

Millbrae Team at 7.0 Super Senior National Championship

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85 Doubles Gold Slam National Champion, Betty Cookson
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The most senior competitor at the 2008 USTA **League Presented by Chrysler 7.0 Super Senior National Championship** is certainly the most decorated. **Betty Cookson** is competing this weekend with her Millbrae Racquet Club team, representing the Northern California section.

Betty will be recognized this summer at the USTA Semi-Annual Meeting, during the US Open, as a **National Gold Slam Champion**. That's winning all four national championships on four different surfaces, hard court, clay, grass and indoors in the same year. In 2008, Betty, 86 years old, became a National Gold Slam Champion in the Women's 85 Doubles division with partner, 92 year old, Dodo Cheney. Betty says, "I'm proud of the accomplishment and honored to be invited to the US Open for the presentation. The privilege of lunching in the President's Box is a tradition that I'm so pleased to see continue."

For Betty, her championship play is balanced by all of the time she gives back to tennis. A **Northern California Hall of Fame member**, recently, the **International Tennis Hall of Fame** paid tribute to Betty for her commitment to volunteerism at their annual awards luncheon in Palm Desert. She was presented with the Samuel Hardy Award which recognizes her long and outstanding service, and her personal unselfishness and devotion to tennis (her late husband, Bob, a former USTA President, received the award in 1994). "I don't know why everyone doesn't want to volunteer," says Betty, who's been at it now for more than 50 years and is still going strong.

Volunteer opportunities started in 1958, for Betty, with the prestigious boys and girls USTA National Hardcourt Championships hosted by her club in Burlingame, CA. She eventually became Tournament Director in 1976, a position she held until 1987. In 2000, the Nike Junior Tour turned to Betty for help in developing the tour's U.S. launch, where all of the proceeds were donated back to junior travel teams in the section. Betty has served on numerous National and Northern California committees and councils as a member and as Chair, and has twice served on the Northern California Board of Directors.

Still travelling to national tournaments, some of Betty's fondest memories are of the kids she housed who were experiencing a national tournament for the first time. "I think they'll always remember that experience, because for many of them it was their first time away from home. It was also rewarding to watch them compete, especially in tough matches. You could see them develop character."