



Anguilla Tennis Academy

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ATA Monthly

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Anguilla Tennis Academy Nearing Opening Date

If any residents or tourists have passed by the Anguilla Tennis Academy's facility in Blowing Point lately, they will have seen much progress. Although construction is somewhat behind schedule due to labour problems and mass development in Anguilla, the facility is now much closer to nearing completion. The most obvious sign of major improvement is that the courts have finally been paved. Currently, representatives from Agile Courts are in the process of constructing the courts, putting up the fences, and placing the light fixtures. Yet, as equally noticeable, the stadium court is finally starting to take form. This centre court will be able to hold up to 2,500 people and will house bathrooms, locker rooms, an eating area, and gymnasium. Moreover, the main building is 85% finished with only minor work left such as tiling, placing the glass in the door frames, bathrooms, and some electrical work.

Although the official opening is still far off, actual play on the tennis courts will start in mid June. The Anguilla Tennis Academy's long running and acclaimed summer camp will actually take place at the new facility this year. Mitch Lake, founder of the ATA, is quite excited about the fact that the tennis camp he started back in 1996 will actually be held at a facility built for the children that he single-handedly thought up and made happen. Mitch said, "words cannot describe how excited I am to see this project finally getting much closer to completion. The fact that the children will be able to play at the facility is a dream come true for me, many of our supporters, and certainly the children. I want to thank the sponsors and everyone who has put so much time into making my dream a shared vision."

When finished, the new facility will hopefully become the national facility of Anguilla and it will be the only tennis structure of its kind in the Caribbean. There are many tennis courts and facilities throughout the Lesser and Greater Antilles, but none are devoted strictly to children. Brent Worthley, Superintendent, is currently in charge of the construction of the seven tennis courts and is a representative of Agile Courts, a tennis court construction company with over 40 years of experience throughout the Caribbean. Agile Courts is responsible for building many courts around Anguilla such as St. Regis Temenos Villas and Cuisinart Resort and Spa. Brent has travelled extensively throughout the Caribbean and has built many courts.



Court building superintendent Brent Worthley poses for a picture on the new courts!!!



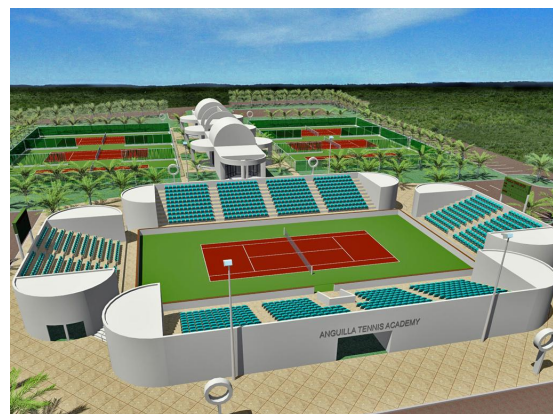
Two workers prepare to put in the net posts.



View from court one towards the palm court at the new Jeremiah Gumbs Tennis Pavilion

When he was asked how the ATA's new facility compares, he mentioned "This facility is one of the premier facilities in the Caribbean. When finished, it will be the best project I have ever worked with in this region of the world. Anguillians should be proud of having such a prestigious sports complex of this magnitude. The design by Myron Goldfinger and the workmanship will not only make the ATA's facility the best in the Caribbean, but one of the nicest and unique in even the southeast United States"

With the courts becoming operational in June, the ATA's director Jason Allen is beginning to make plans for the transitioning of all of the children's programs. Jason spoke with *The Anguillian* on various issues concerning the opening of the facility. "One of the biggest issues facing the ATA's tennis programs has always been space. With only one court operational in The Valley, it has been interesting devising a program in which our 80 or more children could not only play tennis, but receive meaningful instruction at the same time. With the added court space, I am looking forward to being able to provide a higher standard of teaching and a more conducive environment for learning. Also, contingent upon staffing, I am going to look into doing satellite programs around the island in which some kids can participate in the park, some in East End, and the rest at the new facility. An increase in numbers is another issue we can entertain now as well. I must say that this is an exciting time for the ATA and I am certainly proud and thankful of the hard work that Mitch Lake, members of the ATA Board, and friends and sponsors have put forth to make this unparalleled project happen."





L-R Brian Schultz (manager, St. Regis Temenos), Jimmy Buffet, Jason Allen, Bankie Banx, and Joe (Jimmy's friend).

Jimmy Buffet Concert was a Huge Success for the ATA

The Parrotheads came in the thousands for the Jimmy Buffet concert held on March 24, at the Dune Preserve in Rendezvous Bay. It was truly the biggest event/concert ever held in Anguilla as people came from all over the Caribbean and the United States. In the crowd, people could see flags from Jamaica, Trinidad, and even England. In order to hold all the people, the Dune Preserve underwent a massive construction phase which consisted of a brand new section and expansion of land space within the general grounds area.

The concert began promptly at 3pm and ended at approximately 6pm. There were almost 4,000 attendees inside the Dune and almost 500-1,000 people on the beach listening from two large speakers placed right near Bankie's signature boat bar on Rendezvous Bay. The concert was held under the notion of a benefit for three charities; The Anguilla Tennis Academy, Project Stingray, and the Anguilla Community Foundation. There were many events around the island such as a beach barbecue at Gwen's Reggae Bar and Grill in Shoal Bay, a charity auction held at Zurra, Anguilla's newest culinary experience, and a large buffet at Cuisinart Resort and Spa. The exact amount of money raised for the ATA has not been announced yet. However, Jason Allen attended the charity auction at Zurra in which almost USD \$100,000 was raised, of which the ATA will receive 1/3.



Jimmy rocks Bankie's boat at the Dune Preserve!



People line up on the beach to get in to the concert!

The ATA was also given a number of T-shirts to sell at Gwen's Reggae Bar on Friday before the show in which USD \$500 was raised. On the day of the show, members of the ATA's elite group sold Moonsplash T-shirts to concert goers in which USD \$1,865 dollars was collected. All T-shirt money went directly to the ATA's programme account which funds the after school program and the summer camp.

All in all, it was a beneficial weekend for the ATA. The best part is that the ATA did not have to contribute any money toward the event and therefore all money collected goes directly to the children's programmes. When the final figures are released, there will be press releases that divulge the exact figures. Keep an eye out!



The ATA shirt selling crew!!!!



The Dune Preserve packed with Parrotheads!

Rodney Ross joins the ATA as Head Pro

Rodney Ross, a native of Trinidad and Tobago joined the ATA staff in November of last year as the Head Pro. He replaced Marvin Hazell who went to seek admission to college in England. Rodney has 10 years of coaching and playing experience. He is 6'5" and a very strong player. Below are some interesting facts about Rodney.

Tennis Qualification

- ITF level 1
- USPTA member
- IOC technical course for coaches
- International coaches workshop Trinidad & Tobago
- Certificate in Science of sport & coaching (TTOC)
- Attended ITF level 2 workshop held in St. Vincent
- Certificate in sport medicine (IOC)



Achievements (as a player)

- Reserve member Trinidad & Tobago Davis cup team 2003
- Ranked # 2 Boys 18 under in Trinidad & Tobago 1999
- Ranked # 7 men's single Trinidad & Tobago 2004
- Winner-Catch Fast serving junior competition 1997 (105mph)
- Winner- Royal Castle/Coca cola summer classic, senior boys doubles 1999
- Winner- Chubby junior tennis tournament boys 18 under doubles champion 1999
- Round of 16- Tranquility Men's open clay court tournament
- Quarter Finalist- Invitational junior tennis tournament of Trinidad & Tobago 2000
- Round of 16 (Doubles)- IBIS international junior world ranking tennis tournament

Tennis Tips from Coach Rodney



A proper warm-up is essential!!!!

My job consists of teaching not only the children who participate in the ATA's programmes, but tourists visiting Cuisinart Resort and Spa who are interested in playing tennis. Too many times, before they begin play, most do not engage themselves in a proper warm-up. A warm-up is something that as a coach I stress to all the children because it promotes a healthy lifestyle. Although tennis may seem like an "easy" sport, it can be very damaging to the body; especially the arms and back. In order to have a sustained level of play throughout the rest of one's life, a proper warm-up routine is indubitably essential. Before a match, I suggest getting the heartbeat up by either jumping rope or taking a few laps around the court. Once the muscles are loose and warm, dynamic stretching should be next on the list. Dynamic stretching is a modern form of warming up that consists of movements that stretch the muscles. After that, playing mini tennis is a good way to ease into tennis as it helps you to focus on the ball and improve your finesse. Remember, a warm-up is something one should do every time one plays.

Three Scholarships Awarded to Future Tennis Stars of Anguilla



L-R Millie Hodge, Corneila Lowerre, Paul Lowerre, Mitch Lake, Ursula Lowerre, Jason Allen – Front L-R Tamisha Richardson, Errol Lake, Avern Gumbs

On Thursday, March 22, a press conference was held at the Anguilla Tennis Academy's new facility in Blowing Point to announce the recipients of three scholarships for the acclaimed ATA after school programme. Some time ago, it was announced in *The Anguillian* and *The Daily Herald* that Paul Lowerre, Senior Vice-President for UBS Financial Services, graciously donated USD \$30,000 to start a Youth Endowment Scholarship Fund for children who want to play tennis. It is the interest from that endowment that has already given the opportunity to begin a selection process for three young children.

The criteria was that all applicants had to be keen on learning tennis, have a positive attitude, have good grades, exhibit exemplary behaviour, be in financial need, and show community involvement. One of the scholarships was awarded to Tamisha Richardson (12), of George Hill, a young lady who attends the Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School. Tamisha has been participating in the ATA's programmes for four years and has shown much promise and improvement. In her application letter she wrote, "I like tennis because it is very exciting and an appealing sport. I am an energetic and active person so tennis helps keep me disciplined and focused. I love and respect my coaches and team mates when playing and practising and meeting other tennis players from different islands."

Avern Gumbs (10), the next recipient, attends the Valley Primary School and has been involved in the ATA's programmes since she was three years old and can do great things in tennis if she continues to work hard. Avern wrote, "I am interested in tennis because I like competing and exercising. Tennis classes also help to teach good manners and behaviour and I know those are important. At tennis, once rules are followed, everybody is safe and happy. I like playing tennis as it gives me the opportunity to win supplies and trophies and trust me there is no time to be lazy or slack."

The final scholarship went to Errol Lake (6) of South Hill. Errol attends the Valley Primary School as well and has been involved in the ATA's after school programme for the past year. Errol began playing tennis by taking private lessons at Cuisinart Resort and Spa with the ATA staff. He was given this free opportunity because of some personal tragedies he has experienced at a young age. With the passing of his father and the financial difficulties his mother experienced as a result of that prompted Mrs. Brenda Lawrence, a certified social worker, to intervene and find ways for Errol to become involved in more structured and positive activities. Mrs. Lawrence wrote, "[Errol] has the build of a natural athlete, tall, thin, very strong and has good coordination. He is keen to play sports and gets much satisfaction and joy from his tennis lessons. I had originally advocated for Errol to have a tennis scholarship partly so that he could have a positive, Anguillian, male role model as well as having a physical outlet and a place to build the skills required of a disciplined sport. The ATA has provided all of this and more for Errol. Tennis has been a positive and consistent addition to Errol's life."

These scholarships will provide tuition for an entire year in the Anguilla Tennis Academy After School Programme. This programme is conducted during the school year from 4-6 pm Monday-Thursday and Saturday 8-11:30 am. Currently, there are almost 80 children enrolled and with the new facility in Blowing Point nearing completion, there will be room for more participants as there are six courts instead of just one in Webster's Park.

Attending the press conference were Paul Lowerre and family, Mitchell Lake, Millie Hodge, Jason Allen, and of course the three scholarship recipients. When asked about his contribution, Mr. Lowerre said, "I am glad to support the Anguilla Tennis Academy and this is a way to give our thanks to Anguillians who have made us feel so welcome, and to help the advancement of this important children's programme." Mitch Lake (president of the ATA board), Millie Hodge (Vice-President), and Jason Allen (Director of the ATA) all thanked the Lowerre family not only for their generous contribution, but for the establishment of the endowment through UBS Financial Services. They also thanked them for the donation of the coconut palms and palm trees that have been recently planted at the new facility.

The Lowerre family congratulated the three young children and wished them the best of luck with their tennis endeavours. The children were certainly happy to receive the scholarships but equally in awe of the progress of the tennis facility. They seemed eager for it to finish so that they could be some of the first to play.

Ephraim Helton: One of the ATA's staunch supporters for 14 years

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See us at:

www.tennis.ai

Ephraim Helton has been coming to Anguilla as a visitor and friend for 16 years. Affectionately known as "Eph," he is a lawyer based out of Danville, Ky. and has been a supporter of the ATA since inception. Eph first met Mitch when he was working as an assistant pro to Head Pro Chris Wade at Cap Juluca. Twelve to sixteen years ago, Cap Juluca had an expat/tourist tennis night in which Mitch and Chris would play with members of the Anguillian community, expatriates, and tourists. Mitch stayed in touch with Eph in the years to come and from the ATA's humble beginnings, Mr. Helton has been there through every step. He has provided legal services and advice to the ATA at no charge for the entire 13 year history. Eph was paramount in writing and reviewing the lease agreement for the new tennis facility. He has also written many letters to many different factions in his attempt to garner more support financially and in kind. Moreover, Eph has graciously reviewed virtually every contract the ATA board has signed and continues to be a voice of reason to all the people involved in the decision making process.

Besides providing all of that support free of charge, Eph makes regular visits to Anguilla in which he donates money to the ATA's programmes. Eph was recently here for the Jimmy Buffet concert. While here, he made many financial contributions such as assisting with the costs to bring in an additional coach, purchasing meals for the ATA staff and children while they were selling T-shirts, and winning bids at the charity auction at Zurra in which 1/3 of the money goes to the ATA.

Eph's sustained commitment to the ATA is to be lauded and the Anguilla Tennis Academy board thanks him for all of his efforts. Without supporters such as Mr. Ephraim Helton, the ATA would not be where it is today.



Eph and friends enjoy the concert!

About the Anguilla Tennis Academy...

The Anguilla Tennis Academy is dedicated to providing the highest quality tennis instruction to Anguillian, Caribbean and International youth in a competitive environment while encouraging exemplary sportsmanship. The primary goal of the Anguilla Tennis Academy is to expose children to the joys, discipline and rigor of the life long sport of tennis where they can acquire technical skill, experience ideal sportsmanship and develop a strong sense of community.

