



Issue 10 – January/February 2014

Message from the Executive Director – Jim Boyce

In case you haven't heard by now; 2013 was a **fantastic** year for our provinces' competitive players; both at the national and international levels! Former OTA competitive player Milos Raonic won **2 ATP tournaments**, reached a career high #10 in the ATP rankings, became the first Canadian male in the Open Era to reach an ATP 1000 final, (Montreal), and joined fellow Ontarians **Daniel Nestor** and **Frank Dancevic** to help propel Canada to the Davis Cup semi-final! But wait, that's not all; how about **Peter Polansky** winning 2 ATP Challenger level events, or former provincial junior champions **Pavel Krainik** and **Brayden Schnur** winning ITF Futures tournaments! And... in Federation Cup play **Sharon Fichman** contributed 2 wins in a pivotal tie against the Ukraine; thereby sending Canada to the World Group II level... and then went on to excel in WTA doubles play with partner **Gabriella Dabrowski** at the Rogers Cup in Toronto. On the junior



front, Team Ontario won the Canada Games team competition and - watch out for these youngsters over the next few years - OTA competitor **Katherine Zebov** won the Girls U18 Provincials at the age of 14; **Vanessa Wong** won the U16 Nationals; **Alejandro Tabillo** won the Boys U18 Nationals; and 12 year old **Layne Sleeth** won the prestigious "Lil Mo" tournament in Florida. On the seniors front, Toronto's **Muffie Grieve** won the World O80 title; with numerous other Ontarians placing well at both the Nationals and the Worlds.

So, the question you are probably asking right now is... as a club manager/executive, what does this mean to me? The fact is, Ontario's club structure and the OTA's competitive structure together have helped produce, and will continue to produce, some of the nations best players and international champions. Thanks to you, and your club's commitment to the provinces' players... and by supporting OTA certified coaches and hosting OTA sanctioned tournaments, together we are seeing fantastic results at all levels of play!

As mentioned in the last TCC Newsletter, the OTA was successful in obtaining a grant from the **Ontario Trillium Fund** to support our new "**Raise the Net**" initiative. This three year programme, beginning in April 2014, is designed to inform and educate OTA community clubs about the benefits of the Canadian Sport for Life [Long Term Athletic Development, \(LTAD\)](#) initiative. Following the LTAD blueprint will further help this Province and our member clubs produce more great players and encourage a healthy lifestyle for Ontarians throughout their lives through the sport of tennis. The OTA will be travelling the province over the next three years to deliver **Raise the Net** workshops to community club executives and volunteers. We look forward to visiting your community club! To learn more about **Raise the Net** and how your club can get involved, click [here](#). We will be officially launching **Raise the Net** at our AGM on April 12th.



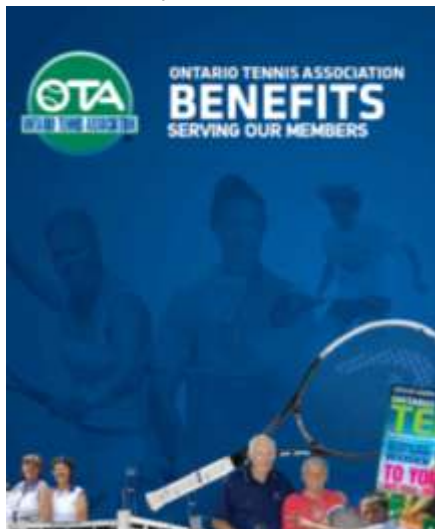
2014 promises to be a very exciting year for tennis in Ontario. We have a new tournament player ranking structure, some very exciting new outreach programmes and a new digital strategy – stay tuned for updates on all these! With over 240 clubs, representing 63,000 players, I'm certain there will be many exciting and inspiring stories coming out of all our tennis communities. Thank you again for your support and dedication to the sport, your members, and the OTA! If you have any questions or comments, feel free to email us at ota@tennisontario.com. We always like to hear from our members.

Membership and Coaching – Jay Neill

I hope you have all been able to adequately deal with the recent ice storm and ongoing cold weather so far this winter. Here is a more pleasant thought. With some luck, outdoor tennis should be in the foreseeable future. On the coaching side of things, more certification dates have recently been added to our schedule since the last newsletter. This schedule will provide people with lots of opportunity to get certified or to upgrade their certification to the next level. The schedule can always be viewed by clicking [here](#). We are now working on the club insurance program for 2014-2015. The plan is to e-mail the program details to the clubs by the end of February. Please make a note to look for this information around that time. The OTA AGM is once again set for the Rexall Centre at York U, Toronto. The date is April 12 so please mark that date in your calendars now. AGM packages (including the Annual Report) will as usual be mailed to the clubs before that time. Finally, just another reminder that the **Raise the Net**



OTA Resource Centre is available for clubs to access. Please go to <http://goo.gl/w8Y35> in order to access any information. 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. Please feel free to contact me at jneill@tennisontario.com if you have any questions on club membership and I will be happy to answer them for you. I look forward to working again with all club executives to help make 2014 the best year ever for your tennis clubs!



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

Even though we have been experiencing the worst winter in years, tennis continues to thrive indoors at our provinces schools. The OTA has been extremely busy with school visits, teaching teachers how to teach tennis. With interest in the sport at an all-time high in Canada, the school boards are lining up to have OTA staff visit schools to introduce floor tennis as part of the regular curriculum. One of the issues that we have with the schools programme is "Continuation". It's great to start a kid off in the sport at school but after that, we need your help. We would love to introduce students and teachers to neighbouring tennis clubs and try to integrate them into the club system. Please contact us if you would like to be put in touch with schools and welcome new young players to your club. You never know where the next Milos is going to come from. Contact me at dlea@tennisontario.com 416-514-1121, if you have any questions about Community Tennis.

As mentioned previously, the new **Raise the Net** initiative is set to roll out this spring. The OTA has hired a person dedicated to delivering the workshop to member Community clubs over the next three years. The new person is **Sahaj Jayanth**. Sahaj is a recent Business Management graduate from Bethany College in Kansas, attending on a tennis scholarship. He worked for the OTA in the Player Development area last year and will continue on in the role of Raise the Net Project Manager. Raise the Net will encompass educational seminars in three main areas; the Canadian Sport 4 Life Long Term Athletic Development, (LTAD) initiative, best practices for good club governance and community outreach through tennis. You can reach Sahaj at 416-514-1123 or info@tennisontario.com, to learn more about Raise the Net and to book a workshop for your club volunteers. The workshops will commence in mid-April, so be sure to book now in order to get a preferred date.



Update Ottawa: John Wins Purdy, our representative in Ottawa, is busy working on some new initiatives, including Little Aces – a programme which introduces the sport to younger children in a format that is accessible to them, using smaller courts, racquets, softer balls, and an adapted scoring system. This scaled-down format allows kids to learn the sport in a fun and enjoyable way. As they grow, children advance to regulation courts with a solid understanding of the game already in place. John is also introducing a new U10 Circuit beginning in early February. For more information on what the OTA is up to in Ottawa, contact John at john.winspurdy@gmail.com. For U10 circuit info, visit www.tennisontario.com / Player Development.

Player Development Update – Kartik Vyas

As mentioned in the last edition of TCC, the OTA has introduced a new competitive player tournament and ranking software system for the 2014 season. Known as VR, (Visual Reality), the new system is a complete tournament software package that will allow our host clubs to easily manage OTA sanctioned tournaments at their location and instantly post results onto the host carrier. The Junior system is already up and running; with Adult, Open and Wheelchair categories to follow shortly. As before, the provincial system is synced with all the other Provinces and Tennis Canada so all results will contribute to national rankings. We have gone back to a **round based points system** which should encourage larger draws, resulting in stronger fields and greater revenue potential for our host clubs' events. Email rankings@tenniscanada.com or [click here](#) for a more detailed FAQ on the new Rogers Rankings system. Speaking of host clubs, we are always on the lookout for member clubs to host our sanctioned events, both junior and adult. Running an OTA sanctioned tournament has never been easier; it can really generate great interest and excitement amongst your membership and, as mentioned, can add to your club's bottom line. As an added bonus, any member club that hosts an OTA sanctioned tournament is entitled to use the VR system to manage their own club's events, **free of charge!** To learn more about hosting OTA tournaments and the new VR tournament software system, contact Andrew Chappell, achappell@tennisontario.com.



As you also know from our last issue, we ran the first ever U9 Champions event. It was a great success; with a couple of young champions receiving coaching bursaries for their fantastic efforts. We will be running the regional qualifying events again in the fall of 2014 so please make sure your club's coach and the parents of any of your U9 members are aware of it. We'd like to double the number of participants this year.

Selections for Team Ontario juniors are currently under way. Both the number of competitors and the calibre of play has been fantastic. It's a great experience to be part of Team Ontario; gaining the opportunity to compete at top flight tournaments both locally and nationally. Our junior team was the winner of the Canada Games last year. Ontario clubs and academies continue to produce the lion's share of the nation's best young players. It all starts with the great programmes many of your clubs offer the kids. Keep up the good work!

On the Seniors front, we are eager to increase the participation in our Senior Provincials event this year. Many club level players feel that they are not good enough to play in this wonderful summer event and are a little bit intimidated. The fact is, many of them would actually be pleasantly surprised at how well they might do if they gave it a try. The regular senior competitors are a very welcoming bunch and are eager to get some new players involved. The week is always very enjoyable, with the right mix of competition, camaraderie and social events. Many first timers come away saying they wish they had tried playing sooner! We will be sending details of the event out to you soon and will ask you to try to encourage some of your members to give it a try.



One of the great features of the OTA's new **Raise the Net** initiative is the opportunity for your club volunteers to learn how to be an official. The Player Development team is always on the lookout for people who are interested in becoming officials. Officials do get paid and have the best seat in the house to watch some fine players, young and old, compete. If there are members of your club who you feel may be interested in learning about this great opportunity, be sure to sign your club up to a **Raise the Net** workshop this spring and bring along anyone who wants to learn more.

Communications and Marketing – Peter Malcomson

Now that the holiday season is over, OTA Marketing is looking forward to the spring season. We have added several new initiatives and have enhanced some of our existing ones. We will be launching the **OTA Roadshow** this spring. The Roadshow team will be travelling around the province and setting up at large club and community events – the initiative is designed to deliver a fun, interactive day that promotes the game as well as our sponsors and partners. The Roadshow will feature many activities, including product demos and giveaways, the OTA Smash Cage, Kids Tennis demos, the new Raise the Net workshops, Rogers Cup deals, exhibition matches and more. If you have a significant event at your club this season, let the Roadshow add some extra sizzle. For more info on the OTA Roadshow, click [here](#).



Another exciting event that we will be presenting this season is the first-ever **Tennis Rocks! Festival**. The two day event will be held at the Rexall Centre, June 7th and 8th. Produced in partnership with the Inter County Tennis Association, the Festival will feature a two day team tennis event - “**The Junior Team Tennis Championships**” - open to junior participants from all OTA and ICTA member clubs. This extravaganza will bring together players and tennis fans from across the province and will also include attractions such as the new OTA Smash

Cage, exhibition matches, entertainment, food and beverage hospitality, retail/sponsor area, prizes and more. Details on the event and the junior team competition will be available soon. This is an event that you will definitely want to tell your junior players and their families about. To find out more about the **Tennis Rocks! Festival**, click [here](#).

We recently sent out an email asking you for Summer Camp guide submissions – there’s still time but some clubs have already submitted their on-line forms. The form can be found by clicking [here](#). You might also think of purchasing a small space ad in the guide to ensure that your club stands out. For ad rate information, click [here](#). To see the on-line version of last year’s guide, click [here](#).

It’s **Club OTA** card time again... we are busy lining up partners for our Club OTA loyalty card again this year. By the time the next TCC newsletter comes around we will let you know about any exciting new offers for your members and will also let you know when to expect the cards. Please feel free to contact me if you need more information about the programme or have some local retailers, restaurants or attractions that might be interested in presenting exclusive offers to OTA players.



The OTA is currently developing a “**Digital Strategy**” to enhance communications with our member clubs and players. We will be upping the content quotient on our website as well as on Twitter and Facebook. There is an OTA Competitive player **app** in the works. This app will allow players to access all of our provincial tournament information, including draws, results, rankings and individual performance history. We will be adding the **Club OTA** loyalty programme to the player app later in the season. As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, the VR tournament software system is available for free to any member clubs that run an OTA-sanctioned tournament.

We will be launching **OTA TV** – our in-house TV channel. We plan to webcast significant OTA tournaments and produce programming that will highlight the sport of tennis, with a particular emphasis on players and stories from Ontario. OTA TV will be powered by **Screenscape**. Screenscape is Canada’s number 1 digital signage network and would be a great, low-cost addition to your facility. It allows you to broadcast messages in your facility that will keep your members informed about club events, tournaments or policies – relieving pressure on your staff and volunteers. Additionally, you can entertain your guests with OTA TV or other programming. BTW, did we mention that the Screenscape system can actually generate revenues for your club?..... To find out more about Screenscape, contact me at, pmalcomson@tennisontario.com or contact Screenscape directly [here](#).



We are also working with another organization, **Jegysoft Inc.**, which can provide an economical online “club management system” that can be customised to your clubs specific management needs. Jegysoft can provide a flexible easy-to-use solution to all your club’s management functions – including online member database, integrated to online court booking, online registration for membership, clinics, ladders, and tournaments; email platforms, online payment processing and more. The system will also produce accounting and court usage reports. Several OTA member clubs, including Valley Tennis Club, Davisville Tennis Club, Waterloo Tennis Club and Astra Tennis Club have already started using Jegysoft and are very pleased with the results. For more information on the Jegysoft club management system, contact Paul Standen, pwstanden@jegysoft.com, 1-888-908-6003 x14 or click [here](#).

And finally...we will also be re-vamping our weekly enews release in late February. For the first time, it will include a “Classified” section. I’d also like to remind you to send OT magazine’s [on line link](#) to your members. The OT Yearbook will be posted on-line at the end of February. Please feel free to contact me at pmalcomson@tennisontario.com with any questions or comments. Happy hitting!

Did You Know...

... that the first round loser in men’s and women’s singles competition at this year’s Wimbledon will each receive \$35,802USD ?

... that Vicki Nelson and Jean Hepner played the longest rally recorded in the history of professional tennis, lasting 29 minutes with a total of 643 shots?

... that the first tennis balls were made of wool or hair wrapped up in leather?

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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ATP/WTA Event



Ontario Open/Roman Cup



Club Messaging