

CROSSCOURT



Slowing game down crucial to early success

Tennis balls are now being designed with the intent of keeping the on-court action lively, fun and, best of all, inside the lines. Taking some of the bounce *out* of the ball just might be the key to keeping the bounce *in* a new player's step.

It's no secret tennis has not always been kind to beginners. But a new tennis ball revolution is geared toward making the sport more newbie-friendly.

Surely you've witnessed this scene before: Newcomer

steps onto court for the first time with an oversized, space age racquet trying to hit a juiced-up, pressurized ball moving at what seems like warp speed. The result?

A swing and a miss. Ball over the fence. Ball into the net. Ball rocketed into the next zip code. Another swing and another miss.

"When I go out to speak or do workshops now, I always ask the question, 'How many of you are using foam and transition balls?'," said Kirk Anderson, the USTA's director of Recreational Coaches and Programs. "Two or three years ago I'd get one or two people. Almost everyone raises their hands now. We're only

See THE BALL ■ Page 38

Having a Ball

USTA gives St. Louis school an extra 'Lift'

— Page 37



MISSOURI VALLEY

2006 proves to be a smashing success

— Page 41

Ashe's legacy lives on

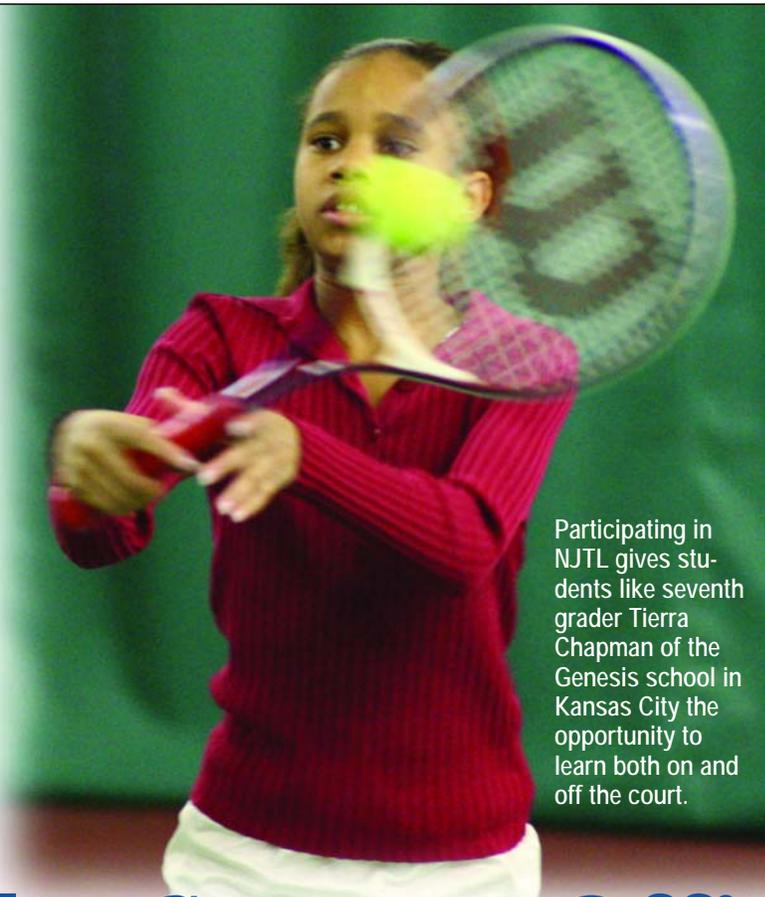
Arthur Ashe wanted to take everyone to court. The tennis court that is.

He'd be proud to know that his most enduring legacy — introducing the sport to those who might not otherwise have the opportunity to play tennis — is something that continues on to this day, and in his name.

Each year, the USTA remembers Ashe's accomplishments and contributions to the sport in many forms. The US Open Stadium Court is named after the former world No. 1, as is Arthur Ashe Kids' Day — held one day prior to the Open's first round — which celebrates Ashe's enduring optimism and belief that children, education and tennis were a terrific mix.

It is also in that vein, that the annual National Arthur Ashe Essay Contest is held — open to National Junior Tennis League (NJTL) members across the country. NJTL was a program Ashe co-founded in 1969 to give more children exposure to tennis.

EARLY START The USTA Missouri Valley added to this national contest by pairing up with several predominantly African-American charter schools and NJTL chapters located within the section to roll out an



Participating in NJTL gives students like seventh grader Tierra Chapman of the Genesis school in Kansas City the opportunity to learn both on and off the court.

Lessons On The Court & Off!

an early start to the contest during February, Black History Month. The goal was to increase awareness of Ashe's legacy as an African-American pioneer, and to get as many children to pen essays for the contest as possible.

“Our goal is for kids to know who Arthur Ashe was. Not just his name, but what he did — both on and off the court,” says Fred Johnson, USTA Missouri Valley diversity manager, who oversees the section's entries to the national contest.

Among the schools included in this early roll out was Kansas City's Genesis School.

Schools like Genesis, now in its third year as a registered NJTL, are excited about the opportunities the USTA Missouri Valley has presented them to help bring tennis to their campuses. The school, which caters to at-risk youth of middle school and early high school ages, has used tennis to expand its students' horizons, athletically and academically.

“Our kids all understand struggle, and Arthur's story is about overcoming and achieving through that struggle,” said J.B. Blanks, teacher and NJTL director for Genesis School.

“His message was a message all of our kids can learn from. What I'm really excited about is that this contest gives our kids the chance to bone up on their writing skills and

learn something about tennis at the same time.”

YEAR-ROUND GOAL Genesis School has seen a slight increase each year in its tennis offerings for students. The school, which runs after-school and summer programs, is trying to get grants for a year-round tennis curriculum. Educational components like the Ashe Essay Contest put tennis in a new and exciting light for students at schools like Genesis, and breaks the mold of the classroom materials about which they'd normally write essays.

The chance to win a free, all-expense paid trip to Arthur Ashe Kids' Day at the US Open just for writing a 300-word essay doesn't hurt either. Two students from the Missouri Valley won their respective age divisions in 2005, with another two prevailing last year. Genesis School also had a student, Gentle Duley, selected to attend an NJTL Leadership Camp in the summer of 2006. So, the students know firsthand the potential rewards of dutiful effort.

“I didn't know much about Arthur Ashe before, but I've learned a lot about him and tennis since we started,” said 15-year-old freshman Nicole Williams, one of Duley's classmates and teammates on the Genesis NJTL squad. “His story and the things he did with tennis were amazing.”

ARTHUR ASHE ESSAY CONTEST DEADLINE

July 10 (Ashe's birthday): Essays are due at USTA National Office. Winners will tour New York and participate in Arthur Ashe Kids' Day (Aug. 25).

For more information about the contest, including the mailing address for entries, “go to the net” at missourivalley.usta.com. Click the “Diversity” option under “Community Tennis.”

4 WINNERS FROM MISSOURI VALLEY IN 2 YEARS:

2005: Katelyn Koerber (Aurora, Kan) and Jessica Wojcik (Grand Island, Neb.)

2006: Ashley Rhone (Del City, Okla.) and Alexandria Henson (Florissant, Mo.)

Tennis Gives School Added Lift

St. Louis school gives kids a new opportunity

USTA organizational members are a diverse collection of groups, with many servicing those looking to do more than serve up tennis balls.

Lift for Life Academy and Gym is just such an organization. This charter middle school located in a recycled bank building in the heart of St. Louis is relatively new to the USTA Missouri Valley family, having been an organizational member for less than a year. But Lift for Life is already accomplishing great things on the court.

VARIED EXPERIENCES Lift for Life was started in the late 1980s as a neighborhood gym to keep children off the streets and give them a positive alternative via weightlifting and fitness. In 2000, that vision expanded when Lift for Life became the city's first charter middle school for students in grades sixth through eighth.

Currently, 400 children attend the school. Most are at-risk kids who have bounced around the school system, but are given a second chance to succeed at Lift for Life. Many of the school's students are bused to the year-round school, no matter what corner of St. Louis they're from.

Besides being a high-performing educational institution, Lift for Life also boasts a wide spectrum of enrichment activities, from cooking, to weightlifting, photography and tennis. That assortment truly makes the school unique, and one of the reasons the daily attendance rate is nearly 94 percent, almost 10 percent higher than the Missouri state average.

"You never know the hidden talents of a child or know if they'll take a liking to something until you give them a chance with it," said Lift for Life Community Relations Director Susan Kelter. "That's our attitude here. We expose them to a lot of things and attempt to bring diverse programming, things like tennis. That's what makes them want to stay in school and be a part of a place like Lift for Life.

"For many of these kids, they'd never even been introduced to the sport of tennis. Just doing that has now shown them that there are many opportunities for them to play."

Tennis became part of the school's curriculum in the summer of 2006. St. Louis Aces owner Dan Apted invited Lift for Life to use the Dwight Davis Tennis Center for tennis lessons. Apted introduced Lift for Life to the Just Us Tennis Foundation, an African-American-based Community Tennis Association in St. Louis that strives to reach urban kids through the sport.

"We ran a four-week program, Monday-Thursday during the summer," said Just Us Tennis Foundation President Joe Clark. "We did one group per week and the groups averaged in size between 30 and 40 kids. We reached about 140 kids in total."

The children who took part in the program were hungry for the sport and became hooked immediately. Even the Lift for Life staff got involved during many of the days of the camps.

"It was a very good program," said Brandon Maytubby, 12, one of last summer's camp participants. "They provided us



The Lift for Life Academy accepts a grant check from the USTA. Kneeling (L-R): Academy students Alexis Smith and Michael Tomlin. Back row (L-R): Arianna Ross, Christian Brooks, USTA Missouri Valley Community Tennis Program Manager Sue Riemann, Lift for Life physical educator teacher Chris Vance, USTA Missouri Valley St. Louis Tennis Service Representative Tina Harrison, Brandon Maytubby and Maurice Kemper.

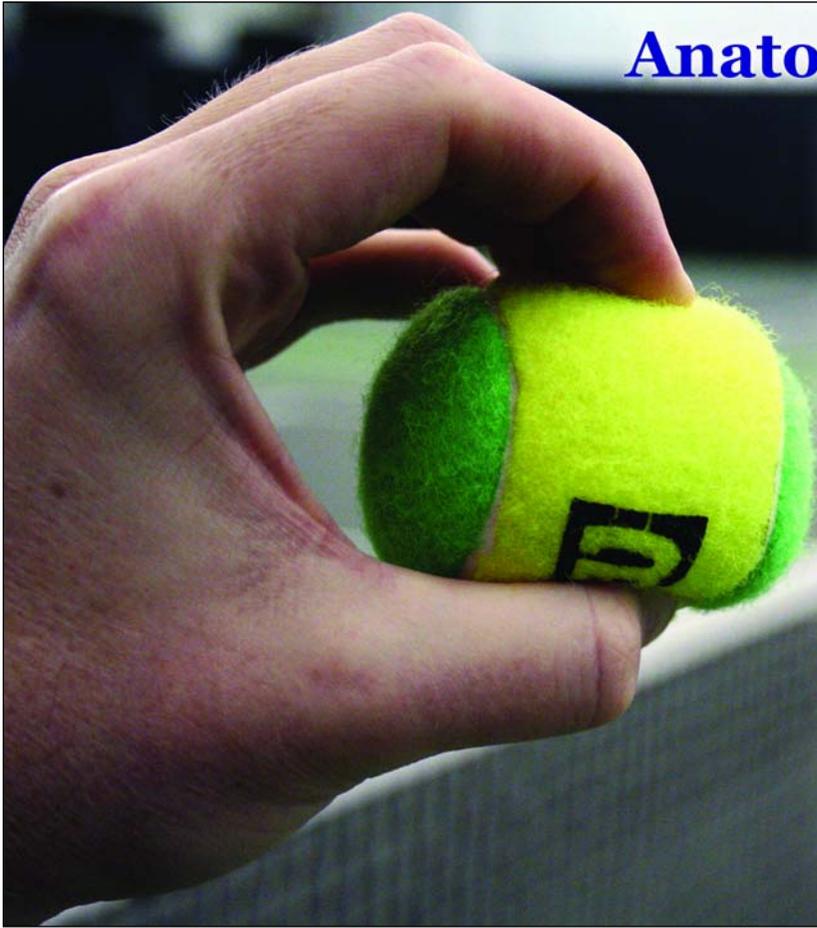
with a lot of things, like drinks, snacks and tennis racquets. I'd played a little tennis before, but the instructors really taught me a lot of new things. I play football and basketball, too, but the reason I love playing tennis is because it's an individual sport."

The program was a huge success for everyone involved. Just Us instructors served as mentors for more than just Lift for Life's students on-court. They introduced Lift for Life's administration to the possibilities that were available through the USTA. Soon after, the Lift for Life Academy and the Lift for Life Gym both became USTA organizational members.

HOOKED ON TENNIS The Just Us Tennis Foundation also encouraged Lift for Life to apply for USTA grants, and introduced the organization's brass to higher-ups at USTA

See LIFT ■ Page 40

Anatomy of a Tennis Ball



Regulation

- Diameter: 2.5 inches
- Weight: 2 ounces
- Color: Optic yellow
- Composition: Pressurized rubber core, layered in felt

Foam

- Diameter: 3.5 inches
- Weight: 1.5 ounces
- Color: Bright red and yellow, yellow and black
- Composition: High density foam

Pressureless/Spinners (Shown Here)

- Diameter: 2.5 inches or slightly more
- Weight: 1.5 ounces or slightly less
- All colors
- Composition: Low compression core, layered in felt

THE BALL ■ From Page 35

now doing what other sports like baseball and soccer have been doing for years. By scaling things down and modifying equipment for kids, you're not changing the sport that much. You're allowing them to play."

SLOWER-MOTION, FASTER LEARNING CURVE Gone are the days where the choice of balls ranged from optic yellow and fuzzy to... optic yellow and fuzzy. Take a trip to any athletic superstore or tennis club now, and you're likely to find tennis balls of different sizes, color, compression and composition. Not only are ball sales of all kinds up across the board, but "transition balls" — the term for slower, low compression balls (spinners) and spongy, foam balls — are particularly hot.

"We have seen pretty good growth in that area (transition balls) the last few years," said Jennifer Parker, business manager for Penn. "When it comes to teaching, especially for kids, there is no substitute really for a foam ball. It almost provides a slow-motion effect for the kids, giving them time to really set up to hit the ball properly. It makes the

sport more enjoyable to learn."

Since many first-timers often give up the sport after just one chance, establishing that enjoyment is vital to helping a new generation of players find the game fun — instead of frustrating from their very first swing. Spinners and foam balls allow kids and other beginners to experience early success and get a peek into their tennis future as they progress toward hitting regulation balls.

Instructors are taking notice.

TRANSITIONING TO TRANSITION BALLS "The reason we use foam balls, No. 1 is to make the sport fun and exciting for the kids," said David Minihan, director of Tennis at Westwood Tennis Center in Norman, Okla., and the author of a soon-to-be published work entitled, *Easy as 1, 2, 3: Introducing Children to Tennis in a Fun and Exciting Environment*.

Standard teaching curriculum for youngsters these days almost always begins with an introduction via transition and foam balls. From the United States Professional Teaching Association (USPTA) and Professional Tennis

Registry (PTR) to ball manufacturers like Wilson, Dunlop and Penn, to the USTA itself, transition and foam balls are becoming a part of the business of tennis, as well as the business of tennis teaching.

"With the foam and transition balls, the ball just comes off the racquet easier for kids," said Minihan. "It's not as heavy on their strings, which means control is better. Just about any kid can make good contact with (transition and foam balls), which means they're experiencing success with the sport right away. I'm a strong believer of making the sport as easy as possible, and foam and transition balls definitely do that."

SWING AND MISSILE Though fun may be the primary result, fundamentals also become easier for kids to grasp with the new equipment, which really excites instructors. Since foam and spinner balls are so much lighter and slower off the bounce, timing isn't such a crucial factor in making solid contact. Correct form is easier to develop because the bounce and speed of these balls is manageable.

Bad technique and hitches in strokes

often develop early on when new players are simply trying to adjust to the speed or height of the bounce. With transition equipment in place, that part of the equation is taken out of play, meaning instructors can now better stress form and function, and not have to adjust to their pupils' height or strength levels. In short, kids are more receptive and excited when they're doing well.

It's a win-win situation for instructors who want to see that success in their young pupils, and for parents who want their children having fun with the sport. The best potential result of all? Young players could become not only happier on the court, but better, more polished players at a younger age. Instead of swing and miss, it's now swing and missile.

"I have four kids and all of them have played tennis now," said Teala Engle of Kansas City, Mo., whose youngest son, Tom, 8, has been playing with both spinner and foam balls in his tennis classes at Midtown Tennis Club in Overland Park, Kan., from the start. "My first three kids went with what I guess then was the more traditional route. Tom is going through a program now where they use (transition) equipment much more, and I think he likes it. Instead of maybe starting and being able to hit one in 20 shots great, maybe now he'll get 10 out of 20."

One of Tom's classmates, 8-year-old Tyler Gillmore, says he likes playing with the transition balls because he "likes to be competitive."

"It's a lot of fun with the softer balls," said Gillmore. "I can get a lot of them in the court even when I swing hard."

THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN DOOR Many of the sport's brass believe transition balls will soon become the next big thing in tennis teaching, and, if it's not already, will become

Transition balls help a youngster like 8-year-old Benjamin Rohleder really set up their swing and develop proper technique.



standard equipment for instructors teaching young-age beginners. It also works well for older-age beginners just taking part in the game and wanting to get the feel of a rally before they develop their tennis hand-eye coordination. The balls are also used extensively in programs like Cardio Tennis, which have thus far been more geared towards adults.

The equipment could also encourage parents to begin introducing the sport to their kids. That has long been a stumbling block, since so many parents have always felt that the sport was so technical, even at the earliest levels. According to Anderson, with transition equipment like mini-nets and balls, parents could begin bringing the court to their own driveways and become their children's earliest instructors. He points out that for many kids, their first taste of sports like basketball and baseball was at home, playing with their parents.

"There are nearly 400,000 coaches teaching soccer in the United States," said Anderson. "Do you know who many of those are? Parents. If we can make the game of tennis so simple that a mom or dad can go out in the driveway and rally some balls back and forth with their child, then we all win."

"The research is overwhelming: When you slow everything down the way you can with these kinds of balls, anyone who has an interest in tennis can take part and have some success on the court. When that starts happening more and more, that's when we'll really take off."

CROSSCOURT COVER: Using transition balls helps these kids at the Midtown Tennis Club in Overland Park, Kan., slow the action down and better develop their swing — while having lots of fun, rather than frustration, as they learn to play the game.

Go to missourivalley.usta.com and click the "Benefits" option under "Membership"

hotels.com
BEST PRICES, BEST PLACES. GUARANTEED.™



Find a place to stay and help the USTA Missouri Valley!

hotels.com is a proud partner of the USTA Missouri Valley. Booking your airfare, hotel, car rental or cruise needs from the USTA Missouri Valley Web site benefits local tennis in your area. **A percentage of everything you book through missourivalley.usta.com goes back into the game in the Missouri Valley!**

For more than 15 years, hotels.com has been providing travelers great prices on the places they want to stay. hotels.com makes planning and booking your trip easy through the hotels.com expert lodging Web site and through our certified hotel experts available 24/7 via a toll free number.



From The Classroom To The Tennis Courts!

The Lift for Life Academy added tennis program was launched with an invite from St. Louis Aces owner Dan Apted to use the courts at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center for lessons.



LIFT • From Page 37

National during a site visit to St. Louis. "I've been on tours to a lot of schools and I won't forget (Lift for Life)," said Karen Green, USTA National Coordinator for School Tennis. "I was really impressed by everything each group was doing to help get their kids introduced to tennis with the intent it could be a life sport for many of them. I thought it was a really good fit with the NJTL (National Junior Tennis League), the section, and the non-profit group."

USTA was convinced enough to offer Lift for Life a Tennis & Education grant for \$10,600 at the end of 2006, a grant that will go toward equipment, instruction fees and transportation costs.

"It takes the entire community to do what we try to do here at Lift for Life, and I was amazed at the cooperation between all the different entities," said Kelter. "We got very excited when the USTA talked about helping us. What the USTA is doing sends a great message to children like ours, and that message is really aligned with everything we're about, providing different opportunities for our kids. It's enormous what this grant is for and what it will help us do."

Cooper Tennis Complex

Having A Smashin' Good Time In Springfield, Mo.



- 12 Indoor Courts
- 17 Outdoor Courts
- Affordable For All!

USTA Missouri Valley Facility of the Year - 2006



Home of World TeamTennis'



Cooper Indoor/Outdoor Tennis Complex

417-837-5800
2331 E. Pythian
Springfield, MO 65802



MISSOURI VALLEY

THE YEAR THAT WAS 2006



MISSOURI VALLEY

● DREAM COME TRUE

Just about anyone who has ever picked up a tennis racket has imagined it — playing at Wimbledon and the US Open. **Chloe Jones** (Baldwin City, Kan.), can stop imagining it because she's done it, playing in the junior divisions of both Grand Slams.

Jones also played for the United States Junior Fed Cup team.

● TAYLOR SHINES

The inspired — and inspiring — play of **Nick Taylor** (Wichita, Kan.) helped the United States win the 2006 Invacare World Team Cup, wheelchair tennis' equivalent of the Davis Cup.

Taylor didn't drop a match during the week-long competition in Brasilia,



Nick Taylor

Brazil. He and doubles partner David Wagner of Fullerton, Calif., were a combined 11-0 on the week, playing both singles and doubles. Taylor got the U.S. off to a rousing start in the final versus Italy, posting a 6-1, 6-2 singles victory.

● US OPEN VICTORIES

Tony Kurtenbach (Omaha, Neb.) took three titles at the 27th Annual US



Chloe Jones

all season for the Iowa Hawkeyes.

Meanwhile, coaches from the Missouri Valley swept up numerous awards. **Jay Louderback**, a 2006 inductee to the Missouri Valley Hall of Fame (Page 13), was named Division I Women's Coach of the Year, after another successful season at Notre Dame. **Amine Boustani** of Drury University in Springfield, Mo., won the ITA Division II Coach of the Year award, while the Division III honor went to **Roger Follmer** of

Washington University in St. Louis.

Finally, the Greater Kansas City area played host to the NCAA Division II championships. BYU-Hawaii claimed its sixth women's title in eight years, and Valdosta State (Ga.) won its first-ever men's crown.

Open USTA National Wheelchair Championships in San Diego.

● NCAA SUCCESS STORIES

In 2006, players with ties to the USTA Missouri Valley authored plenty of success stories on college tennis courts. **Ryan Rowe** (Moline, Ill.) captured the NCAA Doubles Championship for the University of Illinois. **Travis Helgeson** (Overland Park, Kan.) and **Sheeva Parbhu** (Omaha, Neb.) each earned Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) All-American honors — Helgeson playing for the Texas Longhorns, Parbhu for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish.

Both Helgeson and Parbhu advanced to the NCAA quarterfinals.

Meg Racette (Urbandale, Iowa) reached the NCAA tournament's second round, while playing No. 1 singles

● NATIONAL CHAMP

David Bryant (Oklahoma City) won the USTA Men's National 60's doubles title.

● INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS

Beverly Little (Belton, Mo.) represented the United States in the sixth Annual Friendship Cup in Pörschach, Austria.

Richard Johnson (Ballwin, Mo.) also traveled overseas to play in the Von Cramm Cup in Antalya, Turkey.



NCAA Division II Championships

● **NATIONAL OPEN WINNERS**

Haley Martin (Tulsa, Okla.) brought home the first-place Girls 14's doubles title from a USTA National Open.

Anthony Delcore (Omaha, Neb.) and **Cameron Hubbs** (Omaha, Neb.) also claim National Open titles in 2006.

● **PTR MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

Ajay Pant (Overland Park, Kan.) was named *Racquet Sports Industry's* 2006 Professional Tennis Registry Member of the Year.



Ajay Pant

● **ARTHUR ASHE ESSAYISTS**

Alexandria Henson (Florissant, Mo.) and **Ashley Rhone** (Del City, Okla.) wrote their way to national victories. They each won their age divisions of the 2006 National Junior Tennis League (NJTL) Arthur Ashe Essay Contest. They joined the other eight national winners in New York City for Arthur Ashe Kids' Day prior to the US Open.

● **NJTL LEADERS**

Three youths from the Missouri Valley — **Lauren Cheeseborough** (Wichita, Kan.), **Demonta Bailey** (Kansas City, Mo.) and **Gentle Duley** (Kansas City, Mo.) — were selected to attend the NJTL National Leadership Camp in San Diego.

● **LUKE!**

Luke Jensen, the colorful former French Open doubles champ and new University of Syracuse women's tennis coach, continued to be a frequent guest of the USTA Missouri Valley.

Among his visits to the section, he helped celebrate the reopening of the Oklahoma City Tennis Center, after a \$1.8 million facelift, and he gave the opening night speech of the Missouri Valley Annual Conference (page 12).

● **SHOW-ME CUP**

The Springfield Lasers got the cup! The USTA Missouri Valley gave the section's World TeamTennis franchisees something extra to compete for in 2006 — the first-ever Show-Me Cup. And the

Lasers won it. They topped their Missouri rivals, the Kansas City Explorers and St. Louis Aces, to prevail in the intra-section competition.

Olathe, Kan., native **Nick Monroe** played for the triumphant Lasers.

World TeamTennis continued to bring many of the marquee names in tennis to the Missouri Valley, including **Pete Sampras**, **Anna Kournikova**, the dynamic doubles duo of **Mike and Bob Bryan**, and 2004 French Open champ **Anastasia Myskin**. (2007 World TeamTennis schedule page 50)

● **7 PRO CIRCUIT EVENTS**

The Missouri Valley played host to seven different Pro Circuit tournaments



Nick Monroe

in 2006. Each included Community Involvement Day activities to further raise awareness of tennis in each tournament's host city.

● **NATIONAL HONOR**

USTA National saluted **Jane Hines** (Omaha, Neb.) as the organization's national volunteer of the month for August 2006.

● **MORE AWARDS**

Chris Young of Wichita State University (Kan.) received the national USTA/ITA Community Service Award.

The USTA/ITA also presented a Regional Campus Recreation Award to **Chase Hodges** of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.



Luke Jensen and friends in Oklahoma City.

● STEALING THE SHOW

Kansas City hosted the USTA National Husband & Wife Hard Court Championships — a mixed doubles tournament featuring only married couples. **Dustin and Carolina Perry** kept the championship trophy in the Missouri Valley, as the Kansas City couple — both former Division I college players — topped **Junior and Marissa Brown** (Overland Park, Kan.) in the 6-2, 7-6 (4) final.

But the Marolds from Corpus Christi, Texas, nearly stole the show. Charles (60 years old) and Hilary (55) had a tournament to shout about as they made a run all the way to the semifinals, before running into the top-seeded Browns. Charles and Hilary defeated many competitors who haven't been alive as long as the Marolds have been married — 28 years and counting.

Kansas City will again host the tournament July 13-15, 2007.

● USTA LEAGUE TENNIS

USTA League tennis continued to thrive in the Missouri Valley with the number of players in the section up to **13,197 players, up from 12,813 in 2005.**

The section's USTA League champions went on to represent the Missouri Valley well at the USTA League National Championships, with five finishing among the top four in the country in their divisions. One, the 9.0 Mixed Doubles team from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and captained by **B.J. Fleming**, won the 2006 Western Regional National Championship.



Hilary and Charles Marold

St. Louis USTA League team celebrates winning a section title.



● PUBLIC FACILITY GRANTS

Good fortune in the form of USTA Public Facility Funding continued to smile on the Missouri Valley. Three cities received grants to help construct or refurbish public tennis facilities: **Columbia, Mo.; North Liberty, Iowa;** and **McCook, Neb.**



Larry Salyer (L) and Anthony Meadows after a USTA League exhibition match in Oklahoma City.

● WHEELCHAIR TENNIS EMPHASIS

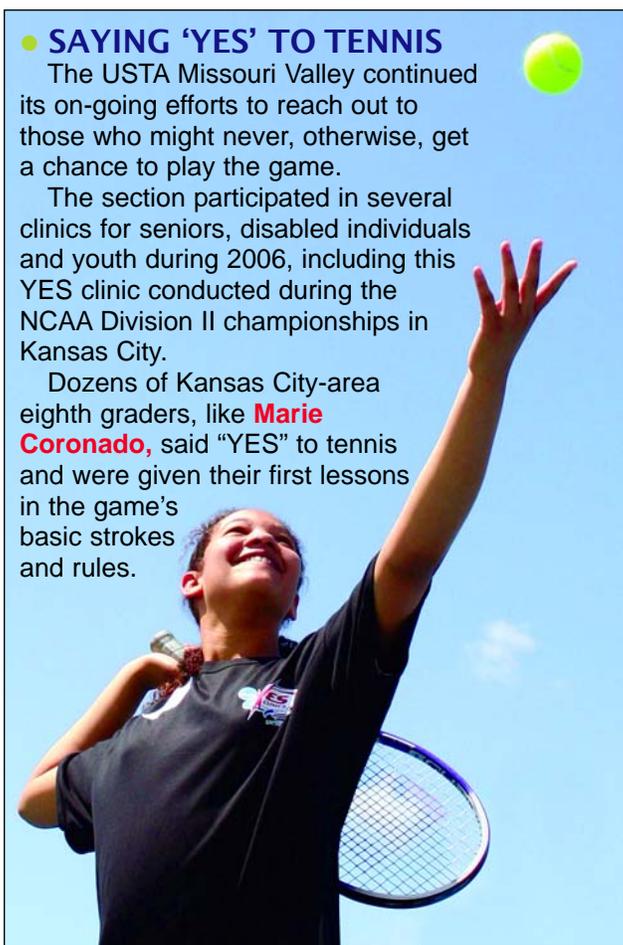
To further stress wheelchair tennis, the Missouri Valley featured **exhibition wheelchair matches** at each of its 2006 USTA League Section Championships — held in St. Louis; Kansas City, Topeka, Kan.; and Oklahoma City. Wheelchair players can participate on any USTA League team, competing with and against either other wheelchair players or able-bodied players.

● SAYING 'YES' TO TENNIS

The USTA Missouri Valley continued its on-going efforts to reach out to those who might never, otherwise, get a chance to play the game.

The section participated in several clinics for seniors, disabled individuals and youth during 2006, including this YES clinic conducted during the NCAA Division II championships in Kansas City.

Dozens of Kansas City-area eighth graders, like **Marie Coronado**, said "YES" to tennis and were given their first lessons in the game's basic strokes and rules.



● JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS

The USTA Missouri Valley saw a 20 percent jump in Junior Team Tennis participation — up to 1,269 players in 2006, compared to 972 in 2005.

● VEN Y JUEGA TENIS

As part of its **Diversity** outreach program, the USTA Missouri Valley published a Spanish-language brochure to promote tennis — a brochure also available at missourivalley.usta.com.

Information about USTA Leagues, Junior Team Tennis, marketing kits and other programs was also made available in Spanish.

● ADAPTIVE TENNIS

Tennis only has boundaries to determine whether the ball is in or out. Everyone can get in the game.

Efforts to emphasize that fact were stepped up throughout 2006.

The **Special Olympics USA National Games** were conducted on the campus of Iowa State University in July with more than 3,000 competitors from across the country — nearly 100 in tennis.

Meanwhile, the **Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis** integrated tennis into its recreational activities. World-ranked wheelchair player Nick Taylor joined the Easter Seals, The Capper Foundation and USTA Missouri Valley staff in Topeka, Kan., for the **BlazeSports Kansas Kickoff** clinic. The event introduced almost 75 players with developmental and physical disabilities to tennis.

● MEMBERSHIP GROWS

Membership in the USTA topped 700,000 across the nation and exceeded more than 22,500 in the Missouri Valley.



MISSOURI VALLEY

*“Go to
the Net!”*

- Your USTA Missouri Valley Website is your 24/7 location for updates, feature stories, photo galleries and more!
- missourivalley.usta.com, redesigned in 2006, is easier to navigate and is packed with more information and photos than ever before!

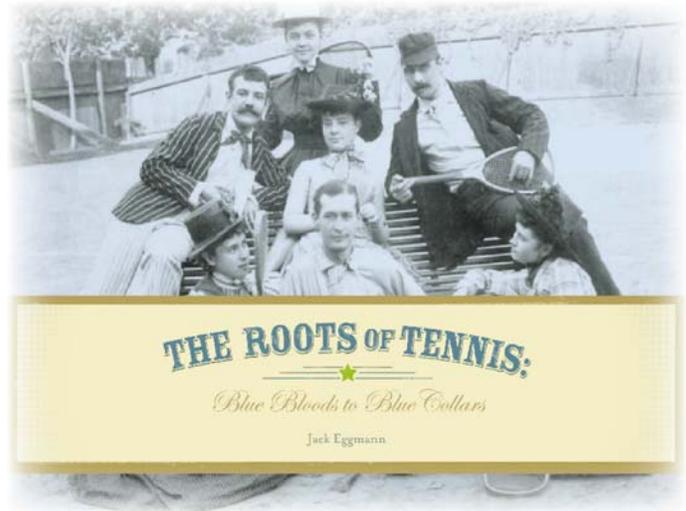


missourivalley.usta.com

HOW AN UNLIKELY CRADLE OF TENNIS SPAWNED GREAT CHAMPIONS.

The Roots of Tennis: Blue Bloods to Blue Collars by Jack Eggmann

How did a landlocked city with bad weather contribute so much to the development of tennis? Beginning as a game for the elite of both coasts, a unique, particular series of circumstances formed "The Roots of Tennis." Mr. Eggmann is the writer and archivist for the St. Louis Tennis Hall of Fame.

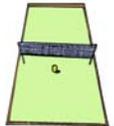


Coming in 2007. \$24.95

Also Available:

Sixty Years of Tennis in St. Louis 1881-1941
\$14.95

Tennis History Press, LLC
www.therootsoftennis.com
314 838 9358



prince
rule the court.



The Fastest Way to More Powerful Serves.

More Penetrating Groundstrokes.

Crisper Volleys.



Experience the Remarkable Benefits of
Extra Racquet Speed.

You can't teach speed. But you can engineer it. Introducing the new O³ Speedport Series. Engineered for speed—only from Prince. Sculpted O-ports increase racquet speed up to 24%, so you can get your racquet in position faster for better ball contact, increased power, maximum spin and pinpoint precision. Not to mention a sweetspot that's up to 59% larger, a variable damping system that allows you to tune vibration control and titanium reinforced paint.

Available in three models: Silver, Blue and Red. Demo one at great tennis shops nationwide.

© 2007 Prince Sports, Inc. All rights reserved.

princetennis.com

2006 USTA League Missouri Valley Champions

Elton Jenkins of Oklahoma pumps his fist after a tough point during the 4.5 men's USTA Missouri Valley League Championship.



CHAMPIONSHIP



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions

▲ 5.0 WOMEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Laura Grooms), 2. Heart of America Wildcard, 3. Heart of America, 4. Oklahoma Wildcard.



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions

◀ 5.0 MEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: James R. Warner), 2. Kansas, 3. St. Louis.



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions

▲ 4.5 WOMEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Janet Lee Pumphrey), 2. Iowa. Semifinalists: Heart of America and Missouri.



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions

▲ 4.5 MEN

1. Nebraska (Captain: Robert Weber), 2. St. Louis. Semifinalists: Heart of America and Oklahoma.



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions

▲ 4.0 MEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: Jeff Dolinar), 2. Kansas. Semifinalists: Oklahoma and Nebraska.

▶ 4.0 WOMEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Judy Fitzpatrick), 2. Heart of America. Semifinalists: Nebraska and St. Louis.



2006 USTA
Missouri Valley Section
Section Champions



▲ 3.5 WOMEN

1. St. Louis (Captain: Kristin Ostanek), 2. Nebraska.
Semifinalists: Oklahoma and Kansas.



▲ 3.5 MEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Larry Thompson), 2. Heart of America. Semifinalists: Kansas and St. Louis.



▲ 3.0 WOMEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: Kimberly McDuffie),
2. Kansas,
3. St. Louis,
4. Oklahoma

▶ 2.5 WOMEN

1. Oklahoma Wildcard (Captain: Hope Heldmar),
2. St. Louis, 3. Iowa,
4. Oklahoma



▲ 3.0 MEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Rick Dodson), 2. Heart of America, 3. St. Louis, 4. Nebraska.

▶ 2.5 MEN

St. Louis (Captain: Robert Rosenberger)



◀ 4.5 SENIOR WOMEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: Jan Allerheiligen),
2. Oklahoma.

▶ 4.5 SENIOR MEN

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Jerry McArtor), 2. Nebraska Wildcard. Semifinalists: Iowa and Heart of America.





▶ **4.0 SENIOR WOMEN**

1. Nebraska (Captain: Sally Johnson), 2. Oklahoma. Semifinalists: Iowa and Heart of America.



▶ **4.0 SENIOR MEN**

1. Heart of America (Captain: William Wood), 2. Oklahoma. Semifinalists: St. Louis and Kansas.

▶ **3.5 SENIOR WOMEN**

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Ellen Madden), 2. Nebraska. Semifinalists: St. Louis and Iowa.



▶ **3.5 SENIOR MEN**

1. St. Louis (Captain: Robert G. Lietz), 2. Oklahoma. Semifinalists: Missouri Wildcard and Kansas.

▶ **3.0 SENIOR WOMEN**

1. Oklahoma (Captains: Ann Jackson & Kathy McConaghie), 2. Nebraska, 3. St. Louis, 4. Heart of America.



▶ **3.0 SENIOR MEN**

1. Heart of America (Captain: John Weber), 2. Iowa, 3. Nebraska, 4. Oklahoma



▶ **8.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Janice Roberts), 2. Heart of America, 3. Kansas, 4. Iowa.

▶ **8.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. Nebraska (Captain: Jerome Sherman), 2. Oklahoma, 3. Oklahoma Wildcard, 4. Heart of America.





◀ **7.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. Nebraska (Captain: Marty Weiss), 2. Heart of America, 3. Oklahoma, 4. St. Louis.

▶ **7.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. St. Louis Wildcard (Captain: Ron Bulter), 2. Kansas. Semifinalists: Oklahoma and Heart of America.



▶ **6.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. Iowa (Captain: Ann Ridenour), 2. Oklahoma, 3. Heart of America, 4. Oklahoma Wildcard.



▶ **6.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. Heart of America (Captain: Stan Bennett), 2. Nebraska, 3. Oklahoma, 4. Oklahoma Wildcard.



▲ **6.0 MIXED**

1. Nebraska (Captain: Carvie Erwin), 2. Heart of America, 3. Iowa, 4. Kansas.



◀ **7.0 MIXED**

1. Kansas (Captain: Robert Mansfield), 2. Oklahoma. Semifinalists: Nebraska and Kansas Wildcard.

▼ **9.0 MIXED**

1. Iowa (Captain: B.J. Fleming), 2. Kansas. Semifinalists: Oklahoma and Heart of America.

IOWA GOES ON TO WIN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



◀ **8.0 MIXED**

1. Oklahoma (Captain: Scott Denne), 2. Heart of America. Semifinalist: Missouri and Iowa.



Go to missourivalley.usta.com for more details, such as when the Bryan Brothers and Pete Sampras will be playing in the Missouri Valley.



World TeamTennis™ 2007 Season

KANSAS CITY EXPLORERS

Home Matches

FRIDAY, JULY 6
Houston Wranglers

SUNDAY, JULY 8
Newport Beach Breakers

TUESDAY, JULY 10
at New York Sportimes

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11
at Delaware Smash

FRIDAY, JULY 13
at St. Louis Aces

SATURDAY, JULY 14
Houston Wranglers

SUNDAY, JULY 15
at Springfield Lasers

MONDAY, JULY 16
at Newport Beach Breakers

TUESDAY, JULY 17
at Sacramento Capitals

THURSDAY, JULY 19
Springfield Lasers 🏆

SATURDAY, JULY 21
St. Louis Aces 🏆

SUNDAY, JULY 22
Boston Lobsters

TUESDAY, JULY 24
at Houston Wranglers

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25
Sacramento Capitals

SPRINGFIELD LASERS

Home Matches

THURSDAY, JULY 5
at Sacramento Capitals

SATURDAY, JULY 7
at Newport Beach Breakers

TUESDAY, JULY 10
New York Buzz

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11
at New York Sportimes

THURSDAY, JULY 12
Newport Beach Breakers

SATURDAY, JULY 14
at Delaware Smash

SUNDAY, JULY 15
Kansas City Explorers 🏆

TUESDAY, JULY 17
at Houston Wranglers

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18
St. Louis Aces 🏆

THURSDAY, JULY 19
at Kansas City Explorers

FRIDAY, JULY 20
at St. Louis Aces

SATURDAY, JULY 21
Boston Lobsters

MONDAY, JULY 23
Houston Wranglers

TUESDAY, JULY 24
Sacramento Capitals

ST. LOUIS ACES

Home Matches

THURSDAY, JULY 5
at Houston Wranglers

FRIDAY, JULY 6
at Boston Lobsters

SATURDAY, JULY 7
Houston Wranglers

MONDAY, JULY 9
New York Buzz

TUESDAY, JULY 10
at Houston Wranglers

FRIDAY, JULY 13
Kansas City Explorers 🏆

SATURDAY, JULY 14
at Sacramento Capitals

SUNDAY, JULY 15
at Newport Beach Breakers

TUESDAY, JULY 17
Sacramento Capitals

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18
at Springfield Lasers

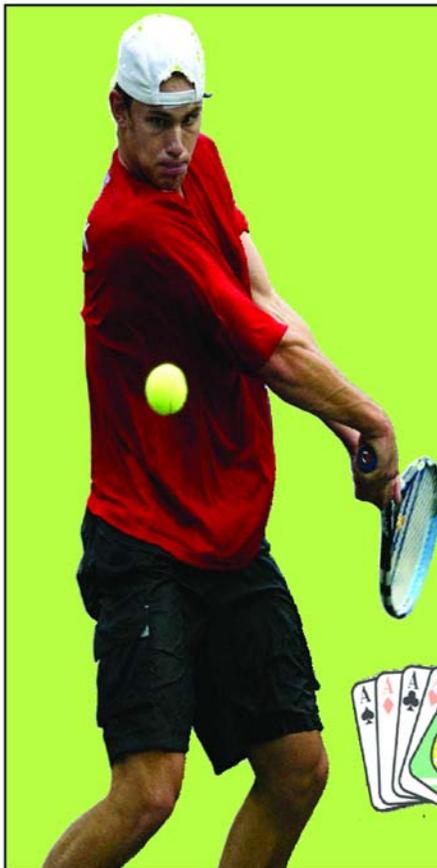
FRIDAY, JULY 20
Springfield Lasers 🏆

SATURDAY, JULY 21
at Kansas City Explorers

MONDAY, JULY 23
New York Sportimes

TUESDAY, JULY 24
Newport Beach Breakers

🏆 - Show-Me Cup Home Matches



HEART.

*TRUE CHAMPIONS HAVE IT & NEVER TAKE IT FOR GRANTED.
FROM THE BOTTOM OF OURS,
WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT
OF PROFESSIONAL TENNIS IN ST. LOUIS.
USTA MEMBERS, PLEASE ENJOY A \$5 DISCOUNT ON ANY
INDIVIDUAL MATCH NIGHT TICKET PURCHASE.*



ST. LOUIS ACES. TENNIS WITH HEART.
WWW.STLOUISACES.COM
314.647.2237

