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VAN DER MEER TENNIS ACADEMY
MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER



Return of Serve – Simple is Best

Many players ask us how to improve their serve - nearly everyone wants more pace; some realize they need a better spin or slice serve. A much smaller percentage ask about improving their returns; yet that shot is one of the most important factors in breaking serve & winning a match.

Dennis Van der Meer knew that most players don't understand that the return is not exactly the same as a groundstroke, and try to hit either forehand or backhand returns like they would in a baseline exchange. and good friend Dennis and good friend Coach Jim Verdieck explained the timing factor difference in terms of a 2- beat motion on returns, as opposed to 3 beats in a baseline exchange. If a serve is hit with pace, it can travel over the net and reach the receiver in less than half a second.

The racket has to get back quickly, and there needs to be a simple, accurate and efficient contact and follow through in order to ensure a high percentage of good returns. Dennis had his players practice returns from serves hit from the service box instead of the baseline, and taught a very disciplined, consistent response to make great receivers. Long time VDM Academy player Grant Stafford became one of the top statistical returners on the ATP tour, enabling him to get wins over such great servers as Pete Sampras and Marat Safin.

The best returners also use fairly conventional grips when returning serve, forgoing extreme Westerns due to the inevitable timing problems that cause framed shots. All top players employ a variety of grips depending on the situation. Many shift their grips slightly without even needing to think about it, due to experience and understanding that a low wide ball requires different handling than a high floater. They have great early recognition skills, and set up accordingly. Great players understand that when returning, simple is best.



Moving inside the baseline to return a second serve can unnerve your opponent, causing weak serves or even double faults



JJ Tracy collects almost as many sportsmanship awards as he does winner's trophies. The talented 13 year old has successfully transitioned from top 10 national US 12's to 14's by working hard on his footwork and conditioning, along with tactics and shot selection.

Junior Summer Camps

Have the best time of your life - train hard, get fit, play awesome tennis with Junior, Collegiate and Pro tennis players from all over the world. Stay for a week or a month in housing or with your family. Learn from ATP, WTA, ITF & Davis Cup Professionals.

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Please visit www.vdmtennis.com for more information



Tournament Results

ICY Hot (Macon)

- Natalie Bassett made the finals in 12 doubles and 5th place in 12 singles
- Robert Hagen won the backdraw in 12 singles

ICY Hot (Norcross)

- Anna Letto made the finals in the backdraw for 16 singles
- Kylie Collins made the quarterfinals, playoff finals for 16 singles doubles

Lexington

- Matt Oliver won 16 doubles and made the finals in 16 singles
- Brooke Schafer won 12 singles
- Nehemiah Molla won the backdraw of 16 singles

Southern States Top 32 Super Champs

- Olivia Rose Besecker won 10 singles

Rockbridge

- Madison Dillon won 18's singles & doubles
- Will Danzell won 16 singles and made the finals in 16 doubles
- Adam Kush finished 4th in 16 singles and made the semi-finals in 16 doubles
- Jije Enkhsaihan won the semifinals in the backdraw for 16's singles and the semi-finals in 16 doubles
- Ashley Chang won the semi-finals in the backdraw for 18's singles
- Anna Letto won 16 singles

STA L1A (Cary)

- Kylie Collins won 14 singles
- JJ Tracy won 14 singles and the semi-finals in doubles (play canceled due to rain)

STA L1A (Raleigh)

- Madison Dillon reached the finals in 16's (play canceled due to rain) and the quarterfinals in 16 doubles
- Anna Letto made the quarterfinals in doubles
- Jacqueline Pelletier made the round of 16 in singles and the semi-finals in doubles (play canceled due to rain)
- Beau Pelletier made the round of 16 in singles and the semi-finals in doubles (play canceled due to rain)



JJ Tracy and Kylie Collins at Cary, North Carolina Tournament



Natalie Bassett



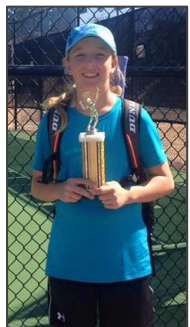
Madison Dillon



Matt Oliver & Partner



Will Danzell



Brooke Schafer



Anna Letto



VDM Coach Reggie Sanderson with Olivia Rose Besecker

Fitness Corner – The Psychological Benefits of Fitness Training

By Katie White

Fitness training provides benefits to on court athletic performance and is key to injury prevention of athletes. Another major benefit of fitness training that is often overlooked is an increase in psychological performance when training and competing. There is a definite connection between improving the physical attributes of fitness, including strength, speed, flexibility, power and endurance to the mental strength of the athlete.



A tennis player who believes that they can move well around the court and last physically throughout the entire duration of a match will have a much stronger mental attitude than a player who does not believe they are stronger or at least as strong as their opponent. This belief helps the player to stay composed under pressure and remain calm during times of mental frustration and nervousness. They can focus their energy on tactics, and are able to make better shot selections than those with less confidence in their physical abilities.

