

University of Rochester hosts First Annual Peter Lyman Memorial USTA Junior Tennis Tournament, July 5-7th, 2013

Peter R. Lyman coached the University of Rochester men's tennis team for 42 years and squash for 44 years. Under his guidance, the men's tennis team was represented at nationals every year, either as a team or on an individual basis, for 22 straight years. Lyman guided the U of R squash team to Top 20 rankings, including placements of 11, 12, and 13 in his long career. He literally donated his expertise and concern for the individual student in his early years. Later, when he was on the faculty payroll, he went above and beyond. His love of tennis and squash inspired University of Rochester teams to local, regional and national recognition. With all this, Pete never looked for personal recognition. It was always all about his players. He is a member of the University's Hall of Fame.

Peter was well past his playing years and arthritis made it difficult for him to walk much less climb steps to watch courts. Instead, he could usually be found encouraging one of his players who were entered in the tournament. Along with his coaching, Peter handled the entry and transportation for all his players whether they were a serious competitor for the city championship or a beginner in the lowest ranked tournament. Each year, Peter would mail entry forms to the young players in upstate NY that had participated in previous years' Junior competitions and include a short personal note encouraging the player to join him. Peter's dedication to his teams and his sport was without limits. Peter passed away Sept. 28, 2012 after hosting his last tournament in July 2012.

It was for these years of self-less dedication to the sport of tennis that the current U of R tennis coach, Matt Nielsen and his assistant, Brian Bowman renamed Peter's annual USTA junior tournament to the First Annual Peter Lyman Memorial Championship. The event was held at the U of R outdoor courts that are aptly named in honor of Lyman. Hot, sunny, 85° humid weather met the boys and girls aged 12-18 years old that competed at designated age levels. The top girls from Western NY to include Brianna Gibbs (Williamsville), Alana Danieu (East Aurora) and Carlee Conway (Grand Island) competed. The greater Rochester area had their top players represented by Raissa Lou, Tami Comins, and the Section V state qualifying doubles team of Chandrika Sanapala and Chhinda Som.

Ross Derosé of Williamsville won the Boys 14. Nate Palmer of Batavia was seeded #2 in the very competitive Boys 18's. He and James Galvert battled it out for the championship on Sunday. Galvert won in a three-set thriller. Lou won 6-3, 6-1 against Long Island native Olivia Funk in the Girls 16's. Carlee Conway won the Girls 18's after three-set matches against Comins (6-2, 4-6, 10-2) and Danieu (6-3, 1-6, 10-4). Comins and Conway then partnered for the Girls Double event and posted an 8-5 Pro-set win against Sanapala and Chhinda. They advanced to the finals against Lou and Gibbs. The match featured big serves and strong volleys as Comins-Conway won by an 8-3 final.

When Conway was asked what was most memorable about being a two-time winner at this year's tournament, she responded that being awarded the trophies by Coach Nielsen was nice, but it was more memorable to have met Peter Lyman several times over the past six years of her USTA Jr. career. "Receiving trophies from Mr. Lyman for winning my age bracket the past three years is most memorable, he was such a nice man and made all us players feel welcomed and important."



Tami Comins (L) Carlee Conway (R) July 7, 2013