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On the cover … Federer wins his fifth U.S. Open title. Photo by Harvey Rubin, USPTA

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- The Oaks at Boca Raton, Boca Raton, Fla.
- USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadows, N.Y.
- Tennis Center at College Park, College Park, Md.
- San Francisco Tennis Club, San Francisco

If you are interested in applying, please visit www.uspta.com, click on “How to Join,” then “Regional Testing Center.”
Industry cooperation is key to speedy success of blended programs

I’ve just returned from the USTA annual meeting in New York, and I was interested to learn that the QuickStart Tennis Play Format has jumped to USTA’s No. 1 priority on its list of programs. During the meeting, QuickStart Tennis was the main topic in speeches by USTA President Jane Brown Grimes, Executive Director Gordon Smith and Chief Executive of Community Tennis Kurt Kamperman.

The fact that QuickStart was the main topic of conversation was exciting from the standpoint of the promotion of graduated tennis equipment and courts and the potential to target American youth at an early age. This is something USPTA agrees with wholeheartedly — so much so that 14 years ago this month USPTA introduced its flagship program for teaching children 10 and under — Little Tennis®, which incorporated low-compression balls and graduated equipment and courts. What is a little disappointing is that the broader industry did not recognize the need to support the development of America’s future tennis players or the value of Little Tennis. With the right industry support, the program would have given us a 14-year head start on developing more players and future American champions.

After USPTA’s initial introduction of Little Tennis, we followed it with an extensive three-ring manual and a companion Web site at littletennis.com. Everything in the teaching program, including the detailed lesson plans and activities in the manual and on the Web site, focused on graduated equipment and tennis courts. In fact, the courts recommended 14 years ago were the same 36-foot courts being recommended today.

This being said, there have been some questions about USPTA’s position on QuickStart Tennis Play Format as it relates to our own Little Tennis teaching program. Specifically, we’ve been asked if we support QuickStart and the answer is definitely “Yes.” In fact, this is probably a great time to set the record straight on why and how we’ve supported QuickStart as a play format for young children, especially since it is another tool to draw young people to tennis and contributes to their long-term development and involvement in the game.

Little Tennis has been the umbrella program for not only its own event, but for all other graduated teaching programs that our members or nonmembers wish to use. QuickStart Tennis Play Format was initially introduced in a meeting attended by then-USPTA President Ron Woods and me, as a series of well-organized tournaments, junior team tennis and events for children 10 and under. We agreed with USTA that it would simply be another way of promoting play and competition with graduated equipment since it was nothing new from a teaching standpoint. We also agreed that any programs that targeted young children and the use of graduated equipment and preparation for future tournament play, including Little Tennis, PTR’s Munchkin Tennis, Joe Pro Teeni Tennis, or any other programs, would be encouraged to use the graduated specifications of QuickStart Tennis Play Format.

During the same meeting with USTA, one of the main points we discussed and agreed on was that QuickStart would not be introduced as a teaching program, and especially not one that forced people to play with certain graduated equipment based on chronological age versus ability. USPTA does not believe in, nor will it adhere to, chronological age mandates and neither will the American public.

In the meantime, some people involved in USTA’s QuickStart development and introduction have a personal desire to tie graduated equipment and court sizes to specific ages for the purpose of teaching children. This means that the racquet sizes, types of balls and size of the courts used to teach children are based on chronological age alone, which is similar to the teaching systems used in England.

continued next page
and some other countries.

This type of training technique has not been used extensively or supported in the United States and it’s something with which the USPTA Education Committee disagrees since it believes that the skill levels of children and their physical strength and size should determine whether they learn and play with graduated equipment at a particular level or be allowed to play with full-size equipment and on full-size courts. The committee also believes that this is something on which American kids and their parents will insist.

As tennis teachers we often see 10-year-olds who are perfectly capable of beating 12- and 13-year-olds, and most teachers don’t believe in relegating the play of these talented children to 60-foot courts or smaller racquets. This subject is something USPTA debated with and convinced USTA officials to avoid in its rollout of QuickStart Tennis Play Format.

As a result, USPTA agreed to support QuickStart as a play format and promote the format through our vast network of other groups (and/or individuals in tennis) and promote QuickStart for its graduated courts and equipment through a series of tournaments.

USPTA helped promote QuickStart Tennis Play Format in many ways, including division e-blasts, brochures and promotions in division newsletters. As far as USPTA is concerned, we have always supported the initiative to promote a play format that would get more kids playing tennis, and we believe we have the complete support and understanding of the directors of USTA as to our respective positions on this program and its place within a comprehensive teaching program.

USPTA has developed many great programs over the years — like Little Tennis — and, more recently, a few others we sincerely believe can boost our entire industry’s efforts to target specific playing markets and grow tennis at a much faster rate.

USPTA has developed many great programs over the years — like Little Tennis — and, more recently, a few others we sincerely believe can boost our entire industry’s efforts to target specific playing markets and grow tennis at a much faster rate.

I hope to meet with USTA to explain our newest initiatives, including our High School Coaches Resource Center, our new Parent-Coach program and several other projects that target specific markets and address player development. We hope that by sharing our ideas now, we will encourage more cooperation among tennis organizations for the greater good of our industry and, as a result, more tennis participation overall. ✴

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Focus on player development key to American revival

I recently went to the Bank of the West tournament in Stanford, Calif., to watch the professional women play. The day was great with a variety of interesting matches and high-quality tennis. The next day I was back at work and talking with our members about the event when I realized something important: I didn’t see one American player over the long day of matches. I have been going to professional tennis tournaments for a long time and can’t remember a day in the early part of an event played in the United States that I didn’t see an American compete.

Serena Williams did play in the tournament and made the semifinals, but she wasn’t scheduled that day. The interesting part was looking over to the practice courts and seeing no American women out there. There were balls being hit and coaches talking to their players, but not in the English language. Conversations from a wide variety of non-English speaking countries filled the air on the Stanford University campus that day.

All of us have heard the concerns about the future of our leading men and women on the pro tour. That day at Stanford has motivated me to help get our better American players back on top. I know most USPTA Professionals are very busy with the responsibilities of their jobs and, typically, advanced junior player development isn’t high on the list or even a part of their job description. Now is the time, however, for us to become more interested and involved in how to get our players back to elite status. A lot of our pros are content in their job environment and do not want to work the long, hard hours and take the travel time to help develop the elite junior. It’s time for us as pros to make the commitment in all areas, including becoming better educated in player development. Teaching professionals need a road path for success in helping players jump to the next level. I’d like to point out some resources to help develop great juniors.

No. 1: The USTA has an excellent course administered by its USA Tennis Coaching Education Department that allows you to complete the USA High Performance Coaching Program. This same program also gives you a USPTA Specialist Degree in Competitive Player Development. You do need a Professional 1 rating to be eligible to take the course. Hopefully, the USTA High Performance Development and our USPTA Player Development Advisory Council can work together to help offer other avenues for our pros to use.

We have a fantastic USPTA Player Development Advisory Council made up of Nick Bollettieri, Rick Macci, Paul Roetert, Zina Garrison, Emilio Sanchez, Tim Hecker, David T. Porter, Ed.D., Jim Loehr, Ed.D., and Jack Groppel, Ph.D. – all of whom advance the USPTA Player Development Program. Hopefully, these high-profile coaches get the opportunity to help American tennis get back to the top.

No. 2: The USPTA provides a tremendous lineup of educational venues throughout the year. The World Conference this year in La Quinta, held from September 15–20, offered a wide variety of seminars and specialty courses with some of the best player development coaches in the country. Divisional and regional conferences will also have some presentations on the elite player.

No. 3: The USPTA also introduces and explains the numerous components of its layered Player Development Program in a series of special inserts that appear in ADDvantage magazine. This program has loads of great information from our top player development professionals. Every insert lists additional resources that are available from USPTA’s extensive educational DVD library. These resources are great educational tools for you to use.

No. 4: The USPTA Pro Shop (uspoteninisshop.com) has tons of educational resources on player development. There is also the World Conference series of DVDs by the best speakers from the past few years. Contact dent received a page.
national conventions. It is an amazing set of educational DVDs. There are also the World Conference audio recordings from all of the conference seminars from 2005-07 to choose from as well as other top professional seminars that USPTA has recorded over the years. Also, there are the 2005 USPTA Competitive Player Development Conference Series DVDs and all the different “On Court with USPTA” shows on the Tennis Channel. The USPTA Pro Shop also offers a wide variety of excellent books concerning player development. This should be the first site you check when looking to add to your tennis educational library.

**No. 5:** John Yandle’s TennisPlayer.net is a fantastic USPTA member benefit and educational source to utilize. The site has a great section on player development with some of the leading figures in the country providing insight. There are other sections and articles that make this site one to occupy you for days.

In closing, we are all very busy yet passionate about the game of tennis. The game is played at a very high level worldwide with an abundance of new talent coming in from around the globe. A key fact is that there are probably more certified tennis professionals in this country than any other country in the world. Please, let’s not have our pro events staged in this great country by foreign players and coaches without proportional representation from the United States. Now is the time to use the vast expertise of thousands of USPTA pros to keep American players at the top.

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Let’s practice what we preach: Tennis and kids are a perfect match

Question: We spend a lot of time with player development, especially with junior players. However, in light of USPTA’s new call to action (as Tim Heckler so aptly put it in last month’s ADDvantage), Tennis — for the health of it!, could you use your column to discuss how we might better attract non-tennis players, youth and teens to the game?

Answer: Attracting young non-players to the game of tennis is a big issue for our trade association of tennis-teaching professionals! And, since each of you has the opportunity to be an ambassador in your community, we do need to help you understand how you can grow your business, grow the game of tennis and build healthy, long-lasting relationships in your community.

I believe we have to start this discussion by recognizing the values of young people in general, and specifically of young children, youth and teens. Children have one common value system and that is to have fun. USPTA’s Little Tennis® offers a tremendous mechanism to introduce children to tennis. And, then, combining the capacity of Little Tennis with the QuickStart Tennis Play Format, you have a winning combination to create tremendous fun for children.

The value system changes a little for pre-teens and teens. Fun still ranks very high but now you have to add friends to the mix. If you can offer a drill group, group lessons, Cardio Tennis, all the way to Junior Circuits™ at your facility, the pre-teens and teens can realize that they can have fun with their friends and enjoy a great game at the same time. But, just having this infrastructure isn’t enough. We need to learn more about what matters to these different youth groups and how we can attract them to our game and to our facilities.

With that in mind, I asked three experts in the field of junior development — and who have contact with young people and their parents almost every day — three very pertinent questions as I attempted to answer your question. I asked these questions of Paul Roettger, Ph.D., managing director of player development for USTA and a fellow in the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), Mark Kovacs, Ph.D., manager of sport science for USTA, and Mike Bergeron, Ph.D., director of the National Institute for Youth Sports & Health and also a fellow in ACSM.

I began by asking this question of each expert: What are some of the challenges you see in getting youth connected to tennis?

Mike Bergeron felt that “of youth who participate in sports through school or their community, more than half reportedly drop out by the age of 12, due to negative experiences such as ‘not having fun’ or too much pressure.” The key is to get each child excited about tennis participation, and to ensure that the learning experience and

Combining the capacity of Little Tennis with the QuickStart Play Format, you have a winning combination to create tremendous fun for children. Photo by Harvey Rubin, USPTA.

Jack Groppel, Ph.D., USPTA Master Professional, is co-founder of the Human Performance Institute. He is the author of The Corporate Athlete and co-author of World Class Tennis Technique. Information can be found at energysforperformance.com.

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Paul Roettet said emphatically that “we need to get kids away from the couch! As tennis-teaching professionals, we have a responsibility to reach out to both young players and their parents. Teaching kids involved in tennis at a young age and providing a positive experience will help introduce them to what is truly the sport for a lifetime. The parents are key in this equation. Many kids get involved in tennis because their parents play. If parents believe that Matt points out a huge idea in this last sentence; that the benefits of learning and playing tennis have to be realized! People need to see, hear and feel that playing tennis will help them improve their health, sociability, grades, work performance, etc. (If you want to learn more about how Tennis – for the health of it! can do all these things, I refer you to the booklet written earlier this year (http://uspta.com/html/HealthBooklet.pdf).

Imagine what would happen in your community if you did one public relations event per quarter ... You have the infrastructure at your disposal and your national headquarters staff is waiting to assist as well.

Mark Kovacs observed that “using tennis as a healthy alternative to watching TV or playing video games should be a major draw for parents. The fact that kids can hit something (the ball) and it is also a competitive endeavor gives tennis a major advantage over traditionally encouraged gym activities such as running, cycling or strength training which most kids do not find enjoyable. It is helpful to educate parents and school administrators about the benefits of tennis compared to other activities. The influence that tennis has on developing a child’s physical capabilities is equal, if not superior to most other forms of exercise.”

Then, I asked the experts the next question: How would you advise that we connect better with parents of young children, pre-teens, and teens?

Mark Kovacs answered that “coaches throughout the country can link with schools, religious institutions, after-school programs and other community organizations to offer tennis as a sport that is not only fun, but can help reverse the national health crisis. Kids who are active throughout their development are less likely to have major health concerns as they age. It is important for all of us to educate parents as to the numerous health and wellness benefits that tennis can bring to the life of their children.” Paul Roettet complemented USPTA by saying that he thinks that the “USPTA has taken a great first step by producing materials supporting the health benefits of tennis.” Paul believes that the next step should be for teaching professionals to learn more about the use of this material to market the sport better. Some examples include connecting with local physicians, health clubs and other organizations to reach a wider audience. He noted that it will help your business and get more players involved in our sport.

I asked one more question of Mike Bergeron, requesting that he speak to his thoughts about how tennis could help with one’s general overall improvement (e.g., grades in school, sociability, etc.). Specifically, I asked how he would advise that USPTA connect better with parents of young children, pre-teens, and teens. This is his response:

“The USPTA, in partnership with other tennis and professional organizations, should develop opportunities to research and promote how appropriate youth tennis development programs can foster physical development and health, academic achievement, sportsmanship, and life skills. Notably, parents also need to see evidence that teaching professionals are sufficiently
trained in youth development through tennis.”

So, what do you need to do? Get started and get involved. Let me share with you some of the things we have been hearing about regarding community public relations efforts.

USPTA Midwest conducted a clinic in Cincinnati in conjunction with the ATP event in July and the Society for Tennis Medicine and Science. Fred Burdick led a community clinic in Atlanta for *Tennis – for the health of it*! and the new president of ACSM attended. The mayor of Oklahoma City, Mick Cornett (See ADvantage, August 2008), claims that tennis is the activity that enabled him to lose weight and then became involved in a Tennis Across America event.

USPTA New England conducted *Tennis – for the health of it!* programs with the Boston Lobsters of World Team Tennis and during the Pilot Penn.

Although some of these events weren’t really junior related, they serve as examples that there are ways to build tennis in your community. Please be sure to visit uspta.com, and click on all the public relations tools to help you get started. Your national office staff is waiting to help you as well.

The key is to GET STARTED! Imagine what would happen in your community if you did one public relations event per quarter. I am not talking about big extravaganzas either. You could speak for a Rotary program, a church youth group, a high school assembly, a Parent Teacher Organization meeting, in addition to running a Tennis Across America clinic. You have the infrastructure at your disposal and your national headquarters staff is waiting to assist as well. Good luck!

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**Act now for this informative and entertaining tennis event!**
**Musical groundies**

*Prepared by Dave Gary, USPTA; “Tennis Drills” book*

**Type:** Doubles, singles  
**Category:** Warm-up & stretching  
**Levels:** All  
**Suggested time:** 10 minutes

**Description and goals:**
This drill teaches students to focus in the warm-up when there are more than four students to a court.

**Organization:**
With five or more students, have four students rallying one on one down the line and have the remaining players jogging around the court. The pro sets the rules for unacceptable errors, so be reasonable. If a student makes an error during the rally, he begins jogging. The student who is already jogging comes into the spot vacated.

**Key points:**
Drill can be done on multiple courts at the same time.

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**Two on two approach**

*Prepared by Dave Gary, USPTA; “Tennis Drills” book*

**Type:** Doubles, singles  
**Category:** Doubles  
**Levels:** Intermediate/advanced  
**Suggested time:** 15 minutes

**Description and goals:**
A fast-paced doubles drill that works on coming to the net, volleys, overheads and defensive situations.

**Organization:**
Players A and B start on the baseline as the challengers. Players C and D start on the other baseline. Extra players line up behind A and B. Pro feeds approach shot to A and B, they hit an approach, come to the net and play out the point. Win or lose, the challengers rotate out to the end of the line. Pro feeds to the next team. Any team needs a total of 3 points to change sides.

**Key points:**
Make sure players are moving together. Making a split step at the appropriate time is key. Finally, make sure players understand how the direction and quality of their shots determines their positioning.

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**Ball recognition**

*Prepared by Dave Gary, USPTA; “Tennis Drills” book*

**Type:** Singles  
**Category:** Groundstrokes, other  
**Levels:** Intermediate/advanced  
**Suggested time:** 15 minutes

**Description and goals:**
This drill works on students’ ability to read the feed coming and choose the right shot to start the point.

**Organization:**
Players start at the center mark on the baseline. Pro feeds a ball to either forehand or backhand, anywhere, with an offensive or defensive ball. Player needs to recognize the type of shot coming, react appropriately and play out the point. Challengers need a total of 3 points to change sides. Extra players on deck.

**Key points:**
Emphasize proper shot selection. Vary your feeds. Feeds could include short balls for an approach-shot focus. Could be played as a team game.
21 serve game

Type: Singles
Levels: All
Category: Serve
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Description and goals:
This is a serve drill that rewards players for accuracy of the serve while playing out points.

Organization:
Pro sections off areas in the service box. Ten points for the smallest, 5 for medium-sized area, and 1 point for the largest. Extra players on deck behind server. Server tries to get a total of 21 points to change sides. If server wins the point, he gets the number of points for the area he served the ball into. An ace is an automatic change.

Key points:
This can be a multiple player/court game. Change target sides for a different focus. Players could keep their points or go back to zero on a change. This could be used as a team singles game instead of the 3 points to change. Make easier by making targets larger or more difficult by changing rules.

Team singles

Type: Singles
Levels: Intermediate/advanced
Category: Return of serve, serve
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Description and goals:
Team serve game. Practicing serves and returns

Organization:
This is a multiple court/player game. For example, three courts, 12 players, three teams of four. One team is returning, the other teams are serving. Each player on the serving team tries to win 3 points. When it does so, the team changes sides with the returning team. The other teams go back to zero. Court 1 returns from the deuce side, court 2 from the ad side, court 3 deuce side.

Key points:
Set up criteria for return team to switch to involve the fourth player. Variations include serve and volley, one serve only, or serve combinations.

Track down the lob

Type: Singles
Levels: Intermediate/advanced
Category: Groundstrokes, shot selection
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Description and goals:
Players learn how to track the lob and decide the type of shot they can hit.

Organization:
Player A starts at the net. Player B by the net post. Extra players on deck behind B. Pro feeds lob over player B. Player B tracks down the lob on the forehand side (right-handed player) and plays out the point. Player A needs to anticipate the type of shot that Player B will hit. Challengers (tracking down the lob) need 3 points to switch sides.

Key points:
Have player B get beyond the ball to enable more options on the type of shot she can hit off the lob. Variations: Have players track down the lob on the backhand side. Have champion start at baseline and move forward when lob goes over challenger’s head. Have challengers start at the net strap and give them the option to hit the overhead if they can reach it.
Personal Web site tips and tricks

Resize and refresh. After resizing images, click the Publish changes button. Then, refresh your browser, either by clicking the refresh button, or by right-mouse clicking on the page somewhere other than a picture and clicking Refresh.

Get your site noticed. Put links on your site to your club, other tennis sites, or your tennis YouTube videos, and get others to link to your site. Then submit your site address to Yahoo, Google and other search engines.

• Yahoo. Go to yahoo.com and scroll to the bottom of the page. Click “Suggest a site.” When the page opens, click on “Submit your site for free.”

• Google. Go to google.com and click on About Google. In the “For site owner” section, click Submit your content to Google. Click on Add your URL to Google.

Use tables. When listing information in several columns, use tables instead of multiple spaces. It will look much cleaner with everything lined up properly. For detailed information on how to use tables with the Web page editor, click on Edit help in your menu, then click on the “How to build tables link” at the top of the page.

If you already have a table on your site, but can’t see the lines, click the Show table button. Also, if you are having trouble selecting or moving something, click the Show table button. There might be a table there you forgot about.

Working with Word. Microsoft Word is great for typing up your personal and facility information because you can spell and grammar check it. However, wait until you are in the Web page editor to do any formatting (font sizes, colors, bold, italics, etc.). Word unfortunately adds a lot of unnecessary code that, when pasted into the page editor, can cause problems for your site. Also, make your tables with the page editor tools on your Web site.

Log off. If you have to leave your computer while working on your site, be sure to log off. If you do not, the next time you come back, your computer may think you are still logged on, but the Web site thinks you are not. If this happens and you can’t edit your site, delete your cookies. In Internet Explorer, go to Tools/Internet options. On the General tab, go to Browsing history and click Delete. Go to the section called Cookie and click Delete cookies. Click Yes when it asks, “Are you sure you want to delete all cookies in the Temporary Internet Files folder?” Click Yes, Close and OK, then close your browser. Open a new browser and you should be able to log in and edit.

Facility and contact me pages. The phone and fax numbers, company name and address that you have on your facility page also appear on your contact me page. In addition, the phone and fax number fields will take only the standard number of digits, so if you use more numbers or type in words, they will not appear correctly. Special hint: If you would like a cell phone number listed on your contact me page, send it to uspta@uspta.org with your name and member number.

Automatic updates. Several components of your personal Web site are automatically updated during the weekly database upload. These include your business phone and e-mail address. In addition, if you change your first name (e.g., Thomas to Tom) or upgrade your certification rating, these are also updated on your site. Furthermore, if you update your e-mail address, first name or business phone on your Web site, that new information is updated in the database and in Find-a-Pro.

Drop the Ws. It is not necessary to use the “www” in your personal Web site address. In fact, in order to log into Tennisplayer.net, you should not use it, as the system does not recognize it as part of a legitimate USPTA personal Web site address.

Be very careful. If professional Web designers, co-workers or friends help you with your site, be very careful about giving out your USPTA membership number. You should treat it as you would your Social Security number. Not only does it give them access to your Web site, but also your personal data that is accessed through your member profile on uspta.com. If someone is helping you at your computer, you can log in for them. If you have an outside person helping you, ask them to send you Word or HTML files for each page. Then you can just copy and paste into your site.

Images only. The upload fields on your USPTA Web site will only take JPG and .GIF images. If you try to upload anything else, it will not display. Also, the only way you can add pictures to your site is by using an image upload field, either on your About me, Facility or Upload pictures page.

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Cardio Tennis with a twist
Seven steps to invigorate your class

by Ken DeHart, USPTA Master Professional
and member of the National Cardio Tennis Speakers Team

One of the advantages, aside from the fun factor that a Cardio Tennis class has over group fitness activities, like spinning and yoga, is its ability to continuously reinvent itself. Cardio Tennis allows for flexibility in the core curriculum and the thousands of drills that can be used.

Here are some ways to add a twist to your class while creating a guided-discovery learning experience at the same time. Players will learn and improve through Cardio Tennis with little to no formal instruction through:

- Repetition
- Demonstration
- Visualization
- Shadowing
- Hitting lots of balls while moving
- Guided discovery
- Learning to adjust through positioning

**Targets** — As you set up your groundstroke cardio drill, have the players aim to one of the four squares on the opposite court. The deuce service court is square No. 1, the square behind the deuce service court is square No. 2, the square behind the ad service court is square No. 3, and the ad service court is square No. 4. You might have the first ball go deep to square No. 2 and the second ball short to square No. 4. You can use numbered cones to indicate the four squares.

Using the squares will add a measurable strategy to the students’ shots without affecting the high-energy aerobic flow of the drills. The use of the squares will also provide a measure of control and competition if the players keep score as they direct balls to the targets given by the instructor (two balls to the chosen squares equal 1 point or whatever point value you choose to assign).

If the cardio coach has a student who is always over-hitting, this exercise will discourage over-hitting while encouraging depth and directional control in the true spirit of Cardio Tennis. The students may even change the type of spin they use to direct the ball to the shorter and deeper targets.

**Mean what you say** — When you use volleys in your cardio drills, ask the students to “touch the volley” or “direct the volley” rather than “hit the volley” and you will find they will not swing at the ball but keep a more controlled racquet on the volley. You may continue using the four squares for targets as indicated earlier. This will allow you to introduce depth and direction control and everyone will enjoy more success and get a better workout.

Ask a player to “toss” a forehand or backhand and you will most likely get a topspin shot with an arc and good spin. Ask a player to “hit” a forehand or backhand and you will most likely get a flat shot that is ripped out of control. Use the correct word and be amazed at the results without disrupting the flow of your cardio class.

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12-step program – Ask your students to move their feet and they will give you a blank stare and nod in agreement. Indicate how many steps you want them to take and you can get results.

The pros average 10 to 12 steps between shots and high school or low-level college players average about eight to 10 steps between shots. A 4.5-4.0 player will average about six to eight steps; a 4.0-3.5 player, four to six steps; and a 3.0-2.5 player will average just over two steps between shots.

Ask your students which level of play they would like to achieve and have them move accordingly during and between the drills. We all know that every 12-step program is a self-help program and this one is no exception.

The “power of the circle” and adjusting steps – Have the players start behind a cone on the court for either groundstrokes or volleys. Feed each student a ball (to the right for right-handed players using forehands), have each player move forward beside the cone and, upon contact, direct the ball to one of the four squares. After contact, have the student shuffle past the cone to his or her left and shuffle back behind the cone to get ready for the next ball.

This movement pattern around the cone will allow students to experience the “12-step program” used by high-level players without teaching during the cardio class. Using the cone to manage how fast students return to the hitting position allows them to learn how to stay in motion before, during and after a shot.

Attention to attention – As the students pause to check their heart rate monitors, first ask them, “Are you in the zone?” Then ask them, “On a scale of 1 – 10, how high is your attention or focus level?” If their attention level is 8-10 they are experiencing a “competitive” level of focus. If their attention level is 5-7 they are in a “social” level of focus and may play up and down in their games. If their attention level is 4 and below, they are lucky just to be there. Students can use this in practice and match play to evaluate quickly, following a won or lost point, why they probably missed their shot or for that matter, made their shot.

Topspin and the “other spin” – Vary your drills by designating which kind of spin you want the players to use in the drill. For example, you might have them hitting a topspin forehand to square No. 2 (deep behind the deuce court service box) and underspin forehand to square No. 4 (into the ad court service box) as they move across the court from their ad court to their deuce court.

Without telling them how, you are helping them to experience how to use different spins to put the ball at different depths in the court. You might have them hit a forehand groundstroke from their deuce court deep to square No. 3. You might also feed them a short ball to their ad court and have them use underspin, sending the ball as a backhand approach shot deep to square No. 2 or a dropshot short to square No. 1.

The use of the squares helps to explain direction and depth as well as when and where to use spins.

Here are two examples of how to incorporate the seven steps for a new twist to your Cardio Tennis programs.

You might set up a dead-ball drill with the following instructions: forehand deep to square No. 3, level 3 speed, and backhand deep to square No. 2, level 2 speed, eight steps between shots, four balls each, rotate out to circle the cone and measure your attention level on a scale of 1-10.

A live-ball drill might be set up the following way: Bill and Ken, 20-ball rally, square No. 2 to square No. 2. Ken, level 2 speed with 10 to 12 steps between shots, topspin only. Bill, level 1 speed with eight to 10 steps between shots and underspin only.

When the drill is over or the players stop to check heart rates, ask them to rate their focus or attention level on a scale of 1-10. A self-rating of 8-10 means they are competitive and that will help them stay focused in match play. Because we all know: “Tennis is a very moving experience.”
Past my bedtime

by Bunny Bruning, USPTA

Bunny Bruning, past president of the Missouri Valley Division, recently gave 24 hours of non-stop tennis lessons as part of USPTA’s Lessons for Life™. She raised $3,250 for Rally for the Cure, a program of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure breast cancer foundation. Bruning, who lost her father to cancer 20 years ago, tells the story of her benefit lesson marathon in her own words.

I haven’t stayed up past midnight for several years. Extending my awake time to 24 hours – that happened when I was on a flight overseas and I was seated in the middle row with no air conditioning on board. I had no idea what was really in store for me July 18-19.

Our fearless president, Gary Trost, had been sent an e-mail from the Rally for the Cure people encouraging tennis pros to host an event. Lessons for Life has been my baby in our division so I told Gary that I was all over this. The idea of a multi-hour event had been itching my brain for a long time and I thought I better produce this before I aged one more gray hair. So I decided to host a 24-hour tennis lesson marathon at Wakonda Club in Des Moines, Iowa.

One week out, I had only six hours filled with willing participants. I had suddenly realized that all my tournament kids would be out of town that weekend. I started e-mailing and calling players from the club and the community and faxing the TV stations. It worked. Suddenly I was just a few hours short of being full. The idea was that I had to stay on the court the entire 24 hours minus five minutes per hour for shower or bathroom duties. So even if I had no one booked that hour, I would have my lounge chair if I needed it.

No such luck. Every $100-per-hour slot was filled and it suddenly occurred to me that I really would be staying up around the clock and teaching tennis. Everyone kept asking how I was going to do it. I had no answer – I just had to. In my 30s, I hardly needed sleep. But as I have aged ungracefully, I like at least seven to eight hours per night.

I began the journey Friday, July 18, at 9 a.m. We endured a couple of hours of light rain but were not deterred. Pictures were taken hourly. People brought food and drinks – I really wasn’t on a deserted island – they were kind. The highlights follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Four ladies from my early teaching days – great kickoff!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Cardio Tennis with disco music – my favorite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>After purchasing his own one-hour lesson, one of my students helped feed balls for a few lessons and assisted in a large group lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Hit me that I was not halfway done. Thank goodness for clay courts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 p.m.</td>
<td>A family brought me a chair massager and a foot bath while I wolves down a sandwich. I had still only spent eight minutes in the pro shop and was banking some time for later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:58 p.m.</td>
<td>I received hugs from two 6-year-old girls – revived!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 p.m.</td>
<td>Taught tapstep to a mom who never could do it before – working miracles!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midnight</td>
<td>Three kids and two parents arrived screaming and hitting balls; the moon is blood orange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 a.m.</td>
<td>My staff and a couple teenagers have too much energy – thought I could take a break but so I had to feed them balls for games. It’s dark this time of night!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 a.m.</td>
<td>Marty and Jeff come in their pajamas. Marty’s mom died from breast cancer. Whisper of sunrise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 a.m.</td>
<td>Don’t remember much – fading. Feel like throwing up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 a.m.</td>
<td>Where’s Wes? By 6:30 a.m. figured he wasn’t coming, took a cat nap for 25 minutes. Bags are eating my face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>Felt alive! Where am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Final lesson with two girls who had been teaching me Rebrows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Done! No fanfare – just more pictures and a latte.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did I feel anything else? I think I was too numb. People kept saying they were proud of me, it was a great event, they saw me on television, etc. I could not feel anything except for some nagging lower back pain. I thought sleep would help. Sunday arrived. I stayed at home. E-mails from people asking how it went; calls from my kids at the tournament. Felt nothing.

Sunday afternoon, sitting outside with my animals, I thought about all my friends and colleagues – and my father – who died from or survived various types of cancer. That’s who I had done this for – they are the heroes – they had to endure the pain, the diagnosis, the treatments, the appointments, and the loss. I just had to last 24 hours. They had lived months, years with a disease, making adjustments to their life and their family and sometimes losing the battle. I started to cry.

Monday: “Are you going to do that again?” My usual semitone answer was “No!”

Tuesday, I printed the pictures and wrote the captions. My two artistic staff members made a storyboard for all to see. Suddenly, my tiredness was gone. Only the smiling faces, the light, the dark, the memories, the friendship of all those people filled me. Tennis brought us together. We did it for them – those who died and lived, and we did it for us – for this moment. We celebrated!

Next year? I think we are going to do a 36-hour tag-team tennis lesson marathon! ☺

Bruning, third from left, raised $3,250 for Lessons for Life with lots of support from friends, club members and lesson takers.

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Rally is a triple header for twin pros: record breaker, fundraiser, tennis promoter

by Jill Phipps, USPTA staff writer

Angelo Rossetti was right on the game plan when he ended the world’s longest tennis rally by watching the battered ball fly by and not moving a muscle.

Angelo’s carefully timed miss, at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, Aug. 10, came well past the point that he and his twin brother, Ettore, set a new Guinness world record for the longest sustained rally.

For a grueling 14 hours and 31 minutes these two members of the United States Professional Tennis Association kept swinging, forehand to forehand, even longer than they needed to because breaking the German-held world record wasn’t enough. They quit the moment they reached their target end time of midnight, and – above all – fulfilled a promise to each other.

In August 2007, Ettore and Angelo Rossetti set a new U.S. record but failed to break the world record when their rally ended with an unreturned shot. Although people have often asked who missed, the identical twins avoid placing the blame on each other and were determined to eliminate the guilt factor from their second attempt.

This year, the brothers had their stroke counters tell them the second they reached a point past midnight that each brother had hit the exact same number of strokes.

At one minute into the new day, Angelo and Ettore had each hit 12,972 strokes, for a total of 25,944. They chalked up 1,248 strokes over the previous world record for the longest sustained rally and lasted four hours longer than their 10-and-a-half-hour effort a year ago.

With willpower and intense training on their side, the twins struck the same Penn 4 tennis ball continuously in play from 9:30 a.m. to midnight without breaks for water, food or the restroom. By the end of the rally, the ball was worn down to its dark brown rubber surface.

In spite of smashing the world record, there was one goal these two fathers of young children did not attain. They wanted to hit 27,000 strokes, symbolic of the number of children under 5 who die every day around the world from treatable or preventable causes.

But they ended their rally on a triumphant note. Shortly after midnight, Angelo said to the supporters gathered at North Haven Heath & Racquet in North Haven, Conn.: “You have given us your shoulders to stand on to reach our dreams,” paraphrasing Andre Agassi’s retirement speech in 2006.

Those dreams included not only breaking the rally record, but also raising awareness and funds for four charities that hold special meaning for them: the ALS Association, Save the Children, Susan G. komen for the Cure and the Tim & Tom Gullikson Foundation.

The effort was to honor Scott B. Wilson, a fellow USPTA Professional, friend and mentor who lost his battle to ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) in 2005, and Tim Gullikson, who died of brain cancer in 1996.

Early in their careers, the brothers worked with Wilson, who was director of tennis at North Haven. Angelo now holds that position at the club, and Ettore is joining him this fall as the assistant director of tennis. Ettore also teaches tennis at Yale University, but his full-time job is as associate director of Internet communication. 

Angelo (left) and Ettore Rossetti proudly accept a Guinness World Records Certificate from Stuart Claxton.
The thrill and the agony: A journey of 25,944 shots

USPTA Professionals Angelo and Ettore Rossetti reflect on their record-breaking, fundraising rally in the following excerpts of conversation.

Angelo:
- It's 10 percent luck, 20 percent skill, 15 percent concentrated power of will, 5 percent pleasure, and 50 percent pain. You put mind over matter by mentally focusing on only one shot at a time.
- One of our keys to success was a training net that helps players hit the ball with a higher trajectory over the net and thus further in the court. It is just as much of a mental challenge as a physical one, if not more so. Doing anything for 15 hours straight is hard to do. We both were physically and mentally training by teaching 12-hour days for more than nine months.
- When putting yourself through 14 hours and 31 minutes of self-torture, so to speak, on the day of the event – never mind the two years to organize and prepare the entire event – any stroke after 24,696 was grueling. The final 1,248 strokes over the record were hit with utter joy.
- Last year I basically collapsed on the court after we hugged and could have slept right on the court for hours since we had done an all-nighter. This year was different for me. I found my 'tennis high' and had about as much energy as Nadal does when he plays. At one point I even said, 'Are there any other records we can beat?' when we were over the record and still rallying.
- Once we stopped on purpose at 12:01 a.m., since we did tell people the event would go through midnight and we had the record well in hand, I gave Ettore a big hug. I just didn't have the energy for our chest bump as well. I was way too excited to feel physical pain at that point.

About half of the fans who were still left when the record was set. Angelo in the middle holding the plaque with Stuart Claxton of Guinness World Records, with Ettore to the right followed by the Rossetti's parents.
I was so very proud of our accomplishment. When you state that you are going to do something of this magnitude and actually accomplish it for the world to watch, it is truly extraordinary — especially when it is ‘on cue.’ We didn’t let down our fans, friends and family and, above all, the people who are affected every day with (breast) cancer, hunger, Lou Gehrig’s disease and brain cancer.

If someone breaks our record I will commit to doing it again. I was concerned about my brother’s health and dehydration at the end so in my mind I have nothing unsettled.

Ettore:

- After letting the ball pass on purpose, we had planned on a chest bump — one of our trademarks along with the Jensen brothers and the Bryan brothers, but we did not have enough energy, so a simple hug had to suffice. I knew I was severely dehydrated from my salty skin and was no longer sweating because I had no more sweat left — a familiar feeling I had experienced the previous month following a USTA 5.5 tennis match when I became ill and could not hold down fluids. It reminded me of the words the late Scott Wilson said during his farewell celebration: ‘I have no more tears left to cry.’ Neither did I.

- I felt exhausted — mentally, physically and emotionally. After the hug, I dropped to my knees and buried my face in my hands, overwhelmed by a confluence of feelings: exhaustion, relief, fatigue, dehydration, hunger, pain, joy and sorrow. In that moment, I thought of my wife Soumia, and my two children, Adam and Jasmine, both under 5 years old — and then began to weep for the children around the world who die every day from preventable or treatable causes before they reach age 5. In the developing world, mothers in many countries do not name their newborns for weeks after birth for fear they will not survive. I thought of those unnamed children. I also thought of the late Scott Wilson and the late Tim Gullickson, our honoraries, and all of the victims and survivors of ALS, brain cancer and breast cancer. I hugged our Dad and gave a thumbs-up to our Mom, who was still loyally watching from the observation window.

- Though we broke the world record, we did not quite reach our goal of 27,000 strokes, so we feel ambivalent. If someone breaks our record, we will likely try again to reclaim it. Since we have attempted it two consecutive years, this leaves some suspense for a possible ‘three-quel.’
Networking for the good of the game

by Terry Killen, USPTA

I am a strong advocate of continuing education and have attended more than 25 national USPTA World Conferences, as well as scores of sectional Mid-Atlantic divisional conferences. Like many pros, I have heard presentations on the advantages of networking in the tennis business. Most of these have focused on promoting personal growth. This article does not deal with networking in that context, however. It is about teaching professionals promoting tennis for the good of our student base and the obligation that all professionals share in giving top U.S. players a chance at competing on the world stage.

Anna’s introduction

I had never heard of Anna Lubinsky until I received a call in early September from one of my closest USPTA friends, Tom Ingram from the Texas Division. I met Tom at a national convention after being introduced to him by his brother John, whom I met at the first national convention I attended in Hawaii in the early 1980s. Over the years, Tom has been a great friend and doubles partner. I stayed with Tom and his family when I attended the Competitive Player Development Conference in Houston in November 2004. Now that I live half the year in Bradenton, Fla., I always invite Tom down to stay with me and play some tennis when I’m in the off season as tennis professional at a swim and tennis club in Potomac, Md.

Tom and I chitchat on occasion so it was not unusual for him to call and check in with me over the course of the summer. During the conversation Tom asked me when I would be in Florida for the winter of 2007. He then asked if I could do both him and his brother a personal favor by providing housing to the daughter of a USPTA pro from Texas who was given an invitation to train at the Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy in Bradenton, Fla., in November and December in an effort to make it on the tour in 2008.

Tom said the young lady’s name was Anna Lubinsky, the daughter of Mary Lubinsky, a USPTA Developmental Coach from the Dallas suburb of Richardson, Texas. I was glad to help out since IMG Academies is only 10 minutes from my winter home and an easy daily commute for Anna. When we ended the conversation Tom said he would have Mary call me with the final details.

Anna’s big break

Since I had heard no more about the request to help Anna, I was surprised to hear from Mary in late October to see if the offer was still good to have her daughter stay with me when she was training. It was during this conversation that Mary informed me that Anna was a May 2007 graduate of Texas A&M University, where she played No. 1 singles, twice made first team All-Big 12 Conference in both singles and doubles and was the ITA Southwest Region Player of the Year in 2007.

Anna had interned at IMG Academies to fulfill an internship requirement for her finance degree between her junior and senior years at A&M. While there she received a 30-minute lesson by USPTA Master Professional Nick Bollettieri.
Although I have never met Nick personally, I have always respected his place in American junior tennis development and have heard him lecture many times at various tennis conferences. He always is sincere in his attempt to promote the game of tennis and help aspiring tennis talent fulfill their potential. It was during this lesson that Nick informed Anna that he saw promise in her tennis skills and offered her a chance to train at IMG Academies after she graduated from college. The only caveat was that she must find her own housing during her stay. Such a generous offer by a tennis legend could not be squandered, and Anna, through the help of her mother Mary and the Ingram brothers, was taking Nick up on his offer.

Although Mary’s only request was that Anna be granted access to a car to help in her commute, it didn’t seem like I was going to be inconvenienced at all. I could tell Mary was somewhat apprehensive about allowing her 23-year-old daughter to stay with a total stranger for nearly a month so far away from home, but I did my best to assure her that I was glad to help out anyone recommended by my friends the Ingram brothers. I gave Mary all the details, and as far as I was concerned the deal was set to begin the last week of November.

I arrived in Bradenton as planned after Thanksgiving and began my winter hiatus. I figured the arrangement was off since I had heard nothing further. I also knew Anna had her grandparents’ home in Tampa as a backup plan, and other than a much longer commute, she might find that scenario more comfortable. I even went to the prestigious ITF Eddie Herr International invitational tennis tournament in early December to see if I might run into Anna by chance and introduce myself to her. As luck would have it, all training during that week was postponed.

On Tuesday of the Eddie Herr tournament I finally heard from Anna, who asked if the offer was still good for her to stay with me. It so happens that she had moved her training site during the Eddie Herr tournament from the IMG Academies to a tennis school at Hillsborough Community College in Tampa under the direction of USPTA Professional Steve Smith. There she was training with Sarah Foster, a college teammate at A&M, until the tournament at IMG ended. Since she had no way to get back to Bradenton other than a Greyhound bus, I agreed to pick her up in Tampa and transport her to Bradenton for her final two weeks of training.

The dedicated professional

Upon her return to the IMG Academies, I began to realize the significant amount of luck, skill, trust and finances it was going to take to complete the tennis journey for Anna Lubinsky. When we stopped to eat on our way back to Bradenton, our conversation led to her personal expectations, and I found Anna to be very realistic regarding her fortunate chain of events. She was appreciative and thankful for all the help she had received along the way, and she was not going to let her one chance slip by without giving it her best effort. She was more mature than any young adult I have been fortunate to meet in a long time.

In her first professional tournament at the Baylor Medical Pro Classic in Fort Worth, Texas, Anna won the sportsmanship award for her skill, class, ability to play fair and win or lose with dignity. During our conversations for two weeks it was always the same with her: “This is my one shot at my dream, and I’m going to do everything possible to leave it all on the court when I’m done.”

The “tweener”

In sports parlance, Anna is a “tweener.” Her parents are middle class and she trained at a public facility, the Fretz Tennis Center, throughout her junior tennis years. Even though she was heavily recruited on a national level by colleges, she was not fortunate enough to train and study in an academy tennis setting. She attended a typical high school and played soccer and basketball in her youth.

It is unfortunate – in the scheme of American tennis – when Anna, a summa cum laude finance graduate who finished in the top 30 in NCAA Division I (ranked as high as 17 in the nation her senior year), is not promoted nor assisted as much as a 16-year-old junior who is fortunate enough to be recruited by a tennis academy or has the financial resources to travel on an international basis with a coach. I always felt that part of my tennis fees paid to the USTA was earmarked for the growth of the game and the good of promising American prospects. But according to Anna, tennis is all about youth, not about late bloomers or collegiate honor students.

A keen perspective/A hopeful outcome

After two weeks of staying with me it was time for Anna to leave for home and spend the Christmas vacation with her family back in the Dallas area. As we drove to the Tampa airport, Anna was happily anticipating seeing her family again and training at home at the T-Bar Ranch Tennis Center, where she works with the youth program in her spare time. We laughed about our time together and smiled at the extraordinary chain of “networking” events that had benefited her cause.

Six USPTA Professionals collaborated in Florida to help Anna make it on the pro tour. All did so to promote the dream of the daughter of a fellow professional. It was somewhat lucky, but mostly it was an unselfish effort to get it done. Had it not been for Nick Bollettieri’s offer, a fortunate conversation with Anna’s mom at a team practice led by John Ingram and attended by his brother Tommy, a phone call from Tommy to me about providing a place to stay in Florida, and Steve Smith giving an alternate practice site, this could not have been done!

Out of the blue, Anna said to me as we stopped to unload her baggage for her flight home, “Tennis makes the world seem small.”

Thank you, fellow USPTA pros, for seeing the big picture here and coming to the aid of Anna Lubinsky. Sometimes in the tennis business we fail to see the importance of reaching out to touch someone in need. We concern ourselves with the monetary outcome instead of the opportunity our positions afford us to help others reach their goals. This situation reminds me of a little didn’t my Dad taught me in my younger years: “It’s nice to be important; but it’s more important to be nice”

I hope Anna makes it in her quest for success in professional tennis. So far, she has won two doubles titles and attained a world ranking of No. 802 in singles and 671 in doubles. Good luck, Anna, and don’t be afraid to reach out for that network again. It’s all for the good of the game.

Terry Killen is a P-1 and a 33-year member of the USPTA. He is a six-time Maryland Pro of the Year, a three-time Washington, D.C., Pro of the Year, former Mid-Atlantic Division Coach of the Year, and an eight-time Mid-Atlantic 45-and-Over Player of the Year. He has coached championship teams on the club, high school, and collegiate levels. Killen also is the proud father of USPTA P-1 Terence R. Killen of Gettysburg, Md.

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Texas’ Fielding and Pennsylvania’s Lai win singles titles at USPTA Grass Court Championships

Trace Fielding of San Antonio earned the men’s open title at the $5,000 United States Professional Tennis Association Grass Court Championships at the Philadelphia Cricket Club in Philadelphia after defeating Henry Walsh of Wichita, Kan., 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-4. Shareen Lai of Morrisville, Pa., earned the women’s open championship title by going undefeated in round-robin play. Lai defeated Marina McCollem of Ames, Iowa, 6-3, 7-6 (4) to be crowned the women’s open champion. Lai later teamed up with Jackie Bohannon of Sarasota, Fla., to also win the women’s open doubles title.

The tournament, which was held from Aug. 22-24, included events in the following categories: men’s and women’s open singles and open doubles competition, and men’s 45 singles and doubles categories. The competition featured many of the top men and women tennis-teaching professionals in the country.

Below is a complete list of all the results from final-round matches:

**Men’s Open Singles Finals** – Trace Fielding, San Antonio, def. Henry Walsh, Wichita, Kan., 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-4

**Men’s 45-and-over Singles Finals** – Geoffrey Martinez, San Rafael, Calif., def. William Pilardi, Pittsburgh, 6-2, 6-3

**Men’s Open Doubles Finals** – Juan Martinez-Arraya, Cos Cob, Conn., and Patricio Misitrano, Norwalk, Conn., def. Paulo Barros, Orlando, Fla., and Jamie Feagan, Clermont, Fla., 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (3)

**Men’s 45-and-over Doubles Finals** – Robert Delgado, Santa Monica, Calif., and William Pilardi, Pittsburgh, def. Christopher Bennett, Marlton, N.J., and Geoffrey Martinez, San Rafael, Calif., 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-4

**Women’s Open Singles Round Robin** – Shareen Lai, Morrisville, Pa., def. Marina McCollem, Ames, Iowa, 6-3, 7-6 (4). Lai def. Jackie Bohannon, Sarasota, Fla., 6-2, 6-0. Lai def. Mary Dailey, Delray Beach, Fla., 6-1, 3-6, 6-0.

**Women’s Open Doubles Finals** – Jackie Bohannon, Sarasota, Fla., and Shareen Lai, Morrisville, Pa., def. Mary Dailey, Delray Beach, Fla., and Marina McCollem, Ames, Iowa, 6-4, 6-3.

Up next as part of the USPTA National Surface Championship Series is the USPTA International Championships from Sept. 15-20 at the La Quinta Resort and Club in La Quinta, Calif., and the USPTA Hard Court Championships, Oct. 24-26, in Tyler, Texas.

The tournaments are open to Professional-level members in good standing. For additional information, please contact the USPTA at 800-USPTA-4U. USPTA Professionals may log in to the “members only” section of the USPTA Web site at uspta.com for more information and an application for tournaments.
Public speaking:
Taking your “game” to the next level

by Hans Römer, USPTA

Your adrenaline is racing, your heart is pounding, your palms are sweating. Butterflies are flying all over the place. You try to focus and relax at the same time, hoping to recall all the important things you practiced. You notice the crowd—the noise, all those faces. You take a deep breath and begin.

Does this sound familiar? Are you down a triple break? Going for your first tournament win? Or serving it out to win the U.S. Open?

No, you are about to give a speech.

If this is you, you are not alone. Millions of people suffer these same symptoms every time they have to speak in public. In fact, the No. 1 fear in the Western world is not spiders, not heights, not even serving at break point—it’s the fear of public speaking. If you search the Internet and type in “number one fear,” the results are overwhelming. How can we learn to overcome this fear, and, perhaps more importantly, learn to be effective communicators in public?

As teaching professionals, we spend much of our time in front of an audience. We are “on stage” every day teaching clinics, running tournaments, and presenting budgets to the tennis committee. A tennis pro is a public speaker. I realized this after seeing Vic Braden in action for the first time. Whether teaching a small group or giving a presentation to a large audience, he presented his vast tennis knowledge humbly, but with plenty of humor and flair. He wasn’t just talking to his audience, he was connecting with each person. I knew then that a successful tennis pro must embrace public speaking.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, a famous American philosopher, once said: “Speech is power, speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel.” All good public speakers share common traits: They are confident; they speak clearly and at a comfortable pace; they use humor and personal anecdotes; they use peoples’ names when they address a smaller group; they don’t overload the audience with facts and figures; they understand there is a balance between entertaining and providing information. And they are genuine. They allow their own personalities to come through. This sounds like a lot to master, but so does hitting a moving ball, with a moving racquet, attached to a moving body. It takes practice.
But improving your public speaking skills is integral to developing as a professional. It could be the difference between candidates for a job, or the difference between moving from head pro to director of tennis. As you improve your skills, you’ll be able to wrap up a tournament or an event with a strong speech, or perhaps present at your next tennis conference. This is taking your game to the next level.

In addition, technology is making it possible to increase your exposure if you’re prepared. At our club, we’ve been using youtube.com posts to promote clinics and events. Video analysis is also becoming more popular (sending students home with a DVD showing their strokes, along with some key reminders from you, is a great teaching tool). These are both opportunities that require good public speaking skills.

So how can we take our speaking skills to the next level? Here is Public Speaking 101:

- Speak clearly at a reasonable pace – not too fast, not too slow
- Eye contact: You must look people in the eye
- Body language: good posture, no wasted movement, but use gestures naturally to emphasize your points
- Humor and personal anecdotes: These help people relax and make you more accessible
- Concise: Don’t overload an audience (or a student!) with too much information – a few key points is all anyone can remember
- Catch phrases: Repeating easy-to-remember phrases helps people remember (solve the riddle, down the middle), develop some of your own
- Repetition: It can be boring if overdone, or not done properly (the professionals call it syntactic patterning), but it is necessary to help people remember when they only have their ears to rely on
- Involve, engage and interact with your audience

These are the basics, but there are many other ways you can improve:

Observe the pros
Watching TV is a start. Especially during an election year, we are treated to many speeches – notice how candidates present themselves and connect with their audience. Also notice the structure of their speeches (the press conferences at sporting events are entertaining and learning experiences). Often professional athletes demonstrate how not to do it. Compare and determine which styles might work for you. It is OK to “borrow” from the professionals – just as you might encourage a student to think of Nadal’s forehand, or Federer’s serve. This is what artists call their “influences.”

Attend your USPTA divisional convention and/or USPTA World Conference
Besides learning a thing or two about the latest developments in the tennis industry and earning educational points, these events will allow you to observe tennis and speaking experts in action. Every divisional convention has usually one or two key speakers. During the World Conference, there are many more. They have all been invited to deliver a different message with their distinct personal styles, but they also have far more in common than you might think. They are all good storytellers, they all use humor, they all involve the crowd with various techniques, and they all open and close strong. Make an effort to meet them (it never hurts to compliment) and ask a few questions. You can walk away with one or two tips for your own development. Mark McMahon once told me to exit with a “Big Bang”.

Peter Burwash advises to tell stories with a message; Vic Braden likes to make people laugh. By collecting all these little tips from peers, you will begin to shape and structure your own style.

Vic Braden: “Laugh and win!”

Consider joining Toastmasters International
Since 1924 this nonprofit organization has helped more than 200,000 people develop their speaking and leadership skills. In the United States alone there are 7,449 clubs. Most meet either for breakfast, lunch or dinner, and the first few visits are usually free. In a “no-pressure” setting, people are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and prepare and deliver short speeches. Presenting on nontennis-related topics is a new challenge and will contribute to your development. Speeches are evaluated weekly; you will receive encouraging and constructive feedback. As you increase your ability, you can move up in levels: Distinguished Toastmaster or Advanced Toastmaster. For the serious and competitive speakers there are local, regional and national speaking contests. Check out their Web site at toastmasters.org.

International Toastmasters: “Speak up, your future is listening!”

Participate in a Dale Carnegie course
This organization has an outstanding reputation for training people in management, leadership, sales, etc. They offer a two-day seminar on public speaking in select cities. It’s not cheap, but view it as an investment. You can score serious points with club owners and managers with this on your resume.

Dale Carnegie: “Fear doesn’t exist anywhere, except in the mind”

“Public Speaking for Dummies”
The “Dummies” books have been an incredible success story. Written by Malcolm Kushner, this book is an easy way to get started. It provides you with 382 pages of information, yet it is still an easy read with “quick tips” and lots of useful suggestions and ideas.

Malcolm Kushner: “Lead with Laughter”

Participate in your USPTA Divisional Seminar Contest
Most divisions organize a contest for members to prepare and deliver a short presentation. This has proved to be a great platform to step up and speak in front of a larger group than you might be used to at your club. Keep your eye on the divisional newsletter to find out when the next local convention takes place. Many participants in these divisional events have been invited to present at the USPTA World Conference.

Marty Rubinstein (2002 Winner National Seminar Contest): “Take a risk ... get out of your comfort zone and see the success of your efforts soar.”

That is what it’s all about: leaving your comfort zone. Just as you coach your students to apply a new strategy or a new stroke in a match, you need to find opportunities to hone your skills. Start small and increase your audience gradually. Invite your club manager and/or tennis committee members to these events and demonstrate your new off-court prowess. Aim big: Maybe your name will be headlining the next USPTA World Conference! :-)

Han Römer, USPTA, is currently director of tennis at the Pordand Country Club in Maine and coaches the women’s tennis team at the University of Southern Maine. He has presented at several USPTA World Conferences, the USTA Tennis Teachers Conference, the ITA Coaches Conventions and numerous divisional conventions. As former president of International Toastmasters Club No. 24, he has published many articles in U.S. and Dutch tennis publications.

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USPTA and ACSM celebrate *Tennis – for the health of it!*™ in Atlanta

Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta held a *Tennis – for the health of it!* event August 12-15 and featured tennis clinics each evening with special guest appearances. The event was coordinated by Fred Burdick, USPTA Southern Division executive director, and member Ben Hestley, who is director of tennis at Druid Hills. The American College of Sports Medicine president, Dr. Mindy Millard-Stafford, was on hand to speak on the alliance with USPTA and celebrate *Tennis – for the health of it!* during the event’s celebrity night on August 14.

Industry leaders and television personalities turned out in force for the celebrity night. Special guests, along with Dr. Millard-Stafford, included Sam Crenshaw, sportscaster with WXIA-TV, the NBC affiliate in Atlanta, and Craig McWilliams, director of advertising in Atlanta for *Inside Tennis*.

The activities during the week were free to all club members. The event was very successful and raised awareness of the health benefits of tennis.

_Pictured from left, Ben Crenshaw, Craig McWilliams, Dr. Harry Joed, Dr. Mindy Millard-Stafford, Ben Hestley, Fred Burdick, and Alan Jensen._

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conventions
(divisions, conventions, 5 credits; World Conference, 8 credits)

Sept. 15-20  USPTA World Conference on Tennis
             La Quinta, Calif.

Oct. 4-6     Hawaii Division
             Honolulu

Oct. 24-25  Southwest Division
             Scottsdale, Ariz.

specialist degrees

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- Sport Science
- Competitive Player Development
- Pro Shop Operations
- Wheelchair Tennis

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For more information about USPTA’s specialist degrees, including applications, please visit our Web site at www.uspta.com or contact the USPTA Education Department at 880-3993 or education@uspta.org.

cardio tennis

Oct. 3   Boston
Oct. 4   Boston
Oct. 25  Phoenix
Nov. 23  Rochester, N.Y.
Dec. 7   Overland Park, Kan.

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(Seminar DVDs, ½ credit/specialty course DVDs, 2 credits)

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exams, upgrades & certification review courses
(4 credits for CRC segment)

Sept. 16-20  La Quinta, Calif.
Sept. 27     Bozeman, Mont.
Oct. 2-3     Flushing, N.Y.
Oct. 4       Hilton Head Island, S.C.
Oct. 4       St. Paul, Minn.
Oct. 5-6     Los Angeles
Oct. 10      Oklahoma City
Oct. 11      Seattle
Oct. 11      Fort Worth, Texas
Oct. 11      Carlsbad, Calif.
Oct. 11-12   Boca Raton, Fla.
Oct. 11-12   Atlanta
Oct. 12      Hot Springs, Ark.
Oct. 19      Pensacola, Fla.
Oct. 20-21   Houston*
Oct. 23      Scottsdale, Ariz.
Oct. 25      Brunswick, Maine
Oct. 25-26   College Park, Md.
Oct. 26      Fayetteville, N.C.
Oct. 29      Mesa, Ariz.
Nov. 1       Mequon, Wis.
Nov. 7-8     Pebble Beach, Calif.
Nov. 9       Orlando, Fla.
Nov. 9       Charleston, S.C.
Nov. 11      Claremont, Calif.
Nov. 15      Kansas City, Mo.
Nov. 15      Kansas City, Mo.
Nov. 15      Napa, Calif.
Nov. 15-16   Big Rapids, Mich.
Nov. 17-18   Houston*
Nov. 23-24   Greenwood Village, Colo.
Dec. 1-2     San Francisco
Dec. 7-8     Los Angeles
Dec. 13      College Park, Md.
Dec. 13-14   Atlanta
Dec. 14      San Antonio
Dec. 30-31   Boca Raton, Fla.

* This course is held at the USPTA World Headquarters.

Exams must be made at least 21 days prior to the dates listed. Each date includes an exam, upgrade and CRC unless noted. Exam cancellations must be received no later than 14 days before the exam. A cancellation fee will be charged accordingly. Applicant: late cancellation fee – $75; failure to cancel – application fee is forfeited. Certified members: late cancellation fee – $25; failure to cancel – $25 plus the upgrade fee is forfeited. Registration for another exam will not be accepted until cancellation fees are paid.

specialty courses

A strategy of excellence, Sept. 16, La Quinta, Calif., D. Yuritic
Managing a tennis complex, Sept. 16, La Quinta, Calif., D. Sunderlin
Marketing, promotion and sales, Sept. 17, La Quinta, Calif., T. Sweitzer
Advanced stroke production, Sept. 17, La Quinta, Calif., S. Oley
Little Tennis, Sept. 18, La Quinta, Calif., F. Hassan
Assertive communication and negotiation skills, Sept. 18, La Quinta, Calif., B. Fackel
The complete professional, Sept. 19, La Quinta, Calif., A. Cutler
The essentials of shot making, Sept. 19, La Quinta, Calif., B. Hobden
Speed, agility and quickness, Sept. 20, La Quinta, Calif., P. Etcheberry
Wheelchair tennis, Sept. 20, La Quinta, Calif., M. Mercier

The deadline to register and/or cancel a course is 15 working days before the event. Anyone canceling late or failing to cancel will forfeit one-half the course fee. Schedule is subject to change. Call the USPTA Education Department for more information or e-mail education@uspta.org.
USPTA DVD Resources

USPTA is the world’s largest producer of broadcast-quality tennis instruction on DVD. These are just a few of the more than 100 titles available. For easy ordering, go to www.usprotennisishop.com.

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Specialty courses - $44.95 each. Bonus! Earn education credits while watching!
Members

Barbara Mueller, USPTA, will be inducted into the 2008 USTA/Midwest Section Hall of Fame in December, during the USTA/Midwest Section’s 115th annual meeting. Mueller, an accomplished tennis player, holds more than 55 USTA national singles and doubles titles and has been a finalist in more than 25 USTA national singles and doubles tournaments. A USPTA certified instructor for more than 30 years, Mueller is devoted to teaching wheelchair tennis and delivering tennis to Native Americans. She has introduced the game to youth and adults in Native American communities in Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and Arizona. Mueller has been a head instructor in Wisconsin for wheelchair tennis, and has also taught the sport in Ohio, Arizona and California.

Cary Gravee, USPTA, has been named head coach of High Performance Training for the Beijing, China International Tennis Training Academy. Gravee will be responsible for developing all tennis programs for beginning ITF players through aspiriing ATP and WTA players, as well as training and overseeing all coaches.

Ronney has authored a book, “Proud Parents’ Guide to Raising Athletic, Balanced, and Coordinated Kids.” The book includes more than 200 games for parents who want to jump-start their child’s fundamental skills, self-confidence and sports potential while creating a lifestyle of family fitness. It includes explanations of children’s development and learning styles, and offers academic research, progress charts and help for families with special-needs kids. The book may be purchased through its publisher, Thomas Nelson, at www.thomasnelson.com. Once on the site, use the author search option and type in “Ronney.” The book is also available through Amazon.com.

The United States Tennis Association recently announced that Tennis Channel and ESPN will begin covering the U.S. Open in 2009. From left: Ken Solomon, chairman and CEO, Tennis Channel; Arlen Kantarian, chief executive officer, professional tennis, USTA; and John Skipper, executive vice president for content, ESPN. Photo Credit: Tennis Channel.

Manufacturer

HEAD N.V. is the first sporting goods company to “supercharge” its carbon responsibility by committing to saving more than 7,000 acres of mature rainforest from destruction each year. That’s equal in size to more than 100,000 tennis courts. HEAD is encouraging sports enthusiasts and consumers to supercharge their own carbon responsibility with its new Cool Earth initiative. All products HEAD manufactures and sells worldwide under the HEAD, Penn, Tyrolia, and Mares brands will soon feature information about Cool Earth and the global warming issue. The company is also launching an advertising campaign, “Don’t pray for snow. Do something.” It will feature some of HEAD’s well-known athletes. Hans Römer, USPTA, has purchased and donated his first acre of rain forest. He is also donating 5 percent of his private lessons this summer to the Cool Earth Initiative. For more

Member product showcase

Former tour player, professional journalist and USPTA Professional Karen Yacub’s Web site, TennisCoachOnline.com, offers a series of books designed for all levels of players, from beginners to tournament players, who are looking for self-improvement through a visual learning method and simple words. This series, “Play Winning Tennis,” focuses on a variety of principles to improve the quality of your game, and includes more than 500 dynamic drawings and 300 easy-to-follow diagrams. For more information, e-mail yacub@tenniscoachonline.com.

Karen Ronney

USPTA member Julio Yacub’s Web site, TennisCoachOnline.com, offers a series of books designed for all levels of players, from beginners to tournament players, who are looking for self-improvement through a visual learning method and simple words. This series, “Play Winning Tennis,” focuses on a variety of principles to improve the quality of your game, and includes more than 500 dynamic drawings and 300 easy-to-follow diagrams. For more information, e-mail yacub@tenniscoachonline.com.

Every year, millions of pairs of athletic shoes are thrown away, clogging landfills and wasting a lot of good material. So Nike created a solution to allow you to recycle your old shoes! Reuse-A-Shoe, part of the "Let Me Play" campaign, is one of Nike's longest-running environmental and community programs. Worn-out athletic shoes of any brand are collected, processed and recycled into material used in sports surfaces like basketball courts, tennis courts, athletic fields, running tracks and playgrounds for young people around the world. Since the birth of Reuse-A-Shoe in 1990, Nike has recycled more than 21 million pairs of athletic shoes to go toward more than 255 sport surfaces, giving thousands of young people access to new playgrounds and athletic facilities around the world. For more information, visit http://www.letmeplay.com/reuseashoe.

HEAD/Penn Racquet Sports announced that the company is offering its support and will extend payment terms for all invoices currently due from Texas and Louisiana retailers that have been affected by Hurricane Ike. "It is important that in a time like this we are sympathetic to what our customers are experiencing," said Greg Mason, senior director of sales, HEAD/Penn Racquet Sports. "Extending billing is just a small gesture in making our customers' lives a little less stressful during this time." For detailed information, customers can contact their district sales manager, or the credit department at HEAD/Penn Racquet Sports.

Miscellany
Professionals with Peter Burwash International direct the tennis program at one out of every six facilities that made the Tennis Resorts Online annual rankings. The rankings include 13 PBI-staffed properties in the Top 75 Tennis Resorts, up from 11 last year. Guests who complete an online survey about their experiences at tennisresortsonline.com determine the annual rankings. PBI, directed by USPTA Master Professional Peter Burwash, has five of its facilities among the top 25 in the prestigious "Gold" category. They are Bio-Hotel Stanglwirt in Austria (No. 4); ConeoL Bay, in the U.S. Virgin Islands (No. 5), Four Seasons Resort Nevis in Nevis, West Indies (No. 11); Naples Grande Resort & Club in Naples, Fla. (No. 14); and Desert Springs, in Palm Desert, Calif. (No. 18). Six PBI properties made the "Silver" category: Kapalua Resort in Maui, Hawaii; the Ritz-Carlton Lodge - Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Ga.; Rio Mar Beach Resort & Spa, Puerto Rico; Carmel Valley Ranch in Carmel Valley, Calif.; Little Dix Bay, British Virgin Islands; and the Lodge at Ventana Canyon Golf & Racquet Club in Tucson, Ariz. In the "Bronze" rankings, there are two PBI sites: the Maui Prince Hotel in Maui, Hawaii; and the Jumeirah Beach Hotel in the United Arab Emirates.

2008 USPTA New England awards:
Regional Pro of the Year – Angelo Rossetti
Rookie of the Year – Jerry Albrikes
High School Coach of the Year – Chris Hibbard
College Coach of the Year – Brian Shanley
Coach of the Year – Francisco Montoya-Velez
Facility Manager of the Year – Sheila Weinstock
Tennis Industry Excellence Award – Phil Parrish
Wheelchair Pro of the Year – Mike Mercier
35-and-over Player of the Year – Anne Schwartz
55-and-over Player of the Year – Laury Hammel
55-and-over Player of the Year – Sheila Weinstock
Senior Player of the Year – Bruce Mahler
Senior Player of the Year – Lynn Miller
Open Players of the Year – Ettore Rossetti, Angelo Rossetti
45-and-over Player of the Year – Hans Romer
Regional Pro of the Year – Marc Rubinstein
Regional Pro of the Year – Scott Smith
Dan Bonfigli Memorial Award – Townsend Gilbert
Ed Serves Award (President’s Award For Outstanding Long-Term Service) – Ric Martinez
Pro of the Year – Laury Hammel
Lessons For Life Award – Jason Ronan (with Friends of Reading – Gregg Luongo, Michael LaPierre, Lorraine Salter, Kate Ronan)
Lessons For Life Award (Most Donations Raised 2002-2007) – Dave Altshuler

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