



JULY 11 2011

NIAGARA TENNIS NEWS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY !

The 25th anniversary of the Grand Opening for our Tennis Complex at Memorial Park slipped by quietly this week. But it was a glorious week by any standard, with the courts bathed in sunshine and looking wonderful under clear blue skies since the start of the month.

In hindsight, it would have been nice to have a commemorative book at the courts throughout the week, with a place for everyone to sign in. How many players would you estimate used the facility through the week? More than most realize, I expect.

This newspaper clipping captures the moment as it happened on July 5 1986. Big improvements to the Tennis Complex since that time have been the building of the pavilion in 1990, and the resurfacing of the omni-courts in 2002. It's definitely time for the next "something big" to bring us up to 2011 standards. Membership participation is what brought about all the earlier achievements, and membership participation is what will take us on to bigger and better things. Are you ready?



Lord Mayor Jim Marino, Aldermen Jim Collard and Lorraine Warner got together to cut the red ribbon to open the brand new omni courts at Memorial Park Saturday morning. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Association hosted the grand opening with an exhibition tennis match followed by a barbecue in the evening.

Niagara Advance clipping

MEN'S B DOUBLES TOURNAMENT FOR THE JAMES & KEVAN O'CONNOR TROPHY

Our 25th anniversary week was not without fanfare, as it saw the 2011 competition season get underway with the playing of the Men's B Doubles championship. The weather was perfect for us on Saturday morning and the matches were enjoyed by all.

Congratulations to Patrick MacNeill and Chado Brcic who emerged as the winners. It was the third consecutive title for Patrick, who had won last year with Dominic Ventresca and in 2009 with Chado. Finalists were Terry Francis and Larry Shantz.

The second flight was won by Max Bade and Richard Berti, who won over Ian Waddell and Marc Gauvin. Third flight saw Enzo Mancuso and Gary Inkster win over Ralph Mellanby and Neil Cuthbertson, while the fourth flight winners were Larry Mantle and Flory Massi over Ray Cutts and Jim Thackray.



Patrick MacNeill & Chado Brcic

Thanks to James and Kevan O'Connor for sponsoring the tournament and providing the champions' prizes. Kevan is celebrating 40 years of real estate service in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Thanks also to Pam's Pro Shop for providing four prizes for the event.

The Men's B Tournament was initiated in 2009 by Vittorio Venturi, seen to the right in conversation with Marc Gauvin. The drawsheet in the background was printed compliments of Patrick MacNeill and the Quartek Group (engineers, architects, planners).



*Terry Francis, Larry Shantz, Max Bade, Richard Berti, Flory Massi, Larry Mantle, Neil Cuthbertson, Ian Waddell, Gary Inkster, Marc Gauvin, Jim Thackray, Patrick MacNeill, Chado Brcic
Front: Ralph Mellanby, Enzo Mancuso, Ray Cutts*



Thanks to Monica Berti, Mary Pohorly, Wayne Vent, Flory Massi and Jim Thackray for putting up the new shade awning.

And thanks to Monica and to Marilyn Francis for helping with the tournament lunch.



MEET YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS

I wish everyone could meet Brenda Parks ... she's an inspiration. The story of how Brenda came to be a tennis player is a story of "you never know how one thing may lead to another".

On June 11 2010, Brian and Brenda Parks happened to be walking through Memorial Park on our Opening Day. The happy atmosphere attracted their attention, causing them to linger and then to notice a friend, Shirley Rednall, helping with the proceedings in the pavilion. While they were chatting, it happened that Shirley was called to play on the courts, and Brenda noticed the bounce in her step as she went to join the game.

The experience lasted only a few minutes, but Brenda remembers a significant shift occurring in her impressions of Tennis : what once had been categorized (even unconsciously) as "stodgy, exclusionary" now appeared to be better defined as "regular people having a great time".

That new impression was an influence the next time Brenda went to the Post Office. She noticed a club promotional brochure on the kiosk and brought it home. She made contact with Shawna Macfarlane and was invited to come to the courts "ready to play" soon thereafter.

Shawna met a quiet lady, wearing cross-trainers and carrying a wooden tennis racquet. But only a few minutes later, now with an appropriate racquet in hand, Brenda was hitting tennis balls and was hooked. Shawna invited her to come to a Tennis 101 clinic, at which Brenda was overwhelmed by the acceptance she received from the other players. She loved her time on court from the beginning and her passion has only grown.



After only a few clinics, she teamed up with Brenda Sabine-Green and played in the Women's Doubles Tournament, amazed once again at how accepting everyone was and what a happy time tennis players had together. Soon thereafter, Sarah Chapman created a special Singles Round Robin and Brenda was the first to play a match with everyone else on the list. She continued her pursuit of the game through the winter, attending clinics with Shawna across the river and playing indoors at the St Catharines Tennis Club.

This spring, Brenda stepped up to become an organizer of a Regular Game, filling two courts every Tuesday in the 8:30-10:00 time slot. She does a wonderful job of setting up games and making sure there will be enough players each week. At the end of June, they enjoyed their first month-end party.



Brenda glows with her love of tennis. She takes every opportunity to play and is often at the courts 5 or 6 times a week in clinics and games.

All by itself, it's a great story for a 60-year-old person to experience the joy of adding a new physical activity to her life. But for 20 years, this notion would have been considered an impossible dream for Brenda. In June 1991, she experienced an emergency back surgery when a spinal disc deteriorated and created nerve damage that took away much of the control of her right foot. It was a painful and frightening experience, and a long road back through physical therapy .

Simply becoming painfree and becoming mobile again were challenge enough. Gradually, Brenda regained some of the lost musculature in her right calf, and learned how to make adjustments to keep the right foot in line. But her physical activity was limited to walking with her dog. It was a fate that Brenda accepted ... it would have to be enough.

Until she happened to notice Shirley at the Tennis Club Opening Day ... and until she happened to pick up a brochure and phone Shawna, who was totally encouraging and guided her learning ... and until the players she met at Tennis 101 were warm and welcoming ... and so on and so on. Suddenly life became so much more!

Brenda LOVES playing tennis. And she loves how that joy spills over into the rest of her life. I hope you get a chance to meet her.



*Charlene Juras and Shirley Rednall,
working at Opening Day
June 11 2010.*

INTERCLUB MATCH WITH GRIMSBY TENNIS CLUB

It was a historic occasion on Sunday, as the first match was played in the new Niagara Peninsula Interclub League. A team of 4 men and 4 women travelled from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Grimsby to compete on their four hard courts. We received a warm welcome from the host club and enjoyed seeing their attractive facilities.

The first round of play was Men's Doubles and Ladies' Doubles and saw the matches split down the middle. Our top pairings of Helmut Hammerling & Scott McGregor, and Sarah Chapman-Jay & Dorothy Booth, both came out ahead, while Grimsby won the other two courts. We were leading in games by a score of 24-23.

After a break and a rest from the heat, we all took to the courts for the Mixed Doubles with a format of 8-game pro sets. Grimsby won courts 2 and 3, while Jim Thackray & Rosemary Goodwin added a point for NOTL with a victory on court 4. The home side now led by a score of 4 to 3, and all eyes turned to court 1 where Helmut & Sarah had taken a 7-4 lead but had been caught for 7-7 and headed into a tiebreak with Richard Facey-Crowther & Marilyn Baktawar.

The clubhouse patio area overlooking the court was jammed with members of both teams and spectators from the host club. The tiebreak went back and forth to 3-3, then to 6-6, before Richard & Marilyn scored two points with well-placed and decisive shots from Richard. A great comeback! This gave the Grimsby TC a 5-3 victory. [They also won on games by a total of 50-43.]

The return match will be played on our courts on Sunday August 7th at 3:00.

Next match on the schedule is this Sunday, July 17th ... a home match with Welland. The regular Welland team has requested a re-schedule date, but it's possible an exhibition match will be held this week. We'll let you know by special announcement if it gets confirmed.



Grimsby Tennis Club: Richard Facey-Crowther, Mike Nielson, Andy Fraser, Lee-Anne Facey-Crowther, Marilyn Baktawar, Amanda Fraser, Lauren Doig, Bob Pride, Drew Dulmage

Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club: Sarah Chapman-Jay, Sue Werner, Dorothy Booth, Rosemary Goodwin, Scott McGregor, Helmut Hammerling, Gary Inkster, Jim Thackray



A commemorative certificate was presented to Grimsby TC captain Bob Pride by Niagara-on-the-Lake TC captain Rosemary Goodwin. They had worked together with Tady Saczkowski of the Welland TC to set up the initial interclub schedule.

We now need volunteer captains to organize our NOTL teams for the forthcoming matches. The schedule includes:

Date TBA - hosting Welland TC

August 7 - hosting Grimsby TC

August 14 - at Welland TC

Please contact Rosemary Goodwin if you'd like to get involved as a captain (or as a player) for one of these matches.

Women's Doubles Tournament

July 23-24

Janice Schachtschneider is ready to receive entries for the annual Women's Doubles tournament, and asks for them to be sent to her [theopendoor@sympatico.ca] by Monday July 18.

The original schedule called for preliminary rounds on Saturday morning with final rounds in the afternoon. However, if the weather is too warm, the semi-finals and finals will be played on Sunday.

Entries are welcomed in pairs, or as "partner requested".

PRACTICE IDEA



It's called the "Game of 11". When you want a good workout in a short time, instead of playing a regular Singles format with your sparring partner, try this for a change:

- No overhead serving; just start balls into play underhand
- No alternate serving; either player starts the point dependent on where the balls happen to be
- Count a point for each rally; game ends when one player has 11

It's estimated that you'll play 40% more tennis in the course of an hour using this format than you would if you play regular Singles. It's great for a fast workout, and lets you keep practicing even if you're trying to give your shoulder a rest from serving.

Just one of many ideas from the braintrust of Charles Smith and Don Goodwin, who first started teaching tennis together in 1978. Charles started his tennis management career with Tennis Canada and is now involved with the Shanghai Masters. He stopped in on his way home from Wimbledon.

CORRECTION

In the last issue, we made an error regarding the description of the apparatus used to maintain our courts. While the roller itself originally came from the Lawn Bowling Club, the broom apparatus was built specifically to groom the omni courts when they were installed in 1986. The equipment is kept in the storage building by the baseball field.

We're very fortunate to have Ken Rive as the Facilities Supervisor for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Parks & Recreation Department. Ken not only knows every nook and cranny of the tennis facilities, he is also an excellent player and was a keen participant in club programs and events until forced to stop playing by troublesome knee joints.



CROWDED COURTS

With Regular Games on tap every morning starting at 8:30, the early-bird time period from 7:00-8:30 is becoming increasingly popular. We hope that players will be sensitive to the fact that others may be waiting. Court usage can be maximized by switching from Singles to Doubles ... or four players can share a court for hitting practice by taking just half a court for each pair.

If you haven't yet written a note to a member of Town Council, it's certainly not too late. We'd like to see every Tennis Club member write a sentence or two to emphasize the importance of our Tennis Complex to the well-being of the citizens of our Town. Please let them know you think Tennis is an important amenity. You can reach Lord Mayor David Eke at deke@notl.org, or Councillor Martin Mazza (chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee) at mmazza@notl.org.

*Best regards,
Rosemary Goodwin*

*on behalf of your Volunteer Committee : Ian Waddell, John Christie, Janice Schachtschneider,
Liz Vinassac, Charlene Juras, Sarah Chapman-Jay, Larry Mantle, Peter Marchesseau.*



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