



# WISHLIST FOR THE NEW YEAR

*We asked last year's Champions of Tennis winners what they're looking forward to in the coming year. Their answers point the way toward an agenda to strengthen and grow our game's grassroots.*

## Mike Woody

**NATIONAL TENNIS DIRECTOR,  
GENESIS HEALTH CLUBS**  
*2015 Person of the Year*

Through programming, we can make all our tennis dreams come true. If we roll up our sleeves, have passion to make a difference and we relentlessly work to program to all players—regardless of age, playing experience or level of fitness—I believe we will grow beyond our dreams.

Over the past 15 years we have put to the test amazing programs such as Play Tennis America, Cardio Tennis, 10 and Under Tennis and Recreational Coaches Workshops. All have resulted in growth. Let's knock the dust off those programs and get to work—together.

## David LaSota

**DW LASOTA ENGINEERING INC.**  
*2015 Tennis Industry  
Service Award*

With over 18,000 36-foot and 60-foot tennis courts being built over the past eight years, I hope we continue to build smaller courts for youth, beginners and seniors alike. With the growth of other racquet sports on smaller courts, it seems obvious that our population desires tennis, but not necessarily on a 78-foot court.

I hope to see improved asphalt concrete design and construction techniques. It is vital that we build tennis courts to last so that facilities are attractive and playable. I also want to see LED lighting and play-analysis technology become more affordable and more prevalent.

## Bud Duksta

**PRESIDENT, MARSHFIELD  
TENNIS CLUB/PETER IGO PARK**  
*2015 Public Park of the Year*

Our wish is to form additional partnerships with organizations that will help in our efforts to expand adaptive tennis. Tennis has a lot to give to the adaptive community, and we're so pleased to do what we can. But with key partnerships, we know we can do even more.

## Julian Li

**PROFESSIONAL TOUR  
RACQUET TECHNICIAN**  
*2015 Stringer of the Year*

My wish is that the tennis industry and string manufacturers develop and promote more high-quality multifilament strings. Polyester strings are not made for the general public. What you end up with is a string that creates tennis elbow and other muscle and joint damage.

After stringing at the Australian Open, the Olympics and the Cincinnati Masters, I noticed a shift from all-polyester string beds to hybrids of poly and natural gut or multifilaments. It's time for the industry to point out benefits of multifilament strings that will keep our players playing.

## Penny Maingot

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CORPUS CHRISTI T.A.**

*2015 Community Tennis  
Association of the Year*

Choosing tennis play opportunities over other activities should fill the waking hours for adult, junior and 10-and-under players. The memory of once having to use 13 different sites to accommodate all the participants in a tournament challenges us to have that number of entries again.

We need our middle schools to provide tennis both semesters, and for our middle school coaches to have a passion for tennis and be compensated fairly. Finally, just imagine if tennis balls would last longer during play, plus if the racquets had bigger sweet spots!



## Jeff Rodefeld

**DIRECTOR—RETAIL OPERATIONS,  
INDIANAPOLIS RACQUET CLUB**

*2015 Pro/Specialty  
Retailer of the Year*

For the USTA, I'd like to see continued and increased emphasis on promoting tennis at the grassroots, creating greater awareness and opportunities for play, and driving new and younger players to the sport.

For manufacturers, we need to see the development of innovative products that encourage participation; a focus on the pro/specialty retail channel and its importance to brand awareness, product exposure and product trial; and the willingness to customize purchase programs that are geared to the retailer's business model.

## Rex Maynard

**VOLUNTEER,  
USTA SOUTHERN/NATIONAL**

*2015 Tennis  
Advocate of the Year*

I look forward to everyone embracing the USTA Youth Progression for tennis. We need to engage many more kids in our game. When QuickStart tennis was introduced in 2010, USTA Southern was the only section to require 60-foot courts and orange balls for 10-and-under competition. This resulted in positive benefits for younger players.

After six years, it's time to move forward and introduce 78-foot green-ball tennis to our more advanced 10U players. And it's even more important to offer fun entry-level competition for our new players.

## Mark Kovacs

**PERFORMANCE PHYSIOLOGIST,  
COACH, EDUCATOR, ITPA  
CO-FOUNDER**

*2015 PTR Member of the Year*

I'm really excited about the future of coaching and teaching in the tennis industry. So many great opportunities are evolving outside the traditional mold for individuals who are passionate and focused on lifelong learning. The advances in technology, social media, analytics and sport science allow tennis coaches and teachers to expand the types of work they are doing to help improve the quality of service they provide to their clients and athletes.

## Tim Blenkiron

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NO  
QUIT TRAINING ACADEMY**

*2015 Grassroots Tennis  
Champion of the Year*

I had the opportunity to work with Andre Agassi in creating the Team Agassi program to help at-risk youth become high-level student athletes. Since then we have worked with Bob and Mike Bryan to make Team Bryan, a high-performance education and tennis program. I have seen how mentoring, academics and high-performance tennis can transform children's lives and communities. I would like to see this effort grow to not only increase the number of children who receive tennis scholarships, but also as a pathway to professional tennis.

### Linn Lower

**PRESIDENT,  
LOWER BROS. CO. INC.**

*2015 Builder/Contractor  
of the Year*

I'd like to see a continuation of some encouraging things I've seen over the last few years. One is the construction of larger, tournament-friendly facilities in several cities throughout our region (the Southeast). Another is the rebuilding of some older tennis complexes, large and small, because there is still a high interest in play in the community.

My third wish is to see a grassroots parent-and-teacher-driven movement to build tennis facilities at smaller schools. These new and rebuilt facilities should be used to teach youngsters how much fun the game is.

### Carrie Cimino

**DISTRICT SALES MANAGER,  
HEAD/PENN**

*2015 Tennis Sales  
Rep of the Year*

We need more people playing tennis at all ages and all levels, and then we need to filter them into USTA programs, especially Adult Leagues and Junior Team Tennis. When tennis players are placed on a team, they show up for more practices, have more fun and create team camaraderie.

I'm fortunate to work for a company that takes pride in introducing innovative technology and products to help players improve, and I'm looking forward to seeing more products that will help tennis players play better, play more often and play for the rest of their lives.



### Phil Parrish

**TENNIS DIRECTOR,  
LONGFELLOW CLUB**

*2015 Junior Tennis  
Champion of the Year*

I'd like to see more one-day tournament formats for entry-level players through high school players. We need to get them in our game and keep them playing. Also, I'd love to see middle schools offer a tennis program. In our area, the courts are idle all fall as both boys' and girls' teams play in the spring. We could use the school courts for middle-school programs.

Also, I want to see more college tennis showcases for D-2 and D-3 schools that may not have the resources to go out and recruit and see high-school players that are appropriate for their school.

### Laurie Stussie

**CO-FOUNDER, SETS IN THE  
CITY SOUTHWEST**

*2015 Adult Tennis  
Provider of the Year*

My wish is for the tennis industry to embrace the business case for millennial outreach programs like Sets in the City. In addition to each season bringing in thousands of dollars in revenue to a USTA District, the new players have the potential to bring in much more over a lifetime. Millennials are looking for clinics for themselves as well as their young children—that's 15 years with a family of consistent customers! And for manufacturers, sponsorship of young adult programs can result in irreplaceable brand loyalty from an entirely new base.

### David Colby

**DIRECTOR—JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT,  
MANCHESTER ATHLETIC CLUB**

*2015 Youth Tennis  
Provider of the Year*

I'd like to see more kids out there playing tennis on their own. When I was growing up, we always made up our own games, made up tournaments, and had so much fun devising different ways to compete. I try to encourage my own kids to pick up the phone, call other kids and get out there, make a plan and play! Structured practices and play days are great, but it's better if kids are the ones who are out there, making things happen on their own.

### Paula Scheb

**DIRECTOR OF TENNIS,  
BONITA BAY TENNIS CENTER**

*2015 Private  
Facility of the Year*

If we can assist people in developing friendships through tennis, we can keep them in this game for a long time. Our facility is a second home for many of our members. They want to establish new connections, so our programming is built with this in mind.

We are re-launching our PlaySight SmartCourt technology by rewarding members for getting the mobile app or sending us their doubles video. It is critical we stay current and relevant while, at the same time, not letting technology rule.

## Randy Ortwein

USPTA PRO, GRAND SLAM WINNER, HALL OF FAMER

2015 Wheelchair Tennis Champion of the Year

As a fan, I would love to see full seats at every professional tennis match. Other sports find creative ways to fill their stadiums; we should too. I wish every school had access to tennis equipment and every child could try tennis in PE or after-school programs.

I wish more tennis people would give back to tennis in their local communities. Players, parents, coaches and organizers have so much to offer and it doesn't require a lot of time. Community Tennis Associations are the heart and soul of our sport and are always looking for dedicated volunteers.

## Richard Zaino

PRESIDENT, ZAINO TENNIS COURTS INC.

2015 Youth Tennis Facility Developer of the Year

I would love to see a breakout of American tennis players—a new generation of rising U.S. tennis stars. We need an emerging U.S. player who will take our breath away. That's what will help grow this great game at all levels.

On the construction front, LED lighting continues to grow in popularity; it is now our go-to fixture in courts we build. I feel confident that LED lights are good for court lighting and, although still pricey, will only get better. The benefits are enormous, especially what it comes to energy savings.

## Danise Brown

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PORTLAND AFTER SCHOOL TENNIS & EDUCATION

2015 NJTL of the Year

Our wish is that all our scholar-athletes will grow in mind, body and spirit through year-round programs. Given the right opportunity and tutoring resources, underserved children can and will meet their grade-level benchmarks.

We encourage our scholar-athletes to embrace a blend of physical activity outside of tennis, because engaging in other activities will help create a healthier junior tennis player. Our wish is that every community recognize the potential of underserved children—on and off the tennis court.

## Jorge Capestany

COACH, EDUCATOR, SPEAKER, USPTA MASTER PROFESSIONAL

2015 USPTA Member of the Year

I am most excited about the new USTA University initiative, where the goal is to add many more Professional Tennis Management programs across the country. I know that the population of tennis teaching professionals in our country is aging and the pipeline is not nearly full enough to replace all the experienced and quality teaching pros who will be retiring in coming years.

My goal is to help other teaching pros through the *tennisdrills.tv* website, which supplies more than 1,700 tennis drills to make their practices better and their jobs easier.

## Doug Booth

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, USTA FLORIDA

## Nancy Horowitz

PRESIDENT, USTA FLORIDA

2015 USTA Section of the Year

We're excited about the opening of the USTA National Campus in Orlando and the impact of once again having a research and development arm of USTA, like we did in the 1970s and '80s with Eve Kraft and Henry Talbert in Princeton, N.J. Some of our most influential programs and leaders originated in Princeton.

The new National Campus will help us impact the growth of tennis in many ways, and it will bring people from all over to this one area for education and events. Doing so will enhance the collaboration of tennis organizations.

With USTA Florida moving to new headquarters adjacent to the National Campus in Orlando, we hope to use the campus as an example to improve public tennis facilities and programs throughout Florida that will help grow our sport. We look forward to the continued teamwork between volunteers and staff to advance tennis for all, and increasing school participation on all levels to develop players for a lifetime. Our industry is poised to have breakout growth!

