

International Tennis Federation – Brad Parks Award

The ITF's Brad Parks Award is named after California's Brad Parks, who founded the sport of wheelchair tennis in 1976. The award is presented annually to an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to wheelchair tennis on an international basis.

Rick Draney was instrumental in the development and promotion of the quad division in wheelchair tennis during the 1980s and 1990s. His contribution to the sport, both in the USA and internationally, is immeasurable.

While Rick began his own wheelchair tennis career in 1984, the quad division became an officially recognized classification in the USA by the late 1980s. Among the many clinics and demonstrations Rick was involved in leading, were clinics at the Stoke Mandeville Games in the UK in the early 1990s. These were the catalyst for the international growth of the quad division.

As an administrator and influencer, along with the likes of Brad Parks, Rick liaised with the USTA and the ITF to recognize the quad division, and its development led to the introduction of official quad world rankings in 1998. In the same year, a quad event was included in the World Team Cup for the first time.

As a player, Rick won two World Team Cups (representing the USA), as well as most of the division's major titles, including multiple U.S. Open and British Open Super Series crowns. While still competing at an elite level, Rick also took on the role of the U.S. Open Super Series Tournament Committee Chairperson for nine years.

From the advent of computerized quad division rankings, Rick spent more than 120 weeks as quad singles world #1 between 1997 and February 2002. This was in addition to the hundreds of weeks spent as the #1 quad player on the NFWT and USTA rankings prior to 1997.

Rick's influence and pioneering work had a significant bearing on quad singles and doubles medal events being included in the Paralympic Games, which took place for the first time in Athens in 2004.

Rick currently serves as a member of the ITF's Classification Taskforce Committee, The USTA's National Wheelchair Committee, and the Utah Tennis Association's Wheelchair Committee.

On behalf of the ITF and the wheelchair tennis family, congratulations to Rick Draney for being presented with the ITF's Brad Parks Award for 2018.