



The Racket

CLUB MEMBERSHIP ROBUST: MORE THAN 235 PLAYERS EXPECTED TO OPEN SEASON

As this issue of The Racket goes out to you, the Club's membership is looking extremely healthy. That's in terms of overall numbers as well as in the number of formerly inactive members who have returned to the game. Welcome back! We expect to start the season at capacity. Families represent approximately one-third of our memberships with the majority being Single Memberships.

There are currently 29 inactive members, mostly because of injuries, but that's down from a whopping 67 inactive members last season during the height of the pandemic. Unfortunately, we have also had a significant number of resignations (18 officially, 28 no response) from among active and inactive members. What we know is that many of those are due to unresolved medical issues or relocation. We wish all of them well and hope they hold fond memories of their years with LPTA as we do of them.

We have invited 25 prospective members to join LPTA this season and have another 20 waiting in the wings. Our heartfelt thanks goes to the many current members who continue to recruit prospects from among their families and friends. We hope that everyone understands that, in the interest of providing an enjoyable tennis experience for all, with limited "bumping" and wait time for courts, we cannot accept all the fine applicants on our waitlist at this time. We hope to see prospective members still on the waitlist play as guests of their sponsors this summer, and we will continue to monitor the list during the first few weeks of the season.

With the demand for membership information and applications outstripping the available spots, we remain confident that LPTA membership will remain healthy for the foreseeable future.

NEW MEMBERS READY FOR ACTION

Four new LPTA members were accepted late last year but opted to postpone joining until this year. Another two are spouses of members who've upgraded to a Family Membership. The newbies are: **Kathryn Brown**, a marketing professional who plays at the intermediate level. Sponsored by Betsy Berry, she prefers doubles and hopes to play on weekday mornings.

Bridget Coughlin, wife of member Brian Wegner. She is a newcomer to the game, has three sons and is CEO/President of the Shedd Aquarium. She is interested in both singles and doubles, either evenings or weekends.

James Escobar, a 3.5 player who works in corporate real estate. Spouse **Alissa Garman Escobar** is a 3.5-4.0 singles or doubles player. She works as a territory manager for Boston Scientific. The Escobars were sponsored by Mark Gertzof.

Erika Vogel, a non-profit program director and a 4.0 player. She was sponsored by her husband, Jonathan. She prefers daytime tennis and plays both singles and doubles.

Jory Wishnoff, an attorney and a 3.5 player sponsored by Stan Martin. He has played mostly singles, but is interested in doubles and has a flexible schedule.

Profiles of other new 2021 members will appear in upcoming issues of *The Racket*.

MEET OUR NEW PRO: MARINOS LOUKIDIS



Talk about bad timing.

It was February 2020 and Marinos Loukidis decided to put his career in e-commerce and business analytics on hold for a stab as a tennis teaching professional.

And then the Pandemic tightened its grip.

Although he had landed a tennis gig at Lakeshore Sport and Fitness, it was many months before the Fullerton Avenue facility and Marinos's job as a net sport instructor were back on track.

By this winter, however, he was busy giving lessons to a full range of players, including Betsy Berry and a number of other LPTA members. "We are very fortunate to have hired Marinos as our new pro," said Betsy. "He's smart, passionate about the game and has a winning personality. I really like his approach to teaching. He worked me hard and helped my game."

Marinos, 32, was one of the top ten junior tennis players in his native Greece, although he also was an avid soccer, basketball and volleyball player. By 16, he was teaching tennis at local clubs in Patras, about two hours southwest of Athens. Rather than turn professional, Marinos decided to attend a local university where he earned a business degree.

Marinos moved to Canada in 2012 to complete a Master's degree in business technology at the University of Ottawa. In 2013, he relocated to Chicago to join his wife Nellie, who was finishing a Ph.D. in Neuroscience at Northwestern University. She now is employed as a consultant for McKinsey & Co. Marinos and Nellie live in East Lakeview with two cats and King, their "cuddly" 90-pound pit bull terrier.

Marinos has followed a number of the pro tennis players with Greek heritage, including Pete Sampras, Stefanos Tsitsipas, Nick Kyrgios and Mark Philippoussis. After developing a number of youth players, Marinos looks forward to the challenge of working with LPTA members.

"Proper coaching goes well beyond generic instruction," he said. "I strive to ensure that my teaching is individualized and aimed towards each student's goals."



DEE SHIVELY: FAMILIAR FACE NAMED LPTA CLUB MANAGER



From running snappy tennis drills to managing receivables to buying fresh fruit for the Clubhouse, there isn't a job, task or responsibility that Dee Shively hasn't successfully accomplished in her 27-year LPTA tenure.

Over the winter, she accepted the Board's offer to become Club Manager.

"Dee is where she is supposed to be," said Vice President David Polayes. "LPTA will be in very capable hands under her leadership."

Dee became a member in 1994 and joined the staff in 2000.

Previously, she was a fireballing softball pitcher at Millikin

University, where in 1988 she earned a degree in mathematics and basic computer science. As a young tennis player, Dee was coached by Gloria Connors, mother of tennis legend Jimmy Connors. She later played two years on the Virginia Slims satellite tour and competed in World Team Tennis out of Midtown Tennis Club before deciding to make Chicago her permanent home.

"I was a small-town girl from Belleville," she said. "When I first saw Lake Shore Drive, I knew Chicago is where I wanted to be." Dee became familiar with LPTA after Club employee Henry Miller and members such as Nancy Borzak befriended her at Midtown. She later joined as the Club's youngest member.

As Club Manager, Dee will welcome back an experienced crew, including Grounds Manager Duncan Stephen, Robert Stone, Dennis Percevecz, Curtis Henderson, George Koretos and George Pearce.

She said the biggest challenges running LPTA in 2021 will be keeping the courts in solid playing condition, dealing with Chicago's topsy turvy weather and coping with continuing COVID regulations. "My biggest goal is to provide high quality customer service to LPTA members and the 2,200 people who have registered to play on the public side," Dee said.

LPTA ADDS MEMBER EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR



Dylan Drooger has been named LPTA's first Member Experience Coordinator. Drooger, 29, is a Chicago native who also has lived in California, Austria, Colorado and Japan.

He taught 8th grade social studies in Denver before moving to Tokyo to teach English as a Second Language. He graduated from Earlham College in Richmond, Ind., with a degree in political science.

As Member Experience Coordinator, Dylan will oversee LPTA tennis programming and help enhance the overall member experience. He will report directly to Club Manager Dee Shively and is expected to work on some evenings, weekends and other times when Dee is not on site. He also will be monitoring court-related

activities and handling communications chores, including the website, member portal and daily morning email.

“I really look forward to meeting everyone at the club and serving the needs of LPTA members,” he said. “This is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference by providing high level customer-focused service.”

Since returning to Chicago in 2020, Dylan has worked as an independent graphic and web designer. He has a pilot’s license and looks forward to traveling in South America and Africa.

But for now his sights are set on LPTA ... and maybe picking up a racket in his off hours.

“I played at Lincoln Park High School and am hoping to learn the game again on the green clay of LPTA.”

TODD MARTIN YOUTH LEADERSHIP EVENT: JUNE 11 AT LPTA



Lincoln Park Tennis Association (LPTA) is pleased to welcome Todd Martin, former #4 World Ranked player, current CEO of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, and Founder of Todd Martin Youth Leadership (TMYL) for a day of tennis.

Please join Todd on Friday, June 11, 2021 for tennis, fun and socializing. This event is open to all LPTA members. All proceeds from the event will go directly to Todd Martin Youth Leadership (TMYL) and Chicago Tennis Opportunity Program (TOP), given our affinity and past support of this program. TMYL supports under-resourced children and families through tennis, academic support, and leadership development.

Schedule of events for the TMYL day:

- **Private Lessons with Todd Martin** (1pm – 6pm): Join Todd on court for your own (or up to 4 members) private lesson. Donation of \$1,000 includes a one-hour private lesson with Todd and Happy Hour. This is only open to active LPTA members.
- **Member Tennis Mixer** (6pm – 7pm): Members can join Todd on court for tennis play and tips. Up to 24 members can participate and additional Pros will be on hand. Donation of \$100 includes participating in the one hour on court mixer with Todd and Happy Hour. This is only open to active LPTA members.
- **Happy Hour** (7pm – 8pm): Happy Hour with Todd will be catered by our neighbor Bacino’s and held under the trees outside the Public Side entrance. Join in the fun for conversation, nibbles, beverages, and a Silent Auction (with some great tennis stuff). This is open to active LPTA members and their guests. Donation is \$35 per member or guest.



Registration for the event: All Registration and event information will be handled by Todd Martin Youth Leadership and can be found [here](#).

Questions can be directed to: Anne Chalesle, Event Director, Todd Martin Youth Leadership:

cell (312) 282-2549, email: anne.chalesle@tmyl.org

Thanks to Rush Howell for connecting LPTA with TMYL.

MEC SPOTLIGHT: HAVE FUN CLIMBING THE LADDER

Danny Sharp, who is on the LPTA Board and Member Experience Committee, is determined to see more singles play and social interaction at the Club. Last summer, he organized a singles Challenge Ladder, which drew 30 players representing a variety of styles and skills. He would like to see that number double in 2021.

The Challenge Ladder allows members to find and meet new tennis partners for low/no pressure singles play. The ladder is open to players at any level and matches can be arranged by email. The time limit for each match is 50 minutes, although players can agree to extend the match. Players are only expected to play a minimum of three matches during the season and beginning June 6. “The Ladder is strictly about fun and participation,” Sharp said.

Danny has worked diligently to make the program efficient, fair and inclusive. Signup will be open soon and can be accessed via the [LPTA website](#) or [YourCourts](#). Rules are [here](#).

Sharp and his wife Cecil Booth have been LPTA members for five years. British born and bred, Sharp has become a “staunch Chicagoan, living here since 2001 and raising our kids in the City.” Cecil is from Louisville and moved here to attend Northwestern University. Danny has 30-plus years experience in the investment industry and founded Wellington Management Co.’s Chicago office. Last year, he was named to a global role for Boston-based Wellington’s private equity and hedge fund activities.

Danny is almost exclusively a singles player, but has “committed to playing more doubles and trying not to look so confused when doing so.” In the meantime, he will continue to actively promote the Challenge Leader.

[Link to Full LPTA Events Calendar](#)

COURT PROJECT COMMITTEE REPORT

You may recall that the Board approved a multi-year court improvement project that involves the enhancements of Courts 1 and 2, improvements to the four Hydro Courts and major releveling of the four Diversey Tennis Center (DTC) public courts, which are managed by LPTA. New windscreens will be installed on the six LPTA private courts by this time next year. All told, the Board has budgeted \$128,865 to complete the project.

The work in 2021 will begin in early October. It will feature elevating the foundation of Courts 1 and 2 by five inches, as well as some less intensive tweaking on the Hydro Courts. “That should give us six top-notch courts by the opening of the 2022 season,” said David Polayes, LPTA’s Vice President and Chairman of the Court Project Committee. The releveling of DTC’s public courts will begin in early October 2022, with full completion expected in time for the opening of the 2023 season.



The Committee believes the LPTA courts will be in good shape as the 2021 season begins, despite the usual challenges of preparing for play during Chicago’s erratic spring weather. The LPTA staff and Board members also are monitoring the major athletic field construction project now in

full swing north of the Club. They are hopeful the new complex will ultimately improve drainage on the LPTA grounds. "Our real problem is the runoff from Lake Shore Drive," Polayes said. Artificial clay courts have a life expectancy of 30 years or less. LPTA's Courts 1 and 2 have not been renovated in four decades, while DTC's public courts are nearly 50 years old.

Polayes saluted Grounds Manager Duncan Stephen and fellow Court Project Committee members Ben Rose, Larry Garner, Carol Wetmore, Club President Randee Saturno, Len Gaudio and Michael Weiss for their able assistance. Randee said it is David's dogged determination over the years that has kept the Board's focus on the need for steady court maintenance and a comprehensive plan for the playing surfaces, sprinkler systems and drainage equipment.

Polayes cut his tennis club management teeth as a young pro in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Later, he earned an MBA in Accounting and Finance at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Finance. He currently is a Managing Director - Investments at Wells Fargo Advisors.

PANDEMIC-RELATED RULES IN PLACE TO START 2021 SEASON

The Board will continue to revisit COVID restrictions as the summer progresses.

Guests will be allowed from the get-go. However, they must fill out registration forms, as the Club is obligated to perform contact tracing if necessary.

Among the other health and safety guidelines that must be followed until further notice:

- Masks and social distancing are required when off the court, but are optional while playing.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the Club.
- Players should avoid handshakes and other forms of physical contact.
- Benches, chairs and tables will be back on the courts and grounds.
- There will not be jugs of water on the courts, although the club will provide bottled water for players who need it.
- Towel service, fresh snacks and pitchers of beverages will not be available.
- All indoor facilities, including the Clubhouse, showers and locker rooms will remain closed. The toilets will be open with sanitizing rules in place.

SOME OTHER REGULATIONS

After reviewing the member survey taken at the end of last season, the Board also has made some other adjustments to playing rules and the guest policy. For example:

- There will be a 50-minute bump rule when there is a wait for courts. More details on the switchover procedure will be emailed to members and posted on the website.
- The Club will continue with its No Reservations policy.
- During the peak 8:30 am to 12 pm weekday period, only one guest will be permitted per court.

The Board and staff will evaluate court usage patterns and make further refinements as merited.

WEBSITE UPGRADES IMMINENT

LPTA members can expect online enrichments by the end of May.

Michael Weiss, a Board member and Chairman of the Communications & Technology Committee, said the website will be expanded to include such updated information as an updated member directory,

court openings and closings, calendar of special events, court and Club rules, news and social postings, and past issues of *The Racket*.

There also will be a link to the LPTA YourCourts for application forms to book drill groups, RSVP for events and participate in the Tennis Challenge Ladder. Watch your email for information about the rollout.

DISCOUNTS FOR LPTA MEMBERS

[Move Your Feet Sports](#) again is offering LPTA members a 10% discount for its tennis and golf youth sports camps. The weekday series of camps for children 5-13 years of age run from mid-June until late August at the Diversey Tennis Center public courts ([Diversey Tennis Center: Home](#)) adjacent to LPTA and Diversey Driving Range across from our parking lot. LPTA family members and friends are eligible for the discount. Robert Owens is the director and head coach of the MYFS program.

String It, a new tennis shop in the Gold Coast, is offering a 20% discount to LPTA members on anything in the store including racket stringing. Bring in this coupon or show on your phone to receive your discount:

20% off everything in the shop for LPTA members

Same/Next Day Stringing Service!

Late Nite/ Urgent Stringing Service Available!

String It
racquet shop

Tennis Balls by the Can/Case

Pickleball
Badminton
Table Tennis Equipment

Louis DeLaPena, ERSA Certified
1221 North Dearborn, Chicago, IL
312.925.0538
Your Source for Tennis Gear!

LPTA COMMUNICATIONS

The email addresses used to communicate with members are member@yourcourts.com and info@lptachicago.com. Please make sure you put these in your address book/ contact list to prevent Club emails going to your spam folder.

[The Racket 2021 Publication Schedule](#)

We welcome submissions from members! If you have content or photos for *The Racket*, please submit through this [link](#). We are using this form to make sure we don't miss any emails from you, save our in-boxes and have all of our content together in one place. Thank you!

TENNIS ODDS AND ENDS

[Billie Jean King & Elton John on the court](#)

[The Pandemic Drove People to Tennis and Golf. Will They Keep Playing?](#)

[Martina Navratilova to Executive Produce Documentary on Tennis Legends Suzanne Lenglen, Helen Wills](#)

['Couldn't have picked a better day to be back on court' - Tennis players delighted as Irish sports facilities reopen](#)

The 2021 [French Open](#) takes place May 24 - June 13

Cryptogram

TVQJ HBJJOA QVA NCOPOJVTTR LTVRBS NJ VJ
DNWCPTVAA-ADVLBS XNWCH QOHD V HVTT JBH.

PUZZLE BY BEN BASS

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER Feather, plume

Cocktail of the Month

If you try any of the “Cocktails of the Month,” we’d love to see your photos!

MIAMI OPEN ‘MO SMASH’



INGREDIENTS

1 oz Gin
1.5 oz [Finest Call Blood Orange Sour](#)
.5 oz. Solerno Blood Orange Liqueur
Soda Water

INSTRUCTIONS

Add gin and sour to an ice-filled glass and add soda water until almost full. Top with Solerno.

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