



Issue 12 – Summer 2014 Wrap-Up

Message from the Executive Director – Jim Boyce

Hello to all OTA member club executive members. It's hard to believe that the summer season is coming to an end. Let's hope we get some more good weather and play outside a few more times. This summer was an exceptionally busy one at the OTA. As you know, we launched our new Trillium-funded **Raise the Net** programme - a community club initiative in which the OTA has undertaken the task of educating club volunteers about the Sport 4 Life - Long Term Athletic Development strategy as well as emphasizing a lifetime involvement in the sport, through active participation and/or volunteerism. To date, our Raise the Net Programme Manager, Sahaj Jayanth has visited with over 60 clubs across the province, delivering this important message to interested club volunteers. Part of this programme also involved the creation of "ClubStrong"; a Raise the Net resource centre that provides access to many helpful resources, templates, and best practices information for Club Executives. For more information on Raise the Net or to book a visit, visit www.raisethenet.ca.



The OTA was also fortunate to receive two additional grants; "**Capital Kids**" and "**Digital Capacity**". Capital Kids, also funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, is a 3 year, youth based tennis programme based in the Ottawa area that is designed to get more kids into the game and to keep them in it for the long run. Launched this summer, this free programme for kids age 6 to 12 started out in 4 locations and had over 600 participants. A cooperative effort between the OTA, Ottawa Parks and Rec., and Ottawa-area tennis clubs and schools, the objective of Capital Kids is to introduce kids to the sport, get them involved in league play and also offer incentives to join area tennis clubs. Judging by the first year response, this initiative will be very successful in finding new young keen players. For more information

on Capital Kids, visit www.capitalkidstennis.com.

The Digital Capacity grant, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's Sport Priority Funding programme, is a two year grant designed to allow the OTA to upgrade all of its digital communication avenues, including developing a comprehensive social media content strategy; a rebuild/redesign of the OTA website;



implementing ScreenScape in 40 OTA clubs; developing videos and TV spots for OTA TV; providing VR tournament licenses to more OTA clubs; promoting tennis at the 2014 Pan/Parapan Am Games; live-streaming major OTA tournaments; and upgrading the eNews/eMag platform. The Digital Strategy will link all of the OTA's digital tools together into 1 cohesive communications plan. The OTA has already made progress in becoming more digitally literate by creating social media accounts, developing videos, releasing OT Mag online and implementing the new rankings system in conjunction with Tennis Canada. The Digital Strategy execution will enable us to improve our digital communication across all these platforms, make better use of financial resources, enhance the work we have already done and identify new opportunities to make the largest impact possible. This impact can be measured in many ways such as: joining a member club, registering as a competitive player, subscribing to receive OTA eNews, reading OT Mag online, engaging in discussion about OTA programs on social media, becoming a programme volunteer and so on.

This is clearly an exciting time for the OTA and for tennis in general. A recent tennis Canada study showed a significant increase in playing levels across Canada. We feel that the addition of these three initiatives to our existing programmes will help us identify and electrify new players and motivate all of us who already love the game to play more and encourage others to do the same – and quite frankly, we couldn't do it without you!

Thanks for a great summer season!

Player Development Update – Kartik Vyas



The summer competitive season kicked off in style during the last week of June and the first week of July with the Ontario Junior Outdoor Provincial Championships, the largest outdoor Provincial championships in Canada. There were a total of 476 entries in the U12, U14, U16 and U18 events. Held at UTSC, Donalda and of course, Kew Gardens Tennis Club, the tournament featured some of Ontario's, and Canada's, top players. Due to the heightened interest in tennis in Canada and Eugenie Bouchard, Milos

Raonic's performance on the world stage, this year's tournament had a supercharged atmosphere. There were at least 10 different media organizations covering the event. The results were as follows:

U12 Girls

Champion: Natasha Sengphrachanh
Finalist: Daria Tomasevskaya

U12 Boys

Champion: Ashton Cross
Finalist: Tim Zelikovsky

U14 Girls

Champion: Viktoriya Tabunshchik
Finalist: Layne Sleeth

U14 Boys

Champion: Liam Draxl
Finalist: Sasha Pachnev

U16 Girls

Champion: Sofija Zecevic
Finalist: Ines Milosevic

U16 Boys

Champion: Sean Huynh
Finalist: Clarke Wilson

U18 Girls

Champion: Vanessa Wong
Finalist: Natasha Irani

U18 Boys

Champion: Jack Mingjie Lin
Finalist: Sam Philp

Thanks again to host clubs UTSC, Donalda Club and Kew Gardens Tennis Club!

A total of 108 players represented Ontario at the Junior Outdoor Nationals later in the summer. Team Ontario players captured the following singles championship titles at the Outdoor Nationals:

Girls U12: Natasha Sengphrachanh
Boys U12: Ilya Tiraspolsky
Girls U14: Sofiya Babych
Girls U16: Katarina Kopcalic
Boys U16: Jack Mingjie Lin



The 2014 Sporting Life Ontario Open and Roman Cup was one of the most successful events in Canada. Over 400 competitors competed in 13 events from July 30-August 4 in Ottawa. The Rideau Tennis Club and the Ottawa Athletic Club were the primary hosts. The singles winners of the Sporting Life Ontario Open were Egor Koleganov and Elizabeth Fournier. The Roman Cup U12-U16 events also doubled as Tennis Canada sanctioned National Qualifying events and as a result, 8 additional players from Ontario qualified for Team Ontario. Thanks to Sporting Life for their support.

The 2014 Ontario Senior Provincials were held during the week of July 6th at three clubs within the Greater Toronto Area; Lambton Golf & Country Club (Over 35, Over 55, Over 60), Bayview Golf & Country Club (Over 40, Over 45, Over 50) and the Mississauga Golf & Country Club (Over 65, Over 70, Over 75, Over 80, Over 85). There were approximately 200 entrants, a number of participants competing in both the singles and doubles events over the course of the week. Although there was a slight drop in participation, the sites were satisfied with their events and look to remain on board for 2015. Both the OTA and tournament venues have reviewed the tournament format and look to make a few changes to the tournament to try to increase participation. Stay tuned – we will get the details to you once confirmed.





The second annual **Champions U9 Tournament** is only a month away. Last year's inaugural event was a tremendous success – and we are hoping to make the 2014 tournament bigger and better. This year's final will be at the Rexall Centre, November 7 to 9. The winners and runners up in the boys and girls categories all qualify for a one-on-one coaching bursary. We'd like to ask you to speak to your pro and the families of your U9 players and remind them of this year's tournament. The format has been changed this year – there

are no regional qualifying events – just a large main draw event for both boys and girls. For more info on the tournament, click [here](#). For a look at a promotional video of last year's event, click [here](#).

Membership and Coaching – Jay Neill

The summer of 2014 was very busy for the Membership and Regional Development area. There were quite a few coaching courses throughout the summer with more to come in the fall. A total of 167 people have already registered and taken the first 8 Instructor courses so far this year (as at August 31). We have just added our final Instructor course of the year. This is set for November and 20 people are already registered. This will be the first course to include volunteers who were recruited through our Raise the Net initiative. The next Club Pro 1 course in Toronto is now being scheduled and already has 35 people interested in a course that will max out at 20. This course will start late this year or in January '15.



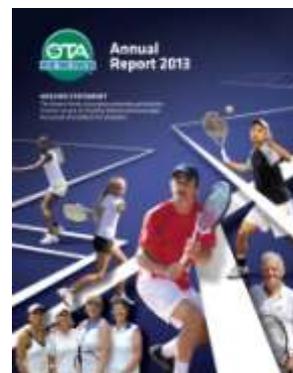
It was great to see so many of our members at OTA Day on May 24 at the Merchant of Tennis Toronto and Oakville locations. Six hundred and sixty members found their way to the Merchant of Tennis that day to receive a gift bag that included 2 tickets to the Rogers Cup as well as many OTA and sponsor gifts. The gift packages contained a value of \$30. This represents 3 times the cost of our member's OTA fee from this one benefit alone. If only my investments did that well!

OTA Presidents' Day was held on August 4 in conjunction with the Rogers Cup- Toronto. It was attended by 210 people who received tickets to the matinee session that day, a continental breakfast, the chance to win many raffle prizes as well as a gift package. The event was highlighted by an appearance by Canadian rising star Brayden Schnur. Brayden currently plays #1 singles at North Carolina and qualified for the main draw of the Rogers Cup (where he lost a close first round match to world #48 Andreas Seppi). From the feedback received again this year, all club representatives continue to enjoy this event and look forward to in 2015!



The first week of June was when **Raise the Net** started visiting OTA member clubs and regional associations. The team attended club socials, tournaments, events etc. to promote the National Long Term Athletic Development, (LTAD) initiative, and Raise the Net through the *OTA National Bank Road Show*. Promotional items such as t-shirts, hats, water bottles, pens and notepads as well as LTAD brochures/Rating guides were distributed to event participants. The Raise the Net team travelled throughout the province this summer reaching over 60 clubs. We hope to visit some indoor clubs over the winter

Finally, just another reminder that the **Raise the Net OTA Resource Centre** is available for clubs to access. The purpose of this Centre is to make the lives of our volunteer club executives as easy as possible. Please go to <http://goo.gl/w8Y355> in order to do this. The Resource Centre contains lots of helpful information, including OTA Annual Reports, articles and posters, the OTA Club Manual, OTA Benefits, the Strategic Plan and more! Should you have issues using this link (receive an ERROR 500 or something similar), then a work-around to this is to have you log on with your google account first (at www.google.ca , then use the link and it will work). If you don't have a Google account, you can go to www.google.ca and follow the instructions there to create one using your existing email id.



As always, please feel free to contact me at jneill@tennisontario.com if you have any questions on club membership. I will be happy to answer them for you. I do hope that 2014 will be the best year ever for your tennis clubs!

Provincial Development News – David Lea/Ely Schwartz/John Wins-Purdy



The OTA continues to introduce tennis into the school curriculum and other community groups, with the aim of increasing interest in the sport amongst young people who might otherwise not be exposed to it. We have worked with many school boards across Ontario to ensure that tennis is included as a sport in Phys Ed classes. The OTA demos the sport to both teachers and students and will also lend balls and equipment to schools that need it.

12 schools participated in the Kids Tennis program during the last month of the school year in June. We were able to link 5 of these schools directly with member clubs, helping them promote club programs into the spring and summer months. There were **1,800** students participating in the programme, and **43** teachers and volunteers helping make it a great month leading into the summer. Many of the new resources provided to the teachers helped make their tennis unit easier to run, and gave them confidence to incorporate into next year's curriculum.



Kids Tennis has continued delivering programming for children with special needs as well as wheelchair tennis throughout this reporting period. In association with Holland Bloorview Rehabilitation Center and the North York Tennis Association, Kids Tennis has been able to introduce tennis and coach **75** children with various disabilities. There have also been **32** volunteers helping at these events. These tennis lessons are often a highlight for these children, and a partnership that we will look to continue to grow.

This was the first full season for Kids Tennis with the use of the new Smash Cage. It was a highly successful spring and summer that targeted all regions of the province, and surpassed all targets for number of events and participants. The cage was at **12** large scale events during this reporting period, and saw over **85,000** participants step up and test out their serve. Some of the highlights included the World Pride Parade, Ontario Open, OTA Roadshow events, YMCA Gravenhurst, Ottawa Little Aces Launch, Sunshine Project Launch, Tennis Rocks Festival, and North Burlington TC Grand Opening.



The NCTA Region had a very busy and productive summer in 2014. With the help of the Capital Kids grant from Trillium, the region was able to really drill down into Ottawa area communities and expose the sport to young first-time players.



Capital Kids has been a great success this season. Programmes ran at 4 different locations across Ottawa – Jules Morin/Bordeleau Park, Sheffield Glen Park, Judge Park and Alta Vista School, from early June to the end of September. 770 kids between the ages of 6-12 registered and participated in the programme for at least one 4 week session (some did 2, 3 or all 4 sessions). Lessons were offered between 3 and 5 times per week (depending on the location) with over 80% of kids playing twice per week. There were 9 coaches, 3 volunteers, and 7 junior instructors active in delivering lessons throughout the summer. Racquets and balls were available at a subsidized rate and were purchased by over 150 kids in the programme.

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Fei Wu, Program Coordinator, was hired in early May and worked tirelessly for 3 weeks to assist in the launch of the Capital Kids Program. She produced and managed a website – www.capitalkidstennis.com with full online registration, built and managed social media, prepared promotional marketing material, and coordinated the program. CTV showed up at one location to interview participants and highlight the programme on the evening news in June – click [here](#) to see segment.



Little Aces in Schools reached 31 elementary schools in the Ottawa area between January-June; introducing tennis in the gym/schoolyard to approximately 4700 kids between the ages of 5-12. Eight connections were built or developed between member clubs and their local schools, either by hosting class lessons at the club or having the club Pro/Instructors assist in school. Approximately 12 of the 31 schools conducted repeat classes and participated between multiple times. Of the 8 clubs involved, 7 reported an increase junior/family membership and participation in

programs and camps as a result. A Little Aces League was launched at Tennis Centre West Ottawa (TCWO) with an event seeing approximately 200 participants from 4 different schools on April 24th with media and municipal presence. The league itself was piloted at TCWO with 36 participants between the ages of 5-10 for 8 weeks. Fall 2014 will see 3 leagues emerge at TCWO, Carleton Tennis Centre and Ottawa Athletic Club (OAC). There are currently 31 kids registered at Carleton, 32 at TCWO and approximately 136 kids at OAC involved. Over 20 kids from Capital Kids joined the Little Aces leagues.

On the competitive front, the competitive circuit saw a significant increase in participation over last year. Five new clubs signed on to host an OTA sanctioned junior tournament and a total of five U9 Rogers Rookie, 12 U10 Future Star, and 20 other (U12-U18***) events were added to the schedule. A Junior Competitive Interclub league was created in the winter and included 4 teams (OAC, TCWO, Carleton and Sportheque) with 16 players playing every weekend. The league has expanded to U12 and U14 and will include OAC, TCWO, Carleton, Sportheque and The Rideau, with a total of 9 teams and 60 competitive players participating on a weekly basis.



Communications and Marketing – Peter Malcomson



The OTA was pleased to kick off two significant new partnerships this season; with **National Bank** and **Pizzaville**. National Bank took ownership of the **National Bank Roadshow**. **Pizzaville** took over as sponsor of the Smash Cage in August. The Roadshow, featuring racquet demos, prizes, giveaways and important OTA Raise the Net information, visited approximately 25 locations during the summer – reaching over 2,000 participants. The Smash Cage was utilized at approximately 20 clubs and festivals in the summer and requests continue to come in. Over 4,000 participants enjoyed the smash cage in the summer. For more information on how your club can take advantage of these two promotional properties, contact pmalcomson@tennisontario.com.

The OTA, in partnership with the InterCounty Tennis Association was very excited to launch the first ever **Tennis Rocks! Festival**; June 7 and 8 - at the Rexall Centre. This great event featured the Junior Team Tennis Championships, a two day junior team tournament encouraging friendly competition on all the Rexall Centre Courts. Over 35 teams and 200 kids representing 25+ OTA/ICTA clubs took part in the tournament. Thanks to the InterCounty Tennis Association and particularly Todd Orrett and Sonja Zibin, for partnering with us on this one! The festival also included a host of



other activities on Centre Court and around the grounds, including skill games, exhibition matches, the OTA Smash Cage, a DJ, prizes, sponsor exhibits, stadium tours, hospitality and more. Plans are underway for next year's Tennis Rocks! festival so make sure your club fields a team or two - and be sure to invite all your members to come out and enjoy. More details to follow in the next issue of TCC.



Three issues of Ontario Tennis Magazine, including the recently released Fall edition, were published and distributed to our home readers and OTA member clubs. All issues were also made available on-line at www.tennisontario.com. Advertising in the magazines is up from last year. New advertisers included Advantage Tennis International and Pizzaville. The Yearbook edition will be published in March 2015.

The OTA again had a booth and hospitality suites at the Rogers Cup. The OTA hosted guests at their suite in seven sessions. OTA Booth participation was steady throughout the 9 days – particularly on the opening weekend – the OTA distributed 12,500 tickets to clubs for family weekend. The opening weekend was extremely successful for the OTA – many families visited the booth to find out how to start playing tennis, join a club, etc. Many parents visited to find out more about starting their children off in the sport. We had OTA TV playing on the TV screen, information was disseminated on Raise the Net, the U9 Championships, the new OTA Player Rating Guide and we assisted the Philpott Fund with promoting one of their events. Approximately 1,400 OTA magazines and Rating Guides were distributed. There were approximately 10,000 exposures at the booth. Thanks as always to Rita Lee and her team for volunteering at the booth!



On the PR side, numerous press releases were sent out to over 120 media outlets concerning the Junior Provincials and the Ontario Open/Roman Cup in Ottawa. Due to the increased interest in tennis, particularly Canadians' success internationally, numerous media covered both events, especially the Junior Provincials. There were at least 10 media exposures, including on CTV, Sportsnet, CFRB, City TV and CBC Ottawa.

Now that the indoor season is approaching, OTA Marketing is turning its attention to sponsorship acquisition and planning some new and/or improved promotional activities designed to enhance your member's experience and enjoyment. More on that in the next issue. As always, feel free to contact me at pmalcomson@tennisontario.com if you have any questions or comments.

Did You Know...?

... that Canadian **Carling Bassett** was 14 years, 10 months old when she played in the Canadian Open (Rogers Cup) in 1982?

... that the **Davis Cup** weighs 231lbs/105kgs?

... that if a player touches the net in between the singles stick and the net post while the ball is in play, that the point continues? This part of the net is considered to be a permanent fixture.

Would you like other executive members at your club to receive the TCC newsletter?

If so, simply send an email with a list of contacts to ota@tennisontario.com and put the word "newsletter" in the subject line

If you have any comments you would like to make to the OTA feel free to contact anyone at the office or email ota@tennisontario.com . For a staff directory, visit www.tennisontario.com/Client/bios.aspx

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