Award' scholarship was presented to Ethan Solop."

Recipients were:

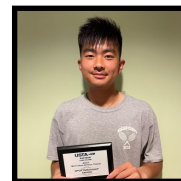
- ⇒ Carter Shea & Ayush Shroff (Great Neck South), doubles
- ⇒ Cooper Schorr (Lynbrook), singles
- ⇒ Ethan Solop (Roslyn)

Harris is at left in each photo and Pavlides is at right.

As in years past, the LI Council provided plaques to high schoolers to recognize their outstanding sportsmanship. Each high

school coach in Nassau and Suffolk County was offered one plaque for a member of his or her team. To see photos of some of the winning athletes, please [click here](#). If we missed your student, please [email us](#) a photo with their name and school.

Great Neck South's Albert Hu (left) won the Section VIII Sportsmanship Award at the State Tournament and Bryan Volk of Half Hollow Hills West won for Section XI.



Time to Nominate!!

The 33rd Annual USTA Long Island Annual Awards Dinner has been scheduled for September 27th at the Sea Cliff Manor. That means it's time to think about your colleagues in the tennis community who deserve recognition. Nominations are now open and will be accepted until **July 31st**. Please take a few minutes to nominate all the people you would like to see recognized at the dinner. [Click here](#) for info and [email us](#) your choices (don't forget to include the category and a short description of why each person deserves the award).

Remembering Drew and Ethan

On Wednesday, May 3rd, on their way home from a high school tennis match, two 14-year-old Roslyn tennis players were killed and two other players were injured by an alleged drunk driver. The Long Island tennis community mourns the loss of these young athletes.

USTA Eastern Executive Director Jenny Schnitzer spoke on behalf of Long Island and USTA Eastern”

“The Eastern family is heartbroken over the loss of Drew Hassenbein and Ethan Falkowitz. The devastating accident at the hands of a drunk driver after celebrating a high school team win is unimaginable and senseless. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families, friends, the Roslyn tennis team and our entire Long Island tennis community.

Drew and Ethan represented the best of our sport. They were bright, young athletes who were passionate and motivated by a love of the game. They were loved by their teammates and all who knew them.

As an organization we are currently developing plans to honor their memories. In doing so, we wish to be thoughtful, as well as sensitive to their loved ones. We are taking some time to think about the best way to use the full support of our extended tennis family to celebrate their lives. We will keep everyone informed as we further develop these plans.”

Drew (photo, left, pictured doing a coin toss at the US Open) was the #1 USTA Nationally ranked player in the Boy’s 12s and in the top 15 as a 14-year old. He trained at Robbie Wagner’s Tennis Center. Drew was also the defending Nassau County Champion and the #1 singles player for Roslyn High School.

Ethan was a high-performance tennis player at Sportime Roslyn and a starter at 4th doubles for the high school team.

While these boys were top-tier players who competed in National tournaments, they wanted nothing more than to play high school tennis with their friends even though they were in middle school.



Boys High School Tennis Season

The boys' high school tennis season enjoyed some exciting firsts when Commack's Eddie Liao became the first Commack boy to win the New York State Singles Championship and Syosset became the first Nassau team to win the NYS Large School Championship.

Liao, a junior, was the tournament's second seed and has committed early to Dartmouth University. The State Tournament took place at the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing. Liao was also Suffolk County Champion.

Syosset, the Long Island and Nassau County Large School champion, defeated Scarsdale at the BJK NTC. Friends Academy — Long Island and Nassau County small school champion — was runner up in the small-school category, losing to Bronxville in the final.

**NASSAU BOYS HIGH SCHOOL
DIVISION 1 TENNIS
CHAMPIONSHIP
MAY 24 @ 2:00 P.M.
HOFSTRA OUTDOOR TENNIS CENTER,
NORTH CAMPUS →**

In Individuals action at the Long Island and County levels, the Nassau County Tournament at Eisenhower Park saw reigning NYS champion Stephan Gershfeld (Hewlett) win his third straight Nassau singles championship. Gershfeld is headed to the University of Pennsylvania this fall. Rounding out the top spots in singles were (2) Ajer Sher (Jericho) and (3) Albert Hu (Great Neck South). Doubles champions were (1) Nikhil Shah & Devan Melandro (Syosset), (2) Alistair Wright & Russell Notaris (Friends) and (3) Carter Shea & Ayush Shroff (Great Neck South).

Suffolk Individuals champions in singles were (1) Liao, (2) Bryan Volk (Half Hollow Hills West), (3) Max Astilean (East Hampton) and (4) Harshith Pennabadi (Ward Melville).



Nassau team at States

The Suffolk tournament took place at (Smithtown East. Doubles champions were: (1) Gabe Bursztyn & Shashank Pennabadi (Ward Melville), (2) Sandro Volpe & Bobby Stabile (Westhampton Beach) and (3) Krithik Madisetty & Lohit Madisetty (Half Hollow Hills East).

The USTA Long Island Regional Council was again pleased to provide sweatshirts to all Nassau and Suffolk singles and doubles competitors at States.

In team championship play, the Long Island Championship took place at Hofstra University, where the USTA Long Island Regional Council was on



Commack HS



Syosset HS

hand to present plaques to the top two teams in small and large schools. In the LI Small School Championship, Friends defeated the Ross School and among Large Schools, Syosset defeated Commack.

For complete news of the boys' season, please [click here](#) for LI Tennis Magazine's coverage.



Eddie Liao



Suffolk team at states



Friends Academy



Ross School

Long Island Happenings

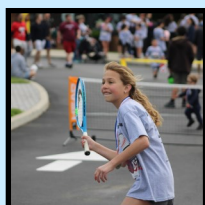


Tuesday Tennis in the Park for players ages 65 and up launched its "6th season of serious mixed tennis for seniors" according to co-founder Allan Silverstein, who said 48 players participated the first week at Hempstead Lake State Park in West Hempstead. Photo credit: Charlie Kaplan

Christopher Morley Tennis Center's Junior Team Tennis team coached by Salomon Levy and Ricardo Aguirre were Green Ball finalists in the USTA Eastern Green Ball Spring event.



LI Council member volunteers taught red ball lessons to children at the annual Robbie's Run 5K and community festival in Merrick. The event raises money that allows Forever 9-The Robbie Levine Foundation to donate AEDs to youth sports programs.



Bethpage Park Tennis Center brought back its annual coaches clinic after a two-year hiatus. The club's pros worked with local coaches and emphasized the importance of high



school tennis. Speakers included Frank Dolan, Alex Altman, David Sickmen and Steve Kaplan, who organized and ran the workshop.



USTA Eastern has placed a priority on registering teachers to receive free equipment, curriculum and training in 2023. If your school is interested in learning how to introduce tennis into its PE programs, email

schooltennis@eastern.usta.com

Photo above: LI volunteers introduce tennis to about 200 children in the adaptive PE classes at the James E. Allen school in Dix Hills. Pictured are (from left): Jerry Weil, Janet Lefkowitz, Nick Giannine, Mike D'Agostaro, Roy Lebel, Sunny Fishkind and Eddie Fishkind.

USTA Eastern held an Early Development Orange and Green Ball Camp at Ross School Tennis Academy.



Farmingdale State College's tennis team, led by coaches Rich Hume and Adam Waterhouse, held a kids tennis day on a college match day. Participants came from Long Island Jack and Jill and the Baldwin PAL.



TAF (Tennis Association of Farmingdale) Tennis Ladder launched its 48th season with seven outdoor

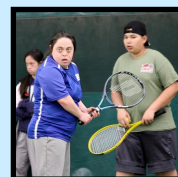


tennis ladders for men and women (May – October). Players are USTA-rated 2.5 – 4.5. For more information, [click here](#) and follow the group on Facebook and Instagram at **TAFtennis**.



LI Health & Racquet Club held a PTR workshop this spring.

Bethpage Park Tennis Center held a special needs clinic during the spring.



Long Island Happenings

Tara Kurepa of Jericho and her partner won the G16 doubles title at an L3 Open in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Tara trains at Sportime Syosset.

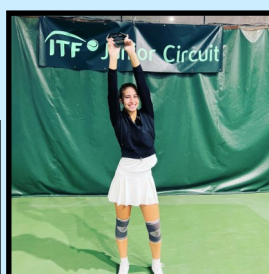


Excel High Performance player Mark Persaud won the USTA B14s L6 tournament in Norwalk, Conn. Mark trains at Sportime Lynbrook.



USTA LI Regional Council member Clark Ruiz ran a L5 G18 tournament during the spring. The finalist was Victoria Matos (at right in photo). Victoria attends Longwood HS in Middle Island and trains at LI Health & Racquet Club with Coach Mauricio Doria. She will attend the University of Connecticut in the fall.

Andrea Vases & Kayla Castellano won were G18 doubles champions at an L6 event in Edison, N.J.



Leena F. was singles champion and doubles finalist in a J100 in Canada. Leena trains at Christopher Morley.

Thea Rabman of Port Washington was singles runner up in the L300 Junior Championships in Indian



Ruiz also ran an L5 champion G16 College Format competition at Pointset Tennis. Winners were (from left):

Gabriella Mazzeo (Bethel, Conn.), Sahara Ahmad (Valley Stream), Tiffany Lin (Woodmere) and Chloe Gross (Roslyn).



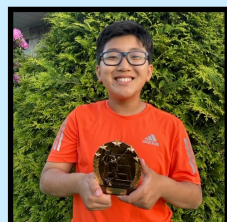
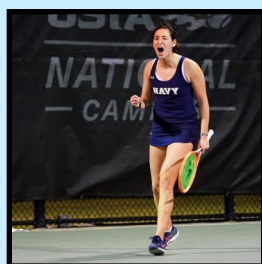
Courtney Zeifman was the L6 Tournament winner at Shelter Rock Country Club.



Wells, Calif. The photo at right, below, is courtesy of LI Council member Randi Wilkins, who attended the event. The final pitted Thea, the 7th seed, against #3 seed Clervie Ngounoue. The final score was 6-1 6-3. Ngounoue also won the doubles.

The Roslyn community held a "Rally for Roslyn" in memory of Drew Hassenbein and Ethan Falkowitz and in support of their families and all the team's members and families.

Emily Tannenbaum was named Patriot League Women's Tennis Player of the Year. Emily, of Commack, plays for the US Naval Academy. This was Emily's 2nd year in a row winning the title.



Michael Paik, who plays middle school tennis for Jericho and trains with Ricky Becker, won an L6 event in the Boys 12s singles division at Shelter Rock Tennis Club.



RVC Player Nabs NTRP National Championship Title

Team Eastern lifted a staggering four championship trophies at the 2023 NTRP National Championships, held March 31-April 2 (singles) and April 14-16 (doubles) in multiple locations across the country. One of those champions: Rockville Centre's Casey Schnabel, who, with partner Christopher Chan of Closter, N.J., sailed past USTA Northern California's Justin Zertuche and Justin Yarbrough to triumph in doubles in the 18 & Over 4.5 Men's division at the competition. The pair previously reached the semifinals of the championship in 2022, ultimately finishing in fourth place.

"Last year we felt the event was winnable, but we were both nervous and couldn't play our games in the playoffs," Schnabel said. "This year we went in not wanting to be passive and have the same thing happen again. We wanted to go after it and play to win, which paid off."

Starting with that mindset, Chan and Schnabel committed to maintaining a high energy level throughout. They began each day with a competitive practice to get the blood pumping.

"We were very intentional with ramping up our practice intensity in the mornings and also bringing a lot of energy right into the pre-match warm up," Chan explained. "The goal was to come out firing and executing well right out of the gate, which we ended up doing, winning the first set [of each match] without going to a tiebreaker."

But they didn't just win the first set; the pair ultimately went a perfect 10-for-10 in sets played overall, including in the semis and in the finals. Against the USTA Northern California team in the championship — whom both Chan and Schnabel dub "the Justins" — the

Eastern duo were thrilled that they were able to develop and execute a winning strategy to ultimately lift the trophy.



would hit these flat lobbs and then come charging to the net, where they kept every ball low. But we rose to the occasion. We had watched them play their first match in the playoffs so we already knew what to expect. We were always ready for the lobb."

It also helped that both Chan and Schnabel were on top of their own games. Down 0-30 on Schnabel's serve at 3-2 in the first set, Chan came up with a series of excellent poaches — as well as a few key low volley pickups — to put the team back in a winning position. And Schnabel produced several big serves throughout to ultimately keep the pair on the front foot — and out in front.

Overall, getting to come back again to compete against some of the best teams in the country — and emerging victorious this time — is an experience neither will forget any time soon.

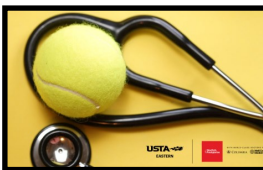
"It's an amazing feeling to just say you're able to play at Nationals to begin with," Schnabel said. "You never take that for granted. But I've always wanted to be one of those people on the final day holding the trophy. Getting to say I'm a national champion is unreal. Not only did we make it here, but each match we played, we played so well. We wanted to get this for each other, not

just ourselves. You never actually think you can win a National, so to actually be able to accomplish it is crazy. We're ecstatic."

Interested in competing at the 2024 NTRP National Championships? USTA Eastern is holding qualifier tournaments in several divisions all summer long at Hofstra University. Winners punch their ticket to Nationals. [Register here](#). For further information see story on page 8.

USTA Eastern & NewYork-Presbyterian Partnership

NewYork-Presbyterian has been named the official hospital of USTA Eastern. Through a new partnership, the organizations will work



together to promote health through the sport of tennis.

As part of the agreement, NewYork-Presbyterian doctors — from orthopedists and behavioral health care providers to pediatricians and cardiologists — will enjoy a presence at USTA Eastern tennis clinics, conferences and tournaments, where they can educate attendees about ways to improve their health and well-being.

"We are thrilled to partner with NewYork-Presbyterian," said Jennifer Schnitzer, executive director and CEO of USTA Eastern. "We have made it a part of our mission to share the benefits of tennis to our members and the public, and we feel very fortunate to be able to do so alongside an organization renowned for its longtime commitment to community health."

To learn more about this partnership, [click here](#)

USTA Leagues Update

By Becky Bellino, LI Adult League Coordinator



4.0 Tri-level

happier. Long Island continues to have a strong presence with players participating at all levels and in all age groups.

Along with our strength in numbers, I am proud to say that we have grown with several new leagues debuting in our region. For the first time, our section introduced a 5.0 tri-level league. Long Island (along with

Southern) brought forth women's teams and the two regions will battle it out at Sectionals in Schenectady at the end of June. Good luck to Jenny Einhorn and Jackie Clark's team from Carefree!

Another new league is the 55 & Over Mixed Doubles. We have teams participating at the 7.0 and 8.0 levels and the winners will also travel to Schenectady in June. Shanon Blue's team out of Lynbrook has earned the top honors at the 8.0 level, and the 7.0's continue to be neck and neck. Good luck to all teams participating.



18+ 9.0



5.0 Tri level

2023 is halfway through, but Long Island tennis is just heating up! Our numbers continue to rise as tennis is still booming, and we couldn't be

happier. Long Island continues to have a strong presence with players participating at all levels and in all age groups.



18+ 6.0

Another new league is the 55 & Over Mixed Doubles. We have teams participating at the 7.0 and 8.0 levels and the winners will also travel to Schenectady in June. Shanon Blue's team out of Lynbrook has earned the top honors at the 8.0 level, and the 7.0's continue to be neck and neck. Good luck to all teams participating.



18+ 7.0

Finally, we have added another social league to the region mirroring the David Dinkins Mixed Doubles League in Metro. Proving that tennis is a lifelong sport and under the leadership of Bruce Lindenman, Chet Singer and Lew Cohen, a 70+ 7.0 men's league has been created. The seniors will play throughout August with the hopes that the will idea will grow as has the Dinkins league, and gain traction for the future. Carefree, Christopher Morley and Robbie Wagner will host the matches.

While our spring leagues are in full swing, so are Sectionals. June marks the start of Adult League Sectional Championships and we wish our teams the best of luck. Below is a recap of our region's winners and you can click [here](#) to find dates and locations for each Sectional. For National Adult League Championships, click [here](#).

18 & Over 6.0 - Sportime Syosset (Captain - Ed Sinn)

18 & Over 7.0 - Huntington Indoor Tennis (Captains - Bridgette Boyle and Lia Newell)

18 & Over 8.0 - Long Beach Tennis Center (Captain - Zane Siddiqui)

18 & Over 9.0 - Long Beach/Sportime Lynbrook (Captains - Shanon Blue and Amani Siddiqui)

18 & Over 4.0 Tri-Level - Huntington Indoor Tennis (Captains Tracy Kleinberg and Lisa Newell)

The 40 & Over Mixed Doubles league is still playing, with winning teams to be determined soon.

Love on the Court

I'd like to highlight two individuals from the community who truly exemplify the positivity that Adult Leagues bring to our region. Adam Moramarco and Eve Jin met on the

tennis court several years ago at a clinic. As the years have passed, they are not only now planning to wed, but they continue to play together in mixed doubles and even captain an 18+ 2.5 women's team together.

Adam is a seasoned player and captain who has played in leagues for almost 20 years. His teams have advanced to Sectionals and Nationals several times. Eve is just getting her tennis tenure started, joining leagues in 2022. These two are a perfect example of how this sport brings people together and form relationships that go beyond the time spent on the court. Adam's favorite thing about leagues is not only the time he gets to spend with his fiancé, but also being the vehicle that has allowed him to make friendships on his teams and with others from across the Eastern Section and even beyond. It's not the number of wins that bring him back each year; it's the people that he meets along the way which I find the most powerful.

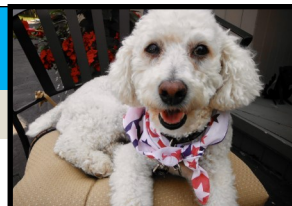
Not only is Eve Adam's #1 supporter by attending every Sectional he participates in, she is now taking her crack at leagues with her team currently



in the lead for the women's 2.5 division. In addition to taking on a lead role as captain, she has formed a camaraderie amongst her teammates that is growing stronger by the day, and enjoys all the time she shares with these women on and off of the court.

True to form, Adam asked Eve to marry him while on the tennis court at Sectionals in 2022. While there is no wedding date quite yet, I wish the two of them the very best and thank them for all they do for Adult Leagues!

Looking forward to a great summer!
Becky Bellino can be reached at bellino@eastern.usta.com.



IN THE NEWS...

USTA Long Island Council member Michelle Stoerback has shared the upcoming schedule for L4 USTA Eastern NTRP National Qualifiers at Hofstra University. (See story, page 6.)

This tournament is open only to players residing in the USTA Eastern Section. Each division champion will receive an automatic entry into the [NTRP National Championships](#).

Players must have a USTA rating to enter and may "play up" .5 above their current rating. Divisions are straight-level, NOT combo ratings. Players must have a valid year-end computer rating to advance to Nationals.

The schedule is as follows:

7/8:

8:30AM - 1PM Men's 40+ Doubles 3.0 and 4.0
1- 5:30PM Men's 40+ Doubles 3.5 and 4.5

7/9:

8:30AM - 1PM Men's 40+ Singles 3.0 and 4.0

1-5:30PM - Men's 40+ Singles - 3.5 and 4.5

7/15:

8:30AM - 1PM Women's 40+ Doubles 3.0 and 4.0.
1- 5:30PM - Women's 40+ Doubles 3.5 and 4.5

7/16:

8:30AM - 1PM Women's 40+ Singles 3.0 and 4.0
1-5:30PM - Women's 40+ Singles - 3.5 and 4.5

7/23:

8:30am-1PM - 18+ Mixed Doubles 6.0, 8.0 and 10.0
8:30am - 1PM - 18+ Mixed Doubles 7.0, 9.0

7/29:

8:30AM - 1PM Men's 55+ Doubles 3.0 and 4.0.
1- 5:30PM - Men's 55+ Doubles 3.5 and 4.5

7/30:

8:30AM - 1PM Men's 55+ Singles 3.0 and 4.0
1-5:30PM - Men's 55+ Singles - 3.5 and 4.5

8/26:

8:30AM - 1PM Women's 55+ Doubles 3.0 and 4.0.
1- 5:30PM - Women's 55+ Doubles 3.5 and 4.5

8/27:

8:30AM - 1PM Women's 55+ Singles 3.0 and 4.0
1-5:30PM - Women's 55+ Singles - 3.5 and 4.5



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.