



VAN DER MEER TENNIS ACADEMY

OCTOBER, 2022 NEWSLETTER



**Dennis & Pat
Van der Meer**
Founders

Brian DeVilliers
Academy Director

Elizma Nortje
Head Pro
Mental Training Director

Tommy Shimada
ATP Coach
Doubles Specialist

David Anderson
Travis Curran
Derek Porter
Head Pros

Intissar Rassif
Santiago Rodriguez
Natnael Zegdeta
Academy Coaches

Mary Brooke Moody
Quickstart Instructor

WHAT MAKES VDM TENNIS ACADEMY STAND OUT?

As another Academy year gets into full swing, we look forward and back to our successes and achievements of past students. We are proud of our many top WTA and ATP players, as well as the excellent student athletes who have built equally successful careers as doctors, lawyers, educators, and coaches as well as business owners. The most valuable lessons have always involved learning about different cultures, respecting and embracing diversity, and becoming good citizens of the world.

Dennis Van der Meer was a visionary coach and master teacher whose teaching techniques have been widely copied and used all over the world. At VDM Academy, all our coaches are required to go through TennisUniversity, the training course based on solid progressions and group teaching. We all teach techniques based on commonalities, with a range of correctness based on individual factors.

We do not impose our own personal preferences upon our player. Instead we focus on developing their own style based on necessary elements in each stroke. We look for the following when making a decision when to actually change a stroke: 1) Can it physically injure them? 2) Will it limit their development? 3) Does it break down in match play? Dennis often suggested simply adding a new grip or stroke so the player didn't feel they were losing something comfortable. Of course, timing is very important in deciding to change things like grips - as well as age and future tennis plans of an adult or junior.

For instance- in the case of a player with an extreme western grip, he would explain the limitations of that grip. He would say, "It's good for very high balls, but vulnerable for low ones, especially slice. It's also not great for normal volleys. Keep your grip if you like for high balls, but add a continental for volleys, and let's see if it helps your game. Usually, the player would end up modifying their forehand grip to semi-western, but never felt like they lost anything.

An approach like Dennis' can coax reluctant players to add new strategies and skills to their games. A player who camped out near the fence suddenly can have success serving and volleying. A player who tried to finish points too early can rely on their groundstrokes long enough to construct a point. This style of coaching enabled Dennis to have success at every level - beginners to world champions. Not all players can reach the top level of touring pros, but everyone can have a solid game for life. In the TennisUniversity course he gives us the blueprint for successful, enjoyable coaching for our players. We strive every day to maintain his standards for excellence.



Dennis and Coach Jim Verdieck reviewing the results of players' charts following match play. These results help players know what is working, and what needs work.

HOLIDAY CAMPS — TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Summer camps were full and awesome. Many families loved the convenience of renting across the street in Beach Arbor, so we are continuing to rent these units as demand on Hilton Head has soared. Thanksgiving and Winter Holiday Camps should be packed as well, so plan early and come see us on the courts!

Junior Camps - November 21-26 | December 27-30

Academy Week Camp - November 21-26 | [register at vdmtennis.com](https://www.vdmtennis.com)



VAN DER MEER TENNIS ACADEMY

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC 1.800.845.6138

[WWW.VDMACADEMY.COM](https://www.vdmacademy.com)

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/VDMTENNISACADEMY](https://www.facebook.com/vdmtennisacademy)





VAN DER MEER TENNIS ACADEMY

OCTOBER, 2022 NEWSLETTER



TEAM VDM CHAMPS



MENTAL TRAINING CORNER — USE YOUR BRAIN ON THE COURT

Legendary coach Dennis Van der Meer noted that in his experience, most people with IQs of 150 immediately drop to 75 as soon as they pick up a tennis racket! It was this kind of wit that enabled him to make his points memorable to his students. While he didn't mean it quite literally, it's true that many otherwise intelligent people lose some of their common sense and ability to think rationally when they step onto a tennis court for a match.

Kids have to learn how to use their brains to figure out tactics to enable them to win a match; vanquishing negative thoughts and fears in order to allow their brains to function as they should. This is done on the practice courts; with coaches paying as much attention to the tactical and mental side of their games as stroke production.

It sounds simple enough, but then why do players ever hit a ball into the net? As Dennis pointed out time and time again, the net is only 3 feet high, and the sky is limitless. Again, Dennis' quirky sense of humor reminded his students to think of basics first- don't make silly errors like hitting a ball in the net. One time at the US Open junior event, we were watching one of our students play in the quarterfinals, and the poor girl was so nervous that she hit many, many balls in the net. Dennis thought out loud to me- "Do Not Feed The Net; Danger of Losing Set." When we got back to Hilton Head, he made the signs for the nets that our kids practice on. He had alligators with their mouths open put on them for good measure.

In short, you need to learn how to relax enough to remember the basics when you're playing important matches. Learn how to breathe, and focus on the tennis ball. Keep a sense of humor in order to use your brain on court. Practice this way, and you'll keep your wits about you during tournaments!



VAN DER MEER TENNIS ACADEMY

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC 1.800.845.6138



VDMACADEMY.COM

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/VDMTENNISACADEMY