

Summer 2026



Calendar

7/7 Nassau Kid's Day @LuHi (Rain date 7/8)

8/10 Suffolk Kid's Day @Island Quest (Rain date 8/11)

8/24 Girls' HS Tennis Season starts in Nassau and Suffolk Counties

8/25 Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Coming Soon—

USTA Long Island 36th Annual Regional Awards Dinner, October date TBD

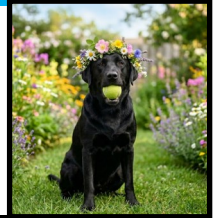
visit www.usta.com/longislandregion for details on all events

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On The Ball: News From LI



Three LI-ers Chosen for Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame

Organization to Induct Daniel Burgess, Joel Ross & Robbie Wagner

The USTA Eastern Junior Tennis Foundation Tennis Hall of Fame has announced its inductees for 2026 membership. Locals Daniel Burgess (in memoriam), Joel Ross and Robbie Wagner will be inducted into the Hall of Fame in a ceremony on August 25th. The 39th Annual Eastern Tennis Hall of Fame ceremony benefitting the Junior Tennis Foundation's Grant & Scholarship Programs is scheduled for Tuesday, August 25th, 2026 at 6pm at the Metropolitan Club New York. To attend or support the inductees, [click here](#).

The Hall of Fame was established in 1988 to honor individuals from the USTA Eastern Section who have made significant contributions to tennis on and off the court.

Danny Burgess

Daniel "Danny" Burgess[†] of Freeport was a longtime instructor and community tennis advocate who played an integral role in the growth of tennis on Long Island right up until his passing in 2020. Danny himself learned how to play at a young age, so he understood firsthand the enrichment the sport could provide at such a formative time. For over 30 years, he taught juniors through his eponymous Daniel Burgess Tennis Academy and hosted a summer camp for local kids—often allowing participants to attend free of charge if their parents couldn't afford the cost. He also founded the Learning Institute of Tennis, Life Skills and Sportsmanship (LITLSS), which combined instruction with educational programming like afterschool tutoring.



Daniel Burgess

In addition to his extensive efforts teaching children, Danny—who served for six years as the USTA Eastern Long Island Region President—worked tirelessly to foster a spirit of community among tennis enthusiasts across Long Island. He expanded the area's volunteer base, organized countless free clinics and frequently introduced the game to new audiences. He assisted in securing funding for the renovation of the tennis courts at the Northport VA Medical Center so veterans could learn how to play safely, developed programming for the Freeport and Merrick Police Activity Leagues and brought accessible tennis lessons to several Long Island senior centers. Many participants sat in chairs and used modified equipment while Danny fed them low-compression balls. For all his achievements, he was awarded USTA Eastern's Fran Osei Community Service Award in 2018. He was selected for induction into the USPTA Eastern Hall of Fame Class of 2024.

[†] In Memoriam

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Eastern Hall of Fame Inductees

(continued from page 1)

Joel Ross



Joel Ross

Joel Ross grew up in Westbury and was a top Eastern junior player, winning the NY State high school singles championship in 1967 and 1968. At the University of Michigan, where he captained the tennis team, he won the Big Ten singles and doubles championships in 1971 and 1972 and appeared on the cover of *Tennis Magazine*.

Joel turned pro after college and reached a world ranking of 288 in 1976. In 1977, as player and coach of the US Maccabia tennis team, he won a gold medal in men's doubles, partnering with Peter Rennert.

Following his retirement from the tour, for the next 30 years he ran the Joel Ross Academy at Mount Vernon Tennis Center and Joel Ross Tennis Camp at Kent School in Kent, Conn.

Robbie Wagner

Robbie Wagner played for John Adams High School in Queens and for Brooklyn College before taking a swing at the satellite pro tour. It was on the tour that Robbie discovered his love of and talent for coaching tennis. Over the ensuing decades, he built up a reputation as a top developer of junior talent. He spent 15 years as the Senior Teaching Professional at Long Island's Roslyn Racquet Club before founding his eponymous Tournament Training Center.

He is also co-founder of the Eastern Excel Tennis Camp and has coached at the US Open and Junior US Open. He has received multiple awards and honors over the course of his coaching career and has trained and mentored many nationally and internationally ranked junior players.



Robbie Wagner

Arthur Ashe Kids Day Seeks Volunteers

Applications are now being accepted for those who want to volunteer at Arthur Ashe Kids' Day (AAKD) powered by USTA Net Generation®. This annual children's tennis event will take place on Sunday, August 23rd.

AAKD honors Arthur Ashe's legacy of instilling the values of humanitarianism, leadership and academic excellence and helps promote the sport of tennis to young people.

The event will feature a host of interactive games, activities, pro player interaction, live music and entertainment throughout the grounds of the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

AAKD is the largest single-day grass-roots tennis and entertainment event in the world (with more than 50,000 guests), allowing young people of all ages and ability levels to discover the many benefits that go hand-in-hand with an involvement in tennis.

Volunteers will be able to choose whether they want to assist with on-court delivery efforts or off-court activities. Volunteers must be 16 or older by August 23rd. Click here to apply: [2026 Arthur Ashe Kids Day Volunteer Application](#). The deadline to apply is July 10th.

Boys' High School Tennis Season

What a great Boys' High School tennis season! Congratulations to our New York State Doubles Champions Ben Wiese & Christian Bravo (Garden City) and all of the state competitors in singles, doubles and teams.

As in past years, the Long Island Regional Council was pleased to provide each Nassau and Suffolk boy competing at States with a special sweatshirt. The Council also supplied plaques for Long Island's team champions and runners up.



STATES

NYS Doubles Results

Champions: Ben Wiese & Christian Bravo (Garden City)

3rd Place – Nikhil Shah & Aayan Mehta (Syosset)

6th place - Ray Hidaka & Kai Hidaka (Shoreham Wading River)

7th Place – Grayson Prince & Jacob Prince (Syosset)

NYS Singles Results

Runner-up - Ignacio Pena Lopez (Ross)

4th Place – Saje Vijay Menon (Wheatley)

5th place – Vidal Macchia (William Floyd)

6th place – Leo Villacreses (Sachem)

7th place – Will Bohner (Friends Academy)

NYS Teams Results

Large schools

Runner up – Syosset

Small schools

Runner up – Bayport-Blue Point

LI Team Results

Long Island Large Schools Champions – Syosset

Runner-up – Harborfields

Long Island Small Schools Champions – Bayport-Blue Point

Runner-up – Wheatley

Nassau County Large School Finals

Champion – Syosset

Runner-up – Roslyn

Small Schools Finals

Champion – Wheatley

Runner-up – Cold Spring Harbor

Suffolk County Large School Finals

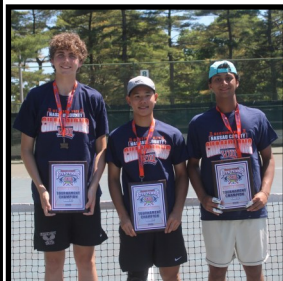
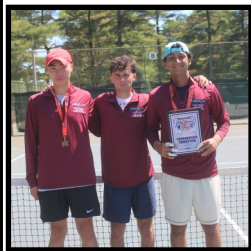
Champion – Harborfields

Runner-up – Half Hollow Hills West

Suffolk County Small Schools Finals

Champion – Bayport-Blue Point

Runner-up – Port Jefferson



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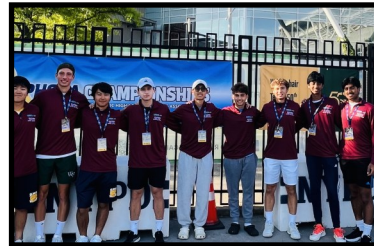
Boys' High School Tennis Season

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Nassau Individuals

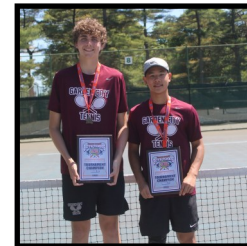
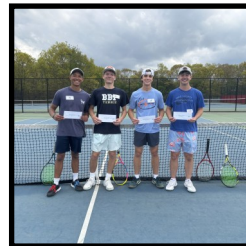
Singles

- 1) Saje Menon (Wheatley)
- 2) Will Bohner (Friends)
- 3) Nick Chin (Jericho)
- 4) Preston Wang (Jericho)



Doubles

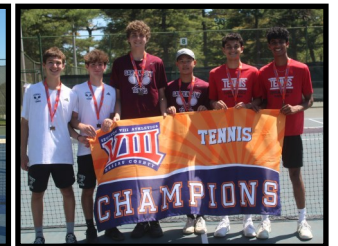
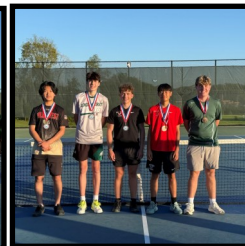
- 1) Christian Bravo/ Ben Wiese (Garden City)
- 2) Aayan Mehta/Nikil Shah (Syosset)
- 3) Grayson Prince/Jacob Prince (Syosset)
- 4) Oliver Samter/Bartek Dzedziach (Roslyn)



Suffolk

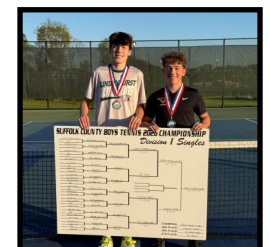
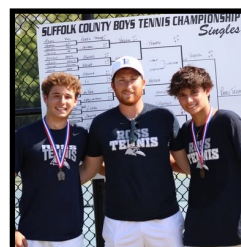
Singles

- 1) Ignacio Pena Lopez (Ross)
- 2) Leonardo Villacreses (Sachem)
- 3) Vidal Macchia (Wm. Floyd)



Doubles

- 1) Ray Hidaka & Kai Hidaka (Shoreham Wading River)
- 2) Ishaanth Guduru & Sreeyanth Guduru (Smithtown West)
- 3) Luke Mayola & Sena Donnelly (Rocky Point)
- 4) Boden Rudloff & Brody Surbeck (Harborfields)



Sportsmanship

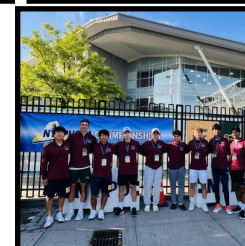
Nassau Individuals Tournament USTA LI Sportsmanship and JMTA Scholarship Winners:

Singles Saje Menon (Wheatley)

Dubs Nikhil Shah/Aayan Mehta (Syosset)

Thank you to the high school coaches who have already shared

photos of their team's sportsmanship winner with us. The LI Regional Council is proud to provide a plaque to each coach who requests one to recognize exemplary sportsmanship. We are compiling a complete list that will be shared on our website and in the next issue of this newsletter.



Around the Region

Adelphi University Red Ball Clinic

The USTA LI Region hosted a red ball tennis clinic at Adelphi University. The school's Women's and Men's tennis teams worked with Regional volunteers to teach tennis at the 2026 Alumni and Friends Tennis Clinic.



staff from the Special Olympics and Bethpage Park Tennis Center. The athletes— individuals from the Special Olympics, kids with down syndrome from local school districts and adults with various disabilities from EPIC LI – had a fun afternoon while surrounded by supportive tennis volunteers.

Play for Autism

Thanks to Ward Melville Coach Erick Sussin for sharing information about the annual Suffolk County "Play for Autism" event which took place in May.

Nearly 40 boys' tennis players from across Suffolk gathered at Smithtown East High School for the annual Bob Davis Play For Autism Doubles Tournament. The event raised \$1,070 for ACEing Autism, a volunteer-driven non-profit dedicated to helping children with autism grow through the sport of tennis.

19 doubles teams played a round-robin format of tie-breakers that determined seeds for a single-elimination tournament. Winners (Luke Jensen and Dominic Linzie) and runners-up (Aidan Apicella and Nick Byman) earned free entry to the Section XI tennis dinner in June.

The event was organized and run by coaches John Selvaggio, Christine Klouda and Erick Sussin as well as Section XI tennis chair Mark Mensch and volunteer Kathryn Gutleber-Sussin. Support was also provided by host site Smithtown East High School and the Suffolk Tennis Coaches Association. Coach Bob Davis founded this event 17 years ago, starting the tradition of playing some fun tennis while raising money for a great cause.



Special Olympics

The USTA LI Region once again was a proud sponsor of the Long Island Special Olympics. Council members hosted a vendor table with giveaways and information on USTA initiatives, and provided a Red Ball Tennis center for all to try and experience. At the tennis portion of the games, all the participating athletes were presented with USTA Eastern Sportsmanship Award stickers.



Special Needs Clinic

Special needs athletes of all ages were treated to a free clinic at Bethpage Park Tennis Center this spring. The annual event is run by *Long Island Tennis Magazine* and



2026 USTA League Kick-Off

The USTA Long Island Region was pleased to provide a grant to support the 2026 USTA League Season Kick-Off event sponsored by Sportime Kings Park.



Around the Region

Tuesday Tennis in the Park

The 9th season of Tuesday Tennis in the Park kicked off at Hempstead Lake State Park with mixed tennis for serious senior tennis players.

Organizers Allan Silverstein and Sue D'Alessandro

reported that 44 players participated in the season's first week. Photo credit: Charlie Kaplan



In play highlights this spring, the mens' tennis team upset the top seed Manhattanville College to win its fourth consecutive Skyline Conference Championship. In Skyline Conference end-of-season awards news, several FSC players were selected for the All-Skyline Conference first team including junior Kwaku Agyeman, sophomore Zakaria Ahmed (Manhasset) and freshman Devan Melandro (Syosset). In addition, Waterhouse was selected as Coach of the Year in voting by his peers for the third-consecutive season, and 10th time overall. Danial Zindani was selected for the All Sportsmanship Team.

Robbie's Run

This year marked the 19th anniversary of the Robbie's Run in Merrick. This event, which includes a 5k, 1k and kids' run plus a community fair, raises money to provide automated external defibrillators (AED) and CPR training for youth sports teams. The Long Island Regional Council has been a proud supporter of Robbie's Run since the event's inception. This year, Council volunteers were joined in teaching Red Ball tennis to kids by members of the Calhoun High School (Merrick) girls' tennis team and members of the Roslyn High School tennis team who are also members of the Advantage All Foundation.

Farmingdale State Rams Highlights

Thanks to Farmingdale State College Tennis Couch Adam Waterhouse for sharing highlights of the Rams' 2026 tennis season. During the spring season, the mens' and womens' tennis teams hosted a USTA Campus Kids Day Program, welcoming local children ages 5 to 15 years old to work on sport-specific skills in addition to allowing them see a live college match.



"It was so much fun seeing the players interact with children from the community on the tennis court," said Waterhouse, who is in his 20th year as head coach of both Rams programs. "Their energy is contagious, and everyone had a great time."



The USTA sponsors Campus Kids' Day events nationwide, serving as both a tennis skills clinic and allowing children to witness a college match in person. These events are designed to boost the visibility of local collegiate programs and expose junior players to the excitement, energy and fun of a college tennis match, with the goal of inspiring attendees to pursue collegiate tennis. Through collaboration with college coaches, this initiative strives to introduce hundreds of young athletes each year to the world of college tennis through the outstanding programs across the country.



Family Day in the Park

The USTA Long Island Regional Council, along with *Long Island Tennis Magazine* and the Baldwin PAL, hosted a free "Family Tennis Day" at Hempstead Lake State Park in June. Volunteers shared their love of tennis with children through Red Ball lessons.



USTA Leagues Update

By Milly Keighery, Adult League Coordinator Long Island Region
(Keighery@eastern.usta.com)

Long Island Teams Shine as Competition Heats Up

The outdoor season may have started slowly thanks to an unpredictable spring, but Long Island tennis players have wasted no time making their mark on the courts. With league competition thriving across the region and championship season underway, local teams have already delivered several impressive performances in 2026.

Strong Start at Mixed Sectionals

The postseason kicked off with the 18 & Over Mixed Doubles Sectional Championships, with Long Island represented across all four divisions. Congratulations to the following teams:

SECTIONAL CHAMPIONS

18+ 6.0 Mixed – Christopher Morley (Ng/Yang)
18+ 7.0 Mixed – Deer Park (Ramo/Dikman)
18+ 8.0 Mixed – Sportime Kings Park (Jackson/Siegelman)
18+ 9.0 Mixed – Deer Park (Chua-McAlonie)

All of Long Island's teams competed admirably, representing the region with determination and sportsmanship. A special congratulations goes to the Christopher Morley 6.0 Mixed team, which captured the Sectional title and will advance to represent USTA Eastern at the USTA National Championships. We wish them the best of luck as they continue their championship journey.

More Champions Crowned

Championship action continued through June with competition in the 55 & Over Mixed and Tri-Level divisions. Congratulations to the following local champions who will move on to represent Long Island at Sectionals:

55+ 6.0 Mixed – Lynbrook (Healy)
55+ 7.0 Mixed – Bethpage (Mao/Garfield)
Men's 4.0 Tri-Level – Kings Park (Jackson/Serbin)
Women's 4.0 Tri-Level – Long Beach (Simpson)
Men's 5.0 Tri-Level – Sportime (Hyman)
Women's 5.0 Tri-Level – Carefree Racquet Club (Bacey/Bonadonna)

Congratulations to all of these teams, and good luck as they compete against the best from across the section.

Looking Ahead: 40 & Over Mixed

Local league play also has concluded for the 40 & Over Mixed divisions, with those teams set to wrap up Long Island's championship calendar when they compete at Sectionals in September.

2026 Long Island 40 & Over Mixed Local Champions

6.0 Mixed – Christopher Morley (Ng/Yang)
7.0 Mixed – Pointset (Sarnelli)
8.0 Mixed – Carefree Racquet Club (Kossegi/Siler)
9.0 Mixed – Deer Park (Chua-McAlonie)

With several championship events still ahead, Long Island continues to demonstrate why it remains one of the strongest and most competitive tennis communities in USTA Eastern.

A Personal Milestone

June also marks my one-year anniversary as Long Island Adult League Coordinator. It has been an incredibly rewarding year and I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such a passionate and dedicated tennis community. Over the past year, I have had the pleasure of meeting captains, players, facility managers, and volunteers from across Long Island. Watching teams compete, grow and build connections through league tennis has been one of the most enjoyable aspects of this role.

Thank you to everyone who has welcomed me, shared their time and expertise and helped make my first year such a memorable experience. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you and to many more seasons of competition, camaraderie, and success on Long Island courts.



Huntington Player Is 2026 NTRP National Champion

Fantastic five. Eastern players captured an astounding five championship titles at the 2026 NTRP National Championships, held April 10-12 (singles), April 17-19 (doubles) and April 24-26 (mixed doubles) at multiple tennis facilities across the country—including the Barnes Tennis Center in San Diego, Calif., the Giammalva Racquet Club in Houston, Texas, and the USTA National Campus in Orlando, Fla.

Among them was Huntington's Sean Tuthill, who overcame USTA Midwest's Christopher Tunnell 4-1, 4-1, to stand atop the podium in the 40 & Over 4.0 Men's singles division. (At NTRP National Championships, sets are contested in a first-to-four-games format, with a tiebreak at 3-3.)

By the time Tuthill set foot on a court at the Barnes Tennis Center, he'd already embarked on an entire California adventure. Prior to the event, he and his family spent a few days at Disneyland in Anaheim, caught the Artemis II splashdown, hiked the Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve and visited the San Diego Zoo. It was already a trip chock full of highlights—and then he captured the championship.

"I just tried to keep a level head, play consistently and make it difficult on my opponents," Tuthill explained of his winning strategy throughout the weekend. "Of course, with the [first-to-

-four] format it is really challenging to quickly adapt to each competitor and execute a gameplan, so it also took some luck."

Whether it was consistency, luck, or possibly a little residual pixie dust from the happiest place on Earth, Tuthill displayed some magical form in San Diego, dropping zero sets and just 14 games through four matches—three round robin battles and a semifinal contest—to ultimately reach the championship. As he made his way through the draw, he continually came up clutch in important moments, going 3-0 in tiebreak sets where, he noted, "anything can happen and momentum shifts quickly."

Even after amassing such an impressive record, Tuthill knew he was in for a battle facing Tunnell for the title. Tunnell also dropped zero sets en route to the final, and impressively, never lost more than three games in any match.

"His ground strokes were very strong and he really could punish you on any short balls," Tuthill said of the challenges his opponent presented. "I tried to play angles and not give him a lot of time to get set from the baseline. I was also fortunate that my first-serve percentage was higher than normal, so I was able to take advantage of some easy holds throughout the match."

Owing in part to his above-average serving day, Tuthill jumped out to an early lead and never let go—even as the skies opened up and delayed play for thirty minutes midway through the first set. The victory, he said, was the perfect way to cap off a great vacation and also a big thrill after spending a long time away from the sport he grew up playing with his father.

"I took an almost 20-year break before starting to play again when my oldest son started taking lessons," Tuthill said. "I've been fortunate to link up with some great local USTA teams

over the last few years and only in 2025 did I play my first individual NTRP tournament. I really just enjoy playing competitive tennis again, and the USTA has been a great way to get back into it."

[This could be you! Learn how you can qualify this summer for the 2027 NTRP National Tournament](#)

Play USTA Flex at SPORTIME!



Now you can play your USTA Flex matches at SPORTIME! USTA Flex is all about flexibility. Each week, you are matched with a new opponent at a similar skill level. You determine the location. You set the time. You play when it's convenient for you.

This year, in partnership with SPORTIME, all Long Island USTA Flex participants can book court time at three participating SPORTIME locations: [SPORTIME Bethpage](#), [SPORTIME Hempstead Lake](#) (doubles available) and [SPORTIME Quogue](#) (doubles available).

Get started today! Long Island Flex kicks off June 29. [Download the USTA Flex app from your app store \(iOS or Google\) and search for a competition near you](#)



Tuthill competes at NTRP, San Diego

USTA

EASTERN
LONG ISLAND



Coming Soon

USTA Long Island regional awards event and nominations details to be announced soon

The USTA Long Island Regional Council is looking forward to the 36th Annual Long Island Awards Ceremony, to be held in October. All details for this event will be announced soon. Please keep an eye on the Long Island Regional [website](#) and [Facebook group](#) for information on making nominations and for how to attend the festivities. As in years past, members of the local tennis community will be recognized with awards for their tennis playing or their volunteering and commitment to growing the game of tennis on Long Island.

Questions? [Email us!](#)



USTA Eastern Long Island

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[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.