

The SLTA Takes Notice

Southern Tennis Association Secretary Bobby Platt was an interested observer in the revival of the North Carolina Tennis Association.



New Net Officers
 Carlyle Lewis, left, of High Point was elected press agent and Berk Ingram of Winston-Salem was elected secretary-treasurer of the North Carolina Tennis Association Friday night in a meeting at the Greensboro Country Club. Lewis succeeds Dr. Henry Clark of Chapel Hill as president.

a host of others were his willing correspondents and co-workers in service to growing tennis in North Carolina. The number of volumes these letters fill staggers the reader when he or she realizes that all these individuals had demanding, full-time, mostly executive positions in other fields. All were involved, but Clark was the hub of the wheel, the maestro of the entire tennis symphony in North Carolina in the crucial formative years of the late 1950s and early 1960s when success was not guaranteed.

Orderly Succession

In 1960 Carlyle Lewis of High Point became the second president of the new NCTA and Berk Ingram of Winston-Salem was elected secretary and treasurer.

“Henry Clark had to start from scratch in a situation where there was zero organization,” noted Billy Trott. “North Carolina was later considered to have one of the best public health systems in the country and it probably goes back to him. I think he had that same vision for bringing tennis together across the state. Henry was the guy who united the state.”

“Henry was accomplished in everything he ever did,” said John Pedydyco. “He was just amazing. But I think that was one of the reasons that North Carolina tennis has been so successful is because so many of our leaders were outstanding.”

Underwriting the Growth: The North Carolina Tennis Foundation

Despite the hard work of volunteers, Clark realized early on that the NCTA could not meet its basic goals without at least some funding, and its more ambitious ones without a great deal of funding. The NCTA, however, was not even incorporated, and could not serve as the vehicle for receiving funds. In August of 1960, therefore, barely eight months after the newly reorganized NCTA took hold, Clark proposed a charitable organization parallel to the NCTA to finance, through tax-deductible donations, future statewide educational and other charitable activities, particularly helping local schools and parks departments promote tennis throughout the state. With tax-deductible donations, Clark noted at the annual NCTA meeting in Greensboro that “an active tennis program in every community in

North Carolina would be a wonderful objective for us.”

The objectives were laid out as:

- (1) The progressive expansion of tennis publicity in North Carolina via newspaper, radio, and TV;
- (2) the development of little league tennis throughout the state;
- (3) the sponsorship of tennis camps, workshops, and local clinics;
- (4) the promotion of intercity team competition;
- (5) the stimulation of more and better city and regional tournaments;
- (6) the development of an advisory service to schools and communities launching or expanding their tennis programs;
- (7) the development of a service to provide qualified tennis instructors to

Net Foundation Plans Talked At NCTA Meet

GREENSBORO (AP)—Plans for establishing a non-profit operating North Carolina Tennis foundation for the promotion of the sport in the Harheel State were presented here Friday during a meeting of the North Carolina Tennis Assn.

And the incoming officers were given authority to go ahead with the idea of setting up such an organization as described by outgoing president Henry Clark of Chapel Hill. The latter was appointed chairman of a group to make it a reality.

Succeeding Clark as president of the NCTA was Carlyle Lewis of High Point. Berk Ingram of Win-

tennis for the past year: Clark Elmore and Susan Lewis of High Point being the recipients. The latter two for their publicity work H. S. McGinty of Chapel Hill received a plaque as representative of his city winning the ECT/Class A team title. Whit Cobb of Charlotte carried off one for the Queen City which won the Piedmont a crown.

many communities during the summer months; and

- (8) the provision of occasional prize trips to sectional and national tournaments for selected deserving youngsters.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

There were—and are — many unsung heroes among the tennis volunteers of North Carolina and that list includes many spouses and family members who pitched in to help.

Henry Clark’s family was one example. As dedicated and indefatigable as Clark was in willing the NCTA into life, he would not have accomplished all he did without his equally tireless and dedicated wife, Blanche, and their children, Henry, Laura, and Anne.

Saddled with massive responsibilities in his day job, and without a personal secretary, Clark sought—and received—help from the troops at home. “It was a family affair,” remembers son Henry III, a top player in his own right and now a professor of education



Henry Clark and Family
 The Clark Family in the early 1960s: (left to right) Laura, Henry III, Blanche, Dr. Henry Clark, Jr., and Anne.

at Virginia Commonwealth University. “There were many nights we sat around the dining room table, stuffing and sealing envelopes until all hours.”

Blanche was of course the foreman of this work group. If there was a first lady of North Carolina tennis in the late 1950s and early 1960s, it

was Blanche Clark, but her efforts were mirrored by patient spouses all over the state who either pitched in to help, or waited at home while his or her significant other manned tournament tables, worked on ranking committees, or performed any of a thousand other services to the game.



Charter of the North Carolina Tennis Foundation
Underwrites the growth of the sport in perpetuity.

Clark's concept of a North Carolina Tennis Foundation was approved by some 80 people attending the August 1960 NCTA banquet, and a small action committee was appointed. Clark called upon Herb Browne, by then a young lawyer in Charlotte, to put together the framework

for incorporating the NCTF as a nonprofit, tax-deductible organization for approval by the Internal Revenue Service. "I had gotten to know Henry when I was an undergraduate and the Chapel Hill league team he was on used the varsity courts," said Browne, who would go on to make many contributions to North Carolina tennis both on court and off, serving as an active NCTF board member through 2010. "I was probably the only attorney he knew who was also a dedicated tennis player."

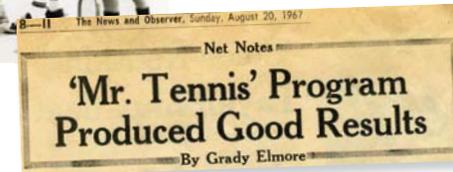
The organization received its charter in December of 1961 "as a nonprofit educational and charitable organization. Its purpose is to encourage the development of amateur tennis in North Carolina as a healthful and wholesome recreational activity, a body and character builder for young and old alike." The first president of NCTF, elected in 1961, was J. Spencer

Love of Greensboro, who had grown Burlington Industries into the largest textile manufacturer in the world. Most unfortunately, Love died of a heart attack while on court in Palm Beach in January of 1962, during his term of office. He was succeeded by Dave Morgan, Jr. of Asheville. Clark served as secretary and treasurer, a post he held through 1966, when he moved to Connecticut.

In November 1961, the key officers of the NCTA, the ECTA, the Piedmont Tennis Association, the WCTA, the Roanoke Tennis Association, and the NCTF met in Chapel Hill with representatives of the N.C. Recreational Commission and the N.C. High School Athletic



Mr. Tennis in the House!
Norm Chambers conducts one of his many clinics around the state as Mr. Tennis.



Association, to map out even more aggressive objectives for 1962.

During the Foundation's first year, 126 people from across the state contributed over \$1,400 for different programs. Weekly newsletters were sent to over 400 recipients, league play expanded to include some 35 cities, little league tennis was started in a few spots, and the summer tournament program in North Carolina was more active than any before it.

Takin' It to the Streets: Mr. Tennis

The unincorporated Association and the charitable Foundation both grew in the early years, meeting regularly in Greensboro as a middle point in the state. By 1967, Allen Morris, former Wimbledon quarterfinalist and many-time state champion, was president of the NCTA and began a new program which would have tremendous effect on tennis throughout the state. "One of the things a bunch of us did was create

"Mr. Tennis," said Morris. "[Mr. Tennis] was hired

by the Association, and he used to go around and teach in small towns. We would pay for the expenses to do that."

Norman Chambers of Raleigh was the first Mr. Tennis in 1967, and he visited dozens of communities across the state, putting on clinics and training instructors who would carry on the programs after he left. Wingate College coach Ronnie Smarr, and Wake Forest stars Ken West and Mike Rubenstein later served as Mr. Tennis. "[They] would go to these little small towns who knew nothing about tennis or who wanted to have somebody come and teach the kids at the local park," said Morris.

This grassroots outreach, centered in public parks and recreation centers, would not have been possible without the organizing of the NCTA and the funding from the NCTF. Mr. Tennis reached numerous young players