



EASTERN



SECTION NEWS



50 Love Women Capture National Championship

From left to right: Madeleine Denise Willi, Brigitte Petra Tanner, Barbara Gnaedig, Susan Bartow, Marlene Buchwald (Co-Captain), Holly Fleming (Captain), Gaynor Deegan Luke, Tomoko Allen, Shirley Liu, Reiko Kratzer, Susan Brown, Melissa Pollner

FOR THE WOMEN OF 50 LOVE, winning the USTA League 3.5 Senior National Championships on October 23 all came down to two factors: being in shape and being ready to play as a team.

The team from Proform Tennis in Rye Brook, NY, had all stayed sharp and fit, playing on other tennis teams throughout the year. But they had also made time to practice together, and developed the teamwork they needed to succeed.

In the National finals, all that hard work and time together paid off, as they edged out the Mid-Atlantic Section women 2-1 with a match tie-break in the last doubles match.

"All the players were so supportive of each other and of me,"

said Holly Fleming, the team's captain. "As we were getting close to Nationals, we were getting together regularly to practice and solidify partnerships. We had a few team dinners to celebrate our successes along the way. As a captain, I couldn't ask for a better group of players."

We asked Holly about her team's victory, her experience at Nationals and her plans for the future.

How do you feel about winning the USTA League 3.5 Senior National Championships?

It's a thrill of course, and it was so exciting. We had such a good season, going undefeated until Sectionals. We had one loss

there, but we were able to regroup and win that tournament. Just being at Nationals was an accomplishment, but we all wanted to win and we went for it.

What do you think led your team to victory?

We were all very team-oriented. All the players were so supportive of each other and of me. As we were getting close to Nationals, we were getting together regularly to practice and solidify partnerships. We had a few team dinners to celebrate our successes along the way. As a captain, I couldn't ask for a better group of players. No drama, just good tennis. Marlene Buchwald, my co-captain, and I couldn't feel more lucky.

All of us play on other teams as well so we went to Nationals well prepared and fit. The fitness played a part we think. Sue Bartow, one of our line 1 players, said she thought it might come down to fitness and it did. The other teams were all very good, especially the team we were playing from Washington, DC, in the final. They really pushed us. The whole final was determined by a third-set super tie-break. It was very exciting.

Was this your team's first trip to Nationals? What was the experience like?

Six members of our team had been to Nationals last year and two, Tomoko Allen and Brigitte Tanner, qualified this year with their Adult 3.5 team as well as with this team. So you can see we have an experienced team even if this was our first year together. In fact, it was my first year qualifying for Seniors, my first year captaining a team, and our first year as a team—so I feel we've really done something special.

Nationals was a blast. The USTA put on a fantastic tournament. The venue, Indian Wells Tennis Garden, was spectacular. I'm sure we were all thrilled just being there and playing in that environment, but winning it all was the best.

What do you do when you're not playing tennis?

I am a wife and mother, like so many others. I have high-school-age children, Ted, 17, and Krissy, 14. Ted is applying to college as we speak. I think he enjoyed me being away and not pestering him about his college apps. I'm from Vermont and we spend as much time there as we can. Outside of tennis, I hike, ski and snowshoe when I can.

What's next for you in tennis?

I'm on a few winter teams for now. I'm thinking about taking this team to 4.0, as many have been bumped up to 4.0 already. We may not have quite the year we had in 2011, but we've become such good friends, I can't see not playing with these wonderful ladies again next season. Who knows? Maybe we can repeat the 50 Love magic? ●



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USTA League is improving its structure to enhance your playing experience starting with the 2013 Championship Season. Under the new structure, the USTA League will have two divisions – Adult and Mixed. The Adult Division is broken down into 18 & Over, 40 & Over and 55 & Over and the Mixed will be 18 & Over. For more information on this new structure logon to usta.com/league

What exactly is changing?

Previously, the USTA League was divided into Adult (18 & Over), Senior (50 & Over), Super Senior (60 & Over) and Mixed (18 & Over). The Adult Division was singles and doubles, while the Senior, Super Senior and Mixed were played as solely doubles matches.

The new structure will have just two divisions—Adult and Mixed. The Adult Division will be composed of 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over; the 18 & Over and the 40 & Over will feature both singles and doubles, while the 55 & Over will be solely doubles. The Mixed Division remains, competing in 18 & Over as before.

As before, participants will continue to compete at their NTRP level for each category.

Are the new Leagues in addition to the existing Leagues?

No. The previous League structure is being replaced with the new age realignment structure as per the divisions and age groupings detailed at right.

Why did the USTA make this change?

The decision to change the structure was made to better distribute USTA League participants among the three age categories—previously, the vast majority of USTA League participants fell in the “Adult” category (18 & Over), with far fewer in the “Senior” (50 & Over) and “Super Senior” (60 & Over) categories—and to better align participants with players their own age.

Existing data research, player surveys and player focus groups clearly indicated a need for age restructuring in order to provide more and better play opportunities, both for competitive and social reasons. Under the old model, players were of the same ability but not necessarily of the same playing style or fitness level. The restructuring guarantees more frequency of play opportunities at more appropriate age divisions.

What are the benefits of making this change?

Research indicates that age restructuring should provide the majority of players with additional play opportunities and produce more competitive match play, which will result in more accurate ratings. The changes also allow players to play in more homogenous groupings should they so choose. (That is, older players will retain the option of playing in the younger age levels while now also having a group reserved for those closer to their age.)

CURRENT LEAGUE STRUCTURE		NEW LEAGUE STRUCTURE (2013)	
	Age	Age	
Adult	18 & Over	18 & Over	Adult 18 & Over 2-Singles; 3-Doubles 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 1-Singles; 2-Doubles 2.5, 5.0
		40 & Over	Adult 40 & Over 2-Singles; 3-Doubles 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5
Senior	50 & Over	55 & Over	Adult 55 & Over 3-Doubles 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0
Super Senior	60 & Over		
Mixed	18 & Over	18 & Over	Mixed (Unchanged) 3-Doubles 2.5, 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0

Teen Cancer Survivor Works as Ball Person at 2011 US Open

MANY OF THE BALL PERSONS at the 2011 US Open are natural athletes, whose powerful legs and strong arms helped them become a part of tennis history. But a few have had to battle through physical challenges that surpass even the hardest of tryouts.

One of those ball persons was Colin Gooley of Baldwinsville, NY, who lost his right leg at the age of 8 to cancer. Colin, who wears a prosthetic leg and plays high school lacrosse, made it through the tryouts, the qualifying tournament and the main draw, and finished the US Open, working at the women’s doubles final in Arthur Ashe Stadium.

“I enjoyed being a ball person because I had the opportunity to watch tennis all day long and be right on the court with the players,” said Colin. “I also enjoyed the competition of the ball people, because we each had to fight for our spot

on the TV courts.”

Colin had not been much of a tennis fan before the US Open. But since the age of 10, the 18-year-old athlete has become an inspiration to children with cancer, who are worried about amputations.



A video of Colin playing lacrosse and snowboarding has been used to train staff at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. And Colin regularly speaks with children who have cancer, including a 10-year-old he recently met with who loves basketball.

“I met with him and explained it will be hard in the



‘I enjoyed being a ball person because I had the opportunity to watch tennis all day long and be right on the court with the players.’

beginning learning how to walk and run again with a prosthetic leg,” Colin said. “But once that is learned, you’ll be able to do anything you want to.”

It took Colin a little time to learn the rules of tennis, and to stay alert during long matches. But he was paying close attention to the women’s doubles final, which ended with Liezel Huber and Lisa Raymond defeating 2010 doubles champions Vania King and Yaroslava Shvedova, 4-6, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3).

Colin provided the players with towels, balls and shade during the dramatic match, which lasted 2 hours and 47 minutes.

“Being in the women’s doubles final was amazing,” said Colin. “To me it seemed like the most exciting match I have seen because of how close I was to the players as they battled for the championship.”

While Colin enjoyed the three weeks in New York, his father Phil Gooley enjoyed watching him, and is very proud of everything his son has accomplished.

“With everything he’s been through in life, he’s got such a positive attitude about everything,” said Phil. “He’s my hero.” ●

COPELAND CORNER

Welcome to Copeland Corner, a new feature with our official sponsor, Copeland Coating Co., Inc. Copeland, whose roots date back to 1945, both manufactures and installs court surfaces. As a one-stop shop, they are uniquely positioned to help tennis facilities looking for affordable ways to renovate their courts. In this installment, we talk with Michael Edgerton, a senior project manager with Copeland and a Certified Tennis Court Builder.

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New Coats for the Year

THIS YEAR, COPELAND COATING has resurfaced more than 300 tennis and basketball courts that either needed repairs, or were brand new. Here are a few highlights from 2011:

United States Military Academy at West Point

Resurfaced nine new tennis courts with the Action Pave 10 Coat Cushion and Color System. Color scheme was a special two-tone green to match their colors.



Southold High School (Southold, NY)

Repaired the surface of the four existing courts and then resurfaced with the Action Pave 3 Coat Color System, using the blue and green color scheme.



School 5, Yonkers Public Schools (Yonkers, NY)

Resurfaced area near school's new Jennifer Casale Fante Playground with a 1/2 basketball court, kickball and hopscotch areas, and a three-lane walking path. The improvements were paid for by the Jennifer Fante Foundation, in memory of a teacher at the school who died in 2006.



Williamsbridge Oval Park (Bronx, NY)

This project included new construction of two basketball courts for the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. The courts were resurfaced with the Action Pave 6 Coat Color System and included the green leaf stencil at the center of the court.



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