

**USTA**  
NORTHERN

# **NORTHERN EXPOSURE**

2017 USTA SECTION OF THE YEAR

MAY 2018

## CONGRATULATIONS AWARD WINNERS

### THE FRIDINGER FAMILY

Ralph W. Westcott Family of the Year



### DAN JAMES

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Hall of Fame  
Educational Merit  
Award

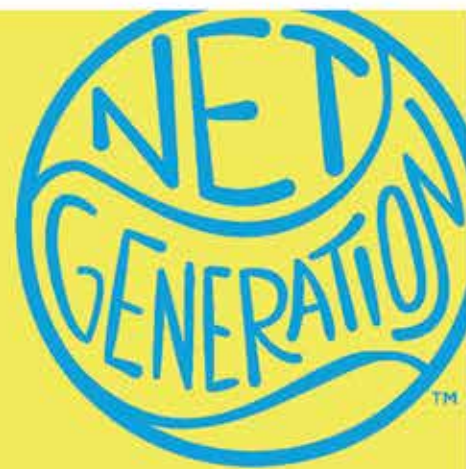


### ROSHAN RAJKUMAR

USTA Volunteer  
of the Year Award



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For more information about Net Generation in USTA Northern, contact Sandy Smith at [ssmith@northern.usta.com](mailto:ssmith@northern.usta.com) or at (952) 358-3288.





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### USTA Northern Seeking Applicants For Its Board of Directors

USTA Northern believes that tennis is a life-long sport that should attract, develop and retain players of all backgrounds including, racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, beliefs, sexual orientation, family status, physical appearance, socioeconomic status and ideas.

A non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, USTA Northern encompasses Minnesota, North and South Dakota and the Northwestern part of Wisconsin from Eau Claire to the North Shore. Its mission is "to promote and develop the growth of tennis" with the target audience being everyone from age 4 to 104 whether one has played tennis or not.

The Section is looking for more volunteer voices to represent the organization and serve on its Board of Directors for 2019-20. All applications will be thoroughly reviewed, and the selection process is based on multiple factors including those who not only have a love of tennis, but:

- Have previous Board of Director or volunteer experience with other organizations, especially non-profits
- Possess business, legal, finance, marketing, communications, fundraising or technology skills
- May have previous experience working on a USTA Northern committee or volunteering for the organization (not a requirement).
- Are team players
- Have diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Want to be involved in helping grow the game of tennis

If you or someone you know would be interested in joining this passionate group of individuals, please apply at <https://form.jotform.com/USTANorthern/BOD>. Deadline to apply is June 15, 2018.

USTA Northern requires selected candidates to successfully complete a background check prior to the start of the term. Board member terms are two-year appointments and run from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020.

For more information, please contact **Becky Cantellano** at [becky@northern.usta.com](mailto:becky@northern.usta.com) or at (952) 887-5001.

### USTA Northern, TRIA Announce Partnership

USTA Northern and TRIA Orthopedic Center are proud to announce a new partnership in which TRIA will become the official orthopedic and sports medicine sponsor of USTA Northern.

As part of the agreement, TRIA will provide on-site athletic training services at USTA League Championships and other select junior level tournaments and camps in the Twin Cities. Athletic trainers from TRIA will also be available to educate athletes on topics including injury prevention, nutrition and hydration.

"We are excited about this amazing partnership with TRIA," USTA Northern Executive Director **Becky Cantellano** said. "With tennis being a lifetime sport, we know that our players, young and old, are searching for information that will keep them healthy both on and off the court, while enabling them to continue playing at their best for years to come. TRIA being the official orthopedic and sports medicine sponsor of the section provides that and so much more."

Based in Bloomington, Minn., TRIA offers comprehensive orthopedic and sports medicine care delivered by a team of nationally-recognized specialists. From diagnosis to treatment, to rehabilitation and even surgery, TRIA provides a wide range of services to meet patients' specific needs. TRIA's sports medicine team of orthopedic physicians, physical therapists and athletic trainers have one common goal: helping people return to the activities they love safely, successfully and as quickly as possible.

"TRIA is excited to partner with USTA Northern," said **Edward Craig**, MD, MPH, CEO of TRIA. "We have a shared commitment to our communities and to supporting athletes of all ages and abilities."

For more information about TRIA, visit [tria.com](http://tria.com).

# Tennis Moms

In honor of Mother's Day, USTA Northern would like to thank all of those tennis moms who introduce the sport of a lifetime to their children, shuttle them back and forth to lessons and matches and ultimately are the glue that holds everything together. USTA Northern Board Member **Susan Allen** of Shakopee, Minn., is that mom. Read what tennis has meant to her over the years.

Tennis has been my sport my entire life. I started playing when I was in elementary school and continued to play in high school. Although I never dreamed of playing in college, I attended Gustavus Adolphus and made the team as a freshman. It was truly an exciting year as we placed fourth at the NCAA tournament. While there, I also adopted legendary coach **Steve Wilkinson's** Three Crowns – effort, attitude and sportsmanship – as my personal philosophy for life.

After transferring to St. Cloud State, I became the first Husky player to advance to the NCAA Division II tournament. My tennis family there taught me how to enjoy the sport and still have time for school and other activities.

Upon graduation, I intended to go to law school, but had the opportunity to coach in Europe. I traveled with top-ranked juniors through four different countries (I still keep in touch with a few), and eventually, that led to coaching and traveling with adult groups as well. It was then I fell in love with teaching tennis and never quite made it to law school.

After getting married in 1994 to my husband **Erik**, who I met at Gustavus my freshman year, I continued teaching tennis, making many life-long friends. Honestly, I cannot imagine my life without them. Then in 1998, I received a late Christmas present – our son **Jackson** – and my life was changed forever.

I wanted to continue teaching my students, but that was difficult as a young mom. Often times, my "free babysitting" at the tennis club daycare facility would expire and the "moms" from the club would watch Jackson so I could teach their daughters.

My career continued as Jackson grew, but he never wanted to go in the nursery so I had to bribe him. The carrot for Jackson was playing tennis or anything that had to do with the sport! If he was good at the nursery, we would give him hand-me-down tennis shorts and shirts from his boyhood idol, **Wyatt McCoy**. Ironically, Wyatt now teaches Jackson's younger sister, **Lily**, the skills of the game at Life Time Fitness – St. Louis Park. It is funny how everything comes full circle.

Jackson's brother, **Brooks**, entered the world in 2000 and we soon moved to Shakopee. I started working at a new club and Jackson kept playing tennis. He loved the game almost as much as I did.

With all the blessings tennis had bestowed upon me, I couldn't have been happier, but also knew it was time for me to start giving back to the game. With the help of USTA Northern, I formed a junior tennis program, and in turn, became friends with many of the top kids in our Section. Those friendships continued through Jackson's participation in USTA Junior Tournaments both locally and nationally. Although the boys ended up at different clubs over the year, the friendships remain strong and now five of them are playing college tennis. Amazing!

I then worked with many in the community to delivering tennis



programming to kids and adults through the Shakopee Tennis Association. We have more than 250 kids in the program and I love the fact I can give kids and parents a glimpse of what tennis has to offer all day, every day during the summer.

When the boys varsity head coach position opened up at Shakopee High School, I was offered the job and asked two of my closest tennis people – **Jack Roach** and **Jenny Arnfelt** – to join me. Honestly, coaching high school tennis has given me some of my most memorable tennis experiences, including the opportunity to coach Jackson. Let me tell you, coaching your own child is not easy.

Many times, I had to "walk" away from the courts and into the school to cool my temper.

During Jackson's junior year of high school, he was playing for the state championship. I will never forget walking out to coach him, although I did not need to say much as he was in the zone that day and playing some of his best tennis. After the final point, Jack and Jenny motioned for me to walk on to the court first so I could congratulate my "state champion." Sharing that hug with Jackson meant more than anyone will ever know. It was Jackson's match of a lifetime, but also my memory of a lifetime. You can understand why I am so grateful to the game of tennis.

Although Brooks played on the high school team with Jackson, his true love is basketball which makes his Dad happy since he played basketball at Gustavus. He is an excellent player and has transferred the life lessons he learned on the tennis court to the basketball hardwood and beyond. Now Brooks understands delayed gratification, the value of resilience, the importance of team building and the good results of hard work. Although I miss him playing tennis, I am doubly proud of what he has achieved on the basketball court.

My youngest daughter, Lily, is delightful. She was diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) at an early age and although she started her sports career a little later than the boys, she is quickly making up for lost time. JIA may have sidelined her in the beginning, but it has also given her an unmatched resolve which I am now seeing on the tennis court.

Tennis has provided our family with more than we could ever dream. Now you will see us supporting Jackson and his new coaches and teammates at the University of Minnesota most weekends. Our extended family is there too as earlier this season four of my cousins and one uncle who had never seen him play tennis were all in the stands singing the Minnesota Rouser and cheering him to victory. Jackson's tennis career is at a whole new level and all of his hard work is paying off in ways we never imagined. I just wish the tears of pride would stop filling my eyes when I see him play. Honestly, I really am tougher than that!

Tennis has given me so much. People often ask me to rank all these memories, but it is impossible. They all mean so much. The people I have met and come to love along this incredible journey, the places I have traveled, the support not only my immediate family, but my even bigger tennis family provides me, and the values I have learned have made me the mother, wife and teacher I am today! Happy Mother's Day to all the tennis moms out there.

## One Team

It's funny how so much can change in an instant. One day, I am advocating for resources and support from anyone who will listen as the director of a local tennis and education program. I'm competing for limited funding, telling the stories of change that come from involvement in our sport and seeing the tremendous impact that every donor and volunteer make at a local level. I'm applying for grants, leading site visits and completing accountability reports. I am working to prove that a program, and more importantly, the people involved are worth investing in, and it's not always easy, even when talking with one of my program's biggest supporters, the USTA.

Fast forward one month and I am sitting at the USTA National Campus in Orlando, inspired and in awe of the work being done and the enormity and beauty of the facility. I've been there before and it's always left this impression. However, as a program provider in conversations with USTA folks, I always felt a need to prove my program's value to the USTA mission, and during this visit my schedule is filled with national program managers and leaders excited to tell me about their latest innovations and efforts to grow the game and how they could benefit the Northern Section. Conversations are very transparent and it quickly becomes evident that the USTA is very interested in listening and learning how to better support me as an Executive Director of a section, as a past provider of local tennis programs and as a player and parent of players. I am blown away by the fact that my 6 years fighting in the trenches have brought me to this moment of opportunity to advocate for change on a national stage.

Through this experience, I'm also thrilled to discover that the hope of the USTA and my vision as the new ED of USTA Northern are in alignment as we discuss the need to work better together to meet our mission of growing tennis. And the need for collaborative effort doesn't stop at the section level, but extends to the local level where program providers connect with players. The local level is where real growth happens. This is where a player or potential player connects with tennis for the first or the last time. This is where we grow the game through every grandparent that buys a child their first racquet, through every coach who convinces the benchwarmer that he'll have a lot more fun on a tennis court, through fathers who support their daughters in pursuit of athletic achievement, tennis pros who give up their Saturday nights to teach kids a proper serve, and league captains who spend hours ensuring that new recruits know how to get to Thursday's match. There are countless examples of these growth moments at the local level and it is our program providers who have the best vantage point for witnessing both these successes and understanding the challenges in connecting players to tennis.

At USTA Northern, it is our job as a section office to support our local providers just as USTA supports our efforts at a section level.



At the section level, we like to think we know our needs a bit better than the folks out in New York or Florida and I'm pretty sure that the Bismarck-Mandan Tennis Association knows a bit more than we do at the section office about the unique needs in their community. Thus, my vision for better collaboration in growing the game doesn't end with the USTA family, but extends to our program delivery system. We need to listen and learn from one another and let the best ideas rise to the top. We need to be open to change and keep doing what works.

Together, we can make the biggest impact. That is why we are about to launch a strategic planning process that involves surveying our key stakeholders in shaping our priorities and goals over the next few years as we work to engage more people with the sport of tennis. If you are a program provider, look for a link in your email inbox soon and please don't miss this opportunity to influence positive change. Looking for other ways to make an impact? We'll also be recruiting new board and committee members this year to begin service in 2019 who will be key players in the execution and evaluation of the tactics used to reach strategic goals.

As we celebrate tennis month this May and get ready for outdoor tennis season, USTA Northern is busier than ever with marketing, training, recruiting and scheduling efforts to enhance the player experience and get more people on the courts. We are working to support player-to-provider connections in a variety of ways, most notably through Net Generation, an ever-evolving tool which I'm told is about 30% complete, yet already a useful platform and becoming better every day through feedback from early adopters. As a Net Gen skeptic at first, I've come around and am impressed by the collaboration at all levels of the industry to make this product integrate a once disconnected youth tennis landscape. In the adult arena, we're looking for partners to offer innovative formats that engage a variety of player types, from those looking for a weekend workout or social event to competitive purists and everything in between. After all, what works for Federer, doesn't necessarily work for Serena or Nadal.

In my new role, I certainly don't have all the answers, but am excited to work collaboratively with you to find creative solutions to challenges and leverage USTA Northern assets to support our collective efforts. Thank you for your work to date as a tennis ambassador. Please don't hesitate to reach out and tell us how we can help you, your friends, and your customers better engage in this great game. I'm excited to be on the team!

We Are Northern!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brady Contino".

## Fridinger Family Honored As USTA National Family of the Year



The **Tom Fridinger Family (Tom, Ellen, Steve, Beth, Evan, Caleb & Luke)** of White Bear Lake, Minn., and Woodbury, Minn., received the Ralph W. Westcott USTA National Family of the Year Award. The Fridingers were recognized for their outstanding contribution of helping to grow tennis at the local level at the USTA Annual Meeting and Conference, March 16-19, at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa in Carlsbad, Calif.

The Family of the Year Award, created by the USTA in 1965, is given annually to a family that volunteers its time to promote amateur tennis, emphasizing the theme that tennis is a family game. The Fridingers, who were the USTA Northern Family of the Year in 2014, became the sixth USTA Northern family to receive the National award.

The Fridingers are a multi-generational family, all passionate about tennis. Tom and Ellen passed on their love of the game to their son Steve, his wife Beth and their three sons, Evan, Caleb and Luke.

Tom has played tennis for more than 60 years and competed at the College of William & Mary. In USTA Northern adult tournaments, he was ranked No. 1 in 70s doubles and No. 2 in 70s singles, and has qualified for USTA League Nationals 15 times in 35 years. Tom was inducted into the USTA Northern Hall of Fame in 2009, and won a bronze medal at the 2015 National Senior Games in 75-79 doubles. Tom worked at 3M for over 40 years and claims 15 U.S. patents. He started the 3M Tennis League, growing it from 50 to over 300 people in only five years. Tom also serves on the board of directors for St. Paul Urban Tennis and is a volunteer coach with the East Ridge Athletic Association.

Ellen is a recreational tennis player and supports her husband, son and grandchildren both on and off the courts.

Steve and Beth helped start the East Ridge Athletic Association (ERAA) Youth Program and Community Tennis Association in Woodbury in 2010, where Steve was the Director of Instruction. He volunteers his time with the East Ridge High School team and has also

coached winter Junior Team Tennis. Steve plays USTA League tennis and was on the national championship winning 4.5 men's team in 2009. He and Tom played in a number of local and national father/son tournaments together from 1984 to 2011 and were ranked No. 3 in the nation in 2002. They also played in the Equitable Family Tennis Challenge and advanced to play nationals at the US Open in New York.

Beth, a recreational player, is a volunteer coordinator with the ERAA Youth Program and is active in the East Ridge High School Booster Club. She has organized and helped run the East Ridge Summer Smash USTA Level 6 and 7 Junior Tournaments and has coordinated a 10U JTT team. She has organized and participated in a number of USTA Red, Orange, Green trainings and attended the USTA Community Tennis Workshop in 2011.

Evan, Caleb and Luke are active tennis players as well. Evan plays college tennis at Wisconsin-Eau Claire after being a member of the varsity tennis at East Ridge High School since eighth grade. Along with his father, Evan also coaches for ERAA and volunteers with the St. Paul Urban Tennis program. Evan and his grandfather traveled to Guatemala in the fall of 2012 to teach youth tennis. Along with his older brother and father, Caleb also helps coach the ERAA youth program and is ranked No. 9 in USTA Northern Boys 16s and #17 nationally with Tom in the Grandfather/Grandson rankings. The youngest Fridinger, Luke, is ranked 12th in Boys 14s. All three boys played on the East Ridge High School team that placed second at the Minnesota state tournament in 2017.

"The USTA is proud to honor the Fridinger family for their dedication to the sport and their impact upon the tennis community," said **Craig Morris**, USTA Chief Executive, Community Tennis. "The Fridingers exemplify the best parts of the sport and their efforts continue to help the growth of tennis."

## Roshan Rajkumar Receives Volunteer of the Year Honor



Congratulations to **Roshan Rajkumar** of St. Louis Park, Minn., who was presented with the USTA Volunteer Exceptional Service Award (up to 10 years of service) for his outstanding contributions in helping grow tennis at the local level.

Rajkumar is a current member of the USTA Nominating Committee, which he has served since 2015. From 2013-14, he served as chair for the Section Presidents' Task Force, and from

2015-16, he was chair of the USTA Governance Task Force. He has also served on the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, 2013-14; the Section Presidents Committee, 2013-14; and the Section Delegates Committee, 2015-16. In addition, Rajkumar created the USTA Northern Millennial Task Force, 2013-14, which was showcased as a best practice at the USTA National Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Rajkumar first got involved at the Section level when USTA Northern Executive Director **Becky Cantellano** asked him to be a part of what was then the Multicultural Committee, where he served as chair in 2009-10. A former college player at Boston College, and an avid USTA League player, he was nominated to the USTA Northern Board of Directors in 2011, was the Section President in 2013-14 and was the Section Delegate in 2015-16.

From his first term as Vice President of USTA Northern, Rajkumar has seized every opportunity to serve USTA at the national level. He has been instrumental in advocating for issues of inclusivity, diversity, leadership, and living the mission of growing the game of tennis.

The Volunteer Exceptional Service Award recognizes the most outstanding USTA volunteers. Two awards are given each year, one to a volunteer with more than 10 years of service and one to a volunteer with up to 10 years of service. Nominees in each of these categories must currently be serving on a USTA National Committee.

"In his five short, but distinguished, years of USTA service at the national level, Roshan's dedication and leadership have contributed so much," said **Katrina Adams**, USTA Chairman of the Board and President. "We are fortunate to have such talented people like Roshan focused on our mission and continuing to make our game great by giving up their time and volunteering so unselfishly."

Rajkumar becomes the second person from USTA Northern in the last three years to win the Volunteer Exceptional Service Award for those with up to 10 years of service. Former USTA Northern president and current USTA National Board Member **Jeff Baill** of Wayzata, Minn., won the award in 2016.

## Dan James Wins Tennis Educational Merit Award

**Dan James**, formerly of St. Paul, Minn., and now of Seattle, was honored with the Tennis Education Merit Award from the International Tennis Hall of Fame in a special awards presentation at the USTA Annual Meeting in Carlsbad, Calif. The Tennis Educational Merit Award is presented annually by the Hall of Fame to a man and a woman who have made notable contributions at the national level and have demonstrated leadership and creative skills in such areas as instruction, writing, organization, and promotion of the sport of tennis. The female winner of the award was **Dr. Anne Smith**, a former WTA star and world No. 1 in doubles who turned her retirement into an accomplished and impactful career in sport psychology and training.

"At the International Tennis Hall of Fame we are committed to celebrating all that is great about our sport. We celebrate its history, and we celebrate its people—the inspiring champions and the dedicated leaders who have built tennis into the exciting, global sport that it is today," **Todd Martin**, Chief Executive Officer of the International Tennis



Hall of Fame, said. "When we talk about celebrating tennis, we are committed to doing so at all levels – from junior tennis to rec tennis to the pro tours. We are very pleased to present this award to Dan who has demonstrated an outstanding and selfless commitment to inspiring participation and growth in the sport."

A competitive tennis player from a young age, James' first job out of college was as a teaching pro at a local club. In that role, James encountered wheelchair tennis for the first time during his professional development hours. He was awestruck by the sport, became a volunteer wheelchair tennis coach, and quickly found his career calling. In 2003, James became the national manager of Wheelchair Tennis for the USTA. As Head Coach for Team USA, James took five teams to Paralympic Games, with the Americans medaling each time. James also served as tournament director for the US Open Wheelchair Competition from 2013-15.

James' tireless commitment has directly heightened visibility for wheelchair tennis and grown its participation immensely. Working from scratch he developed the template used by the USTA Wheelchair Tennis Department for all pathways into the sport from grassroots to Paralympic. He has authored training manuals for coaches and players and is an official certification tester for USPTA and PTR Wheelchair Certifications.

In addition to his work with the USTA, James served on the International Tennis Federation's Wheelchair Tennis Advisory Panel for 11 years. He was also instrumental in the inclusion of wheelchair tennis inductees into the International Tennis Hall of Fame, which began in 2010. James stepped down from his role with the USTA in November 2016, but remains involved and continues to be a tireless advocate for Wheelchair Tennis.

"I would like to sincerely thank the USTA, where I worked from 2003 through 2016. They provided an opportunity for me to live a dream—a dream to make tennis relevant to all people. Thanks to that, I've really had an amazing experience in tennis," James said. "I would also like to thank the International Tennis Hall of Fame who has made wheelchair tennis relevant by inducting our great athletes."

# Playing It Safe On and Off The Court

Playing tennis, whether competitive or recreational, is a great way to stay fit. Since players are constantly moving and changing direction there is potential to cause strain on their bodies. As a former college tennis player, TRIA athletic trainer **Reggie Ronning** understands the importance of staying safe on and off the court. He shares some tips about warming up, hydration and injury prevention.

### Warm Up, Cool Down

Proper warm ups and cool downs help prevent injury and improve performance. Starting with light physical activity helps increase blood flow to the muscles and prepares them for increased demands. It is also important to begin with low-intensity drills and progress throughout your practice.

These should become part of your daily routine when heading out to the court:

- Always take 5-10 minutes for a dynamic warm up before you play.
- Stretch after you play to help maintain flexibility and promote optimal recovery.
- Stretch slowly and gently so it does not hurt. If you feel pain, start to back off.

### Hydration

Hydration is essential to our daily diet, especially in the warmer months. During exercise or activity, our bodies cool off by sweating. When we sweat, we lose necessary water and electrolytes. If we do not replace these fluids we become dehydrated, making it more difficult to sweat and cool down. Prevention begins with understanding the causes of heat illnesses and making sure to stay cool and hydrated during activity.

A number of factors can affect heat release and perspiration:

- **Environment** – air temperature, humidity and sun affect how our bodies can cool themselves
- **Clothing** – dark colors absorb heat; wearing a light colored hat is recommended
- **Sun** – direct exposure to the sun with no shade increases your core body temperature
- **Age** – children adjust to heat slower than adults
- **Dehydration** – if you have not had enough fluids, your body cannot cool itself through sweat
- **Pre-activity hydration** – athletes starting activities already dehydrated are at greater risk for injury
- **Sunscreen** – apply sunscreen often to help keep your body cool during long hot days
- **Cool towel** – keep a cool, wet towel in a small cooler and apply over your neck during change overs

### Injury Prevention

Tennis elbow, also known as lateral epicondylitis, is one of the most common injuries in tennis. It causes pain over the outside of the elbow from overuse of the forearm muscles, specifically the wrist extensors.

Players with a one-handed backhand are more susceptible to pain because of increased stress on the dominant arm.

Here are a few ways to prevent tennis elbow:

- Strengthen your forearm muscles with exercises that bend and stretch your wrist.
- Place the palm of your injured hand on a flat table. And place the uninjured hand over the back of your injured hand. Contract your muscles to lift your palm off of the table, resisting the upward movement of the injured hand with your uninjured hand.
- Perform wrist flexion by placing the palm of your injured hand flat on the table. Contract your muscles to press your palm into the top of the table.
- Warm up with gentle range of motion exercises before playing and stretching after.
- Pay attention to the technical components of your racquet, such as grip size, head size and string tension.
- Wear a tennis elbow strap if you have pain associated with tennis elbow.

Chronic shoulder pain is also common in tennis players. The pain results from repetitive overhead motions, specifically from serving and overhead shots. These overuse injuries, such as a rotator cuff tear, are muscular in nature and benefit from conservative management. Here are a few ways to prevent shoulder pain:

- Strengthen your shoulder using resistance bands or low resistance exercises with high amounts of reps.
- Stretch and foam roll to target problem areas that may be tight.
- Playing doubles will reduce your volume of serving and helps to build in breaks.
- Applying ice after activity can help limit swelling and decrease pain.

The low back is also a commonly injured area in tennis players. Tennis is a multi-directional sport. It incorporates bending the trunk forward and backwards, as well as side bending and rotation. Athletes who are less mobile in their spine or lack core strength are more prone to suffer from back pain. Here are a few tips to prevent low back injuries:

- Use proper form during play – using your legs and core for power instead of your back.
- Include some core and low back strengthening into your daily workouts.
- Set up a private lesson with a tennis pro who can check your form.
- Be sure to avoid overextension through your spine as you serve by adjusting your ball toss.

### When to visit your doctor

An athlete should visit their doctor or sports medicine physician if symptoms persist for more than one week, despite rest and care measures. Athletes who play through pain may worsen an injury or prolong recovery. Pain can also prevent you from playing at the level you want to play at.

For more information about how you can prevent tennis injuries, visit [www.tria.com/activity/tennis](http://www.tria.com/activity/tennis).



# For the athlete in all of us

 **TRIA** | [tria.com](http://tria.com)

Official orthopedic and sports medicine  
provider of USTA Northern



## Team USA Camp in Rochester

Twenty four of the Section's best 10-13 year olds were selected to participate at the 2018 Team USA High Performance Training Camp April 7-8 at the Rochester Athletic Club in Rochester, Minn. Participants included **Emmanuel Alex** (Arden Hills, Minn.), **Tej Bhagra** (Rochester, Minn.), **Niyathi Bhupatiraju** (Eden Prairie, Minn.), **Noah Carpenter** (Plymouth, Minn.), **Amanda Diao** (Blaine, Minn.), **Ancele Dolensek** (Rochester, Minn.), **Max Exsted** (Savage, Minn.), **Drew Gohl** (Sioux Falls, Minn.), **Tygen Goldammer** (Rosemount, Minn.), **Tarun Gopalakrishnan** (Plymouth, Minn.), **Zoya Hasan** (Edina, Minn.), **Tianna Houske** (Savage, Minn.), **Will Lieberman** (Mahto-



medi, Minn.), **Sam Leslie** (Minneapolis, Minn.), **Claire Loftus** (Rochester, Minn.), **Alexander Lupu** (Sioux Falls, S.D.), **Carter Magistad** (Stillwater, Minn.), **Annika Munson** (Stillwater, Minn.), **Kaleb Ngwendson** (Apple Valley, Minn.), **Nolan Ranger** (Edina, Minn.), **Sarah Shahbaz** (Ham Lake, Minn.), **Ashwike Thotakura** (Eden Prairie, Minn.), **Emmeline Wang** (Hamel, Minn.) and

**Noah Wisniewski** (Rochester, Minn.). **Brian Wilson** from USTA National conducted the camp with help from Section coaches **Jamie Gaard Chapman**, **Felicia Raschiatore**, **Diana Bukajeva**, **Ben Maes**, **Steve Tacl**, **Mike Lipinski**, **Danny Kantar** and **Andres Osorio**.

### Sam Leslie Named Confidence Award Winner

Congratulations to **Sam Leslie** (Minneapolis, Minn.) who was named the Confidence Award winner at the Team USA Camp as selected by camp leader **Brian Wilson** of USTA National.



Sam Leslie

### Jon Pickett Leads Team Twizzler To Gold Medal, Sportsmanship Award; Emmanuel Alex Wins Gold

Congrats to USTA Northern coach **Jon Pickett** (Eau Claire, Wis.) on leading Team Twizzler to the gold medal at the National Team Championships in Tucson, Ariz. His team also won the Sportsmanship Award and had the individual sportsmanship winner, while junior player **Emmanuel Alex** (Arden Hills, Minn.) also won a gold medal in Tucson.



Vunnisa Vu

### Vunnisa Vu Competes At National Drive, Chip and Putt Championships At The Masters

Congratulations to **Vunnisa Vu** (Maplewood, Minn.), who placed 10th in the Girls 12-13 Division at the National Drive, Chip and Putt National Championships at Augusta National Golf Club – home of The Masters on April 1. Vu was one of 80 finalists nationwide.

Like tennis, Vu took to golf quickly after learning to play when she was 10 years old. She plays at Goodrich Golf Course in Maplewood and is playing golf for Roseville High School this spring. Her lowest score so far is 80.

Vu won the USTA Northern Girls 14U Junior Sectional singles and doubles title last June, as well as the winter Level 3 title in January. She is currently ranked #3 in Girls 14s and was a member of the Section's 14s Zonals team last year. A multiple-time Sportsmanship Award winner within the Section, Vu is also ranked #134 in the country for Girls 14s.



### Yee Thao Receives \$1,000 College Scholarship from USTA Northern & Inspirity

Congratulations to Harding High School senior **Yee Thao** (St. Paul, Minn.) who was the inaugural recipient of the USTA Northern Serving Up Love College Scholarship courtesy of Inspirity. Inspirity donated \$1,000 to Serving Up Love specifically designated to fund a college scholarship for a deserving high school senior.

Yee Thao



## Hunter Heck Named To National Junior Team

USTA Northern junior scholarship winner **Hunter Heck** (New Brighton, Minn.) was one of eight boys nationally who qualified for the 2018 Team USA National Junior Team, a training program designed to give a collection of America's best young players, born in either 2002 or 2003, opportunities to train together during the summer and travel to play

against top junior competition from around the world.

All eight players qualified for the team through a playoff held April 13-18 in Carson, Calif. Players were invited for the playoff based on tournament results, USTA national or ITF world ranking. Heck recently won the 16s doubles title at the USTA International Spring Championships with **Maxwell McKennon** (Newport Beach, Calif.) and is ranked No. 25 in the USTA Boys' 16s national standings.

By being named to the team, USTA Player Development will provide Heck with training opportunities, coaching and travel assistance to select ITF tournaments throughout the summer.

## Five Receive Player Development Scholarships

Congratulations to **Hunter Heck** (St. Paul, Minn.), **Amanye Reynolds** (St. Paul, Minn.), **Nicole Snezhko** (Minneapolis, Minn.), **Pemola Wachungsang** (St. Paul, Minn.) and **Wangmo Wachungsang** (St. Paul, Minn.) as all received Serving Up Love scholarships to help with tennis expenses in 2018. Overall, Serving Up Love has already awarded over \$5,000 in scholarships for junior players this year.

## Scholarships Still Available For Junior Players

USTA Northern still has a number of scholarships available to junior players. For more information, please contact **Sandy Smith** at [ssmith@northern.usta.com](mailto:ssmith@northern.usta.com) or at (952) 358-3288.

- **USTA Northern Tennis Camp Scholarships** – Awarded to a male or female player age 13 or younger that demonstrates both a financial need and commitment to tennis. Player must receive an endorsement from his/her tennis coach in order to be eligible. Recipient receives a scholarship to attend a camp located within USTA Northern. To apply, visit <http://bit.ly/2F2LgK1>.
- **USTA Northern Entry-Level Tournament Scholarships Award** – USTA Northern offers scholarships for youth ages 10-14 who reside within the USTA Northern Section and have a financial hardship that prevents them from playing in USTA Junior Tournaments. Scholarship funds can be used for either Level 7 or Level 8 tournaments. Please note that youth playing high school tennis are not eligible to apply due to MSHSL bylaws. The Scholarship covers the entire cost of the tournament

entry fee and will be paid directly to the tournament director. Among items to be considered include financial need and sportsmanship both on and off the court. Contact **Sandy Smith** at [ssmith@northern.usta.com](mailto:ssmith@northern.usta.com) directly for more information.

- **USTA Northern Junior Tennis Scholarships** – Juniors ages 10-17 who have a financial hardship are eligible to apply for a USTA Northern Junior Tennis Scholarship. This application form works for the Tony Stingley Diverse Player Scholarship, the Serving Up Love Junior Tennis Scholarship and the new Serving Up Love College Scholarship. To apply, visit <http://bit.ly/2FeKSvc>.

## Summer Team Tennis Updates

Summer fun is in store for USTA Northern Team Tennis in 2018. Team Tennis is about getting kids of similar ability levels on teams and playing matches against other squads of a comparable skill level in a fun, but competitive atmosphere. The motto of Team Tennis is "Fun, Fitness and Friends."

USTA Northern offers three different Team Tennis options – Junior Team Tennis, World Team Tennis and Stars & Trophies Team Tennis. Junior Team Tennis and World Team Tennis are co-ed programs which singles, doubles and mixed doubles are played. Junior Team Tennis players must be USTA members and have a chance to advance to JTT Nationals, while World Team Tennis does not require membership and is non-advancing after the Section Championships. Stars and Trophies Team Tennis uses a series of gender-neutral, team based Play Days before Section Championships.

For more information about Team Tennis, to find a team or start a program in your community, please contact **Brandon Jackson** at [jackson@northern.usta.com](mailto:jackson@northern.usta.com) or at (952) 358-3291.

## Junior Team Tennis Important Dates

- May 25:** Scheduling Form Due and Team Creation in TennisLink Due
- June 22:** Area Registration Due and Player Registration Closes
- July 9-16:** Area Championships
- July 23-24:** Section Championships 14 and Under Int./Adv.
- July 25-26:** Section Championships 18 and Under Int./Adv.

## Summer World Team Tennis Dates

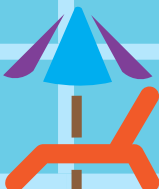



- June 4:** Scheduling Form Due and Team Creation on WTT.com
- July 9:** Section Registration Dues
- July 28:** Section Championships 12 and Under Int./Adv.
- July 28-29:** Section championships 14 and Under Int.
- July 29-30:** Section Championships 18 and Under Int.

## Team Tennis Funding and Grants Available

Team Tennis programs that partner with a local tennis provider could be eligible for a Net Generation Pathway grant of up to \$6,000 dollars if both are registered on [www.netgeneration.com](http://www.netgeneration.com). USTA Northern Community Tennis Grants are also available for Team Tennis programs. For more information, contact **Brandon Jackson** at [jackson@northern.usta.com](mailto:jackson@northern.usta.com) or at (952) 358-3291.

# WE LOVE SUMMER



Category	National Championship Junior Team Tennis	World Team Tennis
Membership	 USTA Membership is required; registration through TennisLink	USTA Membership is not required; registration through WTT site
Team Composition	Co-ed teams— minimum 3 boys and 3 girls	Co-ed teams—minimum 2 boys and 2 girls
Age Levels and Play Divisions	 Based on JNTRP 14 and Under Intermediate 14 and Under Advanced –3.5+ 18 and Under Intermediate 18 and Under Advanced –3.5+	12 and Under Beginner—Orange 60' court 12 and Under Intermediate—Green Ball 12 and Under Advanced—Green Ball 14 and Under Beginner—Green Ball 14 and Under Intermediate—Yellow Ball 18 and Under Beginner—Green Ball 18 and Under Intermediate—Yellow Ball
Match Formats and Scoring	 1 set of Boys and Girls Singles 1 set of Boys and Girls Doubles 1 set of Mixed Doubles 8-game pro-set, no-ad scoring Double-ups must occur in mixed doubles Match is determined by total games won	 1 set of Boys and Girls Singles 1 set of Boys and Girls Doubles 1 set of Mixed Doubles 6-game pro-set, no-ad scoring Substitutions are allowed Overtime and Supertiebreak Double-ups can occur anywhere Power-Up Point
Court Needs and Match Duration	 3 courts for 1.5 hours	 2 courts for 1.5 hours
Advancement Opportunities	 Local Season Area Championships Section Championships National Championships	 Local Season Section Championships
Advancement Eligibility Requirements	Each player is required to play in at least 2 team matches before Area Championships. Each team is required to play in 3 matches over the period of 3 or more days.	No individual player match requirements. Each team is required to play in at least 3 matches before the Section Championships.



## Why Students Should Learn The One-Handed Backhand First



With the revolutionary introduction of size- and skill-appropriate low compression balls, racquets and court sizes, young players can now learn professional-level skills from the start of their playing careers. As a long-time advocate of utilizing this equipment, I have found myself asking the same question lately, "Why don't I see more one-handed backhands in our 10-and-under players?" Now I'm not trying to ignite a debate on whether a one-handed backhand is better than a two-handed backhand. Rather, I'm questioning the standard methodology of teaching the two-handed backhand *before* the one-handed backhand. I believe the reverse approach may best benefit our youngest students on the 36-foot, red ball court. I feel that learning a one-handed backhand before the two-handed backhand can lead to a more accelerated skill acquisition and better tactical sense.

### Why Two-Hands First?

Why do we currently teach two-handed backhands first? Certainly this wasn't the case during the age of wood racquets. However, racquet technology evolved and famous champions such as **Chris Evert**, **Bjorn Borg** and **Jimmy Connors** made technical adaptations by developing incredible two-handers that helped to popularize this shot. This trend continued into the modern era of tennis where two-handers became the norm when young players, who strived to play the game earlier, discovered more stability and power when reacting to the increased ball speeds and spins they were receiving. The result was a huge decrease in one-handers as young players weren't able to compete with this shot while using the more cumbersome adult-sized racquets in coordination with their smaller frames.

Times change and now we live in an era of kid-sized equipment, low-compression balls and smaller courts. The balls move slower, stay lower in the strike zone and allow players more time to effectively position themselves to produce quality swings. As the challenges that faced past coaches and students have been significantly reduced, perhaps we no longer need to just teach two-handed backhands to our students. However, what would be the advantages of teaching a one-hander to a beginning student? Perhaps the answer is in the simplicity of instruction.

### Simplicity of Instruction

Anyone who has worked with young children understands that they have incredibly adaptive developing minds, but also have shorter attention spans. Explaining different grips, swing paths, spins and tactics to young students can be extremely confusing. In order to be successful

as a coach, you have to keep your instructions simple, memorable and effective.

Teaching the one-handed backhand actually promotes simplicity of instruction. By teaching your beginning players to use one-handed backhands, the ready position

will always be the same as the non-dominant hand will support the neck of the racquet, and the player will not have to slide down the handle to change grips on groundstrokes or volleys. In fact, when instructing a beginner, you can even initially teach just one grip (continental), which will allow the student to play every shot on court (groundstrokes, volleys, overheads and serves).

Remember, on a 36-foot, red ball court the primary goal is control, not speed. The red court/ball does not require or react to big topspin, so you do not need to complicate things by hitting a full eastern on the one-handed backhand, or an eastern to semi-western forehand at this point. These will be progressions you use after a student has successfully demonstrated these initial controls. It doesn't get more simplified than teaching one-grip and one-hand for all shots.

### Tactical Advantages

Tactically, since a one-handed backhand allows for greater manipulation of the racquet head, this can lead to a deeper understanding of how to create different spins and shapes (slice, flat, topspin). A more sensitive ball control results in a more complete knowledge of how to use time and space to your advantage, and improves one's ability to flow between offense and defense. A better backhand volley is another result of learning the one-hander, which leads to more tactical exploration in the front of the court. The ultimate outcome is an all-court playing style that is extremely adaptable to different opponents, surfaces and situations.

### Final Thought

**Roger Federer**, **Pete Sampras**, **Gustavo Kuerten**, **Ivan Lendl**, **John McEnroe**, **Boris Becker**, **Billie Jean King**, **Martina Navratilova**, **Steffi Graf** and **Justine Henin** are just a few top-ranked players who competed with one-handed backhands. However, this approach still can allow for flexibility and the development of a two-hander at a later date. For example, former world number one **Novak Djokovic** started with a one-hander and later switched, going on to develop one of the best two-handers the world has ever seen. One-hand or two, it's all up to you. However, if you try to teach the one-hander first, you might be surprised by the improved technical and tactical skill acquisition of your students.

## Online Auditions To Sing At 2018 US Open

Love to sing in the shower? How about on center court at Arthur Ashe Stadium? The USTA has launched a nationwide online audition to sing America The Beautiful as part of its 12th Annual US Open anthem audition, open to all kids 14 years of age or younger.

To submit an audition, kids must upload a recorded version of themselves via a YouTube link, performing all or a portion of "America the Beautiful" a cappella to [usopen.org/anthemauditions](http://usopen.org/anthemauditions) by May 11 at 4 p.m. CDT.

All entries will be reviewed by a panel of judges from the music and entertainment industry. A select number of contestants will be invited to participate in an in-person call-back audition in New York. Winners selected from the call-back audition will perform "America the Beautiful" live during the night sessions at the 2018 US Open.

For more information on the online audition, including the official rules, go to [www.usopen.org/anthemauditions](http://www.usopen.org/anthemauditions).

## Support Serving Up Love By Purchasing A Brick Or Paver At The US Open



Leave your imprint on tennis now and forever by purchasing a brick or paver on the Avenue of Aces at the 2019 US Open. Prices range from \$1,000 to \$25,000 with 50 percent of the proceeds coming back to USTA Northern's Serving Up Love campaign or its three NJTL chapters (donations can be earmarked specifically for Fred Wells Tennis & Education, InnerCity Tennis or St. Paul Urban Tennis). For

more information, or to order your brick or paver, visit [www.avenueofaces.com](http://www.avenueofaces.com), call (914) 696-7223 or e-mail [foundation@usta.com](mailto:foundation@usta.com).

## Org Member T-Shirt Program Back

Organizational Members... the popular discount t-shirt program is back in 2018. T-shirts are only \$6. Orders must be completed online from May 21-June 1 (ship June 18). To order online, please visit [www.signatureconcepts.com/ustanorgts](http://www.signatureconcepts.com/ustanorgts). For more information, contact **Sandy Smith** at [ssmith@northern.usta.com](mailto:ssmith@northern.usta.com).



## On-Court Trainings Coming To Bismarck, Valley City, Sioux Falls, Twin Cities

USTA Northern will be conducting on-court trainings in Bismarck, Valley City and Sioux Falls in late May and early June. For more information or to register, please contact **Mya Smith-Dennis** at [mya@northern.usta.com](mailto:mya@northern.usta.com).

- **Bismarck, N.D.** – Tuesday, May 29 from 9 a.m.-12 Noon at Capital Racquet and Fitness (3200 North 10th Street)
- **Valley City, N.D.** – Wednesday, May 30 from 9 a.m.-12 Noon at

NORTH Tennis Courts (870 2nd Avenue NE). Indoor back-up is the Rec Center (140 4th Street SW).

- **Sioux Falls, S.D.** – Thursday, May 31 from 5-8 p.m. at Washington High School (501 N. Sycamore Avenue)
- **Edina, Minn.** – Saturday, June 2 from 2:30-5:30 p.m. at the Edina Community Center (5701 Normandale Road)

## Stay Connected To USTA Northern via Social Media and the Web

Stay up-to-date on the latest information regarding USTA Northern through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or our Website.

- **Website:** [www.usta.com/northern](http://www.usta.com/northern) (Note: Please allow your location for easy access to USTA Northern information)
- **Facebook:** "Like Us" at [www.facebook.com/ustanorthern](http://www.facebook.com/ustanorthern)
- **Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/ustanorthern](http://www.twitter.com/ustanorthern)
- **Instagram:** [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com); Keyword: USTA Northern
- **Text Message:** <https://bit.ly/2chl41r> to opt-in and receive text messages and emails.

## We Want To Hear From You For Our Publications and Social Media

USTA Northern always loves to hear from its members. We invite anyone to submit letters to the editor and we are always looking for additional writers. We also encourage people to share their tennis photos with the Section so we can see how you are finding yourself in the game. Please send any content to **Lisa Mushett** at [mushett@northern.usta.com](mailto:mushett@northern.usta.com).

## In Memoriam Hall of Famer Cliff Caine Passes Away

USTA Northern Hall of Famer **Cliff Caine** of St. Paul died April 12 at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minn., after a long illness. He was 84.

Caine was an extremely successful college and high school tennis coach in his career. He coached the men's team at Macalester College from 1960-71, winning seven MIAC titles during that time. He then coached the boys and girls teams at St. Paul Academy and Summit School in St. Paul from 1972-84. While at SPA, he won seven Minnesota State High School League championships in a 10-year period. He was named the Minnesota State High School Coach of the Year in 1976 and won the Northwest Professional Tennis Association Coach of the Year Award in 1980.

Caine was one of the 100 Most Influential Persons in Minnesota Tennis from 1976-78 after founding the Minnesota Girls Tennis Coaches Association and serving as its first President. He was a long-time member of the USPTA and served as the Director of Tennis at Town and Country and at Somerset Country Clubs in St. Paul. He is a member of the Minnesota Tennis Coaches Hall of Fame and the Macalester College Hall of Fame and was inducted into the USTA Northern Hall of Fame in 2007.



# Valley City State Named 2018 National Club of the Year

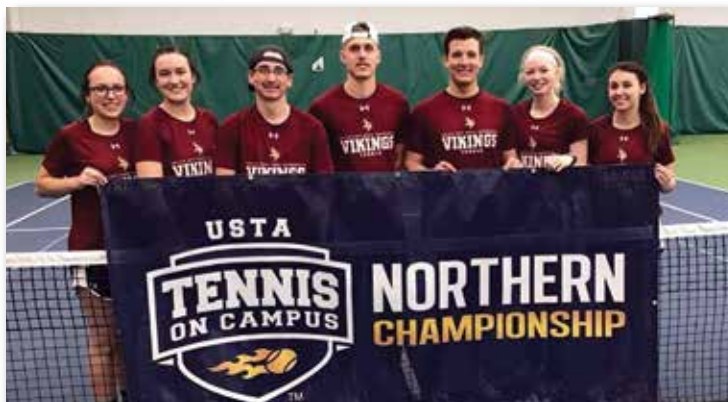
Congratulations to **Valley City State University (VCSU)** in Valley City, N.D., as it was named the 2018 USTA Tennis On Campus National Club of the Year. VCSU will be honored at the 2018 USTA National Semiannual Meeting as part of the 2018 US Open in New York City. The club receives four round-trip expenses (airfare and hotel) to New York, as well as four tickets to a session of the US Open. In addition, Valley City State earned paid entry to the Tennis On Campus Fall Invitational in 2018.

"I am incredibly proud of this team," coach **Erik Kringlie** said. "They work hard in practice, in matches, and most importantly, off the court to not only improve the team but have a positive effect on their university and their community."

Established in 2004, Valley City State boasted its second-largest team ever with 14 players and raised over \$5,000 this season. Playing in all five TOC USTA Northern events offered this year, the team finished with a program high 17-6 regular-season record. The Vikings took home the Silver Bracket title at the 2018 USTA Northern Section Championships.

For the ninth year, the team played host to the Viking Invitational in September and then co-hosted the first-ever Tennis On Campus Northern Border Battle in January which saw teams from North Dakota and Minnesota faceoff against each other for bragging rights. North Dakota won the inaugural tournament.

Off the court, the team is making a huge impact in the community as it works with the university, schools, the Valley City Tennis Association (VCTA) and the local park and rec. The club hosts an annual campus tennis tournament for players and non-players creating a connection



Valley City State University

with students, campus staff and faculty. They also partner with the VCTA to coach a USTA World Team Tennis team, serve as court monitors during the Valley City Junior Level 6 tournament, provide volunteers to help run a Tennis Block Party for the community each May and assist with high school drill nights in the summer and during the season. Club president **Paige Fettig** serves on the Valley City Tennis Association Board of Directors,

and this summer, Fettig and her teammates participated in the Valley City Summer Adult League.

The team also partnered with the VCTA to collect gently-used racquets and equipment in supporting USTA Northern's Play it Forward campaign and donated \$400 to the Valley City Park and Recreation summer tennis program.

"VCSU is one of the premier programs in our Section," USTA Northern Director of Junior Teams **Brandon Jackson** said. "Not only have they hosted two events on top of traveling to every series event, but they also helped mentor a new program and volunteered with countless opportunities in their community. VCSU is a club and community that more people should look to use as a model for building future programs."

Valley City becomes the third team from USTA Northern to win the national Tennis On Campus Club of the Year Award. The University of Minnesota and North Dakota State also have received the honor.

Members of the team include: **Fettig, Katie Clark, Caitlyn Hunter, Emma Maguire, Breanna McDonald, Brandon Miller, Dustin Miller** (Vice President), **Hannah Miller, Clarissa Olson** (Secretary), **Hunter Olson, Dalton Ondracek** and **Melissa Pedersen**.



University of Minnesota

### Minnesota, Carleton Compete At TOC Nationals

The **University of Minnesota** placed in the Top 32 and **Carleton College** in the Top 48 at the 2018 Tennis On Campus National Championships at the

Minnesota lost to San Diego State 26-18, before rebounding to beat Colorado 29-17. Minnesota then lost a tough one to Georgia Tech 26-19 and to Texas A&M 22-21.

Carleton was third in pool play with a 1-2 record, falling to North Carolina State and Florida 30-6 and handling Kent State 27-22. In the Bronze Bracket, the Knights lost to New Mexico 30-8 and to Georgetown 26-9, before taking out Colorado State 23-19. Carleton lost to Columbia in their final match 30-11.



Carleton College

USTA National Campus in Orlando, Fla.

The Gophers finished second in their pool after defeating Duke 24-17 and Dartmouth 24-13 to open the event, but then lost to Washington 26-21 and was delegated to the Silver Bracket.

# Adult Updates

## 22 Compete At Inaugural NTRP National Championships

USTA Northern had 16 players compete at the inaugural 18 & Over NTRP National Championships April 6-8 at the Surprise Racquet and Tennis Club in Surprise, Ariz.

Representing Northern were:

**3.5 W Doubles:** **Carolynn Biven** (Rapid City, S.D.)/  
**Jeanne Wagner** (Rapid City, S.D.)

**4.0 W Doubles:** **Yuliya Grassby** (Rapid City, S.D.)/  
**Tsende Parkin** (Rapid City, S.D.)

**4.0 W Singles:** **Mia Robillos** (Minneapolis, Minn.)

**4.5 W Singles:** **Kaitlyn Dennis** (Minneapolis, Minn.);  
**Rachel LaTour** (Edina, Minn.)

**3.5 M Doubles:** **Derek Fermstad** (Burnsville, Minn.)/  
**Lucas Tesh** (Lakeville, Minn.); **Jason Hall** (Minneapolis, Minn.)/  
**Jon Kruse** (St. Paul, Minn.)

**4.0M Doubles:** **Derek Beiningen** (Mound, Minn.)/  
**Andrew McIntyre** (St. Paul, Minn.)

**3.5M Singles:** **Paul Kotz** (St. Paul, Minn.)

**4.0M Singles:** **Chad LaTour** (Edina, Minn.)

The highest finisher for Northern was the team of Grassby and Parkin who were fourth in the 4.0 Women's Doubles division. The Rapid City duo was undefeated in round robin play, before falling in the semifinals and third-place matches.



Andrew McIntyre



Yuliya Grassby and  
Tsende Parkin

The NTRP National Championships is a new national adult tournament that leverages the NTRP rating system as a means to create level-based individual competition at the 18 & Over and 50 & Over age groups. In all, 650 tennis players from across the United States are

participating in this first-time event and the USTA Northern players were selected based on the 2017 Adult Tournament NTRP Rankings within the Section. Each participant plays at least six matches over the course of three days using the Fast Four scoring format in which sets are played to four.

The 50 & Over competition was held April 20-22 at the Academia Sanchez Casal in Naples, Fla. USTA Northern had six players competing in that event including:

**3.5M Singles:** **Michael Streater** (Sunfish Lake, Minn.)

**4.0M Singles:** **Tim Theisen** (Maple Grove, Minn.)

**4.0M Doubles:** **Matt Bartell** (Waconia, Minn.)/  
**Aaron Rosenberg**



Rachel LaTour

Contact Matchline at [matchline@northern.usta.com](mailto:matchline@northern.usta.com). For more information, contact **Kelley Okerman** at [okerman@northern.usta.com](mailto:okerman@northern.usta.com).

## Grants Available To Run Events Targeting Ages 18-39

The USTA is offering grants to providers who want to run events for 18-39 year old players. Event administration and marketing support is available after a few easy steps. One idea is a Swingle & Mingle Tournament which involves:

- 1/2 day or single-day event
- Non-elimination format (round robin, compass draw, etc.)
- Pick from Fast Four, Best of 3 Tie Breaks or timed matches
- NTRP divisions – singles, doubles or mixed
- TennisLink required

Contact **Nancy Lundberg** at [lundberg@northern.usta.com](mailto:lundberg@northern.usta.com) to discuss details and get the grant application.

## Find Yourself in the Game Through Tennis in Your Parks

Looking for fun and fitness while making new friends? USTA Northern is once again expanding its Tennis In Your Parks adult lessons program for 2018 with offerings now found in all parts of the Twin Cities. New locations in St. Paul, Woodbury, Farmington, Eden Prairie and Plymouth join existing sites in Roseville, New Brighton/Arden Hills, Falcon Heights, Vadnais Heights, Minneapolis, Inver Grove Heights, Bloomington, Burnsville and Mendota Heights.

Tennis In Your Parks is aimed at new or returning players to the game and offers weekly lessons and a play component delivered by USTA-trained instructors. Play begins the first week of June and goes 10 weeks until late July or early August.

Need a racquet? No problem as all players registered in beginner lessons will receive a FREE racquet as part of your registration fee.

To register, contact your local Park and Recreation website or contact **Kelley Okerman** at [okerman@northern.usta.com](mailto:okerman@northern.usta.com).

(Lakeville, Minn.)

**3.5W Singles:** **Lisa Bennett** (Rapid City, S.D.)

**4.0W Singles:** **Ginny KuBERSKI** (St. Paul, Minn.)

## Still Time To Play 2018 Summer USTA League Tennis In Twin Cities

Registration for 2018 Summer Leagues in the Twin Cities is still open for Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Adult 18 & Over Women's Daytime and Mixed Doubles 18 & Over. Looking for a team?

## 2018 TENNIS IN YOUR PARKS SITES

COMMUNITY	PARK (ADDRESS)	EVENING	LEVELS AND TIMES	SESSION DATES	REGISTRATION	
NE METRO						
Roseville	<b>Pochahontas Park</b> 2540 Pascal Street 55113	Monday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm AB/I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 11 - July 23 (no class July 2)	<a href="http://www.cityofroseville.com/parks">www.cityofroseville.com/parks</a>	
	<b>Rosebrook Park</b> 2590 Fry Street 55113	Tuesday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm AB/I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 12 - July 24 (No class July 3)	<a href="http://www.cityofroseville.com/parks">www.cityofroseville.com/parks</a>	
New Brighton/ Arden Hills	<b>Hidden Oaks Park</b> 1550 29th Avenue NW 55112	Wednesday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm AB/I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 13 - July 25 (no class July 4)	<a href="http://www.newbrightonmn.gov">www.newbrightonmn.gov</a>	
Falcon Heights	<b>Community Park</b> 2050 Roselawn Ave W 55113	Thursday	B/I 6:00 - 6:55 pm	June 14 - July 26 (no class July 19)	<a href="http://www.falconheights.org">www.falconheights.org</a>	
Vadnais Heights	<b>Kohler Meadows Park</b> 365 County Rd F E 55127	Thursday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm AB/I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 7 - July 12 (no class July 5) <b>Session 2:</b> July 26 - August 23	<a href="http://www.cityvadnaisheights.com/recreation">www.cityvadnaisheights.com/recreation</a>	
EAST METRO						
Woodbury	<b>Edgewater Park</b> 3100 Edgewater Drive 55125	Tuesday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:00 - 8:00 pm	June 12 - July 24 (no class July 3)	<a href="http://www.woodburyrecreation.com">www.woodburyrecreation.com</a>	
		Thursday	I 6:00 - 7:00 pm	June 14 - July 26 (no class July 5)		
MINNEAPOLIS						
	<b>MLK Park</b> 4055 Nicollet Ave S 55409	Sunday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 3 - August 5 (no class July 1)	<a href="http://www.minneapolisparcs.org">www.minneapolisparcs.org</a>	
	<b>Logan Park</b> 690 13th Ave NE 55413	Sunday	AB 6:00 - 7:00 pm I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 3 - August 5 (no class July 1)		
	<b>Mathews Park</b> 2318 28th Ave S 55406	Monday	AB 6:00 - 7:00 pm I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 4 - August 6 ( no class July 2)	June 4 - August 6 ( no class July 2)	
	<b>Kenny Park</b> 1328 W 57th Street 55419	Monday	B 6:30 - 7:30 pm AB 7:30 - 8:30 pm	June 4 - August 6 ( no class July 2)		
	<b>Lynnhurst Park</b> 1345 W Minnehaha Pkwy 55419	Tuesday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 5 - August 7 ( no class July 3)	June 5 - August 7 ( no class July 3)	
	<b>Logan Park</b> 690 13th Ave NE 55413	Tuesday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 5 - August 7 ( no class July 3)		
	<b>MLK Park</b> 4055 Nicollet Ave S 55409	Tuesday	AB 6:00 - 7:00 pm I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 5 - August 7 ( no class July 3)	June 6 - August 8 ( no class July 4)	
	<b>Lake Hiawatha Park</b> 2701 E 44th St 55406	Wednesday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 6 - August 8 ( no class July 4)		
	<b>Waite Park</b> 1810 34th Ave NE 55418	Wednesday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 6 - August 8 ( no class July 4)	June 7 - August 9 ( no class July 5)	
	<b>Armatage</b> 2500 w 57th St 55410	Thursday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 7 - August 9 ( no class July 5)		
	<b>Kenwood</b> 2101 W Franklin Ave 55405	Thursday	AB 6:00 - 7:00 pm I 7:15 - 8:15 pm	June 7 - August 9 ( no class July 5)	June 7 - August 9 ( no class July 5)	
	<b>Webber Park</b> 4400 Dupont Ave N 55412	Thursday	B 6:30 - 7:30 pm AB 7:30 - 8:30 pm	June 7 - August 9 ( no class July 5)		
	SOUTH METRO					
	Inver Grove Heights	<b>North Valley Park</b> 2800 70th Street East 55076	Monday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm AB 7:15 - 8:15 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 11 - July 23 ( no class July 2) <b>Session 2:</b> July 30 - August 20	<a href="http://www.invergroveheights.org/register">www.invergroveheights.org/register</a>
	Bloomington	<b>Bryant Park</b> 1001 West 85th Street 55431	Tuesday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm I 7:30 - 8:30 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 5 - 26 <b>Session 2:</b> July 10 - 31	<a href="http://www.blm.mn/adultsports">www.blm.mn/adultsports</a>
Burnsville	<b>Wood Park</b> 701 East 143rd Street 55337	Tuesday	B/AB 10:00 - 11:00 am	June 5 - July 17 ( no class July 3)	<a href="http://www.ci.burnsville.mn.us">www.ci.burnsville.mn.us</a>	
		Wednesday	B 6:15 - 7:15 pm I 7:30 - 8:30 pm	June 6 - July 18 ( no class July 4)		
Mendota Heights	<b>Friendly Hills Park</b> 2360 Pueblo Lane 55120	Thursday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:00 - 8:00 pm	June 14 - July 26 (no class July 5)	<a href="http://www.mendota-heights.com">www.mendota-heights.com</a>	
FARMINGTON	<b>Rambling River Tennis Courts</b> 17 Elm Street 55024	Monday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm AB 7:00 - 8:00 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 18 - July 30 (no class July 2) <b>Session 2:</b> August 6 - September 17 (no class September 3)	<a href="http://www.farmington.mn.us">www.farmington.mn.us</a>	
WEST METRO						
Eden Prairie	<b>Round Lake Park</b> 16691 Valley View Road 55344	Monday	B 6:00 - 7:00 pm B 7:00 - 8:00 pm B 6:00 - 7:00 pm B 7:00 - 8:00 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 4 - July 16 ( no class July 2) <b>Session 2:</b> July 23 - August 27	<a href="http://www.edenprairie.org">www.edenprairie.org</a>	
Plymouth	<b>Parkers Lake Community Playfield</b> 15500 County Road 6 55447	Monday & Wednesday	Youth AB (8-10's) 5:00 - 6:00 pm Adult B 6:00 - 7:00 pm Adult AB 7:00 - 8:00 pm Adult B 6:00 - 7:00 pm Adult AB 7:00 - 8:00 pm	<b>Session 1:</b> June 11 - 27 <b>Session 2:</b> July 9 - 22  <b>Session 3:</b> August 6 - 22 (Adult Only)	<a href="http://www.plymouthmn.gov">www.plymouthmn.gov</a>	
ST. PAUL						
SPUT	<b>Central High School</b> 275 Lexington Pkwy N 55104	Thursday	B 6:00 - 6:55 pm I 7:00 - 7:55 pm	June 7 - July 19 (no class July 5)	<a href="http://www.stpaulurbantennis.org">www.stpaulurbantennis.org</a>	

Ever had a situation arise on court where you did not know what to do or have a question about a certain rule? Here are some scenarios which have come up in the Section recently. All answers can be found in the 2018 edition of **Friend at Court**. If you would like to order a copy of **Friend at Court** for \$11, please contact the USTA Northern office at (952) 887-5001.

**Question:** During a match, my opponent broke his strings returning a first serve fault. After he gets a new racquet, should the server get a first or second serve?

**Answer:** Your opponent was lucky he had a back-up racquet. Whenever there is a delay between a first and second serve, caused by the receiver, the server is allowed a first serve. This delay could be anything from washing out a contact lens to clearing a ball from court or like in this scenario, exchanging a racquet because of a broken string.

**Question:** What if the server broke a string between first and second serve? Would it be a first serve?

**Answer:** No...because the server caused the delay, the server can get a new racquet but must play a second serve.

**Where to find the rule:** ITF Rules of Tennis #23 The Let.

**Question:** My opponent would use the tennis ball to wipe the sweat from his brow? Can he legally do this?

**Answer:** No. A player may not take any action that materially changes the condition of the ball; therefore a player may not use it to wipe off perspiration.

**Where to find the rule:** Page 5 – Rules of Tennis USTA Comment 3.1

**Question:** During the middle of the point, one of the singles sticks fell to the ground and I hit the ball into the net. Do I lose the point or is that a let?

**Answer:** Once the singles stick falls, the point should immediately stop and is replayed. If you choose not to stop and hit the ball into the net, then you would lose the point as you played the point in good faith.

**Where to find the rule:** Page 4 – Rules of Tennis USTA Comment 1.3

**Question:** I hit the scoring device with my return and the ball then bounced back into the court. Do I win the point even though it hit the scoring device?

**Answer:** No. You hit a permanent fixture (the scoring device) before landing in the court, therefore play stops immediately and you lose the point.

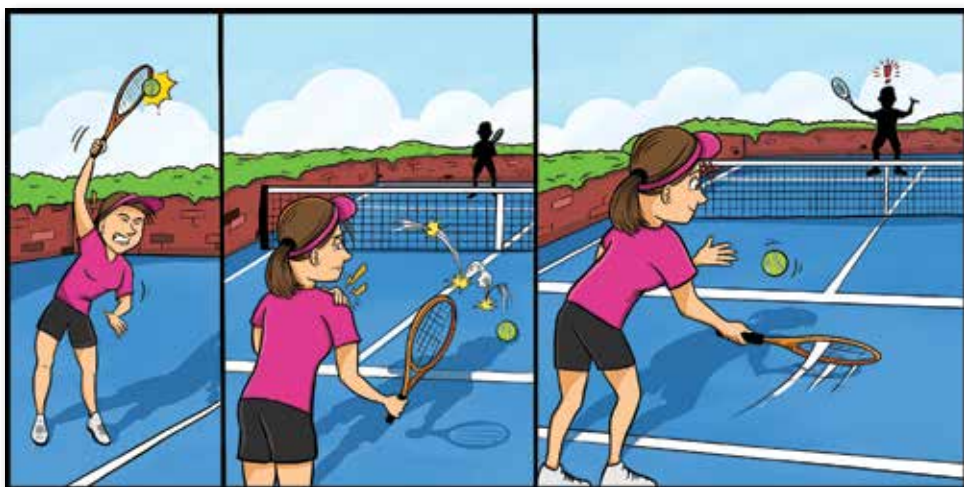
**Where to find the rule:** Page 8 – Rules of Tennis USTA Comment 13.1

**Question:** When hitting a return in singles, the ball hits the top of the net between the singles sticks and the net post and bounces back into play. Is that a good shot?

**Answer:** No...the net posts and any part of the net outside of the singles sticks are considered permanent fixtures in a singles match and are not part of the net.

**Where to find the rule:** Page 4-5 – Permanent Fixtures

**Question:** Prior to the start of a tournament, the #2 seed withdraws



due to illness. Does that change the draw?

**Answer:** If a seed withdraws after the draw has been made, but before the start of play, the tournament referee may do any of the following:

- 1) Fill the vacated position with a person not already in the draw whose inclusion would not affect the seedings
- 2) Remake the draw
- 3) Relocate the players whose seeding groups have changed

**Note:** What method used will be determined based on the time of when the withdrawal occurred and how many people will be affected by changing the draw due to the withdrawal.

**Where to find the rule:** Page 77 – Changes in Draw

**Question:** After a 10-minute rest period between the second and third set, my opponent is late returning to the court. What is the penalty, if any?

**Answer:** What happens depends on how late the players or players are returning to the court:

- If one player is late up to five minutes after the rest period, that player receives a one-game penalty.
- If one player is more than five minutes late, that player is defaulted.
- If both players are late up to five minutes, then there is no penalty.
- If both players are late, but arrive at different times, then the last player to arrive loses one game unless the difference in arrival times is more than five minutes, in which case, the last player to arrive is defaulted.

If both players are more than five minutes late, then the referee may:

- Default both players
- Allow the match to continue without penalties
- Allow the match to continue and penalize the last player to arrive one game unless the difference in arrival times is more than five minutes, in which case, the last player to arrive is defaulted.

**Where to find the rule:** Page 11 – Table 16 C.

If you have a situation that comes up on the court, and do not know the answer, let us know at [mushett@northern.usta.com](mailto:mushett@northern.usta.com).

## Stop Doubting the Big Five: Instead Sit Back and Enjoy

At the beginning of the last several years, tennis critics have uttered the same phrase: "This is the year the young guns begin to take over the game."

Each year they have been wrong. Looking at the numbers over the past 15 or so years, it is surprising that critics are still so quick to make this statement.

Whether you consider there to be a Big Five, Four, Three or Two; there is no questioning that they have been utterly dominant, especially since 2005.

Since then, **Roger Federer**, **Rafael Nadal** and **Novak Djokovic** (The Big Three) have won 44 out of the 53 Slams played (83%) and 82 of the 115 Masters 1000 events played (71%). If you want to throw **Andy Murray** and **Stan Wawrinka** into the mix (thus making the Big Five), they have won 50 of the 53 Slams played (94%) and 97 of the 115 Masters 1000 tournaments (84%).

Looking at individual Grand Slam events, no player outside of the Big Five has won at the Australian Open since 2005, when **Marat Safin** defeated Federer and **Lleyton Hewitt** en route to his second Grand Slam title. Nobody outside of the Big Five has won at Roland Garros since **Gaston Gaudio** won the tournament in 2004, and everyone knows who to thank for that. If Nadal hadn't been sidelined with a foot injury in 2004, it is very possible that he could have won the title then. No one outside the Big Five has won at Wimbledon since Hewitt in 2002. Only the US Open has had more than one winner outside the Big Five since 2004 as **Juan Martin del Potro** took home the title in 2009 and **Marin Cilic** claimed his first Slam title in 2014.

Since 2005, 34 of the 53 (64%) Grand Slams played have resulted in an all-Big Five final, and only two Slam finals since then have not had a member of the Big Five in it (Safin vs. Hewitt at the 2005 Australian Open, and Cilic vs. **Kei Nishikori** at the 2014 US Open).

The Big Five has swept the Masters 1000 events three times in 2011, 2013 and 2015. In all but three years since 2005, a member of the Big Five has won the ATP World Tour Finals.

Nobody outside of the Big Five (Four, really) has been world No. 1 since Federer took over the top spot after the Australian Open on February 2, 2004.

Since 2005, the Big Five has

swept all the Grand Slams in the calendar with the exceptions of 2005, 2009 and 2014.

This, of course, includes 2017, where the two members of the Big Five who had basically been written off, Federer and Nadal, swept the Grand Slams and finished the year ranked No. 1 and 2, respectively.

Federer started off 2018 winning his sixth Australian Open title and his 20<sup>th</sup> Grand Slam title overall. In Rotterdam, Federer became the oldest person to ever hold the world No. 1 ranking, although Nadal recently reclaimed the top spot after Federer's second round exit at the Miami Open.

The point I'm trying to make here is that people need to stop doubting the Big Five. History has proven that even when one or two members get injured or lose their form, the other members are right there to step up and take the reins. They have been dominant the last 15 years, and currently show no signs of slowing down and letting the younger players take over.

It's a lot like the episode of Seinfeld where the gang is searching for their car in the shopping mall garage. After incorrectly proclaiming that they had found the car several times, Jerry finally says that nobody should call out that they have found the car unless they're sitting in it.

Same can be said for the Big Five. Nobody claim their empire is crumbling and let us continue to enjoy one of, if not the greatest, era in tennis history.



### A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR COACHES & ORGANIZERS

Whether you are looking to promote your programs and events, take a course or learn the latest coaching tips, the **USTA Resource Center** has what you're looking for.

- COACHING & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES • MARKETING MATERIALS, INCLUDING CUSTOMIZABLES •
- VIDEOS • TIPS • COURSES • DRILLS • MEDIA ADVISORIES • RULES & REGULATIONS • PROGRAM GUIDES •



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## You Gotta Have Heart

There are many P's when it comes to improving one's tennis game: planning, preparation, practice, purpose, process and patience are very valuable to take one's game to the next level. But, sadly, the most important P is the one too often neglected - passion.

When people evaluate "talent," they usually look at things such as foot speed, jumping ability, agility and pliability, but the muscle that is hardest to measure, and the most important, is heart. When the great **Magnus Norman** (former coach of Grand Slam winner **Stan Wawrinka**) made a presentation here two years ago, he mentioned the difference between physical ability and talent. He felt ability was the thing a person could see on the outside - such as a **Nick Kyrgios** serve - but he saw talent as the capacity to work hard when no one is watching, especially on the practice court.

When a person loves something, what others perceive to be monotonous or too strenuous is a normal and enjoyed part of the process for a player who has passion for the game. Look at **Rafael Nadal**, who competes as if every point is the most important he has ever played whether it is during a match or on the practice court.

The question about quality versus quantity is similar to nature versus nurture. Nature refers to heredity or the genetic makeup of "genotypes" (i.e., information encoded in DNA) an individual carries from the time of conception to the time of death. Nurture, by contrast, refers to various external or environmental factors to which an individual is exposed from conception to death. When one starts out in any new endeavor, it is more about the quantity. Then, as one develops passion and progresses, that quantity paradigm shifts towards quality. Make no mistake, great players love to practice and are continually trying to win the battle to be the best they can be.

Take the story of two professional golfers who have had wildly different careers - **John Daly** and **Tiger Woods**. Daly, who won the 1991 PGA Championship after gaining entry into the tournament as the ninth alternate, is more known for his alcohol issues than the fact he is a two-time major tournament winner. Woods was the most famous athlete in the world at one point in his career and is considered perhaps the greatest golfer of all time. Tiger was on the practice green after a round when Daly walked by and asked why was he practicing? Tiger told him if he was as talented as Daly, he wouldn't need to practice.

History shows us practice wins out as Tiger's fall from grace came from many of the same personal issues Daly suffered from and served as a distraction, taking away his passion for the sport. Look at **Juan Martin del Potro**, who has made his way back into the top five this year. Many feel it is his passion for tennis that has helped him battle multiple career-threatening wrist surgeries the last several years and made him a favorite for this year's French Open. If you look even further back in tennis history, many players have come back from injuries after being out for a year or more because they still had a passion for the sport. It is when people take an extended break because of burnout that

they have not been able to achieve their former level — **John McEnroe** and **Bjorn Borg** being great examples.

There is an excellent biography about the great German champion **Boris Becker** showing how the German

Tennis Federation did not think much of his game. He was considered too slow, but one coach saw his competitiveness — that "talent" often missed when looking just at match play. Seeing him dive all over the grass court with reckless abandon, there was no denying his passion for the game as Becker went on to become the youngest male Wimbledon winner ever at the age of 17.

How does one develop their passion? There are a number of ways including:

- Surrounding yourself with coaches and players who are already passionate about the game and who love the battle.
- Taking time to watch players better than you.
- Having a child's curiosity when it comes to the game.
- Not being afraid to ask for advice or help.
- Recognizing the great health benefits of tennis as it is the sport of a lifetime. According the Cleveland Institute of Health, tennis is the best activity one can do when factoring exercise, problem solving and socialization.
- Embracing how fortunate you are to participate in such a wonderful sport.
- Looking for inspiration in someone you admire as I love watching biographies and reading as many coaching and tennis books as I can. I still admire many peers and players locally, nationally and globally as they fire my passion to try to be a better coach, player and person.

Passion is the X-factor most often forgotten, but is the most vital. Without passion, one will face adversity and simply quit instead of embracing the challenge to improve.

I would like to end with some great words written by a coach I only knew through social media and a mutual friend named **Ollie Stephens**. While I never got the privilege to meet him in person, I immediately liked him because of his passion for all things. Sadly, Ollie just lost his struggle with a rare form of cancer, but his passion lives on forever and makes those who knew him strive to be even a fraction of the battler he was.

**"We only get one shot in this world. Don't be afraid to take risks, don't be afraid to fail. I have learned to see failure as just another step forward towards your goals. Make the changes you want to make TODAY. Most importantly, surround yourself with energy givers and encouragers and not those who would discourage you from following your dreams and goals."**

And always remember... you gotta have heart.



# USTA Northern Salutes Its Volunteer All-Stars

USTA Northern and our tennis providers are forever grateful to their volunteers who give unconditionally for the good of the game and their community. The Section honored some of those individuals April 15-22 during Volunteer All-Star Week!

As the saying goes, "Life is like tennis. If you serve well, you will seldom lose." Special thanks to all who practice their service game both on and off the court.



**Greg Anderson**

**St. Paul, Minn.**

**Nominator: USTA Northern Staff**

"Greg is always one of the first people to respond to any volunteer needs we have whether it is Member Appreciation gatherings, Swingles or Community Outreach events. Whatever the occasion, Greg always wants to help and does it with a smile because he LOVES tennis. Thank you Greg!"



**Carissa Dice**

**Sioux Falls, S.D.**

**Nominator: Lydia Healy**

"Carissa has been an amazing and tireless volunteer for several years. She was asked to join the Sioux Falls Tennis Association Board and quickly took on the very tough challenge of being the Treasurer. During this time, Carissa was working a full-time job in which she traveled frequently and was raising three small children. If her life wasn't busy enough, she readily stepped into the role of SFTA Board President this year. Her efforts are already paying off as she has recruited five new enthusiastic board members and a new tournament sponsor, doubling our South Dakota Open purse to \$10,000."



**Cindy Huether**

**Sioux Falls, S.D.**

**Nominator: Mark Vellek**

Cindy played an instrumental role in the fundraising efforts, making the dream of a six-court indoor facility come to life in Sioux Falls. She serves as Chair of the Board at Huether Family Match Pointe, and this past year volunteered her time and treasure to help bring the first-ever USTA National Level 3 Junior Tournament to Sioux Falls in January. She has served as Executive Director of the Sioux Falls Tennis Association, and along with her husband, **Mike**, has given and so much to tennis in Sioux Falls."



**Nancy Lawrence**

**Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center**

**Nominator: Judy Long**

"Nancy has been a volunteer with the Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center's free after-school program since 2005. She has come two, and sometimes, three times a week to work with students

both on and off the court. She takes a personal interest in ALL of her students, wanting them all to have the benefit of a dedicated mentor whether teaching a forehand volley, how to deal with bullying incidents or just being comfortable with who they are."



**Don Schaack**

**Valley City, N.D.**

**Nominator: Matthew Nielson**

"Don has been a volunteer varsity assistant coach for the Valley City Hi-Liners for 17 years. He develops meaningful relationships with the athletes that help them grow as tennis players and as people. He designed, and was the lead builder of, our tennis shed that we use daily. Don is a pillar of Valley City tennis as a volunteer."



**JD Stephenson**

**Bismarck, N.D.**

**Nominator: Kevin Allan**

"JD is a very active individual on the local tennis scene. JD has volunteered his time and served on the Bismarck-Mandan Tennis Association Board of Directors for many years, earning recognition as its Member of the Year. JD is an active player participating in socials, leagues and tournaments. He organizes and runs a weekly doubles league that plays indoors in winter and outdoors in the summer/fall months. JD's biggest contribution to tennis in the Bismarck-Mandan Community was his willingness to serve as tournament director for the Bismarck Open for a period of three years. Additionally, he was a site manager last year. JD continues to exemplify what it means to be a servant leader and put others first when it comes to tennis."

## USTA Northern Needs Volunteers For Many Spring and Summer Events

USTA Northern has many volunteer opportunities for our community outreach events this spring and summer including Girls on the Run (June 3, Minneapolis), Twin Cities PRIDE Festival (June 23-24, Minneapolis), Special Olympic Area Games (August 12, St. Paul), Special Olympic State Games (September 21-23, St. Paul). If you have a few hours to spare, we can use you! Fill out a volunteer form at <https://form.jotform.us/41195613346151> or contact **Sandy Smith** at [ssmith@northern.usta.com](mailto:ssmith@northern.usta.com).

# Community Tennis Updates

## John & Fay Menard YMCA Tennis Center Opens

The city of Eau Claire, Wis., celebrated the Grand Opening of the John & Fay Menard YMCA Tennis Center April 4-8. City dignitaries, USTA Northern Executive Director **Becky Cantellano** and Tennis Service Representative **Mya Smith-Dennis**, USTA Northern board members, patrons of the YMCA and its former tennis center, media and many more from the tennis community attended the weekend's festivities.



The new 50,000-square-foot facility features eight courts and was constructed using a number of local vendors. Eau Claire-based Midwest Manufacturing designed a majority of the materials used to build the center. That includes concrete, trusses, lumber and steel products. Eau Claire-based Dell Construction also had a hand in the construction as the designer and general contractor. The Menard family, founder of the third-largest home improvement company in the United States, provided the money for constructing the building at a cost of just more than \$10 million.

In addition to the ribbon cutting, the Center hosted a high school

tennis tournament, Cardio Tennis clinics, a doubles mixer with former French Open Doubles Champion **Luke Jensen**, a gala and more during the weekend.



## Song Thao Hired As New E.D. of St. Paul Urban Tennis



Congratulations to **Song Thao** who was named the new Executive Director of St. Paul Urban Tennis in St. Paul, Minn. A former player in the St. Paul Urban program and a graduate of Harding High School and Gustavus Adolphus College, Thao served as the Education and Outreach Director for InnerCity Tennis in Minneapolis and was the training manager for the Hmong American Partnership prior to coming to

SPUT. He will start his new job in mid-April.

"Song has the perfect combination of experience, a passion for kids and their growth through the sport and a commitment to SPUT's vision of becoming one of St. Paul's premier youth development organizations." **Emily Blodgett**, SPUT Board Member and

Search Committee Chair, said. "If we want to embrace SPUT's tagline of Launching Leaders, who better to lead us than a leader that SPUT has launched?"

## Will Prest New Chair of ICT Board of Directors

**Will Prest** is the new Chair of InnerCity Tennis' Board of Directors taking over for **Bob Oberrender**, who served in the role the past nine years. Prest has been a member of ICT's Board of Directors since 2011, including two years as Vice Chair from 2016-17 and four years leading the Program Committee. He has also been on the Board of Governors, as well as the Revenue & Development and Investments and Benefits Committees for The International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, R.I. since 2008.

## InnerCity Tennis, Fred Wells Named 4-Star NJTL Chapters

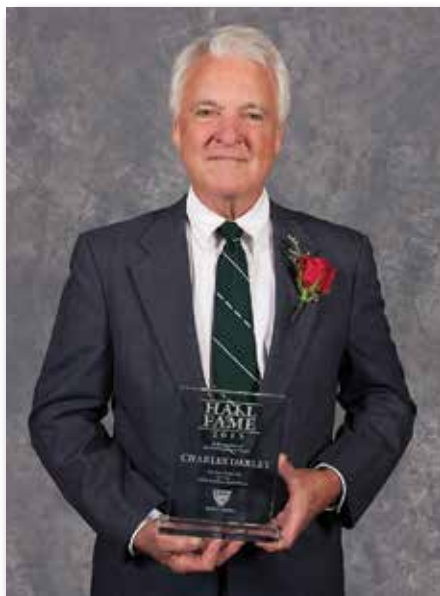
The USTA Foundation has once again recognized **InnerCity Tennis** and **Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center** as 4-Star NJTL chapters, the highest star rating an NJTL can achieve. The USTA NJTL network

includes more than 350 nonprofit youth development organizations and provides no-charge or low-cost tennis and education programming to under-resourced youth across the country. Criteria for the 4-Star designation include:

- 30+ weeks of tennis programming
- 30+ weeks of educational programming
- Serving 70%+ NJTL youth who qualify for free/reduced lunch through our no-charge programming
- 75%+ USPTA/PTR certified coaches

## Carissa Dice Named New Sioux Falls Tennis Association President

The Sioux Falls Tennis Association has named **Carissa Dice** as its next President. Formerly serving as Treasurer of the Board, Dice took over as President this year and has already recruited five new Board members and secured a new sponsor for the South Dakota Open, increasing the prize money to \$10,000 this year.



## Dr. Charles Darley Named Director of Tennis for Cook County Tennis Association

USTA Northern Hall of Famer **Dr. Charles Darley** has been hired as the new Director of Tennis Instruction for the Cook County Tennis Association. Darley was named to the USTA Northern Section Hall of Fame in 2013. He is also a member of the State of Iowa Tennis Hall of Fame and the Roches-

ter, Minn. Athletics Hall of Fame. From 2002-04 he was the director and head coach of the North Shore Tennis Camp in Grand Marais, Minn. under the auspices of the CCTA.

As a player, Darley compiled a high school record of 72-0 at Rochester John Marshall, and is one of only three players to win three Minnesota High School Boys Singles Championships. He played college tennis at the University of California, Berkeley where he was a two-time All-American and three-time Northern California Intercollegiate singles and two-time doubles champion. In 1967, he was ranked #20 in the U.S. in singles and #5 in doubles.

"We are thrilled to have Charley leading our tennis programs and instruction," said **William Hennessy**, President of CCTA. "The appointment of Charley represents a renewed commitment to promoting and teaching the game of tennis in the Cook County community."

## May is Play Tennis Month

Tennis providers – celebrate Play Tennis Month in May by registering your FREE event at [www.rallytheindustry.org](http://www.rallytheindustry.org).

## SE Minnesota Tennis Association Donates \$1,000 To Kutzky Park Fundraiser

Thank you to the **SE Minnesota Tennis Association** who donated \$1,000 to the "Raise The Net for Kutzky Park Tennis" campaign in Rochester, Minn. The \$1.2 million fundraising effort aims to revitalize and modernize the Rochester Tennis Center and Kutzky Park so that it can serve the community and Southern Minnesota for decades to come. Included is complete resurfacing of all 15 courts, expanding and remodeling the clubhouse and upgrading the parking lot and club entrance all before the Kutzky Park 100-year anniversary celebration in 2020. Thus far, \$210,000 of \$450,000 has been raised. To donate, visit <http://www.rochesterarea.org/give.php>.



## Milbank, S.D., Received \$10,000 Facilities Grant

The City of Milbank, S.D., received a \$10,000 Public Facilities Funding Grant from USTA Northern to refurbish the courts at Milbank High School.

## Next Community Tennis Grant Deadline Is September 1

USTA Northern's mission is to promote and develop the growth of tennis. We measure success through participation, retention, customer service/partnerships, diversity, membership and awareness and offer support to tennis providers in helping us in these effort through Community Tennis Grants. There are two types available:

**Project/Program Support** - Funds for a specific program or project promoting the growth and development of tennis. Funding priorities include:

- Youth Tennis Programming (focus on entry level tournaments/play events and after-school programming)
- Green Dot Tennis Balls for Middle School and JV programs
- Adult Recreational Programming
- Family Tennis Programming
- Inclusion of Racially and Culturally Diverse Populations

**CTA Capacity Building** - Funds available for Community Tennis Associations to improve organizational effectiveness and performance through sound management, board development and a persistent rededication to achieving results. Requests might include funding for starting or restructuring a CTA/NJTL Chapter, training and education of staff/volunteers, Website development, developing strategic partnerships, etc.

The next Community Tennis Grant deadline is September 1. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/2lglGn1> or contact **Mya Smith-Dennis** at [mya@northern.usta.com](mailto:mya@northern.usta.com).



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**Putting a new spin on  
how kids learn tennis**

Life Time's SMART program is laser-focused on your child's long-term athletic and tennis development. We have scaled kids' tennis down to size, making learning more fun and easier for all kids ages 4 to 17.

Learning starts with a smaller court size, appropriately sized racquets and a progressive ball-sizing system.

**To learn more about junior tennis programs, ask at your nearest Life Time.**

