

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# Spreading the Good News

As the socially distant sport looks to rebuild throughout the U.S., advocating for tennis on a local level is more important than ever.

In early June, versions of a chart circulated on social media that ranked 36 activities by COVID-19 risk levels. That chart was generated by interviews with Michigan state public health experts, who assessed the risks of various popular or everyday activities on the transmission of the virus.

The Michigan doctors pointed to five factors when considering how risky a particular activity might be: 1) inside or outside; 2) proximity to others; 3) exposure time; 4) likelihood of compliance; and 5) personal risk level. The list they came up with assigned a score for each of the 36 activities, with 10 being the riskiest and 1 the least risky.

For tennis players, providers and enthusiasts, this ranking by doctors affirmed what we all pretty much knew: Tennis ranked at Risk Level 1—the lowest risk level of any of the other activities. (The only other activity that ranked at Risk Level 1 is “getting takeout from a restaurant.”)



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This is news that all tennis providers should be spreading throughout their communities, as people who have been physically distancing for months look to get back to being active. A bonus for tennis, though, is that while it's easy to maintain physical distance, it *still* is a social sport.

In the new reality of our world, this is also something that will probably be increasingly important in the future,

even well beyond this current pandemic. People, especially parents and seniors, will look for safe sports and activities that are naturally physically distant and can easily keep people from spreading or catching any sort of virus.

Couple this with the news that the US Open will be played this year, and we have some great stories to trumpet. Government officials, health experts, civic organizations, companies, parents, school officials—everyone seems to recognize how important this sport can be in keeping people healthy and active. The fact that it's fun to play is just another plus.

All of this is fuel for what many of you may recognize is a passion of mine—advocacy for tennis, particularly advocacy on the *local* level, for growing the game at the grassroots. I've often used this space to push for greater advocacy efforts on behalf of this sport, and I'll continue to do so. Advocating for tennis in your community is something we all need to do.

I've been fortunate to have been in touch with a number of industry execs involved in the Tennis Industry United effort, and most conversations seem to come around to the importance of advocacy—especially now as we look to rebuild this sport. As tragic and challenging as this time is for all of us, it's also an opportunity for us to get more people involved in tennis. No matter what your role is in this industry, make advocating for tennis a part of your job description.

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