



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TENNIS ASSOCIATION

SENIOR NEWS

January Custom

(Stories by Mark Winters)

Many begin a New Year with firm resolutions. Some are directed by life-style changes. A commitment of that sort requires dedication and focus. An example would be practicing and playing more tournaments. That is why the Desert Circuit has become a January custom for countless competitors. Four senior events are held at facilities that are truly places to play, and they feature first-rate hotels, player gifts, parties and awards. It is the annual kickoff for a year filled with tennis.



John Rosser won the Plaza Senior Tournament Men's 40 singles.



Craig Hiddleston, a high ranked Canadian who flew under the radar, defeated Leif Nordland in the Men's 50 Plaza Senior Tournament final.

The 27th Monterey Country Club Senior Tennis Classic, organized by Andy Scorteanu, the Director of Tennis at the facility, was held January 5-10, in Palm Desert. Scorteanu is known for bringing fresh ideas to tennis. This year he introduced a "First match loser" consolation event to the delight of the participants.



Randy Berg and Randy Houston downed Kelly Davidson and Chacho Romero in the Plaza Senior Tournament Men's 60 doubles final.



Doug Ditmer slipped past Toby Crabel in the Men's 60 Plaza Senior Tournament final.

He said, "Many come from far and wide, and they appreciated the opportunity to extend their match play. Another innovation this year was substituting gift cards to Piero's Pizza-Vino, one of the desert's best-known restaurants on El Paseo Drive in Palm Desert and the Indian Wells Tennis Gardens, during the PNB Paribas Open Tournament in March, for winner trophies. This was equally well received."

The Plaza Senior Tournament, presented by Kristine Eastling-Agee of Stewart Title, along with Patty Service of Las Casuelas Terraza Restaurant, was staged at the Plaza Racquet Club, January 11-17. Kurt and Ana Haggstrom were the amiable hosts of the championships.

"This year's tournament was a huge success," Kurt pointed out. "Draws were up; play was spirited; and the weather was

perfect. We saw many new first time players from Arizona and Northern California. As is always the case, the players' party was very well attended. Those on hand enjoyed a delicious Southwestern feast then danced under the stars. This part of the story would not be complete without mentioning Ana's Rum cake, which always leaves everyone who has a piece asking for another."

Haggstrom added, "I must mention Bill Matthews and Julie David's Mixed Combo 100, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Dick Lake and Juliana Copley. This was the winners' first victory over their opponents in three years of facing them in the final. The third time proved to be a charm or as we joked 'no one beats Bill and Julie three times in a row'."



Saul Snyder outlasted Dennis Nielsen in the Men's 80 Plaza Senior Tournament final.



For Bill Matthews and Julie David "Three was a charm" in the Plaza Senior Tournament 100 Combined Mixed final.

The 34th Palm Springs Racquet Club Senior Championships was played January 17-23. Glenn Erickson, as always, was in charge. Overall, the tournament was solid, and those playing it appreciated all that was done for them.

The ASICS World Tennis Classic (Super Category II), January 24-31, at the Mission Hills Country Club, was the final Desert Circuit



Pam and Greg Shephard won the Plaza Senior Tournament Mixed 125 doubles.



Men's 70 ASICS World Tennis Classic winners Craig Edgecumbe and Tad Yukawa with finalists Dean Corley and Michael Stewart

(ASICS World Tennis Classic photos by Jayne Robertson)



Andi Polisky and John Popplewell edged Chris Ornstien and Nanda Fischer in the Mixed 140 Plaza Senior Tournament final.



Mixed 50 ASICS World Tennis Classic finalists Thomas Schlack and Susan Wright with winners Tracy Worley Hagen and Mike Fedderly

contest. Once again, Ed Trost teamed with Jayne Robertson to host yet another memorable event. Trost proudly related, "By all accounts, the 2016 ASICS World Tennis Classic was the best yet."

He continued, "The weather was nearly perfect, and 730 players, from 29 states, with a large contingent from British Columbia, participated. The competition was never greater. Having the Mixed 50, 60 and 70 divisions as a Category I National Championships added another level of excitement to the tournament. It led to

the largest entry field we have ever had. Everyone was vying for a coveted Gold Ball that goes to a National champion. The winners and finalists received a few extra prizes. All of the women in the finals received beautiful bouquets, and all of the finalists received tournament jackets to show off during the year.



Mixed 70 ASICS World Tennis Classic finalists John Popplewell and Claudia Giacomini with winners Linda Bucklin and Charlie Hoeveler



ASICS World Tennis Classic Men's 40 champion, Josh Osswald

"ASICS again made a huge splash having its new racquets and shoes on display. A number of players raved about the playability of the racquet and the comfort of the shoes. The spirited play was only surpassed by the players' party, where the DJ played longer than ever, enabling about 250 players and their guests to party hearty."

Those who take the time to help at Desert Circuit tournaments are often overlooked. Those who organize the four championships are well aware that these special people are the reason success



ASICS World Tennis Classic Men's 65 competitor Eddie Verdugo



Barbara Hubbard was a Women's 65 ASICS World Tennis Classic standout.

We also extend a sincere thanks to all of the host sites.

"Another shout-out goes to all the sponsors: ASICS, Comfort Air – Heating & Air Conditioning, Tifosi Sunglasses, Eisenhower Desert Orthopedic Center, Desert Regional Medical Center, Reed's Original Ginger Beer, Clark's Nutrition, KJJZ Radio, Raw Revolution, and ClifBar. The tournament would not have been as



ASICS World Tennis Classic Men's 90 champion Graydon Nichols

is realized. As Trost said, "This great event would not have happened without a dedicated corps of volunteers headed by Sheryl Herschman. They not only greeted players, checked them in for matches and took scores, they were also site managers at other venues that were used including: Lake Mirage Racquet Club, Marriott Desert Springs, Monterey Country Club, Palm Valley Country Club, and Rancho Las Palmas.



ASICS World Tennis Classic Tournament Director Ed Trost with Women's 80 stars Dorothy Matthiessen and Doris deVries

successful without their support."

Andy Scorteanu noted, "The days of the Desert Circuit, relying on participants from Southern California, along with those from neighboring states, are long gone. Now, the tournaments attract many of the world's most talented 35 to 90 year-old-players to the desert."

From a Tournament Director's point of view, Kurt and Ana Haggstrom said it best chorusing, "This is our favorite tournament to run. Seniors really appreciate all the little things we do."

Southern Californians Selected For ITF Young Cup Teams

Seven top players from the section will represent the US in the Senior International Tennis Federation Young Cup team play, May 1-6, in Umag, Croatia.



Ross Duncan
Photo Irvine Valley College



Marcio Pepe
Photo Carolyn Nichols



Tony Bujan
Photo J. Fred Sidhu



Jennifer Dawson
Photo J. Fred Sidhu



Michael Chang



Alissa Finerman
Photo Carolyn Nichols

Ross Duncan will captain and play, along with Marcio Pepe on the Men's 35 Italia Cup team. The Men's 40 Trabert Cup squad will feature two outstanding local performers – Tony Bujan and Michael Chang – in the lineup. Jennifer Dawson is set for Women's 40 Young Cup play. Following the "Two on a team" theme, Alissa Finerman and Debbie Spence-Nasim are Women's 45 Court Cup team members.



Debbie Spence-Nasim
Photo Carolyn Nichols

Crabel Capital Men's 60 Masters Invitational Championships Update

Last year's Crabel Capital Men's 60 Masters Invitational Championships, played on the unrivaled grass courts at Mission Hills Country Club, was an uncompromising inaugural success. It was such a unique and competitive event that players across the country are already setting their sights on earning a spot in the draw of the 2016 version of this one of a kind showcase.

Tournament Director, Steve Solomon said, "To qualify for the tournament, an individual must play at least one Men's 60 National Championship and have a solid record in other 60 events during the season. Those who reach a National



Tom Smith and Robert Castorri came up short in the 2015 Crabel Capital Men's 60 Masters Invitational doubles final against Tim Garcia and Sal Castillo.

final will automatically qualify. Additional players will be invited based on their performance during the year, along with their

attitude and approach to the event and other players."

Solomon continued, "In 2015, twelve players were divided into two divisions and played five matches to reach the semifinals. This year's format is being developed. It could be the same as a year ago.

"An alternative would be having a sixteen player event with four divisions. This approach would mean that all the participants would have at least five opportunities to compete."

For more information, please contact Steve Solomon, either by telephone – (760) 325-8084 or by email at Solomonmnd@aol.com

In Memoriam

Juanita (Nita) Graham

While visiting her sister in the early 1970's, Louise Juanita (Nita) Graham fell in love with Southern California and ended up settling in Long Beach. Initially, she worked at the Veterans Administration in the area before becoming a Nurse Practitioner with Kaiser Permanente in Downey and West Los Angeles. Whenever time allowed, she could be found in one place – the tennis court. After retiring, when she was asked about taking time to travel and see the world, she admitted that the tennis court was her world. Juanita (Nita) Graham passed away on January 22nd.

National & Sectional Tournaments

National Father & Daughter Senior, Super, Ultra Senior & Mother & Son Hard Court Championships at The Springs (Category I)

April 1-3

Tournament ID: 500001516

Contact: Sheryl Herschman – (760) 776-6585

130th Southern California Sectional Championships (MW 30-60)

April 2-3, 8-10

Tournament ID: 651719116

Contact: Annette Buck – (310) 208-3840

Tennis Channel National Men's 60 Hard Court Championships (Category I)

April 4-10

Tournament ID: 651701916

Contact: Steve Solomon – (760) 325-8084

National Women's 50-90 Hard Court Championships (Category I)

May 9-15

Tournament ID: 651804316

Contact: William (Bill) Kellogg – (858) 454-6500

Verne Hughes Memorial National Men's 75-90 Hard Court Championships (Category I)

May 15-21

Tournament ID: 650003116

Contact: Ned Buckman – (949) 525-9290