

CROSSCOURT

Being a good sport means more than shaking hands after match point

By Marti Eidson

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Marti was an intern with the USTA/Missouri Valley Section in January 2006. Having played tennis since she was 4, she is now the No. 1 player for Baker University in Baldwin City, Kan.)

I have seen and heard it all, from giving your opponent credit for a good shot to the sound of a racket slamming against the court. Because I have been playing tennis for almost

Character Counts

It's not all about how fast you serve, how often you can hit that forehand winner, or making sure you win by double goose eggs, but also about how you act when competing – win or lose.

After hearing Parks explain how important sportsmanship is in the game of tennis, it makes me think twice about how I am perceived by others. When you are on the court, in your zone, it's easy to forget that there are people watching you and how you act.

Rebecca's mother, Patricia, said that her daughter had to work at being a good sport.

"It never came naturally," she said. "As far as adversity on the court,

17 years, nothing comes as a surprise. As far as sportsmanship is concerned, keeping anger and aggression from taking over control is difficult for some, and for others staying cool comes naturally.

As for myself, it is a work in progress. Many can relate to my competitive nature, always wanting to succeed and do my best, and when I don't, it's frustrating. Fighting off the urge to scream is an ongoing battle for many players.

After speaking with many of the 2005 USTA/Missouri Valley Section Junior Sportsmanship Award winners, I was inspired.

Rebecca Parks from Tulsa, Okla., winner of the Girls' 18 Junior Sportsmanship Award, said that it is difficult when opponents get angry and make bad calls.

"You have to learn to control yourself," stated Parks. "People's opinions of you are dictated by how you act, not just how you play."

she had to work hard at it."

And that hard work has paid off for Rebecca, who is a top college scholarship contender in Oklahoma. The high level of sportsmanship Rebecca displays, along with her tennis ability, will definitely help her become more marketable to college coaches.

SCHOLARSHIPS & SPORTSMANSHIP Iowa State University's head women's tennis coach Michele Conlon looks for good sports, not just good players, when recruiting.

"If you recruit a person into your program that has strong character, it makes life a lot smoother," said Conlon, who has a previous Billy Talbert National Sportsmanship Award winner and a Missouri Valley Junior Sportsmanship Award winner on her team. She says that any college coach looks for sportsmanship in a player to a certain degree: "It's not the only part of

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New logo and brand image to reenergize tennis community



MISSOURI VALLEY

recruiting, but it is important.”

Reagan Dodd, head men's and women's tennis coach at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kan., agrees with Coach Conlon.

“If I hear negatives about a player, it makes me think twice,” Dodd said. “Sportsmanship definitely ranks in the top three things I look at when recruiting a player.”

After speaking with Boys' 16 USTA/Missouri Valley Section Junior Sportsmanship Award winner Abe Souza from St. Louis, his positive attitude was engraved in my mind. He gave great advice for players who are struggling with this aspect of the game.

“You have to remind yourself that if

you get mad, you are probably going to play worse, and that's not what anyone wants,” observed Souza.

POSTIVE ON & OFF THE COURT

Souza is currently ranked No. 1 in the USTA/Missouri Valley Boys' 16 section. He said that being a good sport gives his ranking validity for others.

“If you are a good sport, people honor your accomplishments and respect you that much more,” Souza stated. “There's not much they can say about your ranking except that you succeed because of hard work and being a good player.”

There is so much truth in what Souza said. What can people say about you if you are a hard but fair player? Nothing. Nothing but positives. They'll say you win *and* lose with respect and class – not that you win because your tantrums distract your opponent.

For both Junior Sportsmanship Award winners, Rebecca and Abe, their high level of sportsmanship has encompassed all aspects of their lives.

“It just teaches me to look at the positive side of everything,” Parks said. “In life, bad things will always happen...you can't let it ruin everything.”

For Souza, his religious affiliation reiterates his good sportsmanship.

“It's kind of a moral thing to me,” he said.

No matter what your motivation, sportsmanship is a vital key to success at all levels of tennis.

Each year the Missouri Valley Section recognizes juniors who portray outstand-

ing sportsmanship qualities on and off the court. For a complete list of section junior sportsmanship award winners see page 25 of the Yearbook.

Nationally, the highest award for junior sportsmanship is the Billy Talbert award. The winner of the award demonstrates the highest qualities of sportsmanship in tournament play and the best traditions of remarkable sportspersons of both the past and present. For more information on the Billy Talbert award visit usta.ccom/communitytennis.



How you play the game really does matter, according to Rebecca Parks: *“People's opinions of you are dictated by how you act, not just how you play.”*



Abe Souza has both a mature tennis game and attitude: *“You have to remind yourself that if you get mad, you are probably going to play worse.”*

Good Sports In Action...

Good sports do not go unnoticed. What do good sports do to stand out?

“On match point, a guy hit a ball, his opponent called it good, and the umpire called the ball out. The guy who called it good, overruled the umpire and lost the match.” – **Abe Souza**, junior player from St. Louis

“Making legit calls and changing their calls when it would hurt them in the end. Calling the lines fairly in a tight match.” – **Regan Dodd**, Baker University (Baldwin City, Kan.) Head Men's and Women's Tennis Coach

“I see coaches go against their player and give point penalties.” – **Michele Conlon**, Iowa State University Head

Women's Tennis Coach

And Bad Sports...

Unfortunately, here's one example of extremely poor sportsmanship:

“I saw somebody jump the net and deck somebody.” – **Michele Conlon**

The USTA has unveiled a new brand identity that creates a consistent and unified branded platform for all USTA programs and events. For the first time, the iconic flaming ball of the US Open will be integrated into the USTA logo to better connect the US Open to all USTA programs.

The new brand identity further signifies the USTA's position as a progressive leader in driving the growth and appeal of tennis in the United States – from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. The new flaming ball and shield logo provides a consistent visual communication that links USTA programs – the US Open, USTA Pro Circuit, USTA Leagues, USTA Junior Team Tennis, USTA Membership – and the 17 USTA Sections.

“This new branding system creates a consistent identity linking all USTA professional and grassroots programs, while creating an aspirational brand to further grow the game,” said Michelle Wilson, managing director of Marketing, Pro Tennis, USTA. “By carrying the flaming ball icon through the entire brand identity system, we can better leverage fans’ emotional connection to the US Open to all our programs.”

The new logo and brand identity is now being incorporated into all USTA materials, including USTA professional and recreational programs, usta.com, *USTA Magazine*, and all USTA events. In addition, the new branding system will be incorporated throughout the 17 USTA Sections. The new logo also will be prominently featured at the USTA National Tennis Center, home of the US Open.

Dawn of a



MISSOURI VALLEY



new logo

To obtain a logo contact the USTA/Missouri Valley Section Director of Marketing Communications: Manon Eilts, eilts@movalley.usta.com or 913-322-4826.



‘It’s Your Game’

A brand image campaign that will reenergize the tennis community will be launched in April and May. The campaign rallies around the slogan, “It’s Your Game.”

Local marketing executions will be available for use at the grass roots level to promote and develop the growth of tennis.

Kathy Francis, USTA Managing Director of Community Tennis Marketing and Development, explains the new image campaign during the USTA/Missouri Valley Annual Conference Dec. 2, 2005.



HEART OF AMERICA

Former USTA/Missouri Valley president and Hall of Fame member **Mervyn Webster** joined the Indian Creek Racquet Club (overland Park, Kan.) as the facility's Co-Junior Tennis Director in January. Webster, who took on his new duties Jan. 2, coached the World Team Tennis Wichita Advantage franchise in its championship year of 1993, was a USTA National Team coach, and was the coach of Lori McNeil during her 1994 Wimbledon semifinal run.

The USTA/Missouri Valley Section conducted a **Tournament Director's Workshop** for junior and adult tournament directors Jan 21-22 at the Overland Park Marriott. The workshop went over the TennisLink™ and Tournament Data Management system software used to help run and maintain tournaments, allowed fellow tournament directors the opportunity to network, and gave director's tips on topics such as event awards presentations and publicity. An **Official's Workshop** was also held the same weekend. Current or aspiring officials took classes to certify their credentials and went over new changes to the tennis rulebook, *Friend at Court*.

IOWA

The **Children & Family Urban Ministries** in Des Moines received a \$12,000 USTA Tennis & Education Foundation grant to purchase new computers and build a computer lab. The organization, working with 50 to 100 students on a weekly basis, started its tennis program in 2005 and also became a National Junior Tennis League chapter.

Drake University in Des Moines played host to the second annual USTA/Missouri Valley **Tennis on Campus Championships**, Feb. 18-19. Twelve teams from eight schools – University of Nebraska, Iowa State, Missouri-Rolla, University of Northern Iowa, Washington University, St. Louis University, Drake University and Kirkwood College – took part in the event, held at the Drake Tennis Center.

KANSAS

Kossover Tennis Center in Topeka, was named a recent recipient of a USTA Public Funding Grant. The tennis center will receive \$66,784.64 from the USTA for court improvements and upgrades that included expanded seating and a stadium court. All 18 of the facility's courts will be resurfaced, and the pro shop will be expanded. These upgrades should help position Kossover for more high profile adult and junior tournaments.

The **Capper Foundation Easter Seals of Topeka** received a \$5,000 grant from the USTA Tennis & Education Foundation. The grant will be used to conduct summer tennis camps for youngsters with disabilities.

First Serve Tennis Center in Lawrence opened Feb. 1 with three indoor courts, and a plan to add an additional indoor court by September. The facility, which is owned by Mike Elwell, will serve as the home to the University of Kansas women's tennis team and practices. The director of tennis at First Serve will be former Iowa player Stuart Waters.

MISSOURI

Missouri State University (Springfield) recently cut five of the school's 21 intercollegiate sports programs, including the men's and women's tennis programs. School officials said that current athletes' scholarships would be honored, but that tennis will no longer remain a varsity sport after the 2005-06 season. The university said it would help any of the school's 14 tennis players attempt to transfer to other schools.

The **CCRA Tennis Complex/Fairview Tennis Complex** in Columbia has received a \$100,000 USTA "Tennis in the Parks" Grant to renovate and build 12 new courts.

NEBRASKA

The **Nebraska Tennis Center** in Lincoln opened for business in late December of 2005. The proposed 36-court complex (13 indoor, 20 outdoor hard, three clay) opened six indoor courts to begin the process, and is tentatively slated for completion by the end of 2006. The facility, located on 215 acres near the University of Nebraska, will be the largest tennis complex in the USTA/Missouri Valley when finished.

Omaha's **Cameron Hubbs** was one half of the winning Girls' 18's doubles team at the Copper Bowl in January in Tucson. She partnered with **Rebecca Parks** of Tulsa, Okla., to win the prestigious junior tournament.

OKLAHOMA

The **Oklahoma District Tennis Association** (ODTA) inducted three new members – Billy Buckley, Tommy English and Roger Jack – into its Hall of Fame at the district's annual meeting in December in Oklahoma City. More than 100 ODTA members attended the meeting, held at Willow Creek Golf and Country Club.

ST. LOUIS

The **St. Louis District Tennis Association** (SLDTA) inducted three new members – Lloyd Brown, Don Dippold and Leigh Strassner – into its Hall of Fame at the District's Annual Awards Dinner, Jan. 14, at the Knight Center on the campus of Washington University.

Jack Levis reached the finals of the Boys' 18's division at the Copper Bowl in January in Tucson, Ariz. Levis won five consecutive matches, including back-to-back three-set wins in the quarterfinals and semifinals, before falling to Bozhidar Katsarov of Ojai, Calif.

Previous *CrossCourts* can be downloaded at missourivalley.usta.com



◀ 6.0 ADULT MIXED

1. Nebraska (Captain: Carvie Erwin), 2. Iowa, 3. Oklahoma, 4. Heart of America, 5. Kansas.

▶ 7.0 ADULT MIXED

1. Heart of America (Captain: Carol Bennett), 2. Kansas, 3. Oklahoma, 4. Nebraska, 5. Iowa, 6. St. Louis.



▶ 8.0 ADULT MIXED

1. Oklahoma (Captain: J. Scott Denne), 2. Iowa. Semifinalists: Heart of America and St. Louis.



▼ 9.0 ADULT MIXED

1. Kansas (Captain: Kimberly Blackman), 2. Heart of America, 3. Nebraska, 4. Oklahoma, 5. St. Louis, 6. Iowa.





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▲ 2.5 WOMEN

1. *Oklahoma (Tulsa/Captain: Mary Sanderlin)*,
2. St. Louis, 3. Oklahoma (Oklahoma City), 4. Iowa.



▼ 3.0 MEN

1. *Nebraska (Captain: Myrle Giersch)*, 2. Oklahoma,
3. St. Louis, 4. Kansas, 5. Heart of America.



▲ 3.0 WOMEN

1. *Heart of America (Captain: Pam Anthony)*, 2.
Kansas, 3. Nebraska, 4. St. Louis, 5. Oklahoma.



▲ 3.5 MEN

1. *Oklahoma (Captain: Jose Falcon)*, 2. Kansas. Semifinalists:
Iowa and Heart of America.



◀ 3.5 WOMEN

1. *Iowa (Captain: Janice Koder)*, 2. St. Louis.
Semifinalists: Heart of America and Kansas.



▼ 4.0 MEN

1. *St. Louis (Captain: Richard Papanek)*, 2. Kansas.
Semifinalists: Oklahoma and Heart of America.



◀ 4.0 WOMEN

1. *Kansas (Captain: Shannon Folck)*, 2.
Nebraska. Semifinalists: Oklahoma and
Heart of America.



▲ 4.5 WOMEN

1. *Heart of America (Captain: Patty Falke)*, 2. Oklahoma (Oklahoma City).
Semifinalists: Missouri and Oklahoma
(West).

▶ 4.5 MEN

1. *Heart of America (Captain: Michael Colbert)*, 2. Nebraska.
Semifinalists: Missouri and Oklahoma.





► 3.0 SENIOR WOMEN

1. St. Louis (Captain: Rose Albrecht),
2. Nebraska, 3. Heart of America, 4. Oklahoma,
5. Kansas.



▼ 3.0 SENIOR MEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: John Weber), 2. Nebraska,
3. Oklahoma, 4. St. Louis, 5. Iowa.

▲ 5.0 MEN

1. St. Louis (Captain: William Hornbarger),
2. Kansas, 3. Oklahoma, 4. St. Louis
- Wildcard.



► 5.0 WOMEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: Christine Radevic), 2. Oklahoma, 3. Heart of America.



▲ 3.5 SENIOR WOMEN

1. Heart of America (Captain: Barbara Meigs), 2. Nebraska,
3. Iowa, 4. St. Louis, 5. Kansas, 6. Oklahoma.



◀ 3.5 SENIOR MEN

1. Iowa (Captain: Randall Hinrichs), 2. Kansas.
- Semifinalists: St. Louis and Oklahoma.

◀ 4.0 SENIOR MEN

1. Kansas (Captain: Terry Cobb),
2. Oklahoma, 3. Nebraska, 4. Heart of America,
5. Iowa, 6. St. Louis.

► 4.0 SENIOR WOMEN

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



► **4.5 SENIOR MEN**

1. *Oklahoma* (Captain: Charles Bond), 2. Kansas, 3. Nebraska, 4. Iowa, 5. St. Louis.



▼ **4.5 SENIOR WOMEN**

1. *Oklahoma* (Captain: Marcia Bennett), 2. Iowa, 3. Heart of America, 4. St. Louis.



▲ **6.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. *Nebraska* (Captain: John Reefer), 2. St. Louis, 3. Heart of America, 4. Oklahoma.

◄ **6.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. *Oklahoma* (Captain: Diane Parks), 2. Nebraska, 3. Kansas.

► **7.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. *Heart of America* (Captain: Barbara Meigs), 2. Oklahoma, 3. St. Louis, 4. Nebraska.



▲ **7.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. *Heart of America* (Captain: I.L. Malm), 2. Iowa, 3. Oklahoma, 4. St. Louis, 5. Missouri, 6. Nebraska.



▲ **8.0 SUPER SR. MEN**

1. *Heart of America* (Captain: Bob Bates), 2. Iowa, 3. Nebraska, 4. Oklahoma.

◄ **8.0 SUPER SR. WOMEN**

1. *Oklahoma* (Captain: Brigitte Pennell), 2. St. Louis, 3. Heart of America, 4. Iowa.