



Anguilla Tennis Academy

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ATA Monthly

Feature Articles

- Summer Camp 2007 is at the new facility! **page 1-2**
- ATA Children Compete in Nashville **page 3-4**

Other Articles

* Christians in Action clean the facility **page 5**

* Will Edmonds to volunteer for two months **page 6**

Editor in Chief:
Jason Allen
jallen@caribcable.com
264-476-0697

2007 Summer Camp will be at the New Facility

This is a very exciting time for all people involved in the Anguilla Tennis Academy. The year 2007 will go down in history as the ATA summer camp will be held at the new facility. Although the facility is not 100% complete, the courts are fully operational and therefore ready to be christened by hundreds of children who plan to play this year. This is the Anguilla Tennis Academy's twelfth year of operation and the 2006-2007 season has proven to be the most significant as much has occurred. The beginning of the school year marked the fourth consecutive year for the ATA After School Program. Moreover, because of the fantastic work done by the ATA staff at Cuisinart Resort and Spa as the official management company of their tennis facility, the ATA was able to secure management contracts from Malliouhana Hotel and Spa, St. Regis Temenos Villas, Covecastles, and Cerulean Villa.

To top off this year's accomplishments, the highly acclaimed 2007 Summer Tennis Camp will be held at the long awaited Anguilla Tennis Academy World Class Facility. There are six courts ready to be used and the ATA is expecting large numbers. The first two weeks of camp will be conducted by the ATA staff including Will Edmonds from England and Matt Cooper of Athens, Georgia. The third and final week is the international week which will include some players from all over the world as well as 10 internationally acclaimed coaches. The year end tournament will also be held to decide who will be Anguilla's top junior in various categories.

So far, the response has been enormous with over 100 children registering. To be able to deal with the numbers, the ATA has decided to hold two sessions this year. The morning sessions will be for the young or novice players and an afternoon session will be comprised of the advanced juniors who have been playing in the year round after school program. The ATA has already received support for this year's camp but is still waiting on responses from local businesses. It takes a great deal of work and effort to pull off this camp yearly not only because of the large numbers, but because of the ATA's dedication to excellence. For that reason, there is always a contingent of international coaches invited to assist in making the camp a powerhouse in the world.

This year, Chris Wade, one of the founding members of the ATA, and his wife Becky will be coming again. Chris is the Head Tennis Professional at the T Bar M Tennis Academy in Dallas, Texas. His academy was ranked number one in the USA recently. Chris was at one point, the tennis director



One of the new courts!!!



Three courts on each side of the building.

At Cap Juluca here in Anguilla. Lance Lee, Head Tennis Professional at the Arthur Ashe Youth Tennis and Education Center in Philadelphia will be coming for the second year. Yet, this time he will be bringing four junior players from his facility. The AAYTE is amazing organization that shares the same mission and philosophy with the ATA. Lance will also be joined by Kein Wilson, an energetic coach who loves to be on the court. Siobhan Belloli and her son Nate will also be coming back for the third time. Affectionately known as Coach B, she is the queen of grassroots tennis programs and her record shows that she has been making great strides and initiatives in the tennis world for many years. It is a privilege to have her as she brings a great deal of energy and excitement to the children.

Mary and Michelle Woodruff have been coming to Anguilla for more than 8 years now and have been a tremendous help. They were colleagues with Mitch at the Hill School where he was a math teacher. Also joining us is Wyatt Harper, a young man full of energy and experience who has not only been a coach in the summer camp but a past participant. Greg and Sarah Travis from Travis Television will once again be on hand to help document this year's proceedings. Adrian Green, an expert in physical training on from Chris Wade's academy will be on hand to help the top juniors development a fitness regime to help propel them to better tennis.

Indeed this year will be an incredible camp. There will be a buzz around the island with the inauguration of the tennis courts. Much media will be on hand to cover this unprecedented event in the Caribbean.



"Shaping lives and building a future since 1996"

Tennis players from Anguilla come back home as champions



L-R Yasmin Ebner, Olivia Geyer, Teresa Brooks, Jason Allen, Katie Hawkins.

On April 18, a group of delegates representing Anguilla and the Anguilla Tennis Academy left for Nashville, Tennessee to play in the Music City Tennis Invitational. The tournament was held on April 20-21 at the Vanderbilt University Tennis Complex that consists of six pristine indoor courts and nine top quality outdoor courts. The MCTI is a charity tennis tournament in which all the proceeds went to the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital. This was the 34th time the tournament has taken place and consequently the second time that delegates from the Anguilla Tennis Academy have gone. This year, ATA director Jason Allen decided to take the four top junior females in the ATA's programs. Katie Hawkins, Olivia Geyer, Yasmin Ebner, and Teresa Brooks were chosen, and they represented Anguilla well.

The tournament was comprised of two separate divisions called the US Open and the French Open. In each division there were six teams, and each team had ten members. The MCTI is a doubles tournament so therefore each team had five doubles teams. It was a round robin format in which all six teams would play each other once. All five doubles teams would compete against the other team in a match that consisted of 15 games. At the end of the tournament, the team with the most cumulative games would be crowned the championship team. During the tournament, Olivia and Yasmin comprised one doubles team and Katie and Teresa were a doubles team as well. Although all four girls were not on the same team, Olivia and Yasmin were fortunate enough to be on the team that came out as champions in the French Open Division. They were presented with two championship plaques on Sunday afternoon.

As if it were enough to have two champions from Anguilla, the ATA's director Jason Allen also participated in the tournament and won. He teamed up with Will Edmonds in the US Open Division at the top doubles spot. As mentioned before, each team has 5 doubles teams that range in levels from the best on down. The best team plays A, the second best plays B, and so on. Will Edmonds has been to Anguilla as a visiting coach on two separate occasions and he also played number one doubles and singles for Cumberland University. Will's talent combined with Jason's experience made them the top A level team in the tournament not losing a single match. They also helped their team come out as the eventual champions of the US Open Division.

This of course was not the first time that a group of players from Anguilla played in the MCTI. In 2005, Keithroy Proctor, Vallan Hodge, Marvin Hazell, Melissa Mussington, and Jason Allen were there. Keithroy Proctor has since then received a tennis scholarship to Lambuth University. It was special that the children were able to see Keithroy actually compete in a college match while at the MCTI. In the days leading up to the event, Keithroy played in the conference tournament. The girls and the director saw him play a doubles match in which he came out on top as the victor, and a singles match which although he lost, represented himself well. Vallan Hodge is now the head tennis professional at Malliouhana Hotel and Spa, Marvin Hazell spent a year as the head pro of the ATA before leaving for college, and Melissa Mussington remains a top player in Anguilla although she has not been playing this past year due to a rigorous academic schedule.



American Eagle assisted with the tickets



Jason Allen and Will Edmonds discuss strategy



The girls relax after a day

This trip was made possible by the support of many people. First and foremost, American Eagle graciously assisted in providing reduced airfare for all the participants. American Eagle has been a staunch supporter over the years and without their assistance, the ATA would not be where it is today. Millie Hodge, general manager of American Eagle said, "American Eagle believes in providing opportunities for children such as this. We are proud to be involved with any organization that is providing positive activities for the youth." Also, Greg and Sarah Travis of Travis Television hosted the delegates in their home during the entire trip. They also provided meals for the children and took them on many excursions when they were not playing. Bill Riddle and Patsy Bradley, co-chairs of the MCTI, were responsible for hosting and coordinating the incredible event. They invited the ATA group to participate in the tournament free of charge. Bill Riddle has been involved with the ATA since 1999 and has done a great job of promoting and bringing the Academy closer to completion. Also, Peter Parles, owner of Straw Hat Restaurant in Anguilla sponsored Teresa Brooks by assisting with her airfare. Without supporters such as Bill, Greg and Sarah Travis, Peter Parles, and American Eagle, it would have been impossible for the children to participate.

Greg Travis is producing a video that will illustrate how the children did during the tournament and will be shown soon in Anguilla. The Anguillian spoke with Jason Allen recently, "I am so very proud of these four young ladies. They played very well and represented themselves, Anguilla, and the Anguilla Tennis Academy superbly. It is a plus that Olivia and Yasmin brought home championship plaques and of course I felt honoured to be on a championship team as well. The MCTI is a great event and I would like Bill Riddle to come back to Anguilla to help organize a similar fundraising event for the ATA as our facility is nearing completion."

Tennis Tips from Coach Will

willjedmonds@hotmail.com



Start it with a Serve

All too often in tennis, people go out and hit back and forth for hours without ever hitting a serve. They'll drop the ball, knock it over with a forehand, and even play points and keep score this way. But is there anything wrong with this? Surely they're getting better. Unfortunately, this form of practice doesn't translate well into match play.

During a tennis match, 40% of the time we swing a racket, it's a serve. Yet, during the course of a practice, often we serve less than 2% of our swings. Equally, 20% of the swings in a match are returns of serve, yet in practice, return of serve is something people do less than 1% of the time. Often players and coaches are equally to blame for sometimes going hours without hitting a real serve; real being a serve where someone is on the other side of the net, ready to return and looking to expose a weak serve.

So, my top tip is to try and start every point with a serve. Whether you're warming up in the service boxes, or hitting forehands cross-court, whether you're a lady practicing for your team league, or a young kid wanting to play like Federer, start with a serve. Obviously, you'll want to make sure you begin slowly, warming up the shoulder in a manner for optimal performance as the practice continues. Once the serve is fully warmed up (should be within 10 minutes of the start of any practice) all points, drills, games, and exercises should begin with a full-speed serve, with someone returning the serve in a competitive manner. Over time, players will feel more comfortable with their serve, more comfortable returning, and much more at ease in a pressure match situation.



More than 40 children turned out to help with the cleaning of the facility.

Christians in Action at the Anguilla Tennis Academy's New Facility

This past Saturday, June 9, 2007, almost 50 children from the Central Baptist Church set out to do work in the community. These young people formed part of the "Christians in Action" (CIA) youth group which is directed by Marlon Lake of The Forest. CIA meets every Friday at 7:30 p.m. and is engaged in doing many different activities that are centred on developing a strong Christian background for the youth. Recently, CIA has been venturing out into the community to help in anyway possible while giving God the Glory by doing such things in his name. Some of the activities they do are to raise funds and others are to just be of service.

Marlon Lake is the brother of Mitchell Lake, founder of the Anguilla Tennis Academy. Marlon said, "I saw a need because the Anguilla Tennis Academy will be opening for its summer program. I realized there was a lot of work to be done so I figured that since I have a good amount of young people, we could bring them down and they could do some work for the Anguilla Tennis Academy." While at the ATA's new facility, the children were involved in cleaning up trash, removing unused construction supplies, swept the main building, and planted almost 40 coconut palm trees. CIA's main activities are based at the church in which they focus on spiritual, academic, and athletic aspects. The leaders try to create a balance within the activities so that there is a wide range of activities that have their basis in the teaching of Jesus Christ. The children more times than none really enjoy the competitive games because the ages range from 12-21 although there is no cap for the age limit, therefore in that range it is very common for youth to be ultra competitive.

Marlon Lake, on a personal level, feels drawn to help the ATA not only because his brother is involved, but more importantly because he grew up playing tennis in the programs as well. This type of community involvement and love for country is hard to teach, but Christians in Action seem to be making a difference. Mr. Lake said, "I just want to say congratulations to the board of directors of the Anguilla Tennis Academy for their accomplishments, it has been a long process, with a lot of hard work and it is finally coming to a point where we can see productivity and completion is in sight. That is why I decided to bring my youth group out here to assist. It is important that non profit organization such as the ATA and CIA work together for the betterment of youth. I would like to encourage other people in the community to get involved with not only the ATA but other organizations in the community."

Although many children and people were on hand, The Anguillian was able to speak to a number of individuals. Gerard Macdonna mentioned, "I am here to clean up the Anguilla Tennis Academy to prepare it for the summer camp this year and I am looking forward to playing when it opens." Keon Halley also said "I am here to help clean up the academy so it can be ready for the summer camp. I think the academy is big, the courts are beautiful and will be really good to play on." Kyle Hodge, although off guard, had a few words to say as well, "This is awesome, a lot of kids came out and this is really great. There are about 40 children here today and I am proud to be a junior leader in the CIA. This academy is a great success and it is going to be good for the kids." The board of directors wish to thank the Christians in Action youth group for their dedication to a great cause. Moreover, CIA wants to give a special thanks to Greig's Trucking, Vanterpool Trucking Service, ABC Supplies, Valentine Davis, Aronel Water, parents who provided food and drink, and the children.

Will Edmonds to Volunteer for two months

Having served as a volunteer coach for the International Coaches week at the ATA summer camps in 2004 and 2005, British tennis professional Will Edmonds returns to Anguilla after a two year hiatus to help direct the inaugural summer tennis camp at the new state-of-the-art ATA tennis facility at Blowing Point. As well as his work in Anguilla, Will has coached tennis in several countries, including England, Greece, the Czech Republic, the United States of America and Spain. At the age of 17 he coached Ned Boone to win the British U'13 National Championship. As a coach, Will has represented the Southern Section in the US Zonal Championships at both U'14 and U'12 levels, winning every competition and posted a 22-0 record on route. During his short but successful career, Will has coached at the Club, High School, and College level, taking his ladies' teams to promotion in every flight, his High School team to their first ever post-season appearance, and as assistant coach at Cumberland University, he took an unranked team into the top 20 in the NAIA national polls.

On top of his fantastic string of successes at the competitive level, Will feels his real strengths lay in child development, focusing his efforts in developing hand-eye coordination, balance, athleticism, and more importantly, instilling a sense of fun into the game of tennis, which can only boost the numbers of kids playing, and increasing the possibility of finding a future star in the midst. Will has established himself as well respected and popular speaker on the International coaching conference circuit giving speeches in several different states on topics ranging from coordination-based kids games to high performance preparation, drawing in audiences from all over the World.

Will received a bachelor of science degree in Psychology and has just finished his Masters Degree in Organizational Leadership and Human Relations, which he intends to take full advantage of when organizing this summer's tennis camp. With numbers expected in the hundreds, on 6 courts, with several local and international coaches, Will is going to have his work cut out making sure everything runs smoothly, and that each and every child has the time of their life and learns of the great experience tennis can bring. "I'm excited to be back in Anguilla and helping such a fantastic cause." Will said "The ATA does a fantastic job here on the Island, and I'm honoured that Mitch and Jason have asked for me specifically to come down here and help out with this year's summer camp". He added "this year is going to be particularly special for the ATA and for me as it will be the first camp at the new facility. The place looks fantastic and I'm excited to get stuck into making sure this year's camp is one every child will remember."

Anguilla Tennis Academy

P.O. Box 548
The Valley, Anguilla BWI

PHONE:
(264) 476 -3234 (Mitch)
(264) 476-0697 (Jason)

FAX:
(264) 497-8214

E-MAIL:
Anguilla70@yahoo.com (Mitch)
Jallen@caribcable.com (Jason)

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.tennis.ai

About the Anguilla Tennis Academy...

The Anguilla Tennis Academy is dedicated to providing the highest quality tennis instruction to Anguillan, 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.

