



NIAGARA TENNIS NEWS

September 5, 2010

Hello Tennis Friends!

All of a sudden it really feels like September. Change is definitely in the air. The past four months have been very eventful at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club and there is another busy week ahead. But after that, we should be able to settle in for a couple of months of tranquil tennis. Let's hope for a long and lingering autumn with many enjoyable days on the courts.

This is the Last Call for entries for our final Club Tournaments. The Men's A Doubles is set for Saturday morning at 9am. There should be some good matches, so this will be another spectator opportunity. On Saturday afternoon, we'll play the Ladies Singles and the Junior Girls Singles. And on Sunday afternoon, the spotlight will shift to Men's Singles and to Junior Boys Singles. If you've not yet entered but would like to participate, please contact rosemarygoodwin@mac.com or call 905 468 5503.

Also coming up this week is the closing party for Ladies Night on Wednesday evening. Play will continue on a drop-in basis as long as weather permits, but this will be the final organized activity of the season. Feel free to come by for some round-robin games, or just for dessert and coffee to go along with conversation in the pavilion.

Friday evening brings another special event, as those members who have frequented the Open Doubles Round-Robin throughout the summer are planning a tournament and social gathering.

Junior Program

The busiest tennis volunteer of the summer has been Charlene Juras, director in charge of our Junior Program. In May, Charlene was honored by the Town for her contributions to youth development in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2009. Rather than resting on her laurels, she increased her efforts, dedicating herself to continually improving the program.

None of that is possible without a stellar coaching staff, and Charlene is fortunate to have the leadership of Shawna Macfarlane as head professional. This season, Shawna took on the challenge of guiding our newly-certified instructors through the rigors and realities of on-court assignments with a wide variety of youngsters. Thanks to her efforts Janice Schachtschneider, Thitima Christopher, Ed Mesihovic and Jeremy Martino now have many hours of practical experience in the art of teaching tennis to children. Along with Shawna's son, Rob, they've been the mainstay of our program.



At the closing party for the program on Tuesday, Shawna spoke to the kids about their summer of tennis. She encouraged them to continually seek learning and improvement, but above all to maintain a love for the sport.

One of the ways to do that is by learning to enjoy competition. On August 22, Charlene held an U14 Invitational Tournament. Here is what she had to say about it:



Luca de Leonardis

A round robin format that consisted of playing each player 5 games total with No Ad scoring was the basis of the tournament. Top two played for the Gold/Silver Medal, bottom two played for the Bronze Medal.

Group A included: Jessica Ehlert, Ava Pozojevic, Luca de Leonardis and Scott Robinson
Group B included: Dane Sisinni, Miranda Juras, Andrew Smith and Mattea De Munnich

The level of playing was fantastic! Not all final scores indicated how very close most games were. Most games came down to deuce with the final point being determined by sudden death.

In the A Group of round robin play Jessica Ehlert had to play 3 sudden death points against Ava Pozojevic to earn first place. Ava won 2 of her 3 matches to earn 2nd place and advance to the finals to play against Jessica one last time.

It was a hard fought battle as both girls rallied the ball very well. It was Jessica's baseline groundstroke followed by a short slice return to win each sudden death point that contributed to her winning the Gold Medal and Ava taking home the Silver.

In Consolation play Luca de Leonardis was ahead 2-1 over Scott Robinson. This match also came down to 3 sudden death points with Luca earning the win over Scott.

There was equal playing

ability in the B Group and the final scores proved it.

Dane Sisinni won 2 games 3-2 and 5-0 and lost to Miranda Juras 3-2 but earned 1st place in the round robin with a total score of 10

Miranda Juras won all 3 matches 3-2, earning 2nd place with a score of 9
Andrew Smith earned 3rd place winning one game 3-2, and losing 3-2 and 5-0.
Mattea De Munnich, although 4th, lost her 3 games 3-2 with several being determined by sudden death.



Miranda Juras

The Consolation was between Andrew Smith and Mattea De Munnich. All 5 games were nail biters and very exciting to watch as the last 3 games were determined by sudden death points. Andrew won the match 3-2.

In the Championship game, Dane Sisinni and Miranda Juras held each of their serves, making the score 2-2. It came down to deuce in the final game with Dane winning the sudden death point and earning the Gold Medal with Miranda taking home Silver.

I am really proud of each and every player. The competition was very good and so were the positive attitudes and court etiquette. It was really nice to hear some of the players say to their opponent "Good shot!". Several of the players have been taking lessons 3-4 days a week as well as playing Team Tennis every Friday. These tennis players have shown such an improvement in their game over the last 4 months. It was the first tournament for each of the 4 competitors in the B Group. I am certain it won't be their last!

Photos by Ken Smith



Mattea De Munnich



Andrew Smith

On August 29, Charlene reports that the U12 and U10 junior tennis players participated in their first ever tennis tournament.



*Back Row Max Ramos Roberts, Molly Bowron, Victoria Crocco, Charlene Juras, Mitchell Graba, Max Schiff-Malins
Front Row: Christian Wormwell, Christopher Crocco, Curtis Ehlert, Mackenzie Graba, Lauren Juras.*

Here is how Charlene tells the story of their day:

In the U12 finals, Max Ramos Roberts and Mitchell Graba competed for the Gold Medal. All four games went to sudden death point with Mitchell winning the fourth game to tie the match 2-2. The tie breaker also ended in sudden death with Max earning the title of Junior Tennis U12 Champion and Mitchell taking home the Silver. Molly Bowron won 3-1 against Victoria Crocco in the Consolation game.

In the U10 A Flight Round Robin, Christopher Crocco and Max Schiff-Malins played a hard fought tennis match. They rallied the ball the longest, making that game one of the most exciting games to watch. Several games ended in sudden death point but it was Christopher who earned the win. Christopher and Max tied in the round robin with 6 points each but it was that 3-1 win over Max that allowed him to advance to the finals to play 9 year old Curtis Ehlert. Curtis's powerful groundstrokes, ability to remain focused and move the ball around on the court earned him the title of U10 Junior Tennis Champion. Christopher won the Silver and Max won the Consolation against Lauren Juras.

In the U10 B Flight, Mackenzie Graba took home the Gold Medal winning in a tie breaker over Christian Wormwell, 3-2. Christian won the Silver and Louis Amice took home the Bronze.

"I am very proud of all the players. It was so exciting to see these players rally the ball like they did. Everyone played really hard. There are many future tennis players in this group. Despite the 90 degree weather that they had to play in, there was a lot of energy out on those courts on Saturday!"

Parent volunteers are critical to the success of the Junior Program. Special thanks to Chris Wormwell and all the other parents who contribute so much.



So the kids have worked hard, and they've competed hard. But this past Tuesday, the emphasis was on fun and games. It was the closing party for their program, the end of a road that began in the first week of May.



Here, Tessa, Shawna, Robbie and Thitima toss water balloons, as Lauren Juras volleys one away.



Shawna is ever-present, bringing encouragement or coaxing, a strong hand or a soft hand ... whatever is the right approach for the moment.

The kids had a great time hitting for school supplies in one of the games. All sorts of goodies were spread across the court ... "if you can hit it, it's yours!"



Jim Juras was the man-of-the-hour at the barbecue ... Jane De Munnich was an ever-present and invaluable steady hand ... a diminutive Gioia de Leonardis demonstrates that you don't have to be able to see over the net to be a tennis player ... and, hey, these cupcakes look just like tennis balls!



Charlene sums it all up this way :

“The plans for 2011 are already in the works. We have new and exciting ideas and programs we would like to offer. We hope that all of the 157 children who came through the program this year will be back with us. My goal is to make this program better and better every year!”

That's it for this week. Thanks for all your nice feedback about Niagara Tennis News. We hope it inspires you to want to get more involved in your Tennis Club. We are a do-it-yourself operation, and volunteer opportunities abound.

By the way, if you did a double-take last Monday, thinking you might have just spotted Serena Williams here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, we can assure you it was not a hallucination. A member has confirmed Serena was a tourist visitor at Peller Estates Winery, doing a little sight-seeing en route to the US Open where she has a courtside seat for all matches of her sister Venus.

Best regards,

Rosemary Goodwin

on behalf of,
Don Chambers

Sarah Chapman-Jay

John Christie

Charlene Juras

Peter Marchesseau

Janice Schachtschneider

Elizabeth Vinassac

Irene Wall

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