Greetings!

Summer tennis is well under way. We have had the KHSAA championships, the 60/70 & over Invitational, 55+ Championships, 40+ Championships, and 18+ Championships. Congratulations to all the teams that won and to all the teams that played. Many of us must travel and make a major commitment to play in these events, and win or lose, we love to travel, see old friends, and make new friends. We are happier when we win, but when we are on the court, I look at it as a 50-50 proposition. Two players or two teams on a court and one of those teams will win and one will lose. I will take those odds.

USTA KY, by that I mean the staff and the board, work diligently to expand, improve, and make our tennis life enjoyable. They do this by securing a $25,000 Innovation Grant to expand under-30 tennis opportunities statewide. They do this by supporting facility improvement projects across Kentucky. Money from USTA National, Southern and Kentucky is available for court reconstruction, resurfacing, and lighting initiatives. So far in 2026 Kentucky has received grant money for four funded projects totaling $386,821.

The staff is constantly reaching out to Kentucky counties to offer assistance, advise, and create new partnerships with providers of tennis, including parks and rec departments.

This is where we all should be doing our part by talking to our county magistrates, city council members, mayors, our local park departments, and any tennis provider you are aware of in your area and encourage them to have a conference with the USTA Staff about grant monies to facilitate the growth of our favorite sport.

Now it is time for fun facts about tennis.

The first Wimbledon tournament (male only) took place in 1877. They let the women compete in 1884.

The first US National Championship (US Open) deputed in Newport, Rhode Island in 1881 (male only). They let women compete in 1887 with Ellen Hansel winning the inaugural women's singles title.

Stade Francais hosted the French National Championships (French Open) in 1891. Women's singles were first played in 1897. In 1925 non-French players were allowed to compete.

What is now known as Australian Open come to be in 1905. It was originally known as the Australasian Championships (male only). Women were allowed to play in 1922.

And tennis shoes were invented in 1892 and were known as plimsolls. They were made of cloth with rubber bottoms and were designed for the British Navy to wear on slick ship decks. As the shoes made no sound when walking they were given the moniker “sneakers”! And they did not have a left or right shoe.

Enjoy Wimbledon and play in your whites!

Stay hydrated and see you on the courts!

Ellen

