



Anguilla Tennis Academy

September, 2006

Volume 2, Issue 1

ATA Monthly

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Editor in Chief:
Jason Allen
jallen@caribcable.com
264-476-0697



2006 ATA Summer Camp most successful ever!

Part 1 – Introduction and first two weeks of the camp

July 28, 2006 marked the end of the 11th annual Anguilla Tennis Academy Summer Camp and the continuance of a long standing tradition of excellence not only in Anguilla but throughout the Caribbean. The camp began this year at 8:00 am at the James Ronald Webster Park on July 10 with almost 140 children making their presence. The children came with many smiles and showed an eagerness to learn, play, and simply have fun. Originally, this camp was started in the summer of 1996 by Mitchell Lake, founder and president of the Anguilla Tennis Academy. Mr. Lake was fortunate to receive a tennis scholarship to study at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and was a member of the varsity tennis team where he played singles and doubles for the "Running Bulldogs." The first camp consisted of 20 participants and it continued the same for the next year. Then, Mr. Lake presented to his cohorts a unique idea. He decided that it would be beneficial to invite a select few from the international community to help him coach the children for a grand finale week. This idea of bringing in more help made the number of participants not only rise because of more help, but it made for more prestige by simply making available a higher quality camp that soon became the premier camp in Anguilla. The ATA in turn, has coached more than 1,500 children to date. Some of these same children have grown up and left Anguilla on tennis scholarships as Mitch and Sean Romney did, others have gone elsewhere to simply study, some have come back every summer to help coach the kids, and amazingly enough, five former students now work almost full time with the ATA on a year round basis.

There are far too many accomplishments to mention when referring to all parties involved with the ATA Summer Camp. However, it is important to take this opportunity to highlight this year's camp, its participants, as well as the volunteer international coaches. In order to be fair, it is important to mention first and foremost Jonathan Collazo. For the past six years, Jonathan has been coming to Anguilla to teach the children which in and of itself is a noteworthy accomplishment. Not only has he been a member of the international crew for the final week of the camp, but for the past two years, he has come to assist Jason Allen in the camp's operations for the entire three week running period. The children have fallen in love with him to say the least as he is an exceptional coach and mentor. Jonathan is one of Florida's top coaches and he owns JC Tennis Elite in Tampa, Florida. The children and the ATA have been lucky to receive his professional guidance and leadership for the past six years and for that, we are all grateful. About his experience in Anguilla, Jonathan mentioned, "my experience is always unforgettable here, and although I live in Tampa, Florida, my passion is in Anguilla which shows in the past six years as I have been dedicated to this program. I am proud to be a coach and it makes me happy to see the children not only develop as tennis players but as people." The first two weeks of the camp were conducted at Webster's park on two courts. It is quite a feat to teach over 130 children the game of tennis with just two courts. Yet, this year's two preceding weeks went smoothly and were special for two main reasons. First, thanks to Mr. Timothy Hodge, Director of the Social Security Board (who consequently has two children playing in this year's camp; Timoya and Jordia Hodge), Jason Allen, the ATA director, was able to get approval for the western court to be resurfaced. This work was graciously done by Eudoxie, Alexander, and Brandon Wallace, owners and operators of Gorgeous Scilly Cay restaurant. The crew did a fantastic job by not only making the court almost brand new, but they did it just in time for the start of this year's camp. All the children were able to benefit from this new court and it is certain that the public, children, and citizens of Anguilla will join in together by giving thanks to Mr. Hodge, Eudoxie, Brandon, and Alexander. Second, faced with only having two courts at the ATA's disposal, José Javier Benito Puerto was invited by the ATA board, to conduct and manage a friendly game of football in the area between the two courts so that the numbers of children on the courts could be reduced.

This daily game of football was quite beneficial for the children as it combined aspects of the game of tennis with a team sport. Tennis, by nature, is an individual sport that teaches self-discipline, a goal oriented mindset, character, as well as many other accolades. Yet, football can teach a tennis player to move their feet quickly as well as improve their on court endurance. Mr. Puerto did an extraordinary job not only teaching the children football, but explaining how it can benefit a tennis player.

In total, there were six coaches who volunteered their time during the first two weeks and they were: Jonathan Collazo, José Puerto, Michelle Harrigan, Denny Derrick, Keithroy Proctor, and Calyde Hughes. It is certainly a laudable accomplishment when a camp, in its eleventh year, can continue to inspire past participants to come back and give of their time to help other children. All the coaches and parents are fully aware of the benefits that all children can receive from tennis as it is a sport that models life in every aspect. The ATA is certainly proud of all the coaches, but even more proud of the children. The children, in two short weeks, learned a great deal about tennis, following directions, working together as a team, improved their hand eye coordination, became more mature in terms of the social development, improved on their motor skills, and had fun while doing it.

Part 2 - The International Week

Anguilla is indubitably a small island with a limited amount of resources. Its two major resources are the people and land. Anguilla's residents are known worldwide for their kindness and hospitality and the land, although flat, is predominantly recognized for its beaches and beautiful ocean views. Anguilla also boasts a population of 13,000, and the dominant sports are sailing, cricket, and football. There are few jobs available on Anguilla for tennis pros and coaches. Essentially, only three hotels maintain an actual tennis program and they are, Cuisinart Resort and Spa, Cap Juluca, and Malliouhana Hotel. The ATA has been the frontrunner in Anguilla for tennis and has elevated the game into higher ranks among sports options for youth. Yet, running a camp of this magnitude, and maintaining it at a high level, requires the help of the international community. This year, the ATA board invited 14 international coaches as assistants to run a one week international camp that without a doubt cannot be matched in all of the Caribbean. A quick bio follows for each of them:

Chris and Becky Wade

Chris and Becky are no strangers to Anguilla. Chris was the tennis director for Cap Juluca and was actually Mitchell Lake's coach. Mr. Lake, under the advice and supervision of Chris Wade, decided to begin the Anguilla Tennis Academy. Therefore, as one of the ATA's founding members, the ATA board is honoured that he has returned to be a visiting coach. Mr. Wade is currently the Head Pro of the T Bar M Tennis Center where he supervises 30 tennis professionals and coaches over 70 nationally ranked players in the Dallas, Texas.

Siobhan, Michael, and Nate Belloli

Affectionately known as Coach B, she hails from San Diego, California where she began a tennis grassroots program called SCATA (Siobhan's California Action Tennis Academy). Her program is extremely similar to the ATA and she has provided much insight as well as enthusiasm. She is visiting this year with her husband Michael Belloli as well as son Nate. Nate Belloli is currently a member of the University of Southern Indiana tennis team. As a collegiate athlete and coach, he has brought a much needed insight to the children as well as serving as a role model for the camp's participants. This mother and son team make available a **great breadth of knowledge and experience for all parties involved.**

Lance Lee and Syreeta Williams

The ATA is excited to have Lance Lee and his fiancée Syreeta Williams for this week's camp. Lance Lee is the Head Tennis Pro at the Arthur Ashe Youth Tennis Center in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. He is a young, vibrant, and experienced coach who brings a great deal of dynamism and experience to the children. A former NCAA Division 1 tennis player and top coach in the USA makes this addition to the volunteer roster a definite plus for the youth of Anguilla. Recently, the ATA and the AAYTE partnered together to provide more educational opportunities for the children and it is expected for their children, as well as the ATA's, to benefit from this relationship.

Michelle and Mary Woodruff

Michelle and Mary have been coming to Anguilla as volunteers for six years. Both are current teachers and have dedicated their lives to teaching children. Michelle is an energetic coach who displays a great deal of patience with all the children. Any coach could learn from her experience and the children greatly benefit from her expertise and pleasant demeanour. Mary has been a volunteer in many ways for the ATA. First, she documents the camp every year by taking hundreds of pictures. **She also serves as an adult supervisor and is completely dedicated and devoted not only to the ATA but to the Anguillan children.**

Alicja Kutyla and Jay Lanfear

Alicja is joined by Jay and it is their second year coming as volunteers. Alicja played tennis at Cumberland University in Tennessee and is now a full time coach. She is certainly a great addition to the ATA and we expect to see her in the future.

Wyatt Harper

Wyatt Harper has been here for the past three years. The first time he came was as an international camp participant. He enjoyed it so much; he decided to return as a coach so that he too could give back to the children of Anguilla. He is currently a member of the tennis team at Sewanee University, America's top liberal arts college in Tennessee.



Above: Keithroy enters his dorm room for the Fall 2006 academic year at Lambuth University

The ATA's Keithroy Proctor plays college tennis, receives \$120,000 scholarship

The Anguilla Tennis Academy is proud to announce that one of its long time students and coaches, Keithroy Proctor, recently left for the United States on a tennis scholarship. He arrived in Jackson, Tennessee to attend Lambuth University; one of the nation's finest small private universities. The Anguilla Tennis Academy invested in Keithroy years ago when it was clear that he had a great deal of tennis with the sport along with an even keeled demeanor and good attitude. He was Anguilla's top junior for many years and will certainly become one of the best players Anguilla has ever had after his four years of varsity tennis at the university level. Keithroy plans to specialize in business and marketing while at university as well as concentrating on a solid tennis career.

This success story makes the eleven year history of the ATA worthwhile. The ATA is committed to providing opportunities to children and empowering them through the sport of tennis. Through the years, because of the ATA's pioneering efforts in the Caribbean, many people have joined in this shared vision therefore proving the ATA's administrators with various contacts in the world. These contacts have provided the ATA a network of many people in the tennis industry that can provide participants in the ATA's programs with jobs, tennis vacation, exchange opportunities, and tennis scholarships. Other players have gone through the ATA's programs and have benefited from them such as Samik Benjamin and Iston Benjamin. Currently, there are four players that will soon go to college as well on scholarships if they work hard; Marvin Hazell, Denny Derrick, Vallan Hodge, and Melissa Mussington.

Keithroy's full scholarship is for USD \$15,000 per semester. There are 8 semesters in a college student's career, therefore he and his family have saved USD \$120,000. The ATA would like to take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors and supporters who have contributed to making these types of priceless opportunities for Anguilla's children. Michelle Lake, founder and president of the ATA said, "I am proud of Keithroy and this remarkable achievement this is also a proud moment for the Anguilla Tennis Academy as we endeavor to provide opportunities for our children through the sport of tennis." The ATA's director, Jason Allen mentioned, "I wish Keithroy much success in his educational odyssey. He will have some struggles attempting to manage his time between studying and playing a sport at a professional level, but this opportunity will make him a stronger student and athlete. Anguillians should be proud of this young man and encourage all to follow his career over the next few years. We will look forward to seeing Keithroy during the holidays and the summers as a returning coach as he can certainly be a role model for adolescents who wish to achieve the same as him."

The 2006-2007 After School Program Starts with Over 50 Kids!

The Anguilla Tennis Academy's After School Program officially started on September 11th and has begun in a successful way. There are approximately fifty children already enrolled with more expected to join as the school year progresses. Tennis is becoming more popular among the youth, and the After School Program hopes to accommodate any children whose parents are interested in providing positive activities for their children.

There is a well qualified staff of tennis pros working with the kids each afternoon at the Ronald Webster Park, and their aim is to impart top quality coaching and important life lessons to each child through fun and effective drills and games. The coaches support each other and work very closely to ensure the safety and well being of each child.

Many of the participants in the program have returned from last year's groups and some have progressed enough to advance to the next level where they will no doubt continue to grow and become better tennis players. The Anguilla Tennis Academy's goal to build the lives and shape the future of the local youth is portrayed within the After School Program, which has blossomed out of the annual Summer Program held in July, and continues to show interest in any children who would like to join and play.

The Academy hopes to build on the foundation of the first group of junior players who started back in the late 1990's and have done so by employing coaches who were formally a part of that group. These coaches are committed to the goals of the Academy and this will help to support the future of the young children participating now and ensure positive growth in the years to come. Currently, the program is being managed by Jason Allen, the ATA director with head pro Marvin Hazell being responsible for the day to day implementation and training of the other coaches. Other members of the staff are Vallan Hodge, Denny Derrick, and Calyde Hughes.



The Pee Wee Group with the ATA Coaches



Vallan Hodge teaches Rene Carter to hit A proper volley.

New Addition to the ATA Staff

Calyde Hughes recently began training with Jason Allen and the rest of the ATA crew to become a full time assistant pro with the ATA. Calyde recently graduated from the Alben Lake Hodge Comprehensive School and has grown up playing in the Academy's programs since he was a small child. He will join the staff during the After School Program until the beginning of November where he will begin work at Cuisinart Resort and Spa. The ATA is quite proud to have Calyde as a new member of the team and we expect great things from him.



Calyde Hughes
teacher a
youngster the
correct grip
during the
Summer Camp



Tennis Tips from Jason Allen

You can always find some type of tennis tip to help you with a certain stroke, yet most times, the tip is very technical and it still takes away from the fact that tennis is a game that requires a great deal of focus and mental concentration. These mental aspects are my specialty and therefore will comprise the bulk of my tips. This month, my focus is concentration.

Focus and concentration seem to be inherent within every sport. Yet, most agree that tennis requires a significant amount of these two necessities. Concentrating can be an abstract term in the realm of sports so let me clarify on what you should concentrate while on the court.

1. Concentrate on the tennis ball. Far too often we worry about our opponent or other things. We end up missing shots because we take our eyes off the ball frequently.
2. Have tunnel vision. Do not be preoccupied by the weather, people on other courts, cell phones, or the person walking by. Literally, keep your eyes focused on the court and the ball.
3. Have a purpose when you hit. Too many players never improve simply because they react instead of aiming. Hit your shots deliberately.
4. Try to win by implementing a strategy. Use trial and error to find what your strengths and weaknesses are. Strategizing requires a great deal of concentration.

Mitch and Jason Attend the 2006 US Open

Anguilla Tennis Academy

P.O. Box 548
The Valley, Anguilla BWI

PHONE:
(264) 476 -3234 (Mitch)
(264) 476-0697 (Jason)

FAX:
(264) 497-8214

E-MAIL:
Anguilla70@yahoo.com (Mitch)
Jallen@caribcable.com (Jason)

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The US Open Tennis Championships is one of the four grand slam tennis events and one of the most exciting spectacles in the sports arena. Held at the newly named Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, New York, it is the last grand slam event of the year and therefore puts much pressure on the players as this is the last chance to boost their ranking. Many people from around the world attend this huge event. The 2006 US Open had two new visitors with ATA delegates Michelle Lake and Jason Allen. Both Mitch and Jason left Anguilla on September 7 and were able to view the men's and women's semi-final matches as well as various doubles, juniors, seniors, and wheelchair matches.

This was a great opportunity for the ATA in terms of continuing to give exposure to Anguilla and the tennis academy. It was also a great professional development opportunity as one can learn a great deal by just being around so many professionals, fans, and other tennis enthusiasts. The ATA delegates were able to witness tennis at its highest calibre as they saw Maria Sharapova defeat Amelie Mauresmo (the world's number one) in three sets; Justine Henin-Hardenne defeated Jelena Jankovic in three sets as well. On the men's side, Jason and Mitch saw Roger Federer, the undisputed number one player in the world crush Nikolay Davydenko in three easy sets and Andy Roddick defeated Mikhail Youhznyn in a tough four set match. In the end, Maria Sharapova won the US Open defeating Justine Henin-Hardenne in straight sets. This win for Sharapova was highlighted by the fact that it was her first US Open win and she beat two people she had never been able to beat in Henin-Hardenne and Mauresmo. Of course, Roger Federer had little trouble defeating Andy Roddick in the final in four sets. Roger Federer is now the only man in history to have won 3 Wimbledon's and 3 US Open's back to back. Federer won three out of the four grand slams this year only losing to Rafael Nadal in the final of the French Open.

Mitch Lake had been to the Open various times and it was there that he was able to make many of the contacts that have been key to fundraising for the ATA's new facility. He commented, "[t]he US Open is a wonderful tournament to attend. It gives one an idea of how much work and dedication it takes to be at the level of these professionals. Next year, we plan to take all of the ATA staff and a select few of the children to Arthur Ashe day and to many of the matches." For Jason Allen, the ATA director, it was his first time attending a grand slam event. He said, "[f]or me, attending the US Open was a dream come true. It was so exciting to be there and witness the best tennis I have ever seen. Seeing the greats play up close has also given me a unique and better insight on how to approach coaching the children. I am excited about returning next year. I want to thank Mitch Lake, Denise Hampton, Edgar Bronfman Jr., and Gale Monk for making this trip possible."

About the Anguilla Tennis Academy...

The Anguilla Tennis Academy is dedicated to providing the highest quality tennis instruction to Anguillan, Caribbean and International youth in a competitive environment while encouraging exemplary sportsmanship. The primary goal of the Anguilla Tennis Academy is to expose children to the joys, discipline and rigor of the life long sport of tennis where they can acquire technical skill, experience ideal sportsmanship and develop a strong sense of community.

ANGUILLA TENNIS ACADEMY

P.O. Box 548
The Valley, Anguilla
BWI

