



Newsletter



President's Message



Greetings to all at WTC

What a year it has been. As I look back on 2023, I realize how truly lucky we are to have a thriving tennis club in this community. As with many of you, tennis is such an important part of my life. It is a way to connect socially with like-

minded tennis aficionados, a way to unwind during or after a stressful day, an awesome way to stay fit, and just generally an all-around great sport to play.... but again, I might be a bit biased.

It has been a year of change for the club. We have seen some changes in staffing with the retirement of Helen McArdle, the promotion of April Manahan, the hiring of Kye Allen as Head Pro and promotion of Milos Jovkovic as Director of Tennis. And of course, we have been fortunate in being able to retain the awesome coaches you have all come to know either through lessons, the front desk or just in passing through the courts when coming in to play. But I would be remiss if I didn't also take the time to mention all the great WTC staff, volunteers and Board members who help make this such a great place to play. I want to thank all of you for what you have done and continue to do for the club.

In all my years playing tennis in this community, I never thought I would be in the position to say that we

are at the moment the only indoor tennis facility in the city. With the loss of courts at GSM and the fire at Greystone, we are seeing fierce court booking competition. I know many of you have raised concerns about this with April and other staff and while I wish I could wave a magic wand and make all your wishes come true, we are in the unfortunate situation of only having 6 indoor courts available and just over 500 members. I have never seen our courts as fully booked as they are right now. This is both a blessing and a curse in that we have a successful tennis facility, but we now have to become fast fingered fiends when trying to book a court. So, we ask for your patience as this is not an easy situation for any of us.

On behalf of the Board, as we close out 2023, I want to thank you for being supportive members of WTC. I look forward to seeing you on court or in the club in 2024.

Happy Holidays to all!

Roxanne Chartrand
President
board@waterlootennis.com

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Manager's Message



To say it has been a year of significant change for us at our beloved Waterloo Tennis Club is something of an understatement. We are in both the enviable and unenviable position of being the only "game" in town, but more about that later. Let's take a look at what our members have been up to over the past year.

The winter of 2023 saw a nod to the days of old with the return of live music to our swish upstairs lounge. The Grand River New Horizons band led by our very own Paul Ellingham entertained a small but spirited crowd of members and friends on both Valentine's and St Patty's Day. Check out page 6 to see our members jumpin' and jivin'.

Once again Bill (our Facilities Manager) and his court

maintenance team (internal and external) worked their magic and had the outdoor courts ready for play by May 1st. Here is the "Quality Control Team" testing out the courts on April 27th!



Hawkeye was also installed to keep a close watch on those line calls!



Unfortunately, inclement weather kept us indoors for the first few days of May but then we were off and running with regular play and full roster of events until mid-October (pages 8 through 11).

Congratulations to the Interurban Team who were once again victorious. You can read about their epic battle on page 15.

Read all about the changing of the guard in Senior Inter City League on page 16. We would also like to thank Rudy Gatzke who has led the team since 2015 and has now passed the torch to Pat Craton.

Last year, we read all about the adventures of the Blue Shoe. Well, this year Blue Shoe has been upgraded to the Jazzy Jester. See page 12 for more news on this charismatic character.

The U of W Warriors Varsity tennis team coached by Ned Lazoja made a deep run at the 2023 OUA Championships this year. Catch up on their great results on page 23.

Our junior and senior members have again, this year, been busy making their name in tournaments near and far. Be sure to check out pages 25 to 28 to catch up on all the news about our current and future tennis stars!

This year again, we said good bye to a number of our long time members. We fondly remember Dennis Huss

Manager's Message (con't)

(January 30), Ang Huyn (February 20) and Uwe Sendel (October 15) who have passed on but are not forgotten. Several of our members have also made the difficult decision to retire from tennis but they are part of the fabric and history of this club. We thank you for your service and bid you a fond farewell. (Elisabeth Huss, Mary Liz Hearn, Jan Mellow, Louise Brzustowski, Doug Caverly, Hans Och to name a few.)

Speaking of goodbyes, on November 4th, we said good bye to Helen McArde as our long-standing Manager of Waterloo Tennis Club. Members and staff, both present and former, showed up in numbers to wish Helen a fond farewell. There were tears and hugs aplenty in addition to all of the well wishes. Helen has had an incredible impact on WTC. She together with the various WTC Boards, staff, coaches and volunteers led the club through dark financial days and a pandemic. The Club has been on firm footing and is well poised for the future due in

large part to Helen's hard work and dedication.

Personally, I can't thank Helen enough for stopping me back in August of 2018 to "chat" about a couple of opportunities. WTC has been a place of joy and personal growth for me. Thank you, Helen. See page 19 for more on Helen's Farewell.

A few last words. While it is true that our courts are busier than ever due to recent circumstances, it is also true that our members have stepped up to the challenge. We have mastered the art of the "T-5 second rule" and we are getting those courts booked.

Seriously though, the stats don't lie. We, the members, are playing more tennis than ever before in the history of this club. This is a great thing! It is also frustrating because, as creatures of habit, we want to play when we have always played and now we have to compete for our regular time slots. So why am I stating the obvious? Because, as our President (Roxanne) has acknowledged, it is important for you to know that we understand the situation. While we can't make any promises, our

Board and the WTC team are actively working behind the scenes to explore possible solutions. We ask that you be patient with us and each other as we experience these growing pains. We strongly encourage you to use your voice. Your feedback and input are important and valued. Please continue to share your thoughts and suggestions by emailing the Board at board@waterlootennis.com and me at april@waterlootennis.com.

Thank you all for the generous outpouring of support for the staff, coaches and management team during this time of transition.

We know that there has been a lot of change and it hasn't been easy. We very much appreciate you and don't take your support for granted. On behalf of the staff, coaches and management team, I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season! We are excited for 2024 and can't wait to see how it unfolds!

Take good care,

April Manahan
Club Manager
april@waterlootennis.com

Coaches Corner

Seasons greetings everyone! I hope that the December season is treating you well and that all line calls are in your favour! Let's talk shop for a little bit, so grab yourself a nice warm beverage, cozy up into the indoor season with me and let's chat about competitive pressure! In tennis, competitive pressure refers to how challenging you're making it for your opponent to stay in the game with you. There are plenty of ways to put pressure on your opponent – some of the most well known ways are by simply altering one of the five ball controls to suit your needs.

- Change the **height** of the ball – i.e. hitting moonballs, lobs, short low slices... to name a few. These are some of the easiest shots to hit that really pull opponents out of position and force them to hit outside of their strike zone (Waist to shoulder level)
- Change the **speed** of the ball – Go big or go home! We all love the feeling of a huge forehand cracking off our racquet! The same can be said for serving – but throwing in an off-pace ball that is a little slower is a great way to throw off an opponent's rhythm causing them to mishit
- Change or add **spin** to your shots. Topspin is the most common ball control that players will use when hitting groundstrokes. It helps keep you consistent and causes the ball to jump faster after its hit the ground. But don't neglect your slice! Again, it can throw opponents rhythm off – if in the middle of a rally you toss a slice their way unexpectedly it's a great way to pressure them into making an error.
- Change the **direction** of the ball. We're talking side to side here. Most of us signed up for tennis not a marathon, but if you can keep your opponents running from corner to corner, they will have to rethink their strategy against you!
- Change the **depth** of the ball. Playing the ball deep is a great way to keep opponents from moving into an attacking position and trying to hit a winner – there is a lot of pressure put on opponents when they are just receiving one deep ball after another. You don't even need much pace – so long as you're keeping them back far enough there's a good chance, they will eventually cough up a short ball and open the door for you to attack. If you see opponents getting wise to this and setting up camp at the back wall, hit short. Moving a player up and back with the use of higher deep balls, and lower shorter balls is a great way to exhaust opponents and again force mistakes.

These are some of the simpler examples, but they work even better when you combine them! Move your opponent to the side by changing direction – opening the court – on the next shot increase the speed of the ball to the opposite corner to capitalize on the opening you've created. If you see your opponent is struggling receiving high balls, toss some lobs into the

rally to throw them off, once they start sitting back too far hit a drop shot or short slice. The more of these you add the more “dimensions” you add to your game. So instead of just sitting back at the baseline hitting the same shot all day every day (1 dimensional) toss in a slice, charge the net, go for a winner here and there, lob them, run them! (multi dimensional) – do whatever you can to keep the pressure up!

I highlight some of the ways we can keep pressure up through the use of ball controls but let's never forget the #1 way to maintain pressure – consistency. If you never miss how can someone beat you? If you ever get your opponents saying that, you've done it, you're in their head. The score may say 0-0 at the beginning but if they go in believing you never miss you might as well just start off a 3-0. If you've ever played against someone like this – a human backboard if you will (*ahem John Murray I'm looking at you buddy ahem*) you will know that the pressure you feel just knowing that each point you will need to fight tooth and nail for is immense. This is one of the easiest things you can do to improve your game. Now some of you might ask “Coach Kye how do I improve my consistency?” and that's a great question, so thank you for asking! The two most common errors I see players faced with when trying to improve their consistency are:

1. **Overhitting.** If you're rallying and you keep laser beaming balls long, dial it back a bit, there is a time and place for hitting harder but you would be surprised how much more successful you will be if you take 20% off. This also allows you to develop your skills in building points. Tactically this will improve you by leaps and bounds in the long run.
2. **Not being mindful of the height of your shots.** The net is the first enemy on the court – it literally sits in between you and your opponent so consider it your opponents first line of defense. When you're rallying raise your ball height by a racquet length or two – you will be shocked at how much more consistent you will become – this usually also helps to put the ball deeper into the court resulting in more pressure being applied.

Boy, what a cozy read for the coziest season of all! I hope that you found some of the points here to be helpful. Remember pressure is the name of the game, it doesn't matter how you do it so long as you apply pressure! I'll leave you all with one final little gem here – in tennis there are two things you need to do in order to be successful – Create space, and take time. It doesn't matter how you do it, just that you do it. Have a happy indoor season everyone!

Kye Allen
Head Pro
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Winter Events



Jumpin' & Jivin'

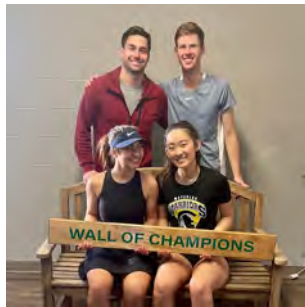


Our thanks to the The Grand River New Horizons band led by our very own club member, Paul Ellingham for brightening our winter. They had everyone jumpin' & jivin' in the club lounge for our Valentine's and St. Patrick Day's events.



Spring Events

Marten Johnston Team Tennis Tournament



A Champion Team
Back: Alex Siuda
& Ryan MacLean
Front: Evi Zafiris
& Vanessa Seto



B Champion Team
Back: Ryan Hummel
& Anton Charko
Front: Ann MacMillan &
Roxanne Chartrand

Spring into Summer Doubles Tournament



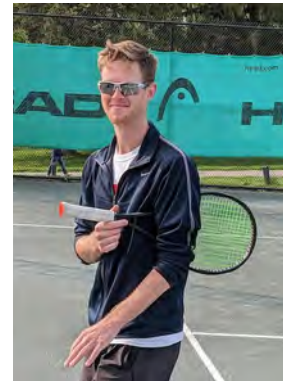
**L-R: Marina Seth & Helen McArdle (Finalists)
Nicole Irvine & Thea Bozsitz (Champions)**



**L-R: Joaquin Bardallo Bandera & Eric Minardi(Finalists),
Tiago Costa & Anton Charko(Champions)**

Opening Day Boot Camp

On Victoria Day the club held our Opening Day Boot Camp. Our coaches, Martin Holy, Milos Jovkovic, Ryan MacLean, Mohsen Soleimanipour, and Mike Ratcliff, along with Club Manager, Helen McArdle put 36 members through their paces to get them ready for the summer season. The Ontario Tennis Association also brought their Smash Cage to make the event even better.



Tribute to Dennis & Elisabeth Huss

After our Opening Day Boot Camp we unveiled the tribute stone donated by Tony Cho in honour of Dennis and Elisabeth Huss. Dennis passed away on January 30th. He was passionate about tennis both as a player and an umpire. Elisabeth was thrilled to see the stone and so many of her tennis friends again.

This was followed by a wonderful barbecue lunch prepared by volunteers Ike Husain and Andrew Gillard.



Courts Plus Mixed Doubles Tournament

On Saturday June 3th, 48 players came out to compete in the Courts Plus Mixed Doubles tournament. Ryan MacLean organized the tournament which ran smoothly from start to finish. Andrew Gillard made the refreshing fruit salad and the salads that accompanied the delicious sandwiches catered by Davenport Catering.

Thank you to Chris Edwards from Courts Plus for once again sponsoring the tournament.



Mixed Doubles 'A'

L-R

**Yow-Chan Lozada & Anton Charko (Finalists),
Samira Gancevich & Tiago Costa (Champions)**



Mixed Doubles 'B'

L-R

**Colin Stranc & Meghan Tracy (Finalists),
Ryan Hummel & Roxanne Chartrand (Champions)**

Breakfast at Wimbledon Woodies & Whites Mixer

On Saturday July 8th, club members gathered in our club lounge to watch the Wimbledon matches. While watching, members enjoyed a delicious breakfast cooked by Andrew, Ike, April, Mary, Violet and Irene. Afterwards, Mike Ratcliff organized a round robin where everyone had to play with a wooden racquet.

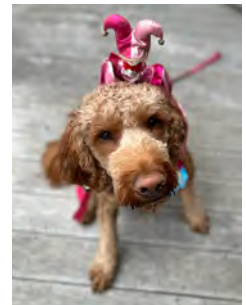
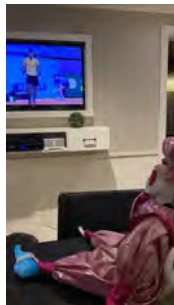
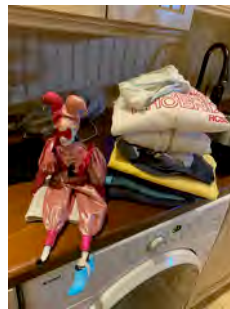


The Blue Shoe Part Two



Once again in the summer a group of women gathered each week for some extraordinarily fun doubles!! The best part of the tennis was to find who would be the winner (or loser!) of this years mascot The Jazzy Jester! Notice that the Jazzy Jester is keeping the Blue Shoe tradition alive by wearing one. The Jester travelled the world and was photographed in gardens, cottages, cheering on Felix, doing housework, and riding bikes and animals! Good fun! Stay tuned for the big reveal of the 2024 mascot!

Written by Kristyn Clairmont, pictures by Pam Sauve.



Club Championships Results



Women's Singles
L-R: Michelle Rogers (Champion)
Jovelyn Merle (Finalist)



Men's Singles
L-R: Kristian Kopic (Finalist)
Ryan MacLean (Champion)

Singles



Women's Singles 'B'
L-R: Nicole Irvine (Champion)
Marissa Liu (Finalist)



Men's Singles 'B'
L-R: Ilya Sherifali (Champion)
Joel Blit (Finalist)

Club Championships Results - Doubles



Women's 'A' Doubles

**L-R: Helen McArdle & Michelle Rogers (Champions)
Paquita Freire & Carla Perez (Finalists)**



Men's 'A' Doubles

**L-R: Alex Siuda & Steve Nieboer (Finalists)
Ryan MacLean & Filbert Nghiem (Champions)**



Women's 'B' Doubles

**L-R: Kartika Nataprawira & Seemontini Pal (Champions)
Jace Hui & Nancy-Lee Ledgley (Finalists)**



Men's 'B' Doubles

**L-R: David Perez & Spencer Tully (Champions)
John Ferland & Jim Kopperson (Finalists)**



Mixed 'A' Doubles

**L-R: Filbert Nghiem & Pat Babcock (Champions)
Kristian Kopic & Jie-Hee Park (Finalists)**



Mixed 'B' Doubles

**L-R: Paul Ingram & Michelle Rogers (Finalists)
Ava Allen & Ryan MacLean (Champions)**

Interurban League

2023 welcomed our historical Interurban city league back to the region for the first time since the pandemic. The league has a rich history of celebrating the best of what tennis has to offer: building community while having fun and competing in the game we all fell in love with.



This year the team welcomed back some familiar faces, along with some first time members. Team members spent Sundays sharpening their skills/scalpels at the net and Tuesdays travelling to different clubs in the region representing WTC in doubles and mixed doubles. After a lengthy season and adding a men's doubles league to the calendar to include Cutten Fields club, happy to report back that we have retained the iconic (and heavy) trophy 🏆. The team came together when it mattered most and duelled out a new sudden death format defeating Greystone in the semis and Royal City in the finals respectfully.

I am super proud of the team who came out and were open to learning new skills, patterns and playing as a collective team which is a unique experience for members. Wanted to also thank everyone at WTC for supporting the interurban team at our home matches on Tuesday nights at 7pm. We always hear you!

Personally, wanted to thank Helen McArdle and Pat Craton for mentoring me while I worked my first year as captain. Big shoes to fill!

Wishing everyone at WTC a happy holiday season and all the best tennis in 2024 🎾

Women

Roxanne Chartrand, Martha D'Agostino, Katrina Fleming, Nicole Irvine, Irene Janzen, Nancy Lee Ledgley, Marissa Liu, Helen McArdle, Catherine Paleczny, Michelle Rogers, Marina Seth.

Men

Joaquin Bandera, Joel Blit, Anton Charko, Tiago Costa, Ryan Hummel, Kelvin Hui, Tom Irvine, Rajiv Kaushik, Tony Pimenoff, Bao Lam, Tai Nguyen, Steve Nieboer, Alex Suida.

Written by Alex Siuda

Senior Inter City League

The Waterloo Tennis Club's senior team, champion in 2022 began their 2023 campaign in the South Western Ontario senior league with the intention to repeat the achievement in 2023. However, a newcomer to the league had its own ideas of which club should reign supreme.

Victoria Park, located in Cambridge was the newest club to join the league in 2023. Though new to the league, its members, were by and large, no strangers to club team competitive tennis, most having represented in their time/prime several of the local clubs in the Region of Waterloo at the Inter Urban level. For many of the players, it was a reunion of sorts meeting erstwhile opponents once again in club competition.

The league organiser, based in Port Dover, arranged the schedule to cut down on travel for the five participating clubs. While a considerate gesture, it resulted in an imbalance of head to head matches with Waterloo coming up against Victoria Park (VP) for half of the regular season schedule. This turned out to be a disadvantage to Waterloo given the strength and collective experience of the VP players. The regular season standing is based on points which are earned by the number of sets won in head to head matchups. This resulted in the other clubs, Port Dover, Ancaster, Rosedale (up till last year, our chief rival) meeting Victoria Park far less than Waterloo did. Still, Waterloo did manage to score a draw and a (narrow) victory over Victoria Park over the course of the regular season which no doubt, helped to keep us in third place for most of the season.

The semi-final play offs teams were VP in first place against Port Dover and Rosedale in second place against Waterloo to decide which clubs were to move on to the final.

Waterloo scored an 'upset' and a convincing one at that winning 18-6 against its old rival Rosedale while Victoria Park overwhelmed Port Dover to set up the final match. The final was played at VP and both teams fielded their best players for the final. Alas, the VP players bolstered by the knowledge that they were the dominant team throughout the season, lived up to expectations winning 17-7. It was a well -deserved win by the 2023 senior league debutants.

This past season was the last captained by Rudy Gatzke who had been at the helm since WTC joined the senior league in 2015. It was Rudy with his drive and enthusiasm who convinced the Board to include this event as an offering to its members. We salute and thank him for his unswerving loyalty and service to the senior event for the past eight years and also for the many years of his volunteer service to the club overall. WTC also is grateful to the following team members for their time and effort representing the club in 2023.

Women: Anne Brisland, Anne Cerar, Janice Cooke, Pat Craton, Martha D'Agostino, Janet Haraszthy, Irene Janzen, Nancy- Lee Ledgley, Helen McArdle, Joanne Raymond

Men: Jeff Coles, Tom Doerner, Chris Edwards, Kelvin Hui, Paul Falco, Azim Shamji, Graham Snyder, Ed Twardus, Mike Watson.

Submitted by Patricia Craton

Let's Be Thankful Mixed Doubles Tournament

On Thanksgiving Monday, we held our "Let's Be Thankful" Mixed Doubles Tournament. Participants brought in 57 lbs of food for the The Food Bank of Waterloo Region! Everyone enjoyed the competition and being able to work off their Thanksgiving dinner. Congrats to the winners, Jove Merle and Ryan Hummel.



**L-R: Paul Ingram and Michelle Rogers (Finalists)
Jovelyn Merle and Ryan Hummel (Champions)**



Halloween Mixer



There were some creative costumes worn at the Halloween Mixer this year! After the votes were counted, Dan Langlois (see left) won the Best Costume of the night. Ouch! That tennis ball looks painful!



Fall Singles Ladder Ranking Tournament



Helen McArdle's Retirement Party



I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support I received after announcing my retirement as Club Manager. No more so than at the retirement party held for me on November 4th in the club lounge. I was blown away by the number of current and past members, staff and coaches that stopped by to wish me well! Thank you for the thoughtful, wonderful gifts too!

It's been quite the journey since I joined the club in my 20's in 1992 and played with co-workers from Mutual. As with many others, Marten Johnston saw me play and started asking me to sub in groups that were short a player. I soon made many new tennis friends that I still have today.

I got more involved in the club as part of the organizing committee for the ITF Women's Challenger that was held at the club for six years. I was hired part time as Tennis Coordinator during that time and then as Club Manager for the last eleven years.

I'd like to take this opportunity to re-iterate some of the things that I mentioned in my AGM speech.

First and foremost, I want to thank you, our members. Your passion for tennis and your unwavering support have been the driving force behind every success we've achieved as a club. Your dedication to this sport and your commitment to our community have made my role as manager an absolute pleasure.

To our dedicated board members, both current and past, thank you for entrusting me with the responsibility of managing this club. Your guidance, vision, and tireless efforts have been the compass that has steered us toward excellence.

Now to our coaches, the backbone of our club's tennis expertise, they have been my partners in nurturing talent, dedication, and a love for the game. Your commitment to our players and your relentless pursuit of excellence have shaped our club into what it is today.

Helen McArdle's Retirement Party

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff members who have been the unsung heroes of our club. From the front desk to the court maintenance crew, to Bill Roth our Facilities Manager, Ryan MacLean our Assistant Manager and April Manahan who has succeeded me as Club Manager. Your hard work, dedication, and professionalism have ensured that every member's experience at our club is exceptional. Your contributions often go unnoticed, but they are the foundation upon which this club stands.

Even though I've retired from my role as manager, I want you all to know that this club still holds a special place in my heart. The Waterloo Tennis Club is not just a place to play tennis; it's a family, a community, and a source of countless memories. I may have stepped down from my official position, but I leave with a heart full of cherished memories and the knowledge that this club is in the capable hands of all of you.

The friendships forged here will endure, and the love for tennis will continue to thrive. I look forward to the next chapter of my life with a sense of excitement and nostalgia. Retirement promises new adventures, but I will forever carry the Waterloo Tennis Club with me, a treasure trove of experiences and friendships. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for allowing me to be a part of this incredible journey. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as the manager of this outstanding club. I look forward to seeing you all around the club when I come into play!



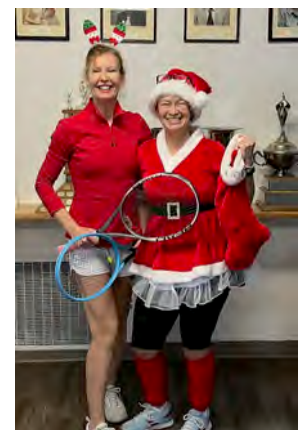
Fall Boot Camp



Christmas Spirit



Christmas Mixer



Cynthia & Marissa



Fall Ladder Standings

Box 1

Players	Matches Played	Match Points	Bonus Points	Tie Breaker Points	Total Points
Mateo Vesic	4	13		12	13
Riona Berbatovci	3	12		12	12
Slobodan Ivanisevic	3	6		3	6
Sam Bonet	2	2		0	2
Max Peng	2	2		0	2
Moez Kanoun	0	0		0	0

Box 2

Players	Matches Played	Match Points	Bonus Points	Tie Breaker Points	Total Points
Mike Koka	2	8		14	8
Andrzej Przepiora	1	4		4	4
Jeremy Singer	2	2		0	2
Matthew Chandler	1	1		0	1
Martha D'Agostino	0	0		0	0
Miro Jovkovic	0	0		0	0

Box 3

Players	Matches Played	Match Points	Bonus Points	Tie Breaker Points	Total Points
Paqueta Freire	1	4		8	4
Geoff McMurdo	1	1		0	1
Rajiv Kaushik	0	0		0	0
Bonnie Trites-Beal	0	0		0	0
Sam Hatamleh	0	0		0	0
Rodrigo Rezende	0	0		0	0

High School Results

Our high school juniors did really well in the WCSSAA Senior Tennis Tournament in October.

Joanne Huang (Winner) - High School Girls Singles, **Brandon Pham** (Winner) & **Dell Wang** (Finalist) - High School Boys Singles, **Stephanie Li** (Winner) & **Jasnoor Dhaliwal** (Finalist) - High School Girls Doubles, **Benjamin Reyes Rivadeneira, Mathias Reyes Rivadeneira** (Winners) - High School Boys Doubles, **Izzy Speiran** (Winner) - High School Mixed Doubles, **David Perez** (Winner) - Open Boys Singles, **Cadence Knight, Erin Pan** - Open Girls Doubles, **Tristan Ivanov, Nikita Marchenko** - Open Boys Doubles, **Carla Perez, Lev Sherifali** - Open Mixed Doubles

University of Waterloo Varsity

Historic OUA for University Waterloo Varsity Tennis Women's and Men's Team

Women's Tennis

In their first match, Waterloo (ranked fourth) managed to secure a victory over the fifth ranked Lions team in a highly competitive match. The top duo of Aldiana Lazoja (Kitchener) and Adema Tursunkhanova (Almaty) delivered exceptional performances, winning their doubles match 8-5, followed by Lazoja's impressive 6-1, 6-2 win in singles and Tursunkhanova's 6-3, 6-1 victory. Although York's Grace Whitley emerged as a bright spot for the Lions, earning a singles victory of 6-2, 6-3, along with an 8-6 doubles win with partner Tamara Janev.



In a thrilling semi-finals match, the No. 4 Waterloo Warriors defeated the top-ranked Western Mustangs to secure their spot in the OUA final for the first time in more than 15 years. The Warriors got off to a great start by winning two out of three doubles matches. Then, in the singles play, Tursunkhanova's victory over Carley Citron in the two-slot gave the Warriors an early lead. Jana Llorin's (Milton) dominant 6-0, 6-0 win over Sofia Smiechowski in the six-slot sealed the deal for Waterloo and ensured their place in the final.

Unfortunately the team lost to the no. 2 Varsity Blues in the finals. In singles play, the Warriors started strong winning in the one- and two-slot from Aldi Lazoja (6-3, 6-2) and Adema Tursunkhanova (6-2, 6-2). However the Blues would go on to win three straight to secure the victory. Adema Tursunkhanova and Jane Llorin were named OUA all-stars.

Men's Tennis

Waterloo Warriors, the fourth-seeded team, advanced to the next stage of the competition after sweeping the McMaster Marauders in the quarter-final round. They displayed their impressive abilities by winning all six singles matches and three doubles matches. Pavle Milic (Toronto), the top-ranked player of Waterloo, won his singles match with a score of 6-4, 6-4, and he also teamed up with Alex Oancea (Thornhill) to win doubles by 8-2.

The OUA semifinals saw a thrilling match between the Western Mustangs and the Waterloo Warriors. The No. 1 ranked Mustangs emerged victorious, securing their spot in the OUA final. The doubles point proved to be crucial, with the Mustangs winning two out of three matches. In the singles, Western won four out of six games. The Warriors fought hard and managed to claim a decisive victory in the doubles one-slot. Ray Xie also put up a strong performance in the two-slot, taking the win for Waterloo after Oancea was forced to retire. Matthew Li's hard-fought, three-set victory in the four-slot was another notable moment for the Warriors.

This put the Waterloo Warriors in the bronze medal game against the no. 3 York Lions. The Warriors came out flying in doubles action, winning all three doubles matches. The Warriors earned a victory in the one-slot from Pavle Milic beating Max Tokarev in the three-set thriller. In what turned out to be a crucial match for the Warriors, rookie Michael Li beat Emilio Velazquez in three sets to lead the team to a third-place finish. Along with clinching the bronze medal for the Warriors, Li was also named as the 2023 men's rookie of the year.

Submitted by Ned Lazoja (UW Varsity Coach)

WTC & the Billie Jean Cup

From tiny seeds, great trees can grow!

Last year our Canadian men's team won the Davis Cup for the first time. This year the women took centre stage and faced teams from all over the world in the Billie Jean Cup which was held in Seville, Spain. The team players were Eugenie Bouchard, Gabriela Dabrowski, Leylah Annie Fernandez, Rebecca Marino, and Marina Stakusic and led by captain Heidi El Tabakh. The Canadian team beat Spain, Poland, Czechia, and Italy en route to being crowned world champions for the first time.



The Waterloo Tennis Club had a tiny part in play in this amazing win. The club held an ITF Women's tournament for six years from 2008 to 2013. This tournament gave young pros a chance to gain valuable points to increase their worldwide ranking. Over those six years, three of victorious BJK Cup players as well as their captain were part of our tournament! The three players were Genie Bouchard, Rebecca Marino and Gaby Dabrowski along with captain Heidi El Tabakh. Another player from our event, Sharon Fichman was one of the commentators for TSN during the Billie Jean Cup.

The club has planted many other tiny seeds over the past years through its Elite program. Will one of them grow into a great tree too? See how some of them are doing on the following pages.

Submitted by Helen McArdle



Genie Bouchard



Rebecca Marino



Gaby Dabrowski



Heidi El Tabakh



Sharon Fichman

Juniors

U12 & U10 OTA Team Events

In November many of our juniors headed down to Sobey's Stadium for the U12 Team Tournament run by Tennis Canada and the OTA. This exciting tournament was filled with a unique team format where points were accumulated as a team through doubles and singles matches. Our juniors represented us well over 5 diverse teams from clubs all around the province. On the boys' side, Ilya S was a member of the winning team. It took some close tiebreaks and some long matches, but the team's doubles performance was well displayed and pushed them to the finish line. Youssef K, Zack Z, Ridit S, Jenson B, and Sibiseran K were all part of the Tri-City Warriors Team that took a close loss in the main draw and consolation but came back strong and won their last match. On the girls' side, Seemontini P was part of the winning team as well. The girls built off their early success and fought hard through to the finals with an almost perfect record. Paris R worked with Team ATI and battled through to the 3/4 finals, where they lost a 3-3 Match tie. Ava A, Shreyaa E, Emma A, Lucy G, and Devin S took part in the Tri-City Warriors team that competed all the way through the consolation draw and took a match win on the last day. Decided by some close, neck-and-neck doubles, the girls persevered and got the job done.

Within the following weeks, the tournament was run again, but this time for the U10's. The Tri-City Warriors girls' team, represented by Emma A, Sunandita P, Dania A, Devin S, fell in the main draw but came back strong in the next round of consolation with a clean 6-0 sweep in singles and doubles. The Tri-City Warriors boys' team, represented by Sibiseran K, Fares K, Ethan B, Deniz A, and Ari B, won a 3-3 match tie in the first round of the main draw and then had a tough loss to push them to the consolation. Both teams fought hard in the rest of the tournament, learned lots about their game, and, most importantly, had so much fun.

Congratulations to the juniors who took part in these events!

Submitted by Jie-Hee Park



“Little Mo” Internationals

Over in sunny Palm Beach Gardens in early December, you could find some of our junior girls representing Waterloo Tennis Club at the 17th Annual "Little Mo" Internationals in Florida. Ava A, Emma A, Emma D, and Sunandita P were all competing in this prestigious event. The girls had the opportunity to compete against players from over 60 different countries. This event led to some amazing tennis, lots of opportunities to display their talents, and of course, make lots of new friends. The girls not only came back with memories, but they came back with some hardware; Emma A and Emma D both came 3rd overall in their respective singles divisions. Emma A won the Girls U9 Green Doubles, and Emma D came 2nd in the Girls U10 Doubles.



Emma A.



Emma D.

Junior Tournaments

In the past few months, many of our juniors have been competing in OTA tournaments, some for the first time. Here are a few of their accomplishments!



Aydin H

The Swing School U8 Rookie (Nov 26), Champion



Bardia H

The Swing School U8 Rookie (Nov 18), Champion



Dania A

Martingrove U8 Rookie (Oct 8), Champion



Haris H

Martingrove U9 Rookie (Sept 24), Champion



Sebastien A

The Swing School U8 Rookie (Nov 26), Finalist



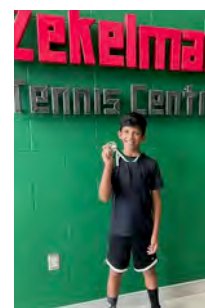
Paris R

GIRLS. SET. MATCH. TIE-BREAK TOURNAMENT Headwaters U12, Champion



Riona B

ACE Super Series U12 Provincial Circuit Plus (Oct 6th-9th), Champion



Sibi K

Zekelman U12 Transition (July), Champion

Juniors

The Sherifali Boys

Ilya Sherifali – 12

Ilya has had an incredibly successful year. Following his Tennis Canada invite last December to France, Germany and Belgium, Ilya proceeded to secure his position at the Canadian Indoor National event by winning the Ontario National Selection tournament at the Toronto Lawn Tennis club (Single and Doubles) and was also awarded the Sportsmanship Award. Ilya took full advantage of his Indoor Canadian Nationals qualification by finishing tied for 2nd in singles and winning the U12 Indoor National Doubles Championship in Calgary.



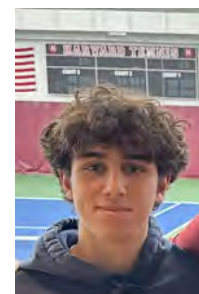
Moving into the summer season, Ilya had an incredibly busy schedule which started with a Tennis Canada invite to represent Canada through a European tournament tour through Italy. On Ilya's return, Ilya was extremely fortunate to compete in Waterloo as the WTC hosted a four star Tennis Ontario summer series event. Ilya successfully won the singles and doubles events on his home courts in an event that hosted 80 of Ontario's best players (boys and girls) and was [featured on CTV](#). This was quickly followed by his participation in the U12 International Cup in a friendly competition with some of the best players from Israel that were invited to compete with Canada's best under 12 players. The summer continued with the Junior Open event (Bloomex Cup) in Ottawa and finally the Outdoor Junior Nationals in Montreal. Ilya continued his success in Montreal with a Finalist result in the U12 Outdoor National Doubles Championship.

The summer success provided Ilya with an incredible opportunity to represent Canada at an international U14 tennis tournament in Israel. Unfortunately, world events changed Ilya's plans and he has since participated in two Tennis Canada camps at both the Montreal IGA Center and at Sobey's Stadium in November. Ilya has been training incredibly hard with Kye Allen and the WTC Elite program with individual lessons after school with Milos Jokovic. Both coaches have been incredible positive influences to Ilya both on and off the court and as Ilya prepares to head into the new year as a U14 competitor.

Lev Sherifali – 16

Many of you will find Lev Sherifali on court continuing to work on his skills as he carves out his path in Tennis, a sport that he loves. Lev started the year by pursuing his Tennis Instructor certification through the Tennis Professional Association which he put to good use this summer as he worked the summer camps at the WTC. Lev has also volunteered his time to work with Kye Allen and Milos Jokovic to support the development of our Elite high performance groups but to also learn from our great coaches on how to be an effective leader on the courts.

Lev ended the year on a high note as he received an invitation to return to Harvard for a tennis camp that he participated in the previous year. Coach Andrew Rueb (US Open and Wimbledon appearances) had Lev work on the top court with another Canadian and National Champion from British Columbia, Gary Jiang. Gary and Lev often hit together despite the geography so the connection at Harvard was a nice opportunity to connect with a friend. Lev and Gary were also the only players from the group that were provided the opportunity to get some hitting in with the Harvard team.



Submitted by Bill Sherifali

Seniors

Our seniors did us proud at the Steve Stevens Senior National Championships in Montreal in August. Pat Babcock won the Women's 65 Doubles event, Daryl Howes-Jones won the Men's 70 Doubles event, John Tibbits won both the the Men's 80 Singles and Doubles events.



Pat Babcock (far left)
2023 Steve Stevens Senior Nationals
Women's 65 Doubles Champion



Ed Twardus (far right)
2023 OTA Yonex Senior Provincials
Men's 75 Doubles Champion

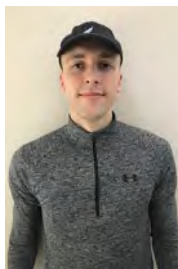
Coaches



**Kye
Allen**
Head Pro



**Martin
Holy**



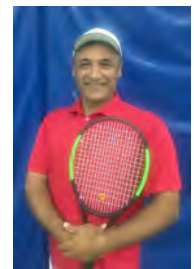
**Milos
Jovkovic**
Tennis Director



**Ryan
MacLean**



**Mike
Ratcliff**



**Mohsen
Soleimanipour**

Interested in lessons with one of the above coaches or Kartika Nataprawira or Jie-Hee Park? Log on and click 'Book A Private Lesson' under the 'Register for Programs, Lessons, Camps & Events' tab. You will see the contact info and pricing for coaches offering lessons.

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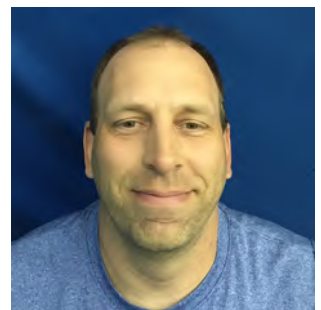
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