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Court Center

Tennis Fest is this Sunday

If you've been to Tennis Fest before, odds are you already have May 2 marked on your calendar as a day not to miss.

If you've never seen Balboa's massive tennis festival — this year could bring over a thousand people — then you better make sure you set aside a few hours between noon and 4 p.m. this Sunday to join the fun.

Presented by the San Diego District Tennis Association, Tennis Fest is a free event featuring USPTA Pros, celebrity coaches and dozens of tennis-oriented manufacturers and organizations. There will also be music and all sorts of trade booths — it's like a huge party dedicated to tennis!

Open to players of all levels, from seasoned players to first time players, free clinics will focus on a variety of skills, including forehands, backhands, vol-

leys, serves and footwork.

All the biggest names in equipment will be represented, including Wilson, Head, Pro Penn, Dunlop, Babolat, Reebok, Volkl and more.

The first 500 people who pre-register will receive a welcome bag which includes a 2004 Tennis Fest t-shirt. You can register at BTC or on-line - go to www.balboatennis.com and click on the link to Tennis Fest 2004. It is strongly recommended to

pre-register to help us better organize the activities.

Racquet donations are also being accepted. Old racquets can be used to help young kids get started in the sport of a lifetime. All racquet donations will be distributed to those in need by the Greater San Diego Tennis Council, a non-profit organization.



Court etiquette more important than ever

BTC proudly claims players from all walks of life — our diversity is one of the things that makes this club one of the very best in the nation.

When it comes to good manners, however, there's often only one right answer.

Here are some of the most important things to keep in mind:

Never walk onto a court — or off a court — during a point.

Never cross one of the front courts to reach a back court (unless the front courts are *completely* empty).

Never chase your ball onto an occupied court. Ask the players on that court to retrieve it for you — after they've finished their point.

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BTC Named USPTA's 2003 Club of the Year

On Saturday, March 13 the BTC's Director.

United States Professional Tennis Association honored the Balboa Tennis Club by presenting them with the San Diego division of the USPTA's 2003 Club of the Year Award.



The Award was presented by Doug Bradley at Morgan Run Country Club in Rancho Sante Fe.

This is the second major honor for BTC within the last year.

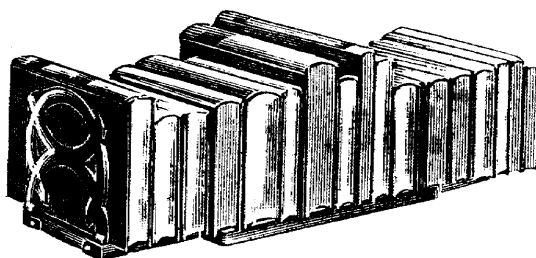
During the US Open Tournament last year the

Geoff Griffin, the President of the San Diego division of the USPTA as well as Balboa Tennis Club's Tennis Director, accepted the award along with Kent Sligh,

United States Tennis Association announced that Balboa Tennis Club has been named an Outstanding Tennis Organization for 2003.

Balboa's proposed Tennis Learning Library needs your help

We hope to establish a Tennis Learning Library that will lend tennis instructional books from the reservations desk to any BTC member, but we need your help.



Odds are you can recommend a tennis book that really helped your game. Do you still have a copy?

Let's be honest, you haven't picked up that book in months. Why not donate your favorite tennis book so it can help someone else?

The Balboa Tennis Club is in the process of collecting tennis instructional books to start a Tennis Learning Library.

Soon members will be able to check out books at the reservations window. A list of all the available titles will be posted for review and any BTC member will be able to check out books for up to two weeks at a time.

Several members have already dropped off books, but we need more to get things rolling. Especially recent titles.

We'll accept any tennis instructional book in good condition. Drop off your donation at the reservation window.



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

Robin Rodger
President

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Randy Gerson

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Terry Overbey

Linda Stadelli

Dwight Van Slyke

Will Tappen

Board Members

Kent Sligh
Director

Geoff Griffin
Tennis Director

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 299-8787

Submissions to the newsletter are welcome.
Call 295-4242

Many issues face Balboa's busy board

By Robin Rodger, BTC President

Balboa Tennis Club recently became a "Tennis Welcome Center" as part of a new nationwide program to promote tennis for beginners.

Geoff Griffin is kicking off this program here with a BTC-sponsored free clinic for beginners on Saturday, June 5, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. This will be followed up by four more consecutive Saturday beginners clinics at a nominal charge. When the clinics are completed Geoff and BTC will host free Saturday social round robins for these players.

The Tennis Fest on May 2, will also expose large numbers of the public to the game we all love. Tennis can be a difficult sport to learn and statistics say many give up after a month or two. Let's help our pro's encourage people to get off the couch and get out there — no one is too old or too young to start.

One of my main concerns when I became president five years ago was to maintain open communication with our membership. All members are invited to attend our board meetings on the third Tuesday of every month.

I also make an effort to use this space to address areas of concern as they come to my attention, and I want to do that now.

The lighting upgrade is finally coming to completion. Per our contract, twelve additional light fixtures will be installed. The first pair are up between courts four and five. They have been added specifically to provide extra light in the shadowy areas in the backcourt. These sample fixtures were put up so the board could approve them before the remaining 10 fixtures are installed.

The other light issue is the excess glare produced by the double corner lights. Amtech Lighting is coming out next week to adjust the pitch of one set of lights for our approval. There is a fine line between glare and insuring maximum light coverage on the court.

The upper deck above the snack shop has not left our radar screen. We received matching funds for the project several years ago, but the city wanted to keep our money without a guarantee of approval, and stated that we needed a structural engineer to verify the roof will hold the weight load. They also insisted we make a number of changes to comply with the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It soon became obvious this was going to cost much more than the \$8,000 that we had budgeted to fund the project.

We are planning to address some of the ADA concerns with the \$15,000 that Toni Atkins has given us for the backboard project. We have been told by the city we need to address a number of ADA concerns before we can move forward with any other project.

Sometimes people want food when the Tennis Café is closed. Ed Barron and the board are looking into installing small, narrow vending machines in the clubhouse hallway. If we decide to proceed, we are planning on putting out a quick survey to see what kinds of foods would be most popular with our members. Foods are limited to those that are compatible with these specialized machines. We will keep you updated with signs and flyers.

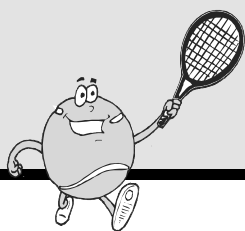
The new member roster will be coming out the first or second week of May. A sign will inform you when members can pick up their free roster from the reservation desk. Extra copies may be obtained for a \$5 fee. There have been changes to the rules and regulations to clarify several gray areas, so be sure and read all the front pages of the membership roster.

If you have any suggestions or complaints there are forms for this purpose in the clubhouse and at the reservation desk. We appreciate your input and work very hard to listen to all ideas. We would appreciate your name and phone number so that we can personally respond to your complaint or suggestion.

We will be resurfacing courts 7—10 in June. Five years ago we created a windscreen and resurfacing fund that enables us to resurface all our courts on a regular schedule.

This article is a bit wordy but I felt the need to communicate many of the issues that are before the board. As you can see, Balboa's Board of Directors deals with many issues at the same time. As a group of volunteers, it can take time to solve some of the complex problems that keep us from moving forward on everything we would like to accomplish. We all love BTC and the Balboa Park area, and we are working to make it all that it can be.





Tennis Tips...

...from the pros

Doubles troubles? Tips for beginners

By Geoff Griffin

Playing singles as a beginner is difficult enough. At least in singles though, your number one objective is to get to the ball and hit it. Doubles on the other hand is a lot more complicated. Now you have a partner. So now you most likely have two very inexperienced people trying to decide where to stand, where to go, and who to hit the ball.

In this tip I am going to cover two of the most important teamwork strategies for beginners. Ball hogging and communication.

Ball Hogging

There are really only three reasons that you should ever run over onto your partner's side of the court. The first two are both related to reacting to returning an opponent's lob and the third is poaching. Anything else is ball hogging. Hogging is often annoying and usually affects your team's ability to play good doubles.

1. The Lob: When a ball goes over your head while you are at the net position, it is often much easier for your partner to run after it. The reason is that he or she is able to run to the ball at an angle rather than straight back. So this is one important reason for your partner to move to your side of the court. In the same point situation you must react to your partner leaving his or her side of the court by crossing over yourself. Seems obvious enough but often forgotten by beginning players.

2. The Poach: Though fairly advanced, poaching is when a player at the net position shoots across to their partner's side in anticipation of an easy volley winner. The act of surprise is critical to its success. And if you do it too much, your opponent will get wise to you and simply pass you down the line.

Also your partner might get annoyed at your apparent *Ball Hogging*.

If your team consists of players of similar abilities, then those are the only acceptable times in which you cross the imaginary line in the center of the court. If you do it any other time, you are, to an extent, infringing on your partner's turf, and will not become very popular on the doubles court.

Communication There are very few words allowed during a particular point in tennis. One obvious one is the word *OUT! USE IT!*

Help your partner to bounce balls that might be going out by saying quickly and loudly, *OUT!* or *BOUNCE!*

This is not a time to be polite. You must almost scare your partner, because, believe me, most beginners want to hit everything they can get their racquet on.

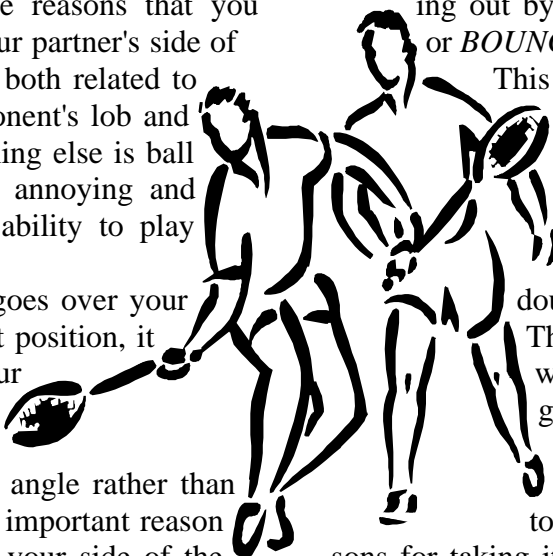
A few other invaluable words in doubles are *YOURS!* and *MINE!* These two words are most important when you and your partner are together at the net or the baseline.

When you are together and a ball comes between you. Who is going to take it? I could tell you many reasons for taking it or not taking it but that may not even come into play when you have a fraction of a second to make the decision.

The bottom line is that if you don't want it yell *YOURS!* and if you do want it yell *MINE!*

The worst thing that can happen is that you will both yell yours at the same time and the ball will harmlessly pass between the two of you.

I hope these little ideas will help you play more like a team and less like two individuals out their on the court. Good luck and have fun.



Spotlight on spot-checking



The Balboa Tennis Club instituted a policy of spot-checking membership cards this year, and it seems to be paying off in a big way.

Membership revenue is up over \$4,000 — and that's just in the first three months!

Spot-checking isn't all about catching cheaters. Most of the people we've caught seem to have been legitimately unaware that their memberships had expired.

So if you don't already do so, you should make a habit of bringing your membership card to the courts with you each time you play.

We don't want to slow you down, but we'll be spot-checking everyone's card anywhere from 3 to 6 times a month.

And we mean *everyone*. While most members have been happy to show their cards, there have been a couple of complaints from long-

Just because the staff knows you well doesn't mean they've memorized your expiration date.

time members. Please remember that just because the staff knows you well doesn't mean they've memorized your expiration date.

We've identified more than a few members who thought they were current only to find out they'd overlooked their renewal.

We've created the spot-checking policy in an effort to avoid making everyone show their card every time they play.

If you happen to be playing on a day when we're spot checking, get your membership card out and get your group together before you pick up your ticket.

Of course, we appreciate you making sure your companions are members or day pass holders anytime you play at BTC.

It's no fun to play cop, but making sure everyone pays their fair share is the best way to keep everyone's dues low.

Lots of ways to make BTC your home

For a lot of people, BTC is more than just a tennis club. It can be a second home, with friendships that last a lifetime.

If you'd like to join our diverse family, there are lots of ways you can get involved.

One of the most sociable choices is to join our Social Committee, where you can help plan (and attend) all kinds of social events, from tournament parties to round robin events.

If you're interested in learning more about the history of the Balboa Tennis Club, you might want

to consider joining a new committee that is being formed to create a scrapbook for our clubhouse.

Over the years we have collected decades worth of newspaper clippings and photos.

Many are posted in the clubhouse, many more are collected in a jumbled file in the Director's office.

The scrapbook committee will be organizing as much as we can into a beautifully bound scrapbook that will be on display in our recently remodeled clubhouse.

The gardening committee is go-

ing strong, but there is always room for another green thumb. They meet regularly to maintain the plants in the pots and planters around our facility.

The Junior Program needs volunteers to work with the kids — you only need to be able to toss a ball. You'll have a great time and the kids will call you "Coach."

To find out more about how you can join any of these groups, call our Director, Kent Sligh, at 619-295-4242. He will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Board keeps an eye on court availability

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. Over the years the Board of Directors have made a number of changes in an attempt to strike a fair balance between tournament players and the needs of our membership.

In 2001 the board voted to drop the fall club tournament, so we only have the spring tournament.

When we adopted the Paul Buskey Senior Heart Tournament, we established an 11 a.m. start time so the event would not interfere with morning play.

The Balboa Open, the District Championships and the Metropolitan all have 5 p.m. start times scheduled

for Fridays.

San Diego High School no longer locks gates outside their six courts, so they are always available for our members to use during tournament times. We are currently working to reestablish an agreement with them that will insure our ability to use their courts on a long-term basis. Directions are available at the reservations desk.

And remember this important fact: courts almost always come available on the final day of a tournament, since tournament directors need to schedule a few extra courts as a contingency against rain.

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

2004 Special Events Schedule

May 2	Tennis Fest	15 courts used	6 courts open for reservations
May 15-16	Hendrickson Memorial	8-13 courts used	8-13 courts open for reservations
June 5	Free Clinic # 2	3:00 pm — 4:30 pm	Sign up at the pro shop
June 7-13	National Open Champs	15 courts used	6 courts open for reservations
July 3-5	SD Tennis Federation	8-16 courts used	5-18 courts open for reservations
July 23-25, 30-Aug 1	Balboa Open	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
August 2-6	Balboa Junior	8-15 courts used	6-13 courts open for reservations
August 14	Free Clinic #3	3:00 pm — 4:30 pm	Sign up at the pro shop
Aug. 27-29, Sept 4-6	San Diego District	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
September 11	Club Social #3	3:30 pm Round Robin	Food served at 5:30 pm
September 13-16	Senior Olympics	12 courts used	All play between Noon—5:00 pm
Sept. 19-21, 26-28	Metropolitan	18 courts used	3 courts open for reservations
October 18	Free Clinic #4	3:00 pm — 4:30 pm	Sign up at the pro shop
November 22	Turkey Shoot	3:30 pm Round Robin	Food served at 5:30 pm

Dive into BTC's Annual Picnic!

You may want to start hitting the tanning salon, waxing parlor and fitness center now — to prepare for our Annual Picnic, wet 'n' wild style!

On May 22nd we'll hold this year's picnic at our next-door oasis, Bud Kearns Swimming Pool. Bring a towel and swimming gear if you're so inclined.

Otherwise, just bring your appetite and a sense of good humor (what could be more fun than checking out your tennis buddies in their swimming skivvies?).

Chairs are few, so bring your beach chair unless you want to tread water.

The Member Picnic gives members a chance to meet off the court and celebrate the year's accomplishments. Also a number of awards will be given out — some serious, some not so serious.

Last year the club held the first Annual Picnic on the lawn in front of the teaching courts, and the event was a huge success.

About a hundred members enjoyed each other's company at a Mexican-themed picnic. Afterwards kids got to break piñatas while the adults played volleyball.

The Annual Picnic was originally conceived as an alternative to our Annual Dinner, a more formal affair that saw attendance slump as dinner prices topped \$30. With banquet hall prices climbing higher, BTC's Board of Directors were anxious to find a solution that would allow more members to attend without breaking the bank.

You can sign up for this year's Annual Picnic at the Reservation Desk right now. Please sign up early if at all possible to assist us in our plan-



Balboa hosts USTA National Open

The USTA only sanctions one national open hardcourt tournament each year, and since 2001 that tournament has been held at the Balboa Tennis Club.

The best tennis of the year will be on display June 7 through the 13 during the USTA National Open Championships.

Past winners have included players with world-wide rankings, as this event attracts players from all over the nation.

Every event has a consolation, so players are guaranteed at least two matches, even if they're in a little over their head.

The winner of the singles divisions will be awarded wild card to a USTA Professional Circuits Event — as well as a gold ball from the USTA.

Revised Matchfinder offers up to date information to get a game

Looking for a game? Did you know that the Balboa Tennis Club keeps a database of players looking for new people to hit with?

Our Matchfinder is a database of names and numbers which automatically sorts all the players by their level. Players also list when they're available to play, and whether they prefer singles or doubles.

Before a recent overhaul, the database had become bloated with old names and numbers.

A new slimmed-down matchfinder is now available, so you can be more confident you are getting current information.

You can add your name or get an updated copy from the Reservations Desk just by asking.

May 2004

Calendar of events

May

2	TENNIS FEST 2004!
15-16	HENDRICKSON MEMORIAL WHEELCHAIR TOURNAMENT
18	BTC BOARD MEETING
22	BTC ANNUAL PICNIC

June

5	FREE CLINIC—OPEN TO BEGINNERS ONLY
7-13	NATIONAL OPEN HARDCOURT CHAMPIONSHIPS
15	BTC BOARD MEETING

July

3-5	SDTF—SAN DIEGO OPEN TOURNAMENT
20	BTC BOARD MEETING
23-25, 30-Aug 1	75th MAUREEN CONNOLLY BTC OPEN

August

2-6	BTC JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS
14	FREE CLINIC—OPEN TO EVERYONE!
17	BTC BOARD MEETING
27-29, Sept 4-6	76th SAN DIEGO DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS

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inside...

New tennis learning library
President's Message
Tennis Tips from the Pros
National Open starts June 7

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