

BARBADOS TENNIS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter January 2008

Message from the President – Dr Raymond Forde

In June, 2007, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced the formal launch of the “Tennis – Play and Stay” campaign. The campaign which is aimed at increasing tennis participation worldwide, centres on the slogan “Serve, Rally and Score” and promotes tennis as easy, fun and healthy.

“Tennis – Play and Stay” is primarily aimed at coaches of starter players of all ages, encouraging them to use the slower red, orange or green balls in both training and competition. The campaign shows that tennis can be easy and fun if starter players use the slower balls on smaller courts to serve, rally and score from the first lesson.

Additional messages within “Tennis – Play and Stay” include promotion of the proven health benefits of tennis, and for players to gain a tennis rating to help find playing opponents of a similar level. “Tennis – Play and Stay” can therefore have a big impact on our sport. It promotes a simple but strong message that can improve the way tennis is introduced by coaches and dramatically changes how tennis is perceived by prospective players worldwide, particularly related to how easy it can be to start to play.

We hope you will support this campaign by continuing to “*Play and Stay*” as well as encouraging others of all ages to take up the game.

As you all will remember, we rebranded the Association in August 2006 and changed our name to *Barbados Tennis Association Inc.* Council is aware that the abbreviation BTA is also synonymous with the Barbados Tourism Authority.

At our recent Annual General Meeting, it was suggested that a survey of the membership be conducted to determine whether the name of the Association should be changed again or not.

Please therefore give your feedback by e-mailing us at tennisbarbados@sunbeach.net to let us know if you feel a further name change would be appropriate.

A five year development plan was launched in early 2007 after having involved all of our stake holders. It has since been shared with the ITF, the National Sports Council (NSC), and the Barbados Olympic Association (BOA). Successive Councils are committed to follow through on the process, as yearly progress reports are expected by the ITF.

The Wilkey facilities continue to be upgraded and Council apologises for any inconvenience to members. We are still on an aggressive fund raising drive to make things happen and

thanks again to those members who provided numerous ideas, financial contributions, physical time and labour, contacts, etc. during the year.

Our objectives for 2008 continue with major fund-raising thrusts to finance teams taking part in junior and senior events overseas, to complete the lighting and renovation of all courts at the National Tennis Centre and to generally develop the game in Barbados.

The new 2007/8 Council appointed at the Annual General Meeting held on September 26, 2007 is as follows.

President – Dr. Raymond Forde

Vice Presidents – Ms. Sandra Osborne & Mrs. Patricia Murray

Secretary – Mrs Eleanor Brown

Assistant Secretary – Mr. Jason Mayhew

Treasurer – Ms. Helen Roper

Councillors – Mrs. Patricia Carlstrom, Ms. Ruth Holder Mr. Louis Prescott, Mrs Margot Thomson and Mr. Matthew Weir

Finally I would like to give a special thank you to our outgoing secretary, Mrs. Bonita Morgan for her time and efforts in coordinating the five year development plan.

Tournament Calendar for 2008 (provisional)

Seniors

Doubles Competition – January 26-27 (at the NTC)

Federation Cup – wk commencing April 21 (Bolivia)

Davis Cup – wk commencing July 14 (Honduras)

Olympic Games (tennis) August 10-17 (Beijing, China)

Open tournament – May (NTC)

Senior and Open Nationals – September (NTC)

Mens & Ladies Top 16s/8s – December (NTC)

Juniors

Easter tournament – March (NTC)

FCIB ITF Group 4 tournament – March 31 – April 5 (NTC)

Junior Davis Cup/Fed Cup 16s & under– wk commencing April 7 (Honduras)

JITIC tournament – TBA

Junior Nationals – September (NTC)

Under 14 Development Championships – TBA

Junior Christmas tournament – December (NTC)

A full calendar of the tournaments in the region, and at our local clubs will be placed on our website shortly.

Wimbledon tickets

Wimbledon runs from 23 June to 6 July 2008. Applications to go in the draw for 2008 Wimbledon tickets can be made via e-mail to tennisbarbados@sunbeach.net.

2007 Tournament Report

Seniors

Nationals

The Nationals held in September 2007 attracted another large entry. For the third successive year, the Men's singles winner was Michael Date holding off Russell Moseley, 7-5, 6-2 in the final of the *Island Heritage* Open competition. In ladies' Open action, fifteen-year-old Alyssa Fuentes became the 2007 women's singles champion defeating Dr Sherry Belle 6-0, 6-2 in the final to claim her first senior national crown.

The Men's doubles Open event had some new faces in the final. Winners were Matthew Weir and Hasani Stewart beating Martin Field and Ian Craig. In Open Ladies doubles action, Sherry Belle and Kathy Stewart retained their 2006 title beating Helen Roper and Marie-Jeanne Symmonds in a close fought three set battle.

In the Over 35s Men's singles final, Jason Small had a walkover against Bernard Frost, while in the Men's Over 45s final, 2006 runner-up George Grant beat Raymond Forde.

In 2006 champ - Margot Thomson's absence, Helen Roper was winner of both the Ladies Over 35s and Over 45s singles events against Sherry Belle and Patricia Murray respectively. Helen and Patricia Murray also took the Over 45s Ladies doubles with the runners-up being Michelle McKenzie and Caryl Pearson.

In the Men's Over 35s doubles, Jason Small and Julian Baird beat Stephen Slocombe and Craig Smith, while Raymond Forde and Peter Symmonds retained their title against Richard Harrison and George Grant in the Over 45s. In the Veterans Mixed doubles – Jason and Natalie Small edged Dr Forde and Helen Roper in the final event of the tournament played as a round robin.

Our thanks go to our sponsors – *Island Heritage* and *SBI Distribution* for their support as well as to the many local companies who again very kindly donated prizes to the winners and runners-up.

Inter-club tournament held at Paragon Tennis Club

Paragon hosted and organized an inter-club doubles tournament involving Paragon, Windward, Summerhayes and Barbados Yacht Club over two weekends in late August and September. Men's, ladies and mixed pairings had to have a combined age of 90 years or more to participate.

A good time was had by all with overall winners BYC being presented with a beautiful trophy in memory of one of Paragons stalwarts, Douglas Corbin. Players were treated to good food and drinks and were well entertained at the end of play.

Men's Top 16s and Ladies' Top 8s Invitational singles

The Men's and Ladies' invitational events sponsored by the *Barbados Olympic Association* were held at the National Tennis Centre in the last week of 2007.

In the men's event, group winners Anthony Marshall, Michael Date, Russell Moseley and youngster Darian King won all their matches. Runners up David Fowler, Devard Wharton, Bernard Frost and Ryan Moseley missed out on the semi-finals, each losing to the group winners in close matches.

The semis saw Anthony Marshall beat Darian King 7-6, 6-1 while Michael Date had a close three setter with Russell Moseley winning 4-6, 6-2, 6-4. In the final, the 2006 champion Anthony Marshall overcame Michael Date 7-6, 6-2.

In the ladies' Top 8s, the two group winners were Alyssa Fuentes and Kristen Lopez. They then played off against the runners-up Ancia Ifill and Kara Gamble before meeting in a long fought out final with Alyssa eventually prevailing 7-5, 7-5.

Juniors

Caribbean Under 14s development championships

A team consisting of Thomas Hill, Kareika Wharton and Ancia Ifill represented Barbados at the Caribbean Under 14s tournament in St Vincent in mid August. Despite losing his first match, Thomas finished well in the main draw and placed 4th out of the 21 entrants. The girls had some tough matches and ended up in 12th and 17th places respectively.

Nationals

Some 60 youngsters competed in the various age groups in the junior section of the September tournament with top junior Darian King the most successful player winning four titles in the Championships sponsored by *Esso*.

After winning the Boys' Under-18 singles title with a 6-1, 6-1 victory over Seanon Williams, King was back in action against the same opponent in the Under-16 final. King, the No.1 seed, beat defending champion Williams 6-3, 6-2 to take the title.

Teaming up later with older brother Christopher, Darian also won the Under-18 doubles, beating Richard Cole and Jerome Dixon 6-4, 6-3. He also took the Under-16 doubles title with Mykel Reifer defeating Andre Parris and Kenton Gamble 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Girls' No. 1 seed Alyssa Fuentes defeated Ashley Frost 6-1, 6-0 to win the Under-18 singles title as she continued her domination of the group. In other age groups, singles winners were Kianna Marshall, Samiya Dottin, Ancia Ifill, Yannick Polanem, Dylan Hall and Thomas Hill.

JITIC

Devard Wharton, Christopher King, Bradley Bryan and Kristen Lopez played in the Central America and Caribbean closed tournament in the Dominican Republic in early August with mixed results. Bradley was the only one to win his first round singles match before losing against the number 1 seed and eventual winner. Bradley also reached the quarter finals of the doubles with his partner Na'im Azhar of Bermuda.

FirstCaribbean International Bank ITF Grade 4

The 2007 event normally played around Easter was held in mid October and attracted considerable interest from top juniors from around the world as in previous years. Entries came from as far away as Russia, Sweden, Mexico and Ecuador.

Six local juniors made the main draw of the Under-18 Boys' event based on their October ITF rankings and wild cards. Bradley Bryan with the highest ranking at #643 and Darian King, who defeated him to win the Coca Cola ITF Tournament in St Lucia ranked at #722 were automatic entries. The four other Barbadians gaining wild card entries into the draw were Devard Wharton, Christopher King, Renaldo Gibson and Dario Parris.

Other Barbadians among the 80 qualifiers vying for the six spots remaining in the main draw were Seanon Williams, Christopher Date, Hasani Stewart, Mykel Reifer, Andre Parris, Carron Beckles, Richard Cole, Jackson Kerr and Kenton Gamble.

The local lads did not have it very easy though, with only Seanon Williams making it into the second round of the qualifying draw before losing to eventual finalist and Rafael Nadal look-alike – Junior Ore. Our other lads in the main draw also fared badly – all going out in the first round against strong and tough opposition.

However, it was unseeded American Alberto Bautista who grabbed the Boys' Under-18 singles title, with a breathtaking display of power tennis and clinical stroke production. Bautista defeated compatriot and qualifier Junior Ore 6-4, 6-7, 6-1 in an exciting rain affected duel that had all the elements of a great match - tension, intrigue and drama.

The King brothers, Darian and Christopher finally gave host country Barbados something to cheer about as they reached the Under 18s semi-finals narrowing losing to number 2 seeds Acosta and Parker 4-6, 6-3, 7-6.

Barbados' top ITF ranked female juniors Kristen Lopez (1204) and Alyssa Fuentes (1850) together with Ashley Frost and Kara Gamble made the main draw as wild card entrants in the Under 18 girls' event. Eight spots were open for qualifiers and among the 15 vying for those coveted spots were Barbadians Allison Boyce, Gabriella Lopez, Zahra Stewart, Yurena Polanen, Jodie Watson, Anne-Marie Jordan and Ancia Ifill.

Sadly, our girls received similar treatment from their opposition as did the boys, losing all matches in both the qualifying and main draws in the first rounds. In the final, Irina Ramialison of Martinique took the Girls' Under-18 singles title, with a 6-4, 6-4 win over American Noel Scott.

In the Boys' and Girls' Under-14 draws, the Barbadian entrants among the girls were Jeniece Ayuen, Coleah Bellamy, Samiya Dottin, Joelle Hall and Melena Lopez. Most of the entrants were from the Caribbean, with three from Suriname. There were 15 Barbadians among the 36 Under-14 boys. Eventual winners were Trinidadian Trevine Sellier and Gian Issa of Suriname in the girls' and boys' singles respectively.

Peter Patterson Xmas tournament

The Prize giving will be held at the NTC at 4.30pm on Saturday January 26, 2008.

National Ranking System

Updated national senior and junior rankings will be completed soon and will be posted on our website www.tennisbarbados.org

Tournament Officials

Our annual ITF junior tournament requires us to have a full compliment of fully qualified persons to officiate the matches throughout the week's play. Currently, we have very few qualified officials in Barbados and therefore we have to import them from other parts of the Caribbean which is now becoming very costly.

A Level 1 Officials course is planned for later in the year, so we are therefore asking that any persons interested in becoming umpires or those whose qualifications may now have lapsed and wishing to resume officiating should contact the President at tennisbarbados@sunbeach.net as soon as possible.

IPIN (International Player Identification Number) for juniors

The ITF launched its International Player Identification Number (IPIN) on December 5th 2007 and it is now very important that all junior players have an IPIN to compete in ITF Junior Circuits.

This requirement comes into effect from January 1 2008. Players who enter ITF events and do not have an IPIN may not be allowed to compete. To register online and read further information on the IPIN please go to the following website: www.itftennis.com/IPIN

If you are not planning to play in an ITF event before March, we also hope to be able to register juniors for their IPIN in Barbados prior to the FCIB ITF tournament. More details shortly.

ITF Junior Tennis school

The ITF has recently advised on the planned launch of the ITF Junior Tennis School in early 2008. Interested juniors should check the following website for further information: www.itfjuniortennisschool.com

National Tennis Centre Information

Opening hours continue to be as follows:

Monday to Friday – 2.30pm – 9.00pm
Saturday – 7.00am – 6.00pm
Sunday – see below

NEW COURT RENTAL CHARGES

(Interim increases effective February 4, 2008)

Court Rental fees:

Without Lights	\$10 per hour for Members \$20 per hour for non-Members
With Lights	\$20 per hour for Members \$30 per hour for non-Members

For court bookings, please call Julian Baird at the National Tennis Centre tel # 427-5300 or 427-5298. Sunday bookings must be made by 2.00pm on Saturdays.

Please also contact Julian or Kevin regarding coaching sessions and racquet re-stringing etc at the National Tennis Centre.

Membership Fees

Membership fees for 2008 are now due.

Membership fees are as follows:

Juniors – 18 & under	One time entrance fee - \$20 Annual membership fee - \$20
Adults – over 18	One time entrance fee - \$40 Annual membership fee - \$50

Membership forms are available from Julian at the NTC or from the Association's website – www.tennisbarbados.org.

Please note that **all juniors must be current paid-up** members to play in tournaments run by the Association. All **seniors requiring Barbados rankings** must also be current members of the Association.

We also welcome the many new members who joined during the last year, but to those seniors still not members and interested in supporting us, please do join up now.

Member's concessions

Sandy Lane Hotel continues to offer court rentals at US\$10 per hour (with or without lights) to senior members of the Association on presentation of 2008 membership cards or receipts. **All players must be current paid up members**, so please make sure your 2008 subscription is paid to be able to take up this opportunity. Call Sandy Lane Hotel – tel # 444-2600 or 266-4247 for bookings.

First Class Fitness Centre located in the Garfield Sobers Gymnasium is also offering members a 10% discount on their rates on presentation of current year membership cards. Call Osolene Skinner at 427-8193 for further details.

Inspire Sports is now open for business at Rockley Golf Course. To enquire about their tennis equipment and clothing call 435-7873.

Gift of Sports Equipment to Schools

As part of the Association's efforts to encourage more children in schools to start tennis, President Dr Raymond Forde and National Coordinator Kevin Yarde presented racquets and balls donated by the ITF to pupils of St Mary's during the summer.

National Tennis Centre - status of improvements

During 2007, the Association embarked on two major projects to improve the facilities at the National Tennis Centre in Wildey. These were the resurfacing of Court #4 and the installation of lights on at least two more courts.

The resurfacing of Court #4 required the complete scarification of the existing surface which was in extremely poor condition, plus it was repainted in preparation for the ITF junior tournament in October 2007. The work started in May 2007, and was somewhat delayed as we took the opportunity to excavate for and build the footings for the floodlights on that court. This work was completed in September 2007.

The installation of the floodlights required further civil and electrical work around the court area such as trenching and the upgrade of the electricity supply at the Tennis Centre. This work should be completed shortly.

We therefore thank those members, corporate sponsors and the Barbados Olympic Association who have helped us financially with this project during 2007. Further funding from various sources is still being pursued to complete the lighting and further court renovations, after which we plan to direct our attention to improving the car park, Club house and surrounding area.

Fundraising events

Tennis Extravaganza at Sugar Hill

The Association and the Friends of Haydn Lewis jointly hosted a Tennis Extravaganza at the Sugar Hill Resort on August 1. The event was a fund raiser in support of the Davis Cup players who will be representing Barbados in Honduras in Americas Zone Group III in July 2008, as well as for Haydn Lewis who is Barbados' top player, currently ranked # 680 in the world.

Despite the heavy rains on the day, the event came off successfully, albeit without the Exhibition matches. The organizers would like to thank the many supporters who braved the weather and turned up to meet the players and enjoy the cocktails and hors d'oeuvres served at the Sugar Hill clubhouse. Particularly exciting was the attendance of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and wife Cherie.

Upcoming Fund-raising events

We are hoping to hold an event to raise funds to send our junior Davis and Federation Cup teams to Honduras in April – more information will be circulated shortly!

Masters Doubles Tournament – January 26-27, 2008

A weekend of tennis will be held at the National Tennis Centre on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27, January 2008.

This will be a Ladies and Men's doubles tournament. Play will start at 3:00pm on Saturday and 9:00am on Sunday. The entrance fee of \$30 per person will include the Sunday B.B.Q. Cost for the play alone will be \$10 per person.

International Tennis Number (ITN)

A separate court will also be set aside for ITN ratings tests where local ITF Level 2 coaches will assess each player's performance individually. This should take approximately 20 minutes.

The ITN is an international tennis number that represents a player's general level of play. In time it is hoped that every tennis player worldwide will have an ITN. ITN 1 represents a high level player (holding an ATP/ WTA ranking or of an equivalent playing standard) and an ITN 10 is a player who is starting to play competitively (can serve and return) on a full court using a normal ITF approved ball. Further information on the differing levels of the ITN can also be found at the link on our website www.tennisbarbados.org

Any senior players wishing to participate in the tournament or be rated for an ITN, please either add your name to lists which have been sent to all clubs, or send your name via e-mail to tennisbarbados@sunbeach.net by **January 23, 2008**.

Other news

Haydn Lewis

Following a summer break, our NSC elite sportsman Haydn Lewis has returned to the Futures events in Australia and has improved his ITF ranking accordingly. Following some closely contested matches, he is now moved to #680.

Haydn has also performed particularly well with his Australian doubles partner David To winning the Australia F10 Futures and reaching the semis of the Tasmania Challenger events in November and December 2007. He is now ranked # 659 in doubles.

Darian King

After recent successes in local, regional and overseas tournaments, 15 year old Darian King has been invited to participate with the ITF Central American and Caribbean Junior Touring Team to travel to the COSAT Circuit events which will take place in January and February 2008.

Darian will be traveling to Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia to participate in training sessions and tournaments. These form part of a project being financed by the ITF Grand Slam Development Fund. The team coaches will be Ivan Molina, ITF Touring Team Coach and Carlos Rodriguez, ITF Development Officer for Central America.

Christopher King

Darian's elder brother Christopher (17) has recently gained a scholarship to study sports management at Vincennes University in Indiana for four years. Best of luck to Christopher!

Devard Wharton & Kristen Lopez

Devard Wharton and Kristen Lopez are both now training with Martin Blackman at the Tennis Centre in College Park, Maryland, United States. From September they both want to continue their education in the US having hopefully gained tennis scholarships. We wish them the best of success!

Damien Applewhaite and Kevin Yarde

Damien and Kevin attended the ITF Worldwide Coaches' Workshop held in Paraguay in October. The theme of the conference was "An integrated approach to coaching advanced players" and topics ranged from the "Tactical improvement for high-level juniors" to "Automatic line calling and the latest technical developments".

Marc Beckles

Overseas based Bajan, Marc Beckles (runner-up in the 2006 Top 16s mens' invitational tournament) continues to play top level tournaments and futures events in the UK and is now ranked in the top 60 players in the UK. He also coaches around 15-20 hours a week.

Anthony Jeremiah

ITF Development Officer for the English Speaking Caribbean – Anthony Jeremiah is visiting Barbados from March 2-6 2008. On his agenda, he will be reviewing the JTI programme, conducting education forums and working with the best 13 and under juniors.

Mailing address change!

Effective January 1, 2008, our mailing address has changed to:

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Wildevy, St Michael, BARBADOS BB 15094

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