

Summer 2007
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CROSSCOURT

Summer
of '07
Preview

LEARNING
How To
TEACH
The Game

Start With Wide-Eyed
Enthusiasm!



Zack Moore
of Kansas City, Mo.



Nebraskan Cameron Hubbs Finishes 117-0 In High School Play

MISSOURI VALLEY

The USTA Missouri Valley publishes **CrossCourt** quarterly, focusing specifically on the members and events in the section. Your feedback is welcomed.



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We encourage you to “go to the net” and keep updated at your USTA Missouri Valley Website.

Learn more... Stay informed... Your section Website is the source for upcoming events, features, photos, results and more. And you can download back issues of **CrossCourt**.

Really tune in to tennis all summer long!

School is out and summer is here! Time to get everyone out of the house, away from video games and the TV.

It’s time to be “on the move,” and the courts are calling!

Summer is our prime time. And there aren’t any re-runs. No two tennis experiences are ever exactly alike. *Then again, Cameron Hubbs’ opponents in Nebraska high school tennis (page 10) might have thought they were seeing the same show over and over again as she repeatedly repeated as an undefeated state champion. Congratulations Cameron on a remarkable run highlighted in the May 28 Sports Illustrated.*

STAR POWER Most of our summer’s top events are highlighted in the following pages of our first expanded issue of *CrossCourt*.

We’ve got Pete Sampras and Serena Williams playing in St. Louis as part of World Team-Tennis™ (WTT). The Bryan Brothers are back, as well. Make a trip to St. Louis, Kansas City, Mo., or Springfield, Mo., for a WTT match this July. It truly is a family-friendly environment that encourages the players to really engage the crowd.

TEAM PLAY Our showcase junior event of the summer, the Sweet 16, starts June 22. But there’s Junior Team Tennis (JTT) being played throughout the whole summer with the Missouri Valley JTT

Championships Aug. 3-5. JTT is a wonderful way for new players to get into the game and for all players to enjoy camaraderie in what is too often considered a purely individual sport.

Speaking of team play, we’ll close out the summer with a flourish of USTA League Section Championships. If there’s one thing I’d urge our League teams to do more of this year it’s encourage young adults — recent college grads or students on summer break — to play Leagues.

KEEP THEM PLAYING Among the issues we need to address with regard to retaining players is the dropout rate among college students. I don’t mean they’re dropping out of school, but many seem to drop out of tennis. After high school, we need to get “kids” involved in Tennis on Campus, then Leagues, and keep them playing for a lifetime.

That brings me to our cover story about Recreational Coach Workshops (RCW). Read all about it. Think about it. We can’t keep anyone playing if we can’t get them started — and a good start, a positive first impression is vital. “Playing to learn” is a great way to make the game fun and welcome a new player into our tennis family.

TENNIS TV Do tune into all the TV coverage during Wimbledon, the US Open Series and the US Open, itself. Then hit the courts and, in the spirit of RCW’s, take someone new to tennis with you. ●

all the **Racquet**



USTA Missouri Valley Executive Director



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From World TeamTennis™ to USTA League Tennis, there’s plenty of heated tennis action to put a sizzle in Missouri Valley’s summer.

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Program places emphasis on “playing to learn,” while giving new coaches guidance to keep new players playing.

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Four years... Four state championships... 117 matches played... 117 victories...

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BACK COVER Meet Mr. Tennis

He loves the game he was “named” to play.

BIG 12 TENNIS Raquel Wagner, a former USTA Missouri Valley standout from St. Louis, volleys while playing for the Missouri Tigers during the opening round of the Big 12 Championships played in Kansas City, Mo., in April.

Maybe we should call it the summer of Sampras and Serena. Two of the game's all-time greats, Pete Sampras and Serena Williams, are slated to play World TeamTennis™ in the USTA Missouri Valley in July.

But while the three World TeamTennis franchises in the Missouri Valley give the section's members an opportunity to see some elite pros up-close, we know the summer is all about *playing* tennis!

The season gets off to a sizzling start with many of the Missouri Valley's top juniors competing in the Segment 2 Sweet 16. Meanwhile, the seniors will wrap up the summer with the Missouri Valley USTA League Super Senior Championships in September.

Taking A Sneak Peek At The '07 SUMMER OF '07

SEGMENT 2 SWEET 16

Many of the top juniors from throughout the Missouri Valley will converge on Kansas City **June 22-25** for the Segment 2 Sweet 16, the section's premiere junior event of the summer.

Formerly the Terrific 32, the Sweet 16 features the Missouri Valley's top 16 ranked boys and girls in each age division, with competition featured in both doubles and singles.

The Sweet 16 is a National Level 3 tournament, making it the top points-earner among the summer junior tourneys in the Missouri Valley.

For coverage of the Sweet 16 tournament "go to the net." Photos and reports will be posted on missourivalley.usta.com.

Tommy Hunter of Topeka, Kan., is blinded by the glow of his prize after winning the Boys 10-and-under division in last summer's Terrific 32. The Missouri Valley's top juniors will compete in the Sweet 16 June 22-25.



One of the Bryan brothers gets so charged up playing World TeamTennis last year for the Kansas City Explorers that he literally climbs the wall in pursuit of the ball. The dynamic Bryan twins will again be the Explorers' featured players this season.

For Better or Worse... Through Aces or Faults!



Scott and Stephanie Broady of Omaha, Neb., captured third place in last year's USTA National Husband & Wife Hard Court Championships.

HUSBAND & WIFE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The USTA Missouri Valley will serve as the host of the USTA National Husband & Wife Hard Court Championships for the second straight year.

The mixed doubles tournament – doubles partners must be legally married to each other – will be contested **July 13-15** at the Plaza Tennis Center in Kansas City, Mo. Any married couple may enter the tournament, the lone requirement being USTA membership.

The entry deadline is **July 6**, and the fee is \$70 per team. To enter the tournament, visit usta.com and click on TennisLink™. The tournament ID number is **404307107**.

For more information, contact the Husband & Wife Tournament Director **Scott Hanover** at **(816) 784-5100** or **Scott_Hanover@kcmo.org**.

Dustin and Carolina Perry of the Missouri Valley won the USTA Gold Ball for the 2006 Husband & Wife Hard Court Championships. The Kansas City, Mo., couple defeated another husband-wife team from the Missouri Valley – Junior and Marissa Brown of Overland Park, Kan. – in last year's final, 6-2, 7-6 (4).

In conjunction with the National Championship, the Missouri Valley will be conducting a section Senior/Super Senior Husband & Wife Championship for Missouri Valley couples. Both the husband and wife must be 50 or older for the Senior competition, 60-plus for the Super Senior. The ID number to enter on TennisLink for this tournament is **404313307**.

PRO CIRCUIT TENNIS

The future stars of tomorrow just might be starting their ascent in the Missouri Valley this summer, during one of the many USTA Pro Circuit tournaments being held in the section.



Five Pro Circuit events are on tap this summer. Edmond, Okla. (**June 25 - July 1**), Wichita, Kan. (**July 16-22**), and St. Joseph, Mo. (**July 30 - Aug. 5**), are each hosting women's tournaments. The men will be playing in Joplin, Mo. (**July 16-22**) and Godfrey, Ill. (**July 23-29**).

Community Involvement Days will be featured at each of the Pro Circuit events. "Go to the net," missourivalley.usta.com, for more details.

WORLD TEAM TENNIS™

World TeamTennis will be serving up big talent in the Missouri Valley during the 2007 season, **July 5-25**.

Serena Williams, on a roll to start the year with her Australian Open championship and through the spring with a Sony Ericsson title, will be competing for the St. Louis Aces **July 23**, when they host the 2005 WTT championship New York Sportstimes.

"We are beyond thrilled for Serena to play a match for us," said Aces owner Dan Apted.

The Newport Beach Breakers travel to St. Louis for a match the very next day, **July 24**, and they'll be bringing their star **Pete Sampras** with them for a match against the Aces.

The Kansas City Explorers, meanwhile, are scheduled to have the best men's doubles team in the world playing twice for them. **Mike and Bob Bryan** will take the court for the Explorers **July 13** when they go on the road to play the Aces and again **July 14** as Kansas City returns home to round up the Houston Wranglers.

The Explorers and Aces will again vie with the Springfield Lasers for the USTA Missouri Valley-sponsored Show-Me Cup. The Lasers won the first cup last year, as the Missouri Valley introduced the cup to determine which of the three teams would rise to top within an intra-section competition.

For the Explorers', Aces' and Lasers' complete 2007 schedules "go to the net" at missourivalley.usta.com and click on the World TeamTennis logo on the home page.



Nick Monroe, a native of Olathe, Kan., helped the Springfield Lasers win the inaugural Show-Me Cup in 2006. The cup is awarded the top team in intra-section play among the three Missouri Valley World TeamTennis franchises – the Springfield Lasers, Kansas City Explorers and St. Louis Aces.

June 22-25

Kansas City, Mo.
USTA Missouri Valley
Segment 2 Sweet 16

June 25 - July 1

Edmond, Okla.
Pro Circuit Tournament
Edmond's USTA Women's
\$10,000 Futures

June 29 - July 2

St. Joseph, Mo.
Junior Segment 2 Futures

June 30

Trenton, Mo.
Tennis Block Party

June 30 - July 4

Omaha, Neb.
USTA National Junior Open

July 6-8

Oklahoma City
Adult 5's & Open
Outdoor Championships

July 6-9

**Tulsa, Okla. &
Edwardsville, Ill.**
Junior Segment 2 Futures

July 8-13

St. Louis
St. Louis Junior Championships

July 13-15

Kansas City, Mo.
USTA National Husband & Wife
Hard Court Championships

July 13-16

Tulsa, Okla.
Junior Segment 2 Futures

July 16-22

Wichita, Kan.
Pro Circuit Tournament
Via Christi Pro Tennis Classic
Women's \$10,000 Futures

July 16-22

Joplin, Mo.
Pro Circuit Tournament
Millennium Tennis Club
Men's \$10,000 Futures

July 20-22

Columbia, Mo.
Missouri Show-Me State Games
Adult Singles & Doubles
Junior Team Tennis

July 20-23

**Edmond, Okla. &
Iowa City, Iowa**
Junior Segment 2 Futures

July 20-23

Wichita, Kan.
USTA Missouri Valley
14's Team Event

July 23-29

Godfrey, Ill.
Pro Circuit Tournament
Lewis & Clark Community College
Men's \$10,000 Futures

July 27-29

Columbia, Mo.
Missouri Show-Me State Games
Juniors Singles & Doubles
Adult Team Tennis

July 27-30

Wichita, Kan.
Junior Segment 2 Futures

July 28 - Aug. 3

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
National Public Parks
Tennis Tournament

July 30 - Aug. 5

St. Joseph, Mo.
Car City Hyundai Women's
Classic \$10,000 Futures



World TeamTennis

The Kansas City Explorers, St. Louis Aces and Springfield Lasers will vie for the Show-Me Cup during July's World TeamTennis season. For each team's 2007 schedule "go to the net" at missourivalley.usta.com.

Aug. 2-5

St. Louis
USTA Missouri Valley
League Section Championships
Adult 2.5, 3.0, 3.5 | Senior 4.0, 4.5

Aug. 3-5

Kansas City, Mo.
USTA Missouri Valley
Junior Team Tennis
Section Championships

Aug. 4-7

Norman, Okla.
Junior Segment 2 Futures

Aug. 7

Des Moines, Iowa
Iowa Parks & Recreation
Association Youth
Tennis Tournament

Aug. 9-12

Kansas City, Mo.
USTA Missouri Valley
League Section Championships
Adult 4.0, 4.5, 5.0 | Senior 3.0, 3.5

Aug. 10-13
Springfield, Mo.

Junior Section Championships

Aug. 23-26

Topeka, Kan.
USTA Missouri Valley
League Section Championships
Mixed Doubles

Aug. 27 - Sept. 10

Flushing, N.Y.
US Open
Coaches Clinic Sept. 2

Aug. 31 - Sept. 3

Omaha, Neb.
Adult 0's & Open Outdoor
Section Championships

Sept. 7-9

Kansas City, Mo.
Junior Novice Championships

Sept. 13-16

Oklahoma City
USTA Missouri Valley
League Section Championships
Super Senior/Senior Mixed

Sept. 14-16

Kansas City, Mo.
Kansas City Adult Open 5's

Sept. 24-30

Tulsa, Okla.
Pro Circuit Tournament
USTA Challenger of Oklahoma
Men's \$50,000 + H Futures



USTA LEAGUE SECTION CHAMPIONSHIPS

More than 2,000 players from throughout the USTA Missouri Valley will be competing in the USTA League Section Championships being held in four different cities over a seven-week stretch.

Winners will advance to the National Championships to be contended later this year.

ST. LOUIS – Aug. 2-5

Adults: 2.5, 3.0 and 3.5 | Seniors: 4.0 and 4.5

KANSAS CITY – Aug. 9-12

Adults: 4.0, 4.5 and 5.0 | Seniors: 3.0 and 3.5

TOPEKA, KAN. – Aug. 23-26

Adult Mixed Doubles 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 and 10.0

OKLAHOMA CITY – Sept. 13-16

Super Seniors and Senior Mixed

Becky Riggs of Tulsa, Okla., gets pumped up after winning a tough point during the 4.0 Senior Women's USTA Missouri Valley League Section Championships last year.

RCW's Stress the ABC's of Tennis

Cynthia Vander Pol attended a recent Recreational Coach Workshop (RCW) seeking tips to help her teach her own kids how to play the game. Parents are becoming common participants in RCW's (page 9).



Program looks to grow the game through developing tennis teachers

Shakespeare never would have been able to pen his plays and sonnets if someone had not first taught him his ABC's.

It all starts with good teaching — “it” being everything from writing dramas and comedies to conducting complex medical research. Tennis is no exception.

Sampras doesn't achieve tennis brilliance if someone doesn't first teach him some tennis basics.

If there are to be more tennis players — simply more players, not just the next great champion — there needs to be more tennis coaches. Particularly at the recreational level.

A “coach,” the USTA realizes, can be anyone willing to learn how to teach others how to play the game. During the last several years, the USTA has sought to train community center directors, YMCA instructors, PE teachers, high school coaches, volunteers, assisted-living directors, parents and anyone else willing to learn how to be better tennis teachers.

The USTA is providing lessons in how to teach the ABC's of tennis through RCW's (Recreational Coach Workshops).

Getting kids and even adults new to the game hooked on tennis depends on their first experiences on the court. If they're trying to teach themselves to play, they quickly become flustered and aren't likely to give the game a second chance. *The pros make the game look so easy, so why is it so darn hard to keep the ball inside the lines?*

But someone else on the court showing the way, providing basic instructions for first-time players can be the difference that keeps new players coming back for more.

That's why the USTA introduced the RCW program in the summer of 2000: to keep new players playing.

RCW's give prospective and current coaches a methodology/guide to teach the sport — and to teach it in a fast, player-friendly and effective manner. The objective isn't to develop elite-level coaches trying to train Grand Slam champs, but to give pointers on teaching the basics.

KEPT IT SIMPLE & FUN The approach is simple, based on a “play to learn” theme, not “learn to play”: Arm coaches with the latest in teaching techniques, keep



While conducting a Recreation Coach Workshop, Ajay Pant ▲ and John Cayton ▼ talk about tennis with every bit as much enthusiasm with which they play the game.

it simple, and leave them with a few drills and coaching tidbits to be more effective in their clinics or practices.

“Retention is the crux of the RCW program,” says John Cayton, the USTA Kansas District Executive Secretary and a certified RCW trainer who has led more than 20 RCW’s. “We’re losing many people because of players having bad first experiences, and a lot of times that can be traced to the first coaching they ever received.

“Many of the coaches are just not trained the right way, or don’t have as much tennis knowledge as they should. That translates to kids not having success. By having better coaching at the earliest levels, we can cut down on losing so many new players and keep them in our sport.”

Reducing frustration and increasing fun on the court is crucial.

RCW LESSON PLANS The RCW program tries to get those interested in teaching tennis to remember their own first experiences in the game. As coaches they must strive to give their new players positive first experiences.

“This is the first step in building confidence with players, having some level of coaching competency,” says Kirk Anderson, who oversees the USTA’s RCW program nationally. “We have 6 million new players come into the game each year, but so many of those leave because of the instruction at the start. There’s a much greater likelihood of these new players staying in the game if they get some type of quality or organized instruction initially. That’s what

these RCW’s are targeted at.”

Workshops are held annually across the nation — including several each year in different locations throughout the USTA Missouri Valley — giving new coaches ample opportunity to learn game-based drills that they can take back to their own tennis courts, gymnasiums and community centers. The goal isn’t to inundate RCW participants with an encyclopedia’s worth of instructional techniques. Though each course is six hours long, it’s hardly a boot camp. The attitude on-court is loose and light.

“I’m not a tennis pro by any means, but I do want to learn how to be better at my job,” says Zack Moore, who attended an RCW in Kansas City, one of the six scheduled thus far in 2007 in the Missouri Valley. He works for the



Kansas City, Mo., Parks and Recreation Department.

“I’m just trying to learn some new skills so when I do get out on the court, I can feel comfortable in what I’m teaching the kids,” continues Moore. “I think the class definitely made me feel better about that.”

RCW CERTIFIED Having master coaches like Anderson or Ajay Pant of Overland Park, Kan. — top-flight trainers who have been specially certified to conduct the workshops — come in to teach is a big draw for many RCW attendees. With literally thousands of hours behind them in on- and off-court instruction, Anderson and Pant can quickly summarize how to run useful practices, lessons and clinics for fledgling players.

Just as important, master trainers serve as effective mentors to new coaches on a variety of coaching-related topics. The workshops can be both instructional and a great networking opportunity. Whether it’s teaching coaches how to find low-compression tennis balls or mini-nets for a reduced price, or how to run a practice for 40 people on two courts, the master trainers serve as invaluable resources even after the RCW is over.

Another draw to RCW’s is affordability. The price range is usually between \$5 to \$40 for an intensive six-hour class. That price usually works well for most new instructors or within a school’s tight budget for a coach’s or PE teacher’s recurrent training. The fact that most RCW’s are held on weekends also gives attendees the flexibility to fit the training into their work schedules.

RCW’s are held in each USTA section, and those in the Missouri Valley are usually scheduled during the early summer months. Almost anyone can find an RCW being held within a reasonable driving distance. If there’s enough need (20 participants is the minimum number for each class) a community can request the USTA hold an RCW in that community.

GUIDING THE WAY The RCW program attempts to bring these coaches into the teaching fold, and give them, at the very least, a guide to run their tennis courses with diligence and competency. The program has been successful thus far, growing from 23 classes in 2000 to nearly 225 last year, with more being scheduled each year.



Ajay Pant holds the attention of those attending this RCW as he provides instruction on teaching new players proper serving technique.

To date, more than 23,000 coaches have gone through the program, a number Anderson is proud of and hopes to keep building upon.

“We had our big jump a couple of years ago, and the program has grown steadily by word of mouth and not much else, especially now that the USTA funds a lot of it,” says Anderson. “The USTA pays for the trainer to come out and the teaching materials as well, and

the [local USTA] district gives the host site a reimbursement, and it’s still pretty cheap for the participants. It’s a win-win-win situation all around.”

COME ONE, COME ALL While the audience for RCW’s has typically been after-school coaches, community center instructors, and parks and recreation employees, newer groups are showing an interest due to the welcoming, non-invasive nature of the work-

shops. Parents interested in teaching their kids have become regulars at RCW's, as have professionals at assisted-living senior centers and managers of at-risk youth organizations.

"Our whole goal when we started this was 'What could we do about the quality of coaching in America?'. When you look at a lot of other sports, you see parents coaching teams and getting involved," says Anderson. "It's not always been that way for tennis on the instructional side, but with this we hope we can get parents to go, 'Hey, I'd like to coach my child's junior team.' The RCW can give them a good basis for what they might do in a practice.

"For a lot of others, it gets their foot in the door. They might find out that teaching tennis is a lot of fun and pursue later certification from groups like the USPTA (United States Professional Tennis Association) or PTR (Professional Tennis Registry)."

With enough push and support, Anderson adds, tennis can be as successful as youth soccer, which has overwhelming parental support in its coaching ranks. That's crucial to getting tennis to reach a much wider audience. A parent needs to believe he or she can go out and at least teach the basics to their children. A new coach needs to have the confidence to teach the new player.

"If you can get new people teaching the context of the game, you can really grow the sport," said Ajay Pant. "Most coaches who coach are not certified. But now, within six hours you at least have a methodology, you understand the progression.

"There's a heightened sense of 'I can do this,' and that helps everyone.

"I like to borrow Kirk's analogy when I think of RCW's and what the goal of them truly is: 'We're not saying that everyone here is a doctor after taking the class. But you're certainly a paramedic, and we all need paramedics.'" ●

Parents anxious to be their kids' coach

Mark Haas is jazzed about tennis — not just because he's a player who lives and breathes the sport. He is also excited about the possibilities of bringing the sport to his 7-year-old daughter Nena.

Haas was one of 32 attendees at a recent Recreational Coach Workshop (RCW), hoping to further his skills as a coach. He attended not as a representative of a community center, a YMCA or a parks and recreation facility — or as a wannabe teaching pro. He attended as a parent. Mothers and fathers like Haas are becoming more and more prevalent at RCW's held across the nation, which is sign of good things to come, since the first step in tennis is often an introduction to the sport from a family member.

"I really wanted a better basis for how to teach my daughter," said Haas of his motivation for attending the RCW held at the Kansas City Racquet Club in May. "I've been a player for awhile, but never had any formal training when it came to teaching. The RCW gave me a lot of tools to walk away with, and it was really enjoyable playing with new people and learning new games to try with my daughter. She's just getting into tennis, so I'm trying to learn how to be the best teacher I can for her."

The motivation was the same for another Kansas City native, Cynthia Vander Pol, who attended the same RCW as Haas. Vander Pol has two children, 7 and 5, and the opportunity to pick up a few coaching nuggets for the \$5 cost of the RCW was right up her alley.

"In years past, I've helped teach kids at our local courts," said Vander Pol. "So I really wanted to just improve on things I already knew. I thought the class helped with that. These RCW's would be a great start for parents looking for some help on what to teach and how to do it." ●



Mark Haas hits an overhead during drills at an RCW held in Kansas City.

Looking for more information on Recreational Coach Workshops in your area? "Go to the net" at missourivalley.usta.com, or contact USTA Missouri Valley Program Manager, **John Terpkosh** at 888-308-8612 ext. 4835, (913) 322-4835 or jterpkosh@movalley.usta.com.

Cameron Hubbs completes perfect 117-0 run in high school tennis

Going undefeated for a single year of high school play is a pretty unique accomplishment. Going undefeated for four years and never dropping a set, though, is an almost absurd achievement that puts a tennis player in rarefied air — and sends newspaper reporters and television stations scrambling for state high school record books to explain the rarity of the feat.

Welcome to Cameron Hubbs' world of perfection. The 2007 Omaha Westside grad recently completed an unblemished run

year. "She never missed practice or just showed up and played state. She was a part of the team everyday and a two-year captain (during her junior and senior years). She doesn't believe that everything revolves around her, and she's the consummate team player. It's great when your best player and team leader is that way."

For many performers in Hubbs' elite-level shoes, players good enough to succeed nationally in the USTA's top junior tournaments, high school tennis often becomes secondary, taking a backseat for a year or two to obtaining a USTA national ranking. Many completely by-pass high school tennis. Not Hubbs. Her dad Ed, a former college coach at Creighton and the Director of Tennis at Omaha's Koch Family Tennis Center, knew the value of the team concept and implored his daughter

UNDEFEATED

through four years of play in Nebraska high school tennis, winning the Class A state No. 1 singles title each year during her scholastic career. In the process, she didn't lose a match, not one in four years. Actually, she didn't drop a single set during her perfect run.

Hubbs is the first girl to ever achieve the Nebraska four-peat in the Class A division and go undefeated at the same time for an entire high school career. Though another girl could conceivably match her in the future, no one can top her. There's nothing better than perfect.

"I think in a few years I'll look back and go, 'I can't believe I did that,'" said Hubbs, who has also been a sterling performer in the USTA Missouri Valley and nationally during her high school years.

Hubbs' tennis won't come to a close with her pristine high school career. She'll take her racquets to Ohio State University on a tennis scholarship this fall.

It wasn't just that Hubbs went a spotless 117-0 in singles and 15-0 in doubles in her four years at Westside. It was the way she won. Until the second set of her state singles final this year with Karma Parbhu of Millard North (which Hubbs won 6-2, 7-5), no opponent had ever gone further than 6-3 in a set against Hubbs.

"Cam' is humble and really a good example for all of our kids on the team," said Westside head girls tennis coach Kim Gradoville, who started at Westside during Hubbs' freshman

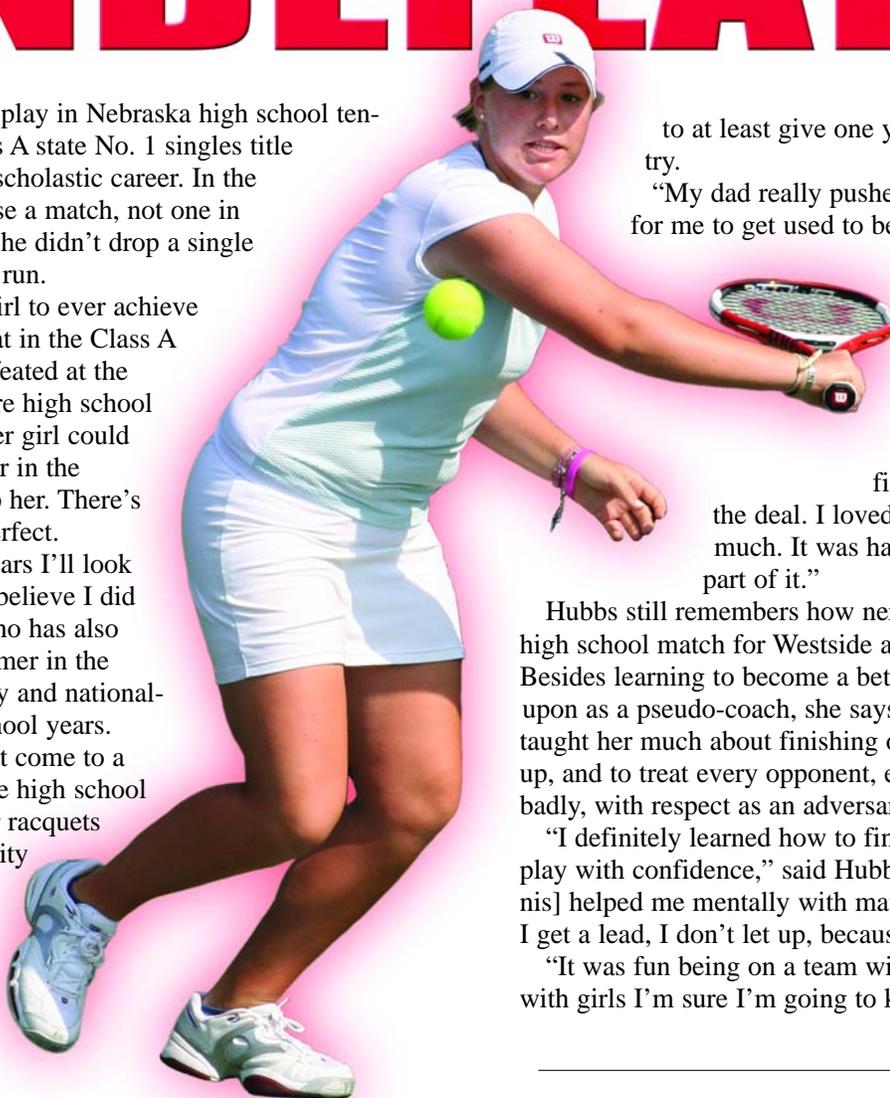
year. "She never missed practice or just showed up and played state. She was a part of the team everyday and a two-year captain (during her junior and senior years). She doesn't believe that everything revolves around her, and she's the consummate team player. It's great when your best player and team leader is that way."

to at least give one year of high school tennis a try. "My dad really pushed high school tennis as a way for me to get used to being around others and having me rely on and help others, too," said Cameron. "Both he and my mom (Debra) said, 'Cam', please just try it.' I'm really glad I did. I won the state title and helped win the team title that first year, and that really sealed the deal. I loved the team and the coach so much. It was hard not to see myself being a part of it."

Hubbs still remembers how nervous she was playing her first high school match for Westside against an older opponent. Besides learning to become a better teammate and being relied upon as a pseudo-coach, she says the high school experience taught her much about finishing off matches and never letting up, and to treat every opponent, even those she had beaten badly, with respect as an adversary.

"I definitely learned how to finish off matches fast and to play with confidence," said Hubbs. "[Playing high school tennis] helped me mentally with matches at national events. When I get a lead, I don't let up, because you just never know."

"It was fun being on a team with all my friends, and playing with girls I'm sure I'm going to know my whole life." ●



While being unbeatable in Nebraska high school tennis, Cameron Hubbs has also been highly successful in USTA competition. She's shown here hitting a backhand en route to winning last year's Terrific 32, the USTA Missouri Valley's top junior event in 2006. In the Girls' 18s final, she prevailed in one of that tournament's top matches, edging **Rebecca Parks** of Tulsa, Okla., 6-4, 1-6, 7-5. Parks recently completed her senior season at Tulsa's Booker T. Washington High School by securing a third straight Oklahoma state high school championship.

Net Notes



SWIFT TURNAROUND

Just 13 months after presenting **Columbia, Mo.**, Mayor Darwin Hindman a \$100,000 USTA Public Facility Funding Grant check, Missouri Valley Executive Director Mary Buschmann returned to Columbia to join city officials and other civic leaders in cutting the ribbon and dedicating 12

new courts built in the central Missouri city. Eight new courts were constructed at Cosmo Park and another four at Fairview Park. The City of Columbia backed the project with \$550,000 generated through a parks tax.

The new courts helped Columbia be named a 2007 Tennis in the Parks Community by the National Recreation and Parks Association and the USTA.

NCAA CHAMPS

Two former USTA Missouri Valley junior standouts helped their schools capture 2007 NCAA Division I Tennis Championships.

Travis Helgeson (Overland Park, Kan.) helped the Georgia Bulldogs claim the men's team title and complete a 32-0 season. Meanwhile, **Amanda Craddock** (St. Louis) capped a banner freshman season as Georgia Tech (29-4) won the women's crown.

Craddock earned the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament Most Valuable Player Award. She posted a 35-10 record in singles play and was 32-13 in doubles. Georgia Tech won 21 straight matches to end the season, topping UCLA 4-2 in the NCAA final.

Helgeson, a junior, transferred to Georgia after being a two-time Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-American at Texas. He helped the Bulldogs secure their fifth tennis championship, while going 34-5 in singles and 37-6 in doubles.

TENNIS ON CAMPUS

Section champion **St. Louis University** joined **Drake University** (Des Moines, Iowa) in representing the Missouri Valley at the USTA National Campus Championships April 26-28 in North Carolina.

St. Louis posted a 4-3 mark and Drake went 2-5 in the 64-team field.

"For a national tournament, there is a significant lack of people who are maliciously competitive," St. Louis captain **Lea Lockhart** observed in a blog for missourivalley.usta.com. "I haven't heard anyone question calls, boo or call a line judge. Whether a match is won or lost, there is a solid understanding of mutual respect. While the competition is intense and immensely challenging, it is also extremely friendly."



Rachel Tiegs of St. Louis University hammers the ball during the USTA Missouri Valley Tennis on Campus championships held in February.



FAMILY FUN

A tennis clinic at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., April 28, turned into a family affair as **Mia Monteau, 11**, joined her cousins in participating: (L-R) **Maddie Martinez, 11**; **Monteau; Jordan Martinez, 9**; and **Mason Martinez, 8**.



By any other name, would Tennis Hayes' serve be as sweet? Maybe. Maybe not.

But regardless of his interesting moniker, Tennis Lee Hayes is a tennis-crazy guy who serves notice wherever he goes.

Name of the Game

Meet a guy named
Tennis Hayes

"It was my father's name, it's my given name," says this 53-year-old Overland Park, Kan., native who has been playing and loving his sport since he was 5. "I'm very passionate about the game and even more passionate about the way I feel about it."

Hayes grew up in the small Western Kentucky town of Henderson, where he took up the sport — like it was ever an option not to. A gentleman named Doc Hosback taught Hayes the sport, and Hayes hasn't been able to escape either his name or the game ever since. Hayes has been a fixture at courts and in tournaments wherever he's lived, whether that's been in Henderson, Chicago or now Overland Park.

"I work real hard at my game," said Tennis, who can still blast his serve upwards of 100 miles per hour and plays a couple of times a week. "When you're as bad as I am, you have to. The name 'Tennis' used to put a lot of fear in guys, but not anymore. Now they just look at it and go, 'I don't have to worry about playing a consolation match right away.'"

What's the best part of having your name be a sport loved and played by millions?

"It's a conversation piece, that's for sure," said Hayes. "It's also nice to have so many places named after you, because every court I go to has my name on it. Tennis really is the greatest sport. Once you start playing tennis, you play forever. It's in your blood."

It's also on Tennis Hayes' birth certificate, driver's license and USTA membership card. ●



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