

*2001 Tournament survival guide...
BTC Wins 2000 Club of the Year!
Tennis Tip: Taking the ball on the rise...*



Courts Center

BTC faces energy crisis

Nighttime court fee aimed at keeping lights on

With California's energy crisis making front page news over the last six months, it shouldn't surprise anyone that the Balboa Tennis Club is feeling the crunch.

But while homeowners saw prices stabilize with a rate cap a few months back, the price that most of California's businesses pay for power is not capped, and the problem is getting much, much worse.

The cost of keeping the courts lighted at BTC has averaged about \$1,800 a month. By December the bill had climbed to \$4,500. The board of directors doubled the energy budget for 2001 and directed the staff to be vigilant about turning out any lights not in use.

The club's January bill was an eye-popping \$6,000, despite the fact that energy usage (kilowatts per day) actually dropped by almost 20 percent. BTC's volunteer board, made up of members

just like you, had to make some painful decisions. They could no longer hope to weather this storm without darkening courts and asking for help from the membership.

Conservation efforts have been pressed to unprecedented levels. The stadium court was darkened, an immediate savings of 10,000 watts. All court lighting on the weekends has been suspended until further notice.

Reservationists have been asked to aggressively monitor play and move members to adjacent courts as soon as it becomes possible to darken any courts.

The board of directors decided to institute a nighttime fee of \$4 per court hour beginning at 5 p.m. Clinics, private lessons and leagues will also be charged.

Some nighttime players felt singled out, however, and wanted to know why only nighttime players were asked to

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BTC hosts free tennis festival

Tennis Fest 2001 — free for all levels of adult players — comes to BTC's stadium court on Sunday March 25, from 1 p.m. until 5:15 p.m.

The event features guest speakers, on-court workshops by top area USTA pros, awards, and demo racquets.

There will be a program on developing "athleticism in tennis," and a top sports physician will discuss tennis injuries.

Participants must RSVP. For more info you can pick up a flyer from the reservation desk or call the SDDTA office at (619) 299-8647.

inside...

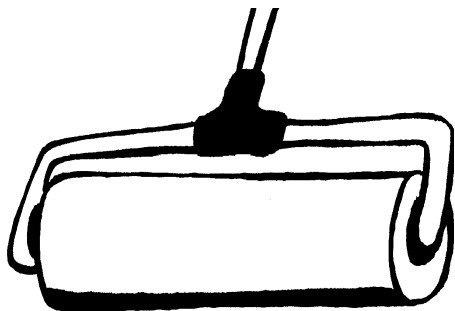
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New Rain Policy curbs squeegee heebie-jeebies

Recently, there have been some concerns about how things are handled on rainy days when you need to squeegee a court.

In response, the following Rain Policy has been developed with fairness and simplicity in mind.

We plan to try this policy and see how it works. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask to see Kent Sligh, BTC's Director, or fill out a suggestion form.



On days when the courts need to be dried with a squeegee, the following policy will apply:

1. Reservations will be honored. Arriving early and using a squeegee to dry a court that someone else has reserved will not give you the right to a court that is reserved.

2. Once you have taken a squeegee, you have one half hour from the start of your reservation to return the squeegee. For ex-

ample, 9AM players would need to return the squeegee by 9:30 AM.

3. If the courts are so wet that it takes more than a half hour to squeegee, the reservationist does have the discretion to extend the half hour deadline.

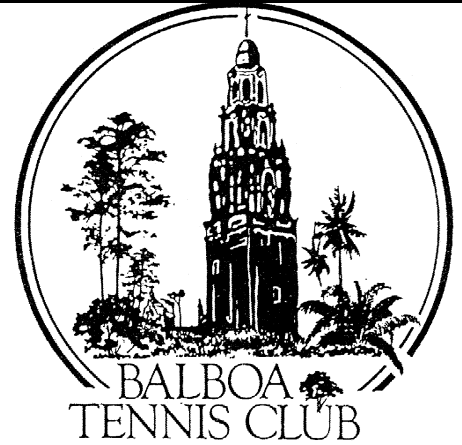
4. Once the squeegee is returned, the reservationist will mark off an extra half hour on your reservation. For example, doubles reservations beginning at 9 AM will run until 11 AM instead of 10:30 AM. If you do not return the squeegee in time, you will not get the extra half hour of play.

5. Reservations will only be extended one half hour – even if the reservationist extends the deadline for returning the squeegee. You should take this into account before deciding to squeegee a court.

6. Once an extra half hour has been granted, every subsequent reservation will be moved back one half hour, as needed. For example, if a 9 AM doubles reservation is extended until 11 AM, a member with a 10:30 reservation for the same court would be asked to wait until 11 AM (or choose another court if there is another court available).

Members Helping Members

Do you have something you'd like to advertise to other club members??? This newsletter goes out 4 times a year to over 1400 members. The fee is only \$25.00 for a business card-sized ad. Please call the Director's office for more details: 295-4242.



2221 Morley Field Drive
San Diego, Calif. 92104
295-9278

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Ron Celeste
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Pam Fullerton
Secretary

Darice Carnaje

Jim Gallagher

Brad Hasper

Roz King

Bev LaRue

Patty Sweeting

Will Tappen

Board Members

Kent Sligh
Director

Geoff Griffin
Tennis Director

Roz King
Editor, Center Court

Board meetings are at 7 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month in the BTC Clubhouse. All members are welcome.

The BTC Main Office is open Monday through Friday.

The reservations desk is open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

The club is closed on New Years Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Office 295-4242

Reservations..... 295-9278

Pro Shop..... 291-5248

Snack Shop 295-1431

Submissions and Ads to the newsletter are welcome.
Call 295-4242

BTC named 2001 Club of the Year!

By Robin Rodger, Balboa Tennis Club President

What a way to start a New Year! Your Balboa Tennis Club was awarded Club of the Year for 2000 by the San Diego District Tennis Association. BTC was selected for this honor from all of the tennis clubs in San Diego County.

The wonderful part of this award is that it recognizes the effort put forth by so many people. The board of directors has been working very hard solving problems, enabling us to move forward on upgrading our facilities, improving our youth program, developing our own web site, and lots more.

Our Club Director, **Kent Sligh**, has been producing a new and improved newsletter, as well as saving the club money in many ways from printing our own court slips to working with the city to fund a number of projects. Many of the things Kent does go unseen by the membership, but we all notice the overall efficiency in the day to day operations.

Our friendly reservations agents played no small part in our award. They all work together to present a united and consistent front in their court designation and rule enforcement. The next time you get a chance, say thanks to **Jeff Anderson**, **Alex Djordjevic**, **Don Green** and **Val Schlagel** for all they did to get you on your court with a smile.

Dennis Anderson has done so many things to improve our facility. You name it – plumbing, carpentry, gardening, painting – he does a lot more than keep the courts clean. His knowledge of our water and electric systems has been invaluable in our decision making process.

Our Tennis Director **Geoff Griffin** and his wife **Manuela** were a huge factor in why BTC received this award. Handling our tournaments in a very friendly and efficient manner, they always go the extra mile to make the entrants feel welcome and comfortable. Geoff's knowledge and experience make him one of BTC's greatest assets.

These tournaments are our way of giving back to the sport of tennis. Bringing the Nationals to BTC was a board decision to uphold the long, rich history of ten-

nis which is a tradition here. We all love the game of tennis and need to give back to the sport by creating an air of excitement and enthusiasm.

Our two Members of the Year upheld this philosophy by giving of their time to make Balboa a better place for all of us to play. **Richard Barndt** has made a difference. He has brought our computer system into the twenty-first century, built a new desk space area out of a closet, and spent hours going over our electric system with Kent and Dennis. **Fran Wakefield** has her hand in the leagues, always lending a helping hand where needed, always welcoming new and upcoming players, encouraging new players to partake in tournament play, and running the intersectional. Fran has definitely made a difference.

What are we looking at for 2001? We have a couple of top priorities. Solving the electrical problem at our club is number one. I want to say a special thank-you to our nighttime mem-

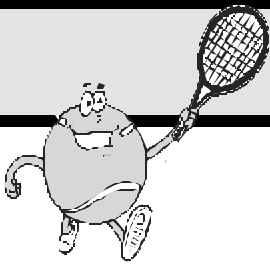
bers who have answered the call in our time of need and contributed court fees to help keep the lights on.

Despite the urgency of the energy crisis, we are continuing to look at the big picture and the ongoing need to improve our facility to ensure it will remain top notch for years to come.

We have submitted a proposal for matching funds to the Park and Recreation Department for upgrading our patio area. James Robbins, of Robbins Jorgensen Christopher Architects, has created a beautiful design that would create additional seating and socialization areas in front of our clubhouse and the snack shop. James, a BTC member, volunteered his time along with Tom Garcia, his landscape architect. If the plan is approved, we expect it will be funded almost entirely through donations, along with matching funds from the city.

The past year was full of problem solving and satisfaction. I love working with so many people that believe that one person can make a difference. Look at where we can go when we all work together. If you want to join this team, give any one of us a call.





Raise your game by taking the ball on the rise

By Kevin Johnston
USPTA & USPTR

Don't you wish you could play the baseline like Andre Agassi and Martina Hingis? Moving your opponent from side to side, until you get that juicy short ball that you put away for a winner?

Your game will rise to the top like the pros if you learn to take the ball on the rise.

Both Andre and Martina play on or inside the baseline when they are on top of their games.

They hit their forehands and backhands when the ball is on the way up after the bounce, usually between the knee and waist level.

The majority of club members wait for the ball to reach its apex and then drop to make contact.

If this is you, it means you are



probably playing from behind the baseline when you are in a rally. Playing from behind the baseline means you are giving your opponent more time to respond to your shot.

If you can take the ball on the

rise from inside the baseline, their reaction time is reduced. This makes it more difficult for them to play an offensive shot.

To play the ball on the rise, you need to position yourself on the baseline. Next, try to anticipate where the bounce of the ball will be from your opponent's shot.

Take your final step towards this anticipated spot and shorten your backswing slightly.

Make contact in front of you as usual and make sure your follow-through is complete.

By practicing this, you will soon find yourself taking the ball on the rise effectively and controlling the point.

Take the ball early and make your game rise to the top.

Kid, you're gonna be a star!

By Geoff Griffin

The players who volley the best have very compact, firm strokes. Just like Hollywood movie stars.

No, I'm not saying that all movie stars look as good on the tennis court as they do on the movie screen, but I am suggesting that a little acting might just help your game.

Remind yourself of two Hollywood actors while at the net and your power and control might improve.

While hitting one-handed backhand volleys, think of Errol Flynn in Robin Hood.

You have a bow and arrow in your hand instead of a racquet. Now visualize!

Use your left hand to resist the racquet (like pulling back on the bow) as the ball leaves your racquet, freeze your right arm in front of you.

A loose wrist would ruin Robin Hood's aim, and it will certainly spell catastrophe to your volley.

The next time you hit a forehand volley, think of James Cagney. Try and end every volley you can in a handcuffed position!

Finish with your wrists touching. This will stop you from swinging and flailing your arms.

It will also help you keep your wrist locked for much better controlled power.

I use these tips on the courts all the time. Every now and then I miss a shot and catch myself thinking I was Cary Grant.

Spotlight

By Roz King

The holiday festivities continued in January as we tennis players had two great banquets to attend, The San Diego District Annual Dinner and the Balboa Tennis Club's Annual Dinner. Both were "Great" affairs.

This year the District dinner was especially exciting as our club was awarded THE CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD for the second time by the district.

We were all proud of our members receiving awards: **Marisa Ramirez** awarded The Women's Sportsmanship Award, **John Flowers** who was the recipient of the Male Sportsmanship Award and **Bill Stack** received a Community Service Award.

Suggestions for these awards are submitted to an awards committee and these accolades are all expressed just before the award is given. These are all tennis players who have contributed to the love of the game. Congratulations!!!!

Speaking of awards **Jim Lackritz**, President of the District, and **Geoff Griffin** were the MC's at the District dinner and, the delightful "hams" that they are, added levity to the occasion with their great quips and stories.

Thanks to **Patty Sweeting** for putting together a wonderful Annual Dinner at the Bali Hai. And, oh yes, more awards! **Robin Rodger** won the Outstanding Service Person Award, and the Male and Female Member of the Year awards went to **Richard Barndt** and **Fran Wakefield**, respectively.

Fran Wakefield is again getting the intersectional team together for the USTA National Doubles Competition in Charleston, SC in March.

All players have a National or Sectional record. The USTA and the SDDTA provide financial support for the players making this trip which gives incentives to those who "lay it on the line" in tournament competition.

Members in the various age groups from our club who will make up the Southern Cal team are: **Melinda Ainslie-Murray**, **Darice Carnaje**, **Jeanne**

Garrett, Pat Poiset, Virginia Blanchard, Judy Janc, Roz King and Fran Wakefield.

Pat Mason and Gail Jordan are also preparing for the Senior Olympics Nationals in Baton Rouge in July.

The Balboa Tennis Club continues to be the center for tennis and members such as **Malcolm Lichtenstein** is one of the reasons it is such a pleasure being a member, as BTC is all about "people."

Malcolm always lifts my spirits when I talk to him, he has a great sense of humor and a keen sense about people.

He arrived here in San Diego from Brooklyn, NY in 1948 as a Navy civil service employee with the title "Acoustical Psychologist." Malcolm states, "I had never even heard of the term."

He became involved in very interesting and important research and study of vision, hearing and motor skills while monitoring performance levels of people using the naval tactical data systems.

His title later became "Engineering Psychologist." Malcolm started playing tennis in 1952 at the BTC old site. "I just started hanging around the court watching through the screen," he says.

He states he never played tournaments or anything but learned to be a rather decent player. "Anyone who played with me just took that chance," he says, always charmingly self deprecating.

Malcolm still loves hanging out at the courts. "I enjoy watching people I know play, and how the personality shows in the game," Malcolm says. "I am more of an observer now than a player."

Malcolm stays busy and he has written some computer programs that have been published. He also travels in and out of the country to fascinating places like Mexico, Turkey and Iceland, to name a few. So add my name to the Malcolm fan club – he is a real charmer!!!



Board exploring all options as electric bill climbs

(Continued from page 1)

chip in. The board faced the same debate, and ultimately the consensus was that daytime players have been helping to pay for the lights all along, and it would be most fair to begin asking for help from the people who are directly benefiting from the lights.

Robin Rodger, President of the Board of Directors, is organizing a meeting of all the other public tennis facilities in the area to share ideas and information.

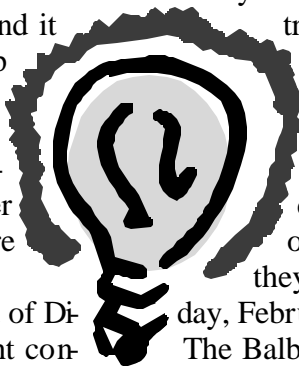
Richard Barndt, Vice President of the Board of Directors, has completed a survey of all the light controls at each pole and has ordered parts that will allow reservationists to lock off all of our lights when the courts are not in use. This will allow for greater control and prevent soccer players from turning on the

tennis court lights.

BTC has been in contact with the City of San Diego and they have agreed to re-wire the circuits that control the lights so the clock that runs the lights can be set to turn off sections of courts at specific times.

Thanks in large part to Balboa Park Program & Activities Manager Penny Scott, city electricians have agreed to work overtime to accomplish this project, and they are scheduled to begin work on Saturday, February 17.

The Balboa Tennis Club is not alone in this crisis. Many California businesses are facing tough times. But the board remains committed to steering the club through this crisis and preserving the Balboa Tennis Club as the center of tennis in the City of San Diego.



Court resurfacing, windscreen projects completed

By Will Tappen

The facilities committee and the Board of Directors have actively been looking at a number of items to be upgraded around the Balboa Tennis Club.

The stadium court was resurfaced in the fall, which completes the most recent round of court resurfacing.

This year the Board of Directors authorized the creation of a court resurface provisional fund, which allows us to begin to save now for our future resurfacing needs. It is our goal to have the finest playing surfaces in the city.

In addition, the board has authorized the purchase and installation of many new windscreens and courtside awnings.

Phase one was recently completed. In this phase, new windscreens were installed around courts 7, 8, 9

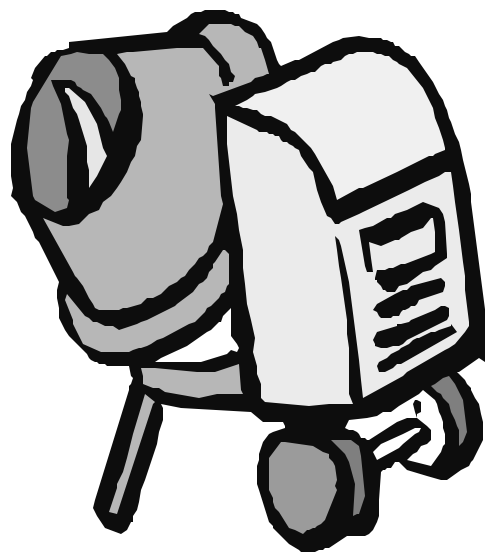
and 10. Also installed in this phase were new windscreens on the west side of court 18, the north side of courts 19, 20, and 21, and the west end of our lower six courts.

The board is currently considering phase two, the replacement of the rest of the older windscreens.

The facilities committee has also recently looked at the courtside seating needs. Two replacement benches have been ordered. In addition, a number of replacements slats for the existing benches have also been ordered.

The facilities committee has also begun to look into the renovation of the seating area in the stadium. This investigation is in an early stage and you should expect to hear more about this in future newsletters.

Finally, if you have issues or



items of concern about our facilities, address these to Will Tappen, chair of the facilities committee, through the reservations desk. Also if you would like to become involved with facilities at the club, we have openings on the committee. Hit it hard and hit it often.

2001 tournament survival guide

Tennis tournaments are an important part of the success of the Balboa Tennis Club, but we recognize that weekend players can find it difficult or impossible to find a court come tournament time.

This is a very serious issue. Prior to the energy crisis, the issue of a fair and balanced tournament schedule was easily the board's number one priority.

Board of Directors put a lot of effort into making some changes that they hope will make tournament season more enjoyable for everyone.

We still have an agreement in place with San Diego High School that allows our members to use their six brand new courts during every tournament moving forward, but there have also been a number of other improvements.

To begin with, two tournaments were dropped from last year's schedule. A new tournament, the Paul Buskey National Senior Heart Tournament, was added — but you might not have noticed it since it was played during off-peak hours during the week.

Also, great pains were taken to set up a schedule that would allow for a break between tournaments.

Everyone was anxious to avoid last year's five week marathon of tournaments that started in October and ran into early November.

Moving forward, we will schedule later start times for tournaments whenever possible. The Balboa Open, the District tournament and the Metropolitan all have 5 p.m. start times scheduled for Fridays.

Tournament reservations will be cut off 15 days before an event begins. The tournament director will give updated court requirements to the reservations staff at that time; and changes to court sheets will only be made by the reservations staff.

Finally, we are taking a census of the membership that should give us better information to add or drop tournaments and schedule court time fairly.

The schedule printed below is intended as a resource that will allow you to plan ahead for these tournaments and avoid frustration.

2001 Balboa Tennis Club Tournament Schedule

April 6-12	National Open	15 courts used	6 courts open for reservations
April 21-22, 27-29	Balboa Spring	15 courts used	6 courts open for reservations
June 30-July 2	Tennis Federation	8-13 courts used	8-13 courts open for reservations
July 20-22, 27-29	Balboa Open	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
July 30-Aug. 3	Balboa Junior	15 courts used	6 courts open for reservations
Aug. 11-12	Hendrickson Wheelchair	8-13 courts used	8-13 courts open for reservations
Aug. 24-26, Sept. 1-3	San Diego District	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
Sept. 28-30, Oct. 5-7	Metropolitan	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
October 11-14	National 3.5	25 courts used	No courts open for reservations
October 25-28	National 4.5	20 courts used	One court open to reservation

Calendar of events

February

20 BTC BOARD MEETING

March

15 NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY VS. YALE
20 BTC BOARD MEETING
25 TENNIS FEST 2001

April

6-12 NATIONAL OPEN TOURNAMENT
17 BTC BOARD MEETING
21-22, 27-29 BALBOA SPRING TOURNAMENT

May

15 BTC BOARD MEETING

Center Court

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