

SPECIAL ISSUE • INTERVIEWS WITH OUR PARALYMPIANS

TENNIS

SEPTEMBER 2012 • SPECIAL ISSUE

INTERVIEW
WITH
THE 'QUADFATHER'



CANADA'S LITTLE ACES

AT THE BIRMINGHAM
WHEELCHAIR TENNIS
CLASSIC

SPECIAL ISSUE WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

GET INVOLVED!



INSTANTLY
VIEW ALL
OUR VIDEOS
INSIDE





Copyright

Tennis Tribe is published by PlanetTennis.net

Paul Gold and Kathryn Bistany are the founders of PlanetTennis.net.

Paul is widely considered one of the web's leading tennis training consultants.

Paul has been coaching and training tennis players of all levels (beginner to Pro) since 1995 and is still actively doing so today.

Kathryn is the managing director of Corpotential, a nutrition consultancy for athletes. She left her successful career in the City after 13 years in investment banking to dedicate herself to personal fitness and sports therapy. After a serious sports injury and suffering nutritional deficiencies, Kathryn decided nutrition offered the key to optimum sports performance.

For more information, go to <http://planettennis.net/about/>

For support, email info@planettennis.net

Cover Photographs - main image Joel Dembe:
[Photographer Peter Figura](#)

Little Aces - Photographer:
[Bill Stepec](#)

Designed by DA Design | www.daveallworthy.com



Special Message from Paul & Kathryn

There's been an unbelievable buzz in London since June. It kicked off with a rather wet Jubilee for Her Majesty (never mind, we loved it all the same!) followed by the usual excitement of Wimbledon. Then, after the customary moans about the Olympics, the mood changed, the tourists and athletes arrived, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games were a monumental success.

As some of you may know, neither one of us is a career journalist, editor, publisher, etc. So we were rather slow at realising that as owners of Tennis Tribe, we could actually apply for media accreditation to the Games. So slow in fact that it was too late. We know, we know; could any two individuals really be that silly??

However, the Paralympic spirit was obviously smiling (or laughing?) down at us and we give huge thanks to Holly Hamilton at Tennis Foundation for arranging, at very short notice, for us to interview some of the paralympian wheelchair tennis players. You will be able to see those video interviews inside this Special Issue.

Equally huge thanks go to Pam Olley of the Ontario Tennis Association and editor of Ontario Tennis Magazine and Brigitte Légaré, press attaché for Team Canada, for arranging yet another last minute interview with Canada's no. 1 wheelchair tennis player, Joel Dembe.

We also thank the ITF for publicising this issue through their social media networks. Now it's up to you, the readers. Get the word out. Tennis is fun and it's for everyone!

To Your Tennis Success,

Paul & Kathryn

FEATURES

ABOUT WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

A HISTORY

06



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

IN THE UK

14



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

OUTSIDE THE UK

15



WHEELCHAIR DEVELOPMENT CAMPS

16



INTERVIEWS WITH OUR PARALYMPIANS

LOUISE HUNT, ALEX JEWITT, PETER NORFOLK (THE QUADFATHER) & ANDY LAPTHORNE

18



FEATURES

COMMUNITY EVENTS

26



WE NEED YOUR STORIES

29



INTERVIEW WITH CANADA'S NO. 1 PLAYER

JOEL DEMBE

30



THE TENNIS WHEELCHAIR

A CHAMPION'S TENNIS WHEELCHAIR

35



GIVE A HELPING HAND

39



TAKE TWO, THE ITF'S 'MUST READ'

TENNIS MAGAZINE

43



A VERY SHORT MESSAGE

FROM TWO PARALYMPIANS

44





ABOUT WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

PHOTO CREDITS: COURTESY OF TENNIS FOUNDATION



Since its inception in the United States in 1976, wheelchair tennis has become one of the fastest growing wheelchair sports in the world and has been a Paralympic sport since 1992.

The only rule change from the able-bodied game is that the ball is allowed to bounce twice, as long as the first bounce is within the confines of the court and the second bounce can be either inside or outside the court boundaries.

The classifications within wheelchair tennis relate to the type and extend of a player's disability so that they compete against others with a similar level of function. Eligibility to play is based on a substantial loss of function in one or both legs.

Paraplegic players have full use of their arms and competitions are separate for men's and women's events.

The quad classification is for players who do not have full use of their arms. This group compete in mixed events.

History

1976

Former acrobat skier, 18-year-old Brad Parks, suffers an injury which leaves him paraplegic. During his rehab, he meets wheelchair athlete Jeff Minnenbraker and the two start discussing the possibilities of wheelchair tennis.

1977

Brad and Jeff start promoting wheelchair tennis across the west coast of the USA through a series of camps and exhibitions, and begin establishing the rules of the game. In May, the Los Angeles City Parks and Recreation Department host the first ever wheelchair tennis tournament with around 20 players and the sport begins to develop.

1980

In early 1980, the National Foundation of Wheelchair Tennis (NFWT) is formed with Brad Parks, David Saltz, Jim Worth and Dave Kiley as the first Board of Directors. A circuit of ten tournaments are established across the USA including the first ever US Open Wheelchair Tennis Championships, staged at the Racquet Club of Irvine attracting over 70 players. Brad Parks takes the inaugural title. By the end of 1980, over 300 players are actively playing wheelchair tennis in the USA.



1981

The Wheelchair Tennis Players Association (WTPA) is formed, under the auspices of the NFWT, so that the ever-increasing number of players has an active role in governing the sport of wheelchair tennis.

The first “Grand Prix Circuit” is established consisting of a series of four major events in different cities across the USA, culminating in the US Open in October.

Jean-Pierre Limborg becomes the first international competitor to participate in the US Open and on his return home to Paris, he sets about starting a programme to develop wheelchair tennis in Europe with his former tennis teacher Pierre Fusade. The first wheelchair tennis club opens its doors in Garches later that year. Over in Sydney, Australia, Graeme Watts starts the first wheelchair tennis programme following clinics by Brad Parks and Jim Worth.

1982

France becomes the first country in Europe to put a wheelchair tennis programme in place. Popular French professional players such as Yannick Noah and Henri Leconte assist with high profile up-down exhibitions where a wheelchair tennis player teams up with an able-bodied partner.

1983

Players from other European nations start to hear about wheelchair tennis for the first time and the first international tournament is staged in Paris called the “Open d’Antony”. Meanwhile, the Grand Prix Circuit in the USA grows to seven nationally sanctioned events, and the US Open.

1984

Everest & Jennings – the world’s biggest manufacturer of wheelchairs – becomes a major sponsor of the NFWT. The expanding circuit in the USA now includes ten events and becomes known as the Everest & Jennings Grand Prix Circuit.

Masahiro Sato starts the first wheelchair tennis programme in Japan, and in Stoke Mandeville, England, a wheelchair tennis demonstration event is staged for the first time.

1985



Over 1,500 wheelchair tennis players take part in 40 sanctioned events in the USA alone. The quad (players with limited mobility or strength in three or four limbs) and women's divisions expand at a phenomenal rate.

An international team competition, the World Team Cup, is established, with six men's teams competing in the inaugural event. There are not enough women to stage their own event.

The first Japan Open takes place and the European Wheelchair Tennis Federation (EWTF) is formed and establishes a network of tournaments in Europe.

1986

The first official French Open is staged in Antony, Paris. The World Team Cup expands to include a women's division; The Everest & Jennings Grand Prix Circuit grows to 55 events with over 2000 players participating; the first Junior National Championships at the US Open attracts 60 players in four divisions.

1987

Wheelchair tennis is officially included in the Wheelchair Games at Stoke Mandeville, England for the first time with 30 men and seven women representing ten nations.

The ITF is approached to assist in developing an international governing body for wheelchair tennis, which sparks the interest of ITF Director of Development, Doug MacCurdy and Brian Tobin, Executive Vice President of the ITF.

1988

The draft constitution and planning documents for the new federation are circulated to the nations after considerable planning and consultation with the ITF. At their AGM, the ITF adopts the two bounce rule in the official Rules of Tennis, officially sanctioning the new sport.

On Monday 10 October, the International Wheelchair Tennis Federation (IWTF) is founded at a meeting during the US Open.

Through the efforts of John Noakes of the International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation (ISMWSF), in conjunction with Doug MacCurdy and Eichii Kawatei of the ITF Committee of Management, a demonstration of wheelchair



GB Wheelchair Tennis Team
Courtesy of Tennis Foundation

tennis is included in the Paralympics in Seoul, South Korea with four men and four women competing. The success of this event leads to wheelchair tennis being included in the 1992 Paralympic Games.

1989

The first Australian Wheelchair Tennis Open takes place at the National Tennis Centre at Flinders Park, Melbourne.

1990

Wheelchair tennis is staged alongside an able-bodied tournament for the first time at the Lipton Players Championships at Key Biscayne, Florida, USA.

1991

NEC join as a major sponsor of the IWTF, providing funding to formalise the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour and Ranking, along with a host of other programmes.

Prize money is awarded at the US Open for the first time and the Wheelchair Tennis World Champions are recognised by the ITF for the first time alongside their able-bodied counterparts.

1992

Wheelchair tennis becomes a full medal sport at the Paralympics in Barcelona, Spain for the first time with Pierre Fusade as Technical Delegate. Randy Snow of the USA and Monique van den Bosch of the Netherlands become double gold medallists, taking both singles and doubles titles.

1993

The ITF agrees at its AGM that wheelchair tennis players may compete in able-bodied tournaments if they wish, and in addition, that the complete set of wheelchair tennis rules should be included within the sport's official Rules.

Pierre Fusade takes over Presidency of the IWTF from Brad Parks after five years. Parks is awarded the first IWTF Trophy in recognition of his contribution to the game of wheelchair tennis. In honour of all his work and achievements, the IWTF trophy later becomes known as the 'Brad Parks Award'.



Birmingham Classic

Courtesy of Bill Stepec

1994

The inaugural NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters takes place in Eindhoven, Netherlands, with the world's top eight men and women competing. The first International Junior Camp takes place in Paris in conjunction with the French Open, the European Wheelchair Tennis Championships are sanctioned at Les Petits As junior tournament in France, and wheelchair tennis is included at the FESPIC Games for the first time.

1995

The World Team Cup gains Invacare Corporation as title sponsor leading to the event becoming known as the Action World Team Cup, after Invacare's ultra light sports wheelchairs.

1997

At the ITF's AGM in Cairo, members vote that wheelchair tennis should become a fully integrated part of the ITF, in the same manner as other sectors of the game such as Juniors and Veterans, with its own department and committee.

Martin McElhatton becomes president of the IWTF and Brad Parks retires from the IWTF committee, 20 years after starting wheelchair tennis in the USA. Yannick Noah becomes the first wheelchair tennis patron.

1998

On 1 January the IWTF is fully integrated into the ITF, making wheelchair tennis the first disabled sport to achieve such a union at international level. The International Wheelchair Tennis Association (IWTA) is formed to represent wheelchair tennis governing bodies across the world and the IWTF is disbanded.

The ITF AGM agrees to allow wheelchair tennis players to use two bounces when competing against able-bodied players.

2000

A junior division is included at the Invacare World Team Cup for the first time, and the first NEC Wheelchair Tennis Doubles Masters event is staged in conjunction with the NEC Masters in Amersfoort, the Netherlands.

A wheelchair tennis anti-doping programme is introduced bringing wheelchair tennis in line with able-bodied tennis. The first



Olympic Mascot

Courtesy of Adrian Pointer

Coaches Commission for wheelchair tennis is also established to ensure the worldwide growth of wheelchair tennis through coaching and player development.

2002

The 2002 Australian Open becomes the first mainstream Grand Slam to have an NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour event running directly alongside it. The Australian Wheelchair Tennis Open joins the British Open and the US Open in having Super Series status, the equivalent of Grand Slam, on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of wheelchair tennis, the ITF introduces the Wheelchair Tennis Silver Fund, with the aim of establishing wheelchair tennis projects in developing countries that are otherwise not able to embrace the sport.

Italian company Camozzi is named title sponsor for the 2002 World Team Cup, and the 2003 Wheelchair Tennis Doubles Masters, leading to Camozzi becoming part of the family of ITF Wheelchair Tennis Partners.

2004

The biggest ever Paralympic Tennis Event takes place in Athens, Greece, with quad singles and doubles events included in the programme for the first time. Peter Norfolk (GBR) wins the inaugural Paralympic Quad Singles Gold medal, while David Wagner and Nick Taylor (USA) take the Quad Doubles Paralympic title.

The Japan Open becomes the fourth tournament on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour to have Super Series status.

Johann Cruyff Foundation becomes an ITF Wheelchair Tennis Partner, to support the further development of an international junior wheelchair tennis programme.

2005

Wimbledon stages the first ever wheelchair tennis tournament on grass for eight of the world's leading men's doubles players. In September, the US Open at Flushing Meadows becomes the third Grand Slam to stage a wheelchair tennis tournament alongside its main event.



Olympic Flame

Courtesy of Kathryn Bistany

2007

After three successive years of wheelchair tennis exhibitions in Paris, Roland Garros becomes the last of the four Grand Slams to integrate competitive wheelchair tennis events.

2009

The restructuring of ranking points for the 2009 NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour takes the sport into a new era, with a new Grand Slam tournament grading installed for the wheelchair events at the four Grand Slams and Super Series events.

BNP Paribas joins the growing family of Wheelchair Tennis Sponsors, as an Official Partner of both the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour and the Invacare World Team Cup.

2010

After being held in several Dutch cities over 17 years, the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters is staged in the Netherlands for the last time before moving to a new host venue in Belgium.

The Doubles Masters is also held in Italy for the last time before moving to the Netherlands.

2011

Invacare, previously the title sponsor of the World Team Cup, becomes title sponsor of the Doubles Masters and the Invacare Doubles Masters is staged for the first time at the Frans Otten Stadium, previously the host venue for the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters, in Amsterdam.

The NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters is held in Mechelen, Belgium, for the first time.

NEC celebrated 20 years of partnership with the ITF in 2011. The ITF renewed its sponsorship agreement with NEC Corporation as title sponsor of the Wheelchair Tennis Tour and year-end Wheelchair Tennis Masters for a further two years, 2012-13.

History is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the ITF and was originally published in its <http://www.itftennis.com> website.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN THE UK

One of the best sources of information if you want to play tennis is the Tennis Foundation, Great Britain's leading tennis charity. Its vision is to ensure the sport is inclusive and accessible to every kind of community, and it provides information on the sport for both disabled and non-disabled players.

The Tennis Foundation delivers a full programme of activities for people with disabilities, including taster sessions, one-day clinics and camps for people of all ages and abilities. In addition, they run a full range of tournaments, which provide competitive playing opportunities at local, national and international level.

There are an increasing number of places available throughout the country which offer regular wheelchair tennis programmes and sessions with Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)-licensed tennis coaches. Some also have purpose-built tennis wheelchairs, provided by the Tennis Foundation to get you started.

Contact the Tennis Foundation via [email](#) for more information or [visit their website](#), which is packed full of case studies and information on how to get into the sport.

To find a Disability Sports Club near you, go to <http://parasport.org.uk> or click on the link below:

<http://www.parasport.org.uk/clubs.asp?section=175§ionTitle=Disability+sports+clubs>

HOW TO GET INVOLVED OUTSIDE THE UK

Parasport Canada

Parasport is sport for people with a disability. It is “para”llel to sport for able-bodied athletes, with adapted equipment or rules to make the game fun and accessible for everyone. There are also some parasports that do not have an able-bodied equivalent. The link below is for those who are new to parasport and would like to get involved:

<http://paralympic.ca/en/Get-Involved/Im-New-to-Parasport.html>

Click the link below to find a club near you:

<http://paralympic.ca/en/Sports/Find-a-Club.html>

In the USA

In the United States, the USTA has actively managed wheelchair tennis activities since 1998, taking over from the National Foundation of Wheelchair Tennis (NFWT).

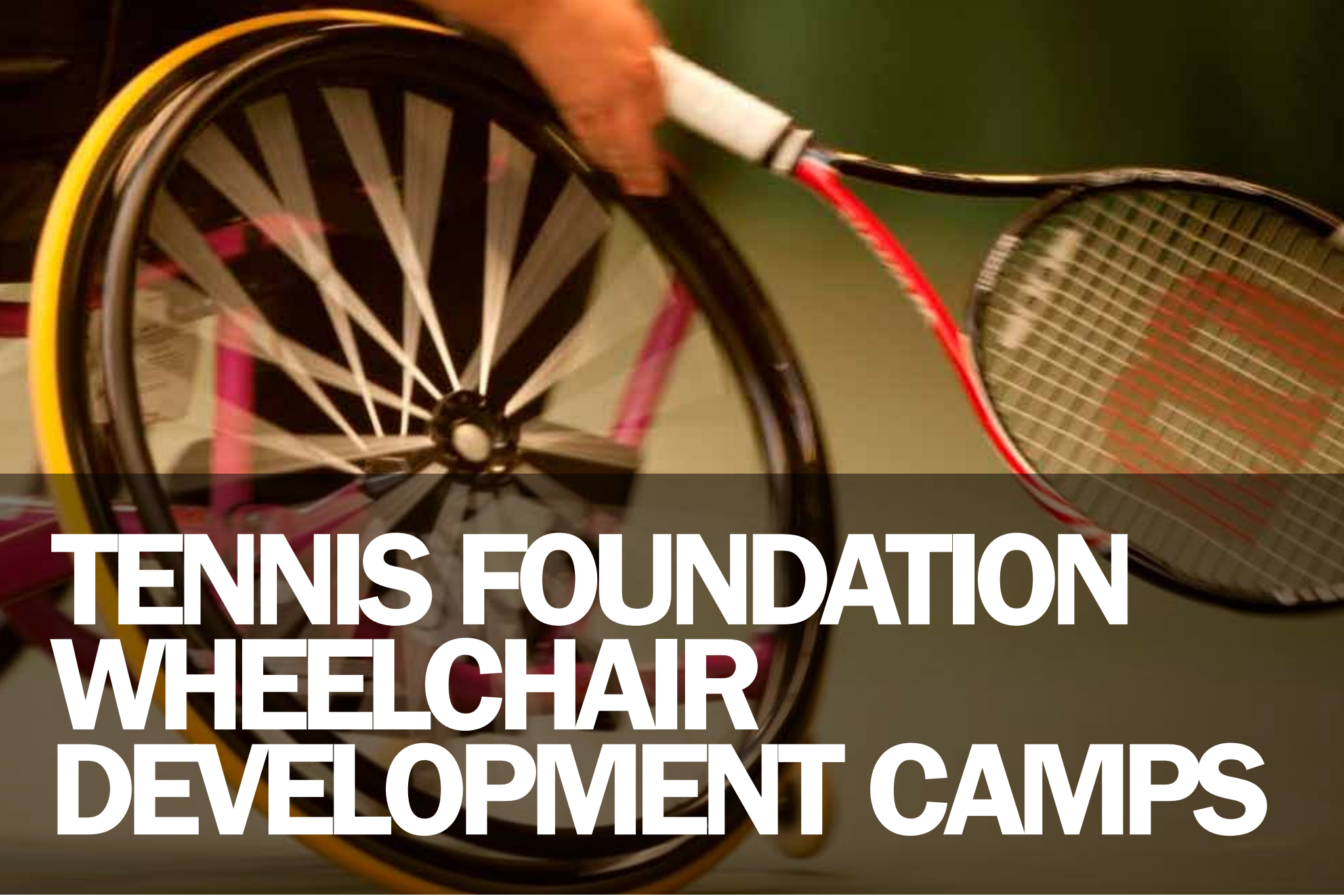
To download their Wheelchair Grassroots Tennis Guide go to <http://www.usta.com/Play-Tennis/Wheelchair-Tennis/Wheelchair/> or click the link below:

<http://bit.ly/USTAgrassroots>

More Information

For more information on how to get involved if you live outside the US and Canada, go to:

<http://www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/development/getting-started.aspx>



TENNIS FOUNDATION WHEELCHAIR DEVELOPMENT CAMPS



A Tennis Foundation
wheelchair tennis development camp

Watch the video above



A number of wheelchair tennis camps are organised by the Tennis Foundation providing:

- **A great introduction to a Paralympic sport;**
- **Coaching by LTA Licensed tennis coaches;**
- **Opportunities to meet current GB wheelchair tennis players;**
- **A trial of tennis wheelchairs especially designed for playing the sport;**
- **All equipment including rackets, balls and tennis chairs;**
- **Chair set-up advice and take home info on competitions and future opportunities.**

Venues and Dates:

All camps will run from 11:00am – 5:00pm on the Saturday and 10:00am – 4:00pm on the Sunday.

The last two camps of 2012 are:

22nd & 23rd September 2012

Nottingham Tennis Centre
University Boulevard
Nottingham
NQ7 2QH

24th & 25th November 2012

Sunderland Tennis Centre
Silksworth Lane
Sunderland
SR3 1PD

Click this link for an Application Form:

<http://bit.ly/TennisCampsApplication>

For enquiries on Tennis Camps in 2013, contact the

Ali.Barker@tennisfoundation.org.uk

INTERVIEWS WITH OUR PARALYMPIANS

LOUISE HUNT

Date of Birth

24 MAY 1991



**Video
Internet Connection Required**



Tennis background and highlights

Louise was a very successful junior player, winning the girls' doubles title on three occasions with fellow Briton Jordanne Whiley at the Cruyff Foundation Junior Wheelchair Tennis in Tarbes, France and she was runner-up to Whiley in the girls' singles final at the 2009 Junior Masters in Tarbes. She also reached a career best junior ranking of No. 2 in January 2009.

A two-time women's doubles National Champion, Louise has been selected to represent Great Britain's women's team in the World Team Cup, the Davis and Fed Cups of wheelchair tennis three times when she would have been eligible to play in the junior event.

Louise enjoyed arguably her best season to date in 2009, winning two women's singles titles in Turkey and winning women's doubles titles across Europe in Britain, France and Turkey.

She enjoyed an equally successful season in 2010 and Louise improved her career best rankings to No 18 in women's singles and No 21 in women's doubles. She reached her first ITF 2 Series final at the South Africa Open and other singles finals at tournaments in Britain, Germany and Turkey before winning both singles and doubles titles at Britain's final world ranking tournament of the year in Cardiff.

In May 2010 Louise also helped the GB women's team to fourth place in the World Team Cup in Turkey, less than a year after being a part of the GB team that reached the women's final at the 2009 World Team Cup in Nottingham for the first time ever.

Louise has started 2011 by winning the women's singles titles at both of Britain's first two world ranking tournaments of the season in Preston and Sunderland, including her first ITF 3 Series title at the North East Tournament in Sunderland.

She also secured her biggest individual career win when beating German world No 12 Katharina Kruger in the women's singles semi-finals at the Biel-Bienne Indoors, before finishing runner-up in the tournament at the beginning of March. To date Louise has also won two doubles titles this season.

Tennis Background and Highlights is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the National Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk> website.

INTERVIEWS WITH OUR PARALYMPIANS

ALEX JEWITT

Date of Birth

5 AUGUST 1976



Video
Internet Connection Required

Tennis background and highlights

Alex is the reigning men's singles National champion after winning the title in Gloucester in May 2010. He was also runner-up in the 2006 National Championships to former British No 1 and 14-time National Champion Jayant Mistry.

After discovering wheelchair tennis at the end of the 1990s and going on to show promise as a player, Alex took three years out to complete university studies. He took up the sport seriously again in 2004 and since then has become one of Britain's leading men's players.

He is a former British No 2 and reached a career best men's singles world ranking of No 26 in August 2007 after reaching the quarter-finals of the 2007 Swiss Open. Alex made his Paralympic Games debut for Great Britain at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics, where he drew world No. 1 and Beijing Paralympic Champion Shingo Kunieda of Japan in the first round of the men's singles.

He won his first men's main draw singles title on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour in Turkey in May 2009 and after eight months off with a shoulder

injury Alex returned to competition in Switzerland in May 2010, just a week before going on to win the 2010 National Championships.

Alex started 2011 by winning the men's doubles at Britain's first world ranking tournament of the season, the North West Challenge in Preston in February, where he was also a men's singles semi-finalist.

At the end of March he was also runner-up in the men's singles at the North East Tournament in Sunderland, Britain's second world ranking event of 2011.

Tennis Background and Highlights is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the National Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk> website.



INTERVIEWS WITH OUR PARALYMPIANS

PETER NORFOLK &
ANDY LAPHORNE
SILVER MEDALLISTS





Peter Norfolk – ‘The Quadfather’

Born: 13th December 1960

Tennis background and highlights

Since the introduction of wheelchair tennis into the Paralympic programme for the Games in Athens in 2004, Peter has dominated the Quad classification. This domination earned him the nickname ‘The Quadfather’.

Winner of 41 Quad Singles titles and 12 quad doubles titles on NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour.

Winner of 18 majors (at Super Series and Grand Slams) on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour.

Winner of inaugural Quad Singles Paralympic Tennis title in Athens in 2004, becoming Great Britain’s first ever Paralympic Tennis Gold medallist.

Retained his Paralympic title in Beijing in 2008. Also silver medallist, quad doubles in Athens 2004 and bronze medallist, quad doubles in Beijing 2008.

Helped Great Britain to win the Quad title at the Invacare World Team Cup, the Davis and Fed Cups of wheelchair tennis, in 2001, 2002 and 2009.

Has won numerous quad singles wheelchair events at Grand Slams with victories at US Open, Flushing Meadows, September 2007 and 2009 and Australian Open, Melbourne Park, January 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Up until 2010 Peter had finished as year-end world No 1 ranked quad singles player in five of the last seven seasons.

Peter ended 2010 by winning both the NEC Singles Masters and Camozzi Doubles Masters titles in the same season for the first time, winning his third Singles Masters title (2006, 2009 and 2010) and his third Doubles Masters title (2003, 2004 and 2010). He finished 2010 as the world No 2 ranked quad singles player.

Peter began 2011 by winning the first Grand Slam quad doubles title of his career. After partnering fellow Briton Andrew Lapthorne to win the 2010 Doubles Masters, the British duo beat American top seeds and defending champions Nick Taylor and David Wagner. Norfolk also finished runner-up to Wagner in the quad singles.



Andy Lapthorne

Born: 11th October 1990

Tennis background and highlights

While rising through the levels in the sport and earning himself a career high men's singles world ranking of 200 by the end of 2008, Andrew also earned a career best junior singles ranking of No 6 in December 2007 and represented Great Britain in the 2008 Cruyff Foundation Junior Masters in Tarbes, France.

Towards the end of 2008 Andrew was classified in to wheelchair tennis' quad division and has since gone from strength-to-strength. In his first quad singles event, at the 2008 Nottingham Indoor, Andrew was a semi-finalist. In his first full season in the quad division in 2009 he reached the finals of his first two tournaments of the year, at the North West Challenge in Preston and the North East tournament in Sunderland and went on to beat world No 3 and Beijing Paralympic silver medallist Johan Andersson of Sweden in the quarter-finals of the Florida Open.

The 2009 Florida Open also saw Andrew make a sensational quad doubles debut partnership with fellow Briton and Paralympic champion Peter Norfolk. Andrew and Peter beat reigning Paralympic champions Nick Taylor and David Wagner of the USA in the quad doubles first round at the Florida Open and went on to win the title.

Andrew went on to reach the quad singles final at the Czech Open and won his first international quad singles title at the Wroclaw Cup in Poland. He ended 2009 with a second quad singles title at the Prague Cup Czech Indoor and completed his first full season as a quad division player with a world ranking of No 9.

He started 2010 in fine form, winning the quad singles and quad doubles at his first tournament of the year, the Melbourne Open, and also reached the final of the Sydney Open. Andrew has since gone on to each of the quarter-finals of two of the year's first three Super Series tournaments, at the Florida Open and the French Open and has improved his career best quad singles ranking to No 6.

Andrew brought his 2010 season to a spectacular close, making his debut in the Camozzi Doubles Masters in Italy and partnering fellow Briton Peter Norfolk to victory in the quad doubles.

Continued on next page »



However, 2011 has started even more impressively for Andrew after he made his Grand Slam debut at the Australian Open in Melbourne. He partnered Norfolk to win the quad doubles, thereby winning his first Grand Slam title and the victory has propelled him to the world No 1 quad doubles ranking. Also at the Australian Open Andrew secured his first career win over American world No 4 Nick Taylor.

Tennis Background and Highlights is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the National Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk> website.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Photography by: Bill Stepec

This article was reprinted with kind permission from <http://www.tenniscanada.com>

Canada's Little Aces

Young Canadian wheelchair tennis players took part in the very first Little Aces Wheelchair Try It Event this past weekend in Mississauga.

Held during the Birmingham Wheelchair Tennis Classic at the Ontario Racquet Club, three girls and three boys aged eight to 19 participated in Tennis Canada's successful first wheelchair development program for kids. The players enjoyed learning a new and accessible sport, and all indicated an interest in further opportunities to play wheelchair tennis.

The Little Aces program encourages young Canadians to get involved in their community and participate in the sport of tennis. Introducing the children to a format of tennis that is more accessible, kids learn how to play the sport with the help of smaller surfaces and racquets, softer balls and an adapted scoring system. This weekend marked the first Little Aces wheelchair event in Mississauga as Tennis Canada works towards including all Canadians in the sport and expanding its wheelchair tennis programs into the other Little Aces communities in North York, Ont., Surrey, B.C., and Edmonton.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Leeds Disability Programmes

Project Overview

A unique project that delivers quality weekly tennis coaching for disabled children, young people and adults with any impairment, at the John Charles Centre for Sport Tennis Centre in Leeds.

Background

The project came about in April 2010 on the back of research suggesting a lack of opportunities for disabled people to access specific tennis coaching, competition and opportunities, not just in Leeds, but across Yorkshire.

The sessions take place weekly at the indoor tennis centre at the John Charles Centre for Sport, situated just south of Leeds city centre. Wheelchair tennis takes place alongside tennis coaching for other local children, young people and adults with learning disabilities. There are also Visually Impaired (VI) tennis sessions for people who are blind or partially sighted. All these forms of tennis are delivered at the same time by qualified coaches and the project was awarded LOCOG's Inspire Mark in 2010.

The Centre also runs another Inspire Mark awarded project, Everyone for Tennis - Inclusive Tennis Festivals, and these are being rolled out across 2012 allowing free opportunities for people to have a go at every type of tennis that is available. These attendees will then be signposted to coaching





programmes, ensuring new players continue to be attracted and awareness is raised of the different versions of the sport, particularly adaptations for disabled people.

Who is Involved?

The project has been set up by Ross Bibby, the Disability Sports Development Officer for Leeds, who is part of the Leeds Sport & Active recreation service at Leeds City Council. The sessions are delivered by LTA qualified coaches, including an experienced deaf tennis player. Disabled and non-disabled volunteers also attend the sessions to gain experience of coaching various adaptations of tennis.

Future Plans

It is hoped that the project will ensure that Leeds will become a hub in the region for tennis for disabled people. With wheelchair tennis a key sport at the Paralympic Games, it is hoped that potential athletes can be found, nurtured and trained at the centre in the build-up to London 2012 and Rio de Janeiro 2016.

For those players who are not looking to reach that level of elite performance, the centre will continue to offer regular fun sessions so that anyone can come along and enjoy playing tennis. The numbers coming along to the VI tennis sessions have grown hugely since the programme began in December 2011. Up to fifteen players regularly attend these weekly sessions and are travelling from across Yorkshire and the North of England. Competitions have also been organised between the next nearest VI tennis club in the North East of England.

Further plans for the future will be to host disability competitions at the John Charles Centre for Sport, as well as holding master class sessions with ex-players. We also want to ensure our disabled players are regularly competing against other players from across the region and the country and we are looking to include wheelchair and VI tennis in the forthcoming Yorkshire County Championships.

Find out more about sport for disabled people in Leeds at www.leeds.gov.uk.

The above article on Leeds Disability Programme is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the LTA and Tennis Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.lta.org.uk> website.

WE NEED YOUR STORIES



Music credits
Level Zero

Composed by
Pierre Langer

Publisher
Breukelen Music Publishing/Dynamedion Publishing.
"Recording Licensed from the UniqueTracks Production Music
Library Inc."

We want to know about wheelchair tennis in your part of the world. Send us your stories!

Write to us at info@planettennis.net and tell us about your wheelchair tennis experiences, training camps, competitions, show us your photos and your videos!

We want to hear from players, coaches, support staff, parents and avid fans!

We will collate all this information and put it in our next free Special Issue for Wheelchair Tennis in 2013.

Tell us what's happening in Wheelchair Tennis around the World!

PLAYER PROFILE

By Peter Figura and Paul Gold

CANADA'S NO.1 PLAYER: JOEL DEMBE

Photo: Joel Dembe during a training session at the London 2012 Paralympic Games at Eton Manor.

Photo credit by Matthew Murnaghan/Canadian Paralympic Committee.



Paralympic Games



Coach: Kai Schrameyer

Photographer Peter Figura

Paul caught up with Joel just before the Closing Ceremony at the Paralympic! The guy's a champ just for talking to us as he had just returned from being given a special tour of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon and had to rush back to the Athlete's Village to get ready for the ceremony.

In the excitement, our microphone failed for part of the interview (great disappointment!) but thankfully not for all of it.

As luck would have it, Peter Figura interviewed Joel before his trip to London which covered most of what Joel discussed with Paul before the microphone decided to cooperate. Here's what Peter wrote:

At the age of 27 Joel Dembe decided to become a full time athlete; a full time wheelchair athlete that is.

"I was playing at a pretty good level and was ranked number 3 in Canada and 77 in the world, but I realized that if I really wanted to get better, training every day, working with a coach, and entering more tournaments is a necessity". So he decided to take a leave of absence from his job as a marketing analyst to focus 100% on tennis.

"Adding coaches, fitness trainers, and hitting partners to my team definitely paid off. I also travel all over the world playing tournaments. I practiced in Toronto with Ben Armstrong and in Vancouver with Kai Schrameyer (former #1 wheelchair tennis player in the World). I think I really improved my serve and return of serve, a very important part of any player's game, but really crucial in wheelchair tennis".

The result – from #3 in Canada and #77 in the world, Joel moved to #1 in Canada and #32 in the world, and is one of Canada's two wheelchair tennis players in the 2012 London Paralympics.

"I know I am not a favourite to win a medal there, but will definitely do my best. I like being an underdog, so I feel no pressure, and I will definitely play as if this was my last Olympics ever" – said Dembe in one of the last interviews before his departure to London.

Joel's story in essence is what Paralympics sport and the Paralympics is all about; show of strength, courage, and the phenomenal back-stories of the athletes. Dembe was born with a benign tumour on his spinal cord and was left a partial paraplegic after surgery was performed to remove the growth shortly after his birth. But this would never stop him from living an active life. Already playing sledge hockey, and active in track and field, he discovered tennis at the age of 14. And since the first moment he held a racquet in his hand he knew it was going to be his sport.



Photo by Peter Figura



Christian Gingras coaching Joel Dembe and Philippe Bedard during a training session at the London 2012 Paralympic Games at Eton Manor.

Photo by Matthew Murnaghan/Canadian Paralympic Committee.

Paralympics sport is reaching another pinnacle. Tickets for the 2012 Paralympics in London were almost sold out - almost 2.5 Million tickets. This was high above the previous record in Beijing – 1.8 Million. The combined TV audience for this event – 4 Billion.

“We definitely have a great opportunity to grow the game in Canada – says Kai Schrameyer – Tennis Canada’s National Development Coach. You have to start with a solid base of players. Schrameyer, a former world #1 wheelchair tennis player, came to Canada with Coca-Cola for the Vancouver Olympics. “I really liked it here, and felt that I would love to get involved in wheelchair tennis again.” So he did.

“Of course the pool of potential players is limited. 5-7% of the population is considered disabled, with various levels of disability. From that pool we have to attract tennis players, grow interest in the game, provide proper facilities, and have trained coaches who are able and interested in working with wheelchair athletes”.

There are many obstacles in the path to develop more players able to compete internationally in our climate and with lack of proper winter facilities. “Many winter clubs use bubbles with revolving doors – says Schrameyer– and a lot of them are not suitable for wheelchair athletes. But we started using gyms, progressive tennis equipment and we are making some progress. We also try to develop the coaching base. Offering a workshop for wheelchair tennis definitely helps, so we can have more tennis coaches and instructional therapists working with our athletes.”

Ben Armstrong is one of them. A well-known high performance coach in Toronto, Ben started working with Joel while teaching at the Player’s Edge Academy.

“It’s not that much different than able body tennis,” says Armstrong. “Yes, there is a rule of second bounce, but the top players are rarely using it. There is a bit different strategy around the game – for example because of that second bounce rule the drop shot is not the best shot to use. But what’s important is to have same goals, same routine, and vision how to develop athletes as with able body players”.

Jane Petras, Director of Wheelchair Tennis, at Tennis Canada sees this in a similar way.

“Tennis Canada facilitates the development of wheelchair tennis in Canada in partnership with organizations at the national, provincial and community levels. The delivery of the first 4 stages of the long term athlete development model (awareness, first contact,



Joel Dembe hits the ball during a training session at the London 2012 Paralympic Games in Eton Manor.

Photo: Phillip MacCallum/Canadian Paralympic Committee.

developing, consolidating) are a partnership between Provincial Wheelchair Sport Associations, Provincial Tennis Associations, Little Aces, Rehabilitation Centres, Schools to name a few. Tennis Canada directly delivers the National High Performance Program which encompasses the latter stages of the long term athlete development model.” And despite all the obstacles, like climate, relatively small pool of athletes, and high cost of competition and training, Petras sees significant progress in the sport and lists hosting the first Wheelchair Tennis LTAD Summit, bringing together 50 partners to develop provincial plans for the recruitment and development of players across Canada, as the major success.

Of course this progress would not be possible without sponsors, and when it comes to wheelchair tennis, the support that tennis Canada receives from the Birmingham family is unparalleled. When asked how it all started Betty Birmingham says: “I was a tennis umpire and working one of the wheelchair tennis tournaments. And I realized that there were some problems with the corporate sponsorship, so I spoke to my late husband Bruce, and he agreed with me that we should support wheelchair tennis. It was that simple.”

Since then the Birmingham family financially supports the training and travelling expenses of the Canadian players, and purchases tennis wheelchairs for the most deserving ones. The family travels to the national Championships, and Betty is very happy to see Canadian players at the 2012 Paralympics. “Oh, one more thing”, she says from her Oakville home, “when they get the medal in London, they will receive the same kind of financial reward through our sponsorship as the able body athletes get through the Government. They deserve this,” she says with conviction. “They work hard if not harder to get where they are right now”



Sports photographer and tennis writer **Peter Figura** has been involved in the game of tennis for over 40 years. Player, coach, umpire, volunteer, he uses all of his experience to present different aspects of the game. Peter writes regularly for the Ontario Tennis Magazine (Canada), where he is a member of the editorial Board, and is a contributor to Tenisklub, a tennis magazine published in Warsaw, Poland. His tennis photographs have been published in Europe, North America, and South America.
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/pjfp/photography/>
<http://www.tennisontario.com>

PAUL'S INTERVIEW WITH JOEL

Here's what Paul asked Joel

Paul: You were talking about one of the big things that started to improve when you started playing full time, the guy that was working with you really helped to improve your serve and your return. Now we know that they are super important parts of the game, aren't they...

Joel: Absolutely

Paul: Tell me how you developed as a tennis player once you became full time and took it really seriously.

Joel: Well by taking it seriously I'm talking about baskets. Baskets and balls and doing it every day and when I was working at my full time job...

Hear the rest of the interview by clicking on the video!



Video
Internet Connection Required

THE TENNIS WHEELCHAIR



Tennis wheelchairs have evolved a lot over the last 30 years, with various designs having had three, four, five or six wheels.

Today, the most common design has either five or six wheels, consisting of the two large wheels used for pushing, with two small caster-type wheels at the front and either one or two small; caster-type wheels at the back called anti-tip wheels.

The large wheels that a player uses for pushing the chair are cambered (slanted outwards from top to bottom), which gives the player greater stability and enables him or her to manoeuvre efficiently around the court.

Modern tennis wheelchairs are made of lightweight materials, such as titanium, and a number of major manufacturers now offer several models of tennis wheelchairs. The most important thing is to find a chair that suits your needs and that fits you. If you are buying a new tennis chair, having the chair custom-built to your measurements will help you get the most out of your abilities on court.

A good way of finding second hand tennis chairs for sale is to join the National Wheelchair Tennis Association, which will entitle you to start receiving newsletters and information.

Both the Dan Maskell Tennis Trust and the Lord's Taverners Sports Wheelchair Sponsorship Scheme offer funding support towards the cost of buying new tennis wheelchairs. The Lord's Taverners Scheme is aimed at those between 8 and 25 years of age.

The information above on Tennis Wheelchairs is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the National Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk> website.

A CHAMPION'S TENNIS WHEELCHAIR

Equipment for the Physically Challenged (EPC) was established in 1989 by Peter Norfolk OBE. They are a small family-run business based in Farnborough, Hampshire. Peter says, “We have been supplying sports wheelchairs for over 20 years and use our expertise to help our customers decide what is best for them.”



*Peter used the ultimate in sports wheelchairs, the **Sunrise Medical Quickie Matchpoint Tennis Wheelchair.***



Peter Norfolk

THE WHEELCHAIR

Peter Norfolk uses the ultimate in sports wheelchairs, the Sunrise Medical Quickie Matchpoint Tennis Wheelchair.

THE WHEELS

The most obvious difference between an everyday chair and a sports chair is the camber of the wheels, which allow players to move quickly around the court. The camber options of 16 or 20 degrees increase stability and enable the player to turn effortlessly. Keeping the tyres well tuned is very important.

THE FRAME

Made from either aluminium or titanium, the frame of a sports chair is designed to be lightweight and strong at the same time. They are also fitted with an integral anti-tip, allowing the player to sit forward and make the chair more manoeuvrable, without worrying about tipping over.

THE SEAT

With an adjustable height, centre of gravity and angle, the seat helps mould the player into the chair, so that where they go, it goes. The back angle accommodates different playing styles and abilities, and the upholstery is also adjustable, helping the player to fit into the backrest and increase mobility.

THE SIDE GUARDS

The aluminium side guards enable players to lock their hips into the chair, creating a secure connection between the player and the chair. Slight movement of the hips will change the direction of the chair according to the player's wish.



The information above on Peter Norfolk's Wheelchairs is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the National Foundation and was originally published in its <http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk> website.

Of course, the mother of all tennis wheelchairs may not be quite what you need just yet. So in comes the Motivation Quick Hit Tennis Wheelchair, a sports wheelchair for all sizes, including children. According to EPC, “What really sets it apart from other sports wheelchairs though is its price. Not intended to rival expensive high-performance chairs, the **Motivation Quick Hit tennis wheelchair** is specifically designed for sports at grassroots level.”



For more on EPC and the products they have to offer, click on this link:
<http://www.epc-wheelchairs.co.uk>

GIVE A HELPING HAND



The following organisations help those with disabilities get involved in wheelchair tennis. Let's help them keep on helping.

Silver Fund

Through the Wheelchair Tennis Silver Fund, the ITF aims to establish long-lasting wheelchair tennis programmes in developing countries, providing disabled children and adults with opportunities to enjoy an active and rewarding life.

In 2002, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of wheelchair tennis, the ITF introduced the Wheelchair Tennis Silver Fund, with the aim of establishing wheelchair tennis projects in countries that are otherwise not able to embrace it. The Fund is responsible for its own fundraising and the resources are spent solely on such development projects.

Over a period of two years, the ITF helps each country to set up a sustainable wheelchair tennis programme. This assistance involves sending a coach to the country for a period of two to four weeks to lay the groundwork for the programme.

The visiting coaches work with local players and coaches in intensive training sessions, hold clinics and exhibitions, meet with the local partners (tennis federation or disabled sports association), set up development plans that are in line with local needs, visit rehabilitation centres, tennis clubs, schools and universities, talk to the media and potential sponsors, etc.

At the end of the two-year period the programmes are expected to be self-sustainable and gradually joining in the great array of worldwide international competition opportunities.

The countries that have already passed through the initial two-year period are now boasting successful wheelchair tennis programmes run locally, which are also linked into the international network. South Africa, for example, has not only participated in the BNP Paribas World Team Cup, the Cruyff Foundation International Junior Camp in Europe and the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens, but has also hosted two international competitions.

There are many ways to support the Wheelchair Tennis Silver Fund, from financial assistance to donating material, time and other resources that are available to you.

The ITF is not only looking for actual funding, but is also aiming to make this a project for the whole of the wheelchair tennis community. Therefore, if you are a player, a coach, or represent a member nation or tournament, please do not hesitate to contact us if you think you can help.

Silver Fund is copyrighted material which has been reprinted with the kind permission of the ITF and was originally published in its <http://www.itftennis.com> website.

The Dan Maskell Tennis Trust is a tennis charity that raises funds for people with disabilities.

Formed in 1997 and named after the late Dan Maskell “the voice of Wimbledon”, the Trust grant aids individuals, disability groups and programmes, clubs, schools and associations to help with the purchase of wheelchairs, tennis equipment and grants for coaching.





motivation

FREEDOM THROUGH MOBILITY

International charity Motivation has been transforming the lives of disabled people around the world since 1991.

At the heart of Motivation's work are low-cost, high-quality wheelchairs.

What makes these chairs special is the way they've been designed specifically for use in developing countries – so they can cope with the potholes and rocky terrain frequently found in rural communities across Africa and Asia. [Find out how Motivation's Rough Terrain wheelchair has helped Benson in northern Uganda.](#)

After some dazzling displays at the 2012 Paralympics, there's been a surge of interest in wheelchair sports. And that's good news for

Motivation because wheelchair sports play a big part in their work.

When the International Paralympic Committee recognised that people in developing countries weren't playing wheelchair sports because they couldn't afford the equipment, they came to Motivation.

They asked the charity to design low-cost sports wheelchairs for tennis and basketball. Motivation rose to the challenge, launching the [Quick Hit for tennis](#) and the [Spin Off for basketball](#) in 2009.

Watch this inspirational short film of the chairs in action in Afghanistan's first ever national wheelchair basketball tournament.



The chairs are proving a boost for wheelchair tennis too. Through its Silver Fund (mentioned above), the International Tennis Federation has distributed the Quick Hit in dozens of countries including Zimbabwe, Kenya, Morocco, Bolivia, Guatemala, India and Iraq. In doing so, they've given hundreds of people the chance to access wheelchair tennis.

In countries where disabled people live on the fringes of society and face prejudice and exclusion on a daily basis, wheelchair sports offer an escape. They give disabled people the chance to feel active and to have fun – and they do a great job of changing people's attitudes towards disability.

*Have a go on a Tennis Wheelchair –
Motivation event in Bristol, England – Summer 2012*

Motivation would love to hear from Tennis Tribe readers.

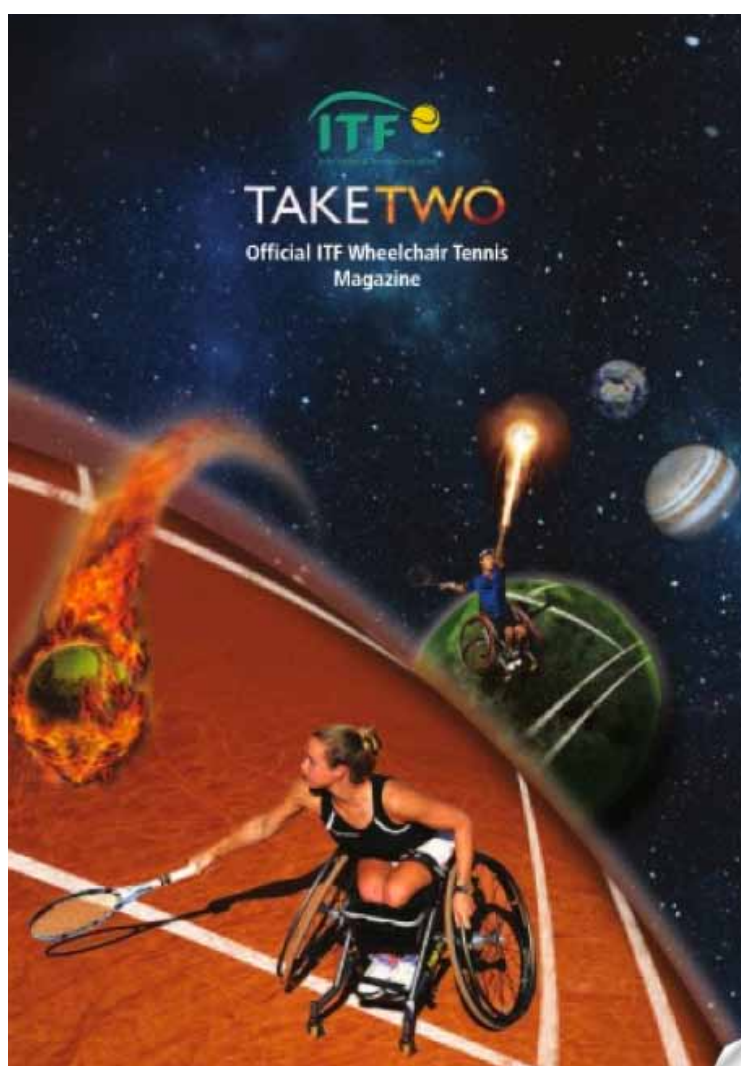
Find them on [facebook](#) and [twitter](#) or visit www.motivation.org.uk



TAKE TWO

THE ITF'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

'Take Two' is a colour magazine published quarterly by the International Tennis Federation that covers the events and issues important to wheelchair tennis, including feature interviews with top players, development news around the world and news from the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour. A 'must' read!



View each edition of the e-zine by going to:

<http://www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/organisation/publications/take-two.aspx>



A VERY SHORT MESSAGE FROM TWO PARALYMPIANS

ALEX JEWITT & LOUISE HUNT



Music credits
Control Freak

Composed by
Nick Tidy

Publisher
Loud Neighbors Music
"Recording Licensed from the UniqueTracks Production Music Library Inc."

**You heard them! Join the Tribe!
Click the 'Like' button (please!)**

