

ADDvantage

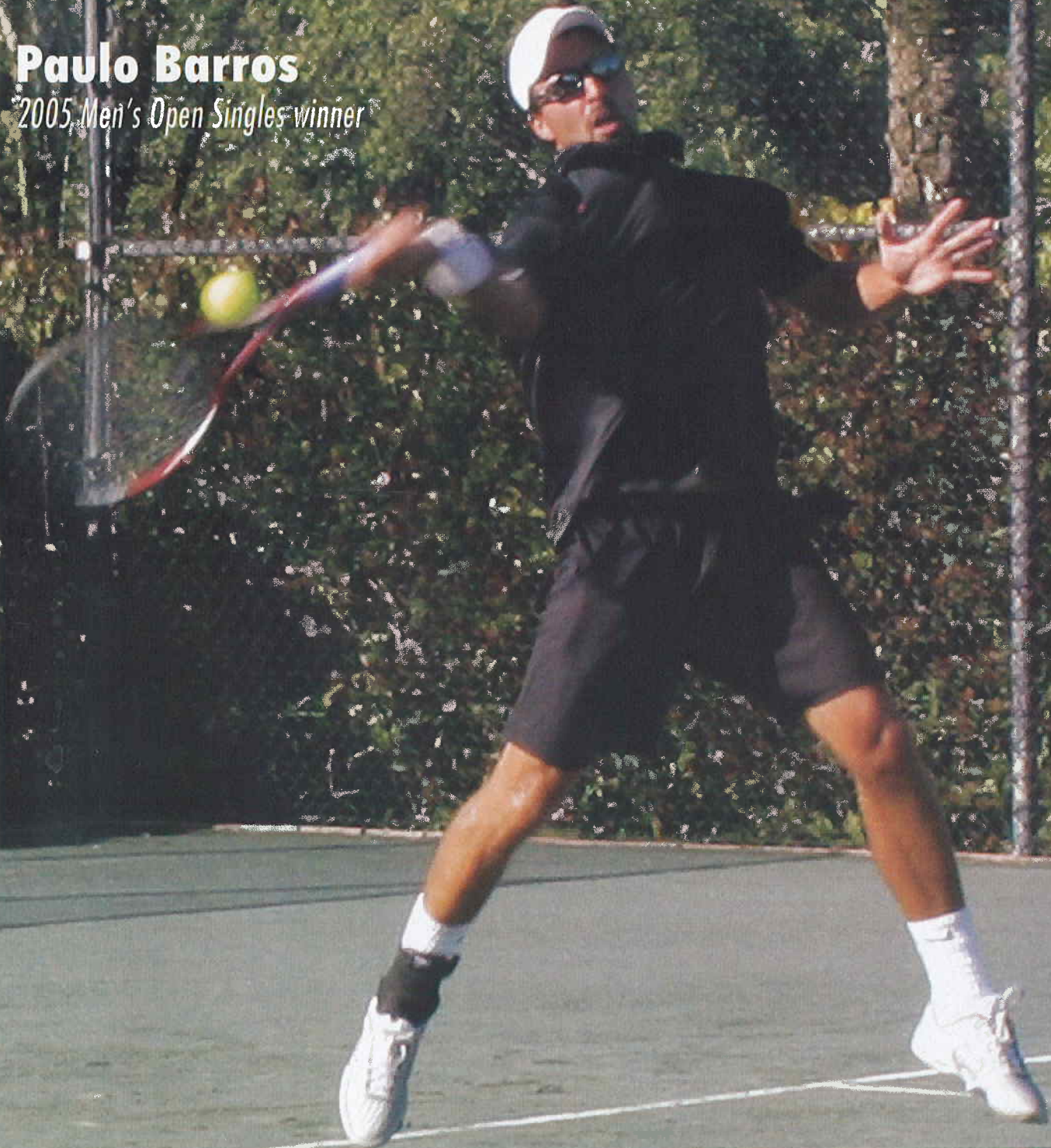
the magazine for men and women tennis-teaching professionals



December 2005

Paulo Barros

2005 Men's Open Singles winner



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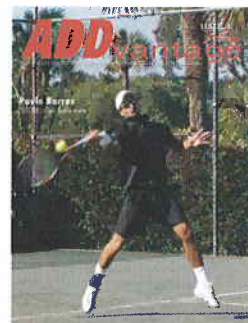
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On the cover ... Paulo Barros - 2005 USPTA International Championships men's open winner.

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USPTA welcomes new members

Congratulations to the following new USPTA members who fulfilled requirements between July 1 and October 31.

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CEO's message

USPTA continues to set standard of certification for tennis teachers, coaches

It is disquieting to occasionally hear that foreign organizations such as the International Tennis Federation, or part of its coaching education department, have the false impression that the total education requirement to become a USPTA-certified Professional is only six hours. This information is articulated by ITF to highlight by comparison its requirement of between 59 and 79 hours of education for its own coaching certifications and perhaps to lend justification to its takeover of worldwide coaching and certification.

Over the years, USPTA has largely ignored the ITF, not putting much store in its periodic, worldwide efforts to take control of tennis-coaching standards. As you know, we have always dealt directly, and somewhat indignantly, with situations in which USPTA is challenged as the world's foremost tennis-coaching certification body.

After careful consideration, I realize the ITF must be drawing its incorrect impression about our education requirements from the review course that USPTA delivers prior to each test. USPTA calls this six-hour review for an exam a "Certification Training Course." The "T" in the CTC is a misnomer. It might more accurately be called a "Certification Review Course," since its only purpose is to review extensive pre-certification highlights from countless prerequisites expected of applicants prior to our exam. It was not meant to include an entire curriculum on how to teach tennis. The course is six hours long because that is how long it takes our testers to offer an orientation or review the guidelines for numerous parts of the Certification Exam that applicants take over two days. It certainly takes applicants much longer – far more than the ITF's 79 hours – to attain the standards required to pass USPTA's Certification Exam.

Anyone or any organization that claims a certification process should be 80 hours or 80 weeks to be legitimate is relying on an arbitrary number. It would be ludicrous to pretend any group could impart all the knowledge necessary to obtain a certification, since we are all students of the game and will remain so ad infinitum. The best we can hope for is to evaluate

and recognize the baseline level of knowledge and then create education resources and programs that will satisfy even the most insatiable appetite for knowledge.

In fact, no amount of reading, classroom or on-court instruction can totally prepare a tennis professional to do his or her job. USPTA's experience requirement for membership applicants is important because it's the combination of education and experience that gives anyone in any profession the skill and knowledge to see various problems and the confidence to offer a diagnosis and cure for those problems. USPTA agrees that a certain amount of formal education is important to all teachers, and so we provide a huge resource library and many avenues through which members may develop their knowledge and skill, and then practice their craft.

What is lost to those who do not look past the highlighted points of our certification brochure is that a professional must have three years of full-time teaching experience before he or she can even attempt to test in at the Professional 1 level. Do the critics ever wonder how many "hours" of on-the-job training and education under an experienced USPTA member three years might include? Added together, the pre-certification education required by a USPTA Professional is far more extensive than that required by any nation in the world for a coaching certification.

The fact is USPTA has no rivals that can match its education offerings. Its 17 divisions and our World Headquarters conduct Certification Training (Review) Courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and specialty courses throughout the year in cities and states throughout the country. These events total hundreds of days of education each year, and these include only those events done live and in person with speakers who are experts in their fields. In addition to on-court and classroom education, USPTA offers the industry's most extensive library of educational DVDs, and we are adding more than 25 new titles every year from our instructional TV series, the annual World Conference and other educational activities. USPTA's educational



Tim Heckler

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