



NEWSLETTER



FALL 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The BLTA kicked off a long hot busy summer with the greatest turnout ever for the Gatorade Open Nationals. A record 64 Men's draw! This was quickly followed by the T-Rex Jr. Nationals, the Bahamas Jr. International Open, the ESSO Summer Classic and more recently the Friends of Tennis Jr. Clay court Champion-ships. All tournaments were well-attended and very successful thanks to a hard-working Jr. Development Committee.

It was my pleasure to represent the BLTA at the ITF AGM in Prague with past president Kit Spencer and his wife, Lesley. I met important ITF staff members and several COTECC Region presidents. This was an extremely useful trip as Bahamian tennis goals and concerns were placed on the agenda for consideration. I followed the network trail to Wimbledon and Roehampton, home of the ITF. There I met with the ITF Executive Director of Development who was very impressed with our program and young tennis sensation, Ryan Sweeting.



Davis Cup Team: From left: Marvin, Devin, H'Cone, Ryan. Not shown: Captain John Farrington

In July I traveled to Bogotá with our Davis Cup team and BLTA treasurer, Othniel Duncombe. Although we ended up relegated to Zone III, we can be very proud of our young team consisting of Marvin Rolle, Devin Mullings, Ryan Sweeting and H'Cone Thompson. They are excellent ambassadors for The Bahamas and Captain John Farrington is confident that they will return us to Zone II in 2006.

Good-bye to Lew Simons who retired last month and left for the USA to spend time with his family. He promises to visit us in January. The BLTA lost a good friend and a great coach. We wish Lew health and happiness in his new venture.

Good-bye also to Dyphany Mortier who resigned in July citing family and career obligations. Dyphany was a tireless worker and has a great passion for tennis. We will miss her enthusiasm and boundless energy.

Mrs. Paula Whitfield has replaced Mrs. Mortier. The BLTA is fortunate to have an experienced Jr. Development executive on board.

Thank you Mickey Williams for continuing your work with the Jr. International Tournament each year and thank you 2005 Friends of Tennis for your financial support.

Mary Shelley
BLTA President

BLTA JUNIOR COACHING CLINICS

These will once again be starting up at the end of September and everyone is welcome to join.

The cost is: Beginner \$80; Intermediate \$120; Advanced \$240. This is for weekly sessions throughout the year.

In New Providence there are clinics at Flamingo Gardens (Kevin Major), Coral Harbour (Steve Thompson), the Gym Club (Paula

Whitfield) and the National Tennis Centre (Giorgio Baldacci, Dugald Small, Vince Andrews, Steve Taylor).

There is also a new clinic starting up at Harold Road run by Van Wilson. If anyone has old rackets, balls or ball hoppers, please leave them at the NTC for Van. For more information contact: vpresident@blta.net or call the NTC at 323-3933 and ask for Carmel Knowles.

FRIENDS OF TENNIS

Thank you Pierre & Terry Monnard for continuing an annual donation of \$1,000 to this Fund that supports BLTA activities.

If other tennis fans can make a donation it will be appreciated.

OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION

Thank you to the Olympic movement who sponsored coach Giorgio Baldacci to go to a Coaches Workshop in Argentina.

It was a great course and Giorgio will be passing on what he learnt.

Congratulations!

... to Ryan Sweeting who, unseeded, won the US Open Boys Singles Championship. He and Bahamian-born Timothy Neilly, reached the quarter finals in the Boys Doubles. They were seeded 5th.

DAVIS CUP

In July, a young Davis Cup team went to Columbia under the captaincy of John Farrington. They played against what turned out to be a strong Columbian team with two touring professionals, Alejandro Fella ranked 259 in the world, and Pablo Gonzalez ranked 308.

Playing at an altitude of over 8,000ft was a major factor. In the opening match Marvin Rolle put up a great performance against Pablo Gonzalez but finally went down in five sets, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.

Subsequently Devin Mullins lost to Alejandro Fella 6-4, 6-2, 6-3. In the doubles Marvin and Ryan Sweeting paired up, losing to Fella and Salomon 7-5, 6-1, 6-3 to give Columbia the tie.

Ryan Sweeting and H'Cone Thompson got Davis Cup experience in the two dead rubbers that went to Columbia.

This means The Bahamas will be in Americas Zone III next year. This is played on a round robin basis over a week at one venue. With our young, dramatically improving players we are confident we have a good chance of bouncing straight back up to Zone II.

BAHAMAS INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR EVENT

At the end of July the NTC showcased junior talent with its ITF-sanctioned International Junior Event with players coming from many countries. Once again there were good performances from Bahamians. Alanna Rodgers lost in the final of the girls singles but went on to win the girls doubles with Rybakova of the USA.

In the boys singles Matthew Sands lost in the semi final but then went on to win the doubles event when he teamed up with Clarke of Trinidad.

This is a great opportunity for our juniors to get international experience at home. However this is an expensive event for the BLTA to host and we would like to hear from potential sponsors who can help us maintain this prestigious event. Week-long and more extensive local publicity is guaranteed as well as some international exposure such as the much searched ITF website.

Can you help please?

JITIC

This summer, the BLTA again sponsored a group of juniors to the JITIC (Central American & Caribbean Junior) Championships in the Dominican Republic.

Ryan Sweeting produced the top result, winning the 18 & Under event. Jessica Sweeting lost in the semi final and Alanna Rodgers reached the doubles final.

Coaches Kim Cartwright and Giorgio Baldacci went with Ryan, Jamaal Adderley, Johnathan Hanna, Jacob Fountain, Ashwood Hall, Jason Rolle, Justin Lunn, Johnathan Taylor, Rodney Carey, Jessica Sweeting, Alanna Rodgers, Elanqua Griffin, Autise Mortimer, Tanea Miller, Kalotina Klonaris, Rashida Robinson and Kerrie Cartwright.

COACHES/PTR

The PTR (Professional Tennis Registry) is the largest global organization with more than 11,500 tennis teachers in 122 countries certified in a standardized teaching method. Below are the current Bahamian and resident members of the PTR. Please note that not all members are Professionally Certified. To become a member or upgrade your certification level, please contact John Antonas at tel. 393-2582 or 362-7404.

Current paid-up members are: Anthony Cooke, Artie Johnson, Bradley Bain, Clyde Rolle, Edith Powell, Gerry Kanuka, Godfrey Bowe (Freeport), Grovenor Williams (Freeport), Jared Turnquest, John Antonas, Kit Spencer, Michael Keating, Owen Forbes, Ricardo Turner, Vincent Andrews. Robbie Isaacs and Paul Small are members based in the US.

The BPTR (Bahamas Professional Tennis Registry) is the recognized Bahamian Professional Organization. Current members are: John Antonas (Pres), Giorgio Baldacci (Treasurer), Artie Johnson(CM), Gerry Kanuka (VP), Leo Rolle, Kit Spencer, Ricardo Turner (CM), and Jarred Turnquest (Sec).

John Antonas

BLTA NATIONAL TENNIS CENTRE NEWS

What a busy place this was this summer! In three months we had three week-long local Junior Tournaments, one Junior International Tournament and our own Open Age Bahamian Nationals: five events where local juniors can not only gain valuable experience but also enjoy an active summer vacation.

In addition there has been the AID clay court event at the Gym Club which is also open to Juniors. Thanks to everyone who helped and to Carmel Knowles who is a constant presence at the NTC.

There have also been numerous Junior Summer Camps run by the coaches who operate out of the National Tennis Center, as well as their own round robins and other events.

This is all in addition to the regular play anyone can participate in at the NTC. It is great to see how active it is these days.

Our new catering franchisee, J's Catering, run by Mr. Lockhart has been busy and is doing a good job. They are open for lunch and supper (including take outs) all week. So if you haven't been, why not give them a try? And at the same time check out the activities at the NTC – it's open to everyone and parking is easy. You can also purchase tennis equipment at franchisee Bradley Bain's tennis shop and get your rackets restrung there.

WORLD RANKED JUNIORS

A great summer has been had by our two top juniors, Ryan Sweeting from Nassau and Jessica Sweeting from Freeport, who both earned places on ITF teams touring Europe. It was the first time we had both a boy and a girl accepted in the junior events at Wimbledon. The first time ever for a girl and only the third for a boy after Mark Knowles and Devin Mullins.

Ryan has excelled this year, rising to 16 in the World Junior Rankings with wins over Donald Young, the world's no. 1 junior, and also over the winner of the French Junior Open in

the same week in England. Recently Ryan made the semi final of the Canadian Jr. Open and won the Doubles.

Jessica Sweeting is currently 84th in the World Junior Rankings with another year to go as a junior.

Matthew Sands is at 344 and Alanna Rodgers at 506. Jamaal Adderley also has a top 1000 ranking at 737. There is also Timothy Neilly who is Bahamian-born but now playing with the USTA. He stands at 17 in the World Junior Rankings.

It was some talent that started in our 12 & under events six years ago!

WHAT ARE THEY DOING NOW?

In recent years we have had many excellent juniors with a considerable number ranked in the world's top 1000 players – probably the highest number per capita of any nation. Well done to them, their coaches and all who helped. Indeed at the present time we have four juniors in the world's top 500, three of whom started their early tennis days with Kim Cartwright at Waterloo Tennis Academy – a great performance. Unfortunately Waterloo is now gone but the BLTA National Tennis Centre fosters a similar atmosphere but on an even bigger scale, with nine courts compared to Waterloo's four.

So where are some of these juniors now?

Larikh Russell is #1 at Southern Nazarene in Oklahoma, Devin Mullins is #1 at Ohio State University, Nikkita Fountain is a top player at Florida International University, and this fall Alanna Rodgers goes to Rice University in Texas and Ryan Sweeting

goes to the University of Florida in Gainesville.

These and many more Bahamians are on tennis scholarships and getting a good education along with their tennis. A tennis scholarship at university is a realistic goal for many juniors and one the BLTA considers a worthwhile and realistic objective.

Jared Turnquest, who also went to college on a tennis scholarship, is now a PTR qualified coach working full time at Lyford Cay Club.

Congratulations also to another ex-Waterloo junior, Kweku Symonette, who recently earned a PTR coaching qualification.

On the international front, John Farrington is now coaching the young no. 1 ranked Indian player, Sania Mirza, ranked at 42 in the world and rising.

Another ex Bahamian Davis Cup player, Roger Smith, is working with the USTA in junior development.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

A Queen's Baton Relay for the Commonwealth Games was recently very successfully organized in Nassau by Craig Powell. All

sporting organisations participated in a relay run across New Providence.

Davis Cup player Marvin Rolle was the BLTA baton carrier and was joined by several others including President Mary Shelley, Coach Dugald Small, and Past President Edith Powell.

PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS

Mark Knowles continues as our top player. With part-time Bahamian resident and Canadian national Danny Nestor they are currently the third ranked doubles pair in the world. Congratulations to Danny who recently married. And to Mark and his wife, Dawn, who are expecting their first child any day now. We hope all this domestic bliss does not stop their great performances of recent years!

Good luck to Marvin Rolle, son of the legendary Leo, who is now giving it a try on the professional tour.

Also congratulations to Mark's mother Vicky Knowles who recently became engaged to another longtime BLTA member, Peter Andrews.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Gatorade Senior Nationals are planned to take place at the Gym Club from October 15-30.



The Focol Junior is in Freeport in October. Entry forms will be available nearer the time from the NTC.

The AID Clay Court Championships at the Gym Club are just finishing as we go to print and the Friends of Tennis Championships are in progress.

Davis Cup Trials and the Junior Christmas Party are provisionally scheduled for Saturday December 17.



ELEUTHERA & ABACO

Congratulations to PTR trained coach Artie Johnson who ran another successful kids' summer camp in Eleuthera with around 80 participants. We are pleased to hear they are now getting a local association going again and that Abaco is trying to do the same.

2005 GATORADE OPEN NATIONALS



Congratulations to Chris Eldon on winning his third consecutive National Singles Championship and to three-time winner this year, Alanna Rodgers. It is good to see these younger names up there. There was a pretty good performance too for more mature supporters of BLTA tennis: Neil Mactaggart in the Men's Doubles and Dyphany Mortier in the Ladies Doubles.

Men's Open Singles

Chris Eldon def. Matthew Sands 6-3, 6-4

Men's Open Doubles

Neil Mactaggart & Jeff Spiers def.

William "JJ" Fountain & Johnathan Hanna 6-2, 6-2

Women's Open Singles

Alanna Rodgers def. Kerrie Cartwright 6-1, 6-4

Women's Doubles

Alanna Rodgers & Dyphany Mortier def. Skye Powell & Chanelle Clare 6-2, 6-2

Mixed Doubles

Alanna Rodgers & Jeff Spiers def. Nikkita Fountain & William "JJ" Fountain 6-1, 6-2.

2005 ESSO JUNIOR SUMMER CLASSIC RESULTS

Boys' 16 Singles Jason Rolle def. William "JJ" Fountain

Boys' 14 Singles Justin Lunn def. Ricardo Demeritte

Boys' 12 Singles Kevin Major Jr. def. Philip Major Jr

Boys' 10 Singles Philip Major Jr. def. Nicoy Rolle

Boys' 12 Doubles Kevin Major Jr. & Philip Major Jr. def. Gerard Ford & Nicoy Rolle

Girls' 18 Singles Autise Mortimer def. Tanea Miller 6-2, 6-1.

Girls' 16 Singles Elanqua Griffin def. Tashelle Burrows 6-3, 6-3.

Girls' 14 Singles Kalotina Klonaris def. Elanqua Griffin

Girls' 12 Singles Kalotina Klonaris def. Erin Strachan

Girls' 10 Singles Erin Strachan def. Chelsi Russell

Girls' 18 Doubles Elanqua Griffin & Shaneicka Griffin def. Kalotina Klonaris & Tashelle Burrows

Girls' 12 Doubles Chelsi Russell & Erin Strachan def. Gabrielle Moxey & Danielle Thompson

2005 T-REX BAHAMIAN JUNIOR NATIONALS

Boys' 18 Singles Jamaal Adderley def. Robert Smith 6-2, 6-2

Boys' 16 Singles Jamaal Adderley def. Jacob Fountain 6-2, 6-1

Boys' 14 Singles

Rodney Carey def. Justin Lunn

Boys' 12 Singles

Johnathan Taylor def. Kevin Major Jr.

Boys' 10 Singles Kevin Major Jr. def. Shaquille Taylor 6-3, 6-2

Boys' 18 Doubles Winners

Johnathan Hanna & Robert Smith

Boys' 16 Doubles Winners

Jason Rolle & Javano Thompson

Boys' 14 Doubles Winners

Marvin Coleby & Johnathan Taylor

Boys' 12 Doubles Winners

Philip Major Jr. & Kevin Major Jr.

Girls' 18 Singles Alanna Rodgers def. Jennifer Williams 6-0, 6-1

Girls' 16 Singles Kerrie Cartwright def. Elanqua Griffin

Girls' 14 Singles Kerrie Cartwright def. Kalotina Klonaris

Girls' 12 Singles Winner Kalotina Klonaris

Girls' 10 Singles Simone Pratt def. Erin Strachan 6-0, 6-1

Girls' 18 Doubles Winners Kerrie Cartwright & Autise Mortimer

Girls' 14 Doubles Winners Simone Pratt & Erin Strachan

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Members are encouraged to write to any of the above administrators. This is a system of communication that we have set up for your individual needs. We look forward to hearing from you.

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