



April 24, 2020

TPA Insights and Perspectives

The Tennis Professionals Association continues to send you and your loved ones our best wishes for continued good health and safety.

If you missed our previous email, our goal now is to provide our coaches and professionals with a compass to ensure that when we do get back to our new normal, we will be prepared and have the necessary tools and ideas to provide the best possible experience for our stakeholders. To view last week's article, [click here](#). All past and upcoming articles are on the homepage of the TPA website, under "Latest Resources & News".

This is our second week of providing informative and in-depth Q & A's from some of Canada's TPA leaders in clubs/Academies. The series is called "Insights and Perspectives", and asks leaders about their actions and initiatives taken to date along with their impacts, as well as delving into valuable insights and strategies they are pursuing for their club, staff and members/players. This diverse group is comprised of a cross section of private, municipal, bubble, and commercial clubs and academies from across Canada.

Our hope is that in sharing this diverse industry knowledge from across Canada with our TPA membership, we will be better equipped for the challenges to come and for the new journey ahead. We hope you agree.

Tennis Professionals Association

The Tennis Professionals Association (TPA) is a member-based association dedicated to growing the profession of tennis coaching throughout Canada. The TPA was developed by Tennis Canada for Canadian Certified Instructors, Coaches, and Club Professionals. The TPA's mission is to support members in their contribution to the growth of tennis in Canada. For more information, visit www.tpacanada.com.

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This week, we will be featuring the following TPA Members:



Claude Chartrand

Claude is the Director of racquet sports at Montreal's Midtown Sanctuaire. He has been the director for the past 6 years, but has been with the club for a total of 20 years. Claude is Coach 2 and Club Pro 2 certified. Additionally, Claude was the 2018 recipient of the TPA Club Professional Excellence Award.



Gary Caron

Gary is the Director of Tennis at the Granite Club, and is Coach 3 and Club Pro 3 certified. He is currently a TPA Advisory Committee member, and also received the TPA Club Professional Excellence Award in 2005.



1. How has the Covid-19 virus pandemic impacted your Club/Academy?

a) Are you still processing monthly membership/Academy fees or have you put them on freeze? Will the time/program be extended or will refunds be issued?

CC (Claude Chartrand) – All member subscriptions have been put on hold since the club closed on March 16, 2020. For the multiple adult and junior programs, the remaining two weeks will be credited upon return. For the third session of the junior program, which started at the beginning of April, all participants who had paid were refunded.

GC (Gary Caron) – The club has been closed since March 15, 2020. We are still processing dues and tennis section fees. No rebates as of yet. All program fees have been credited for the spring programs and classes as of April 4, 2020.

b) Did your Club/Academy continue compensating employee and independent contractors, or lay them off?

CC – All employees are on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Only three employees are still working at the club: The General Manager, the Payroll and Benefits Administrator and the Facilities Manager. Also, important to note: Associates who have been with the company for 5 years or more have had an extra week's pay. Finally, if the work stoppage had been less than three weeks, the associates would have been compensated monetarily.

GC – The club has continued compensating employees (until June 6 2020), but have not compensated contractors at this time.

c) Are you currently initiating any club maintenance/cleaning work at the facility during this shutdown?

CC – The club's facilities manager is present every day. The swimming pool has been emptied and the club is maintained on a daily basis.

GC – Yes, have taken advantage of not having Members in the Club to get a lot of projects done. With respect to tennis we have prepared all the bubbles for the take down, removed insulation, cleaned and mold proof, removed lights and nets.

d) Are you currently reviewing your Tennis Department/Academy processes and procedures, schedules, lesson plans, changes in delivery of program?

CC – No. It would have been interesting, but the adult coordinator, the junior coordinator and I are on the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit. The club currently has no income; it is impossible to do otherwise.



GC – We are reviewing our programs for the summer with more emphasis to be provided for adult programming, as the junior camp program is strong.

e) Who are you receiving guidance from?

CC – The general manager of the club. I'm also in contact with the company's National Tennis Director. (Eight clubs, seven in the U.S. and ours in Montreal).

GC – Other Club Leaders, NACAD, Webinars, Club Benchmarking

f) For those with domes, what is the plan for take down this Spring? (Given that labour workers are unavailable and restricted).

CC – N/A

GC – We have prepared and will be the first on the rotation with Farley to drop them.

2. Communication is crucial for an effective and efficient business operation, and now during a pandemic, even more so. What methods and frequency are you using to communicate and engage?

a) Your members/players/parents

CC – By email. Four emails have been sent by the club to members so far. The emails have been sent to announce the closure of the club, to explain the end of the monthly payments, and also to share links for a free online physical training follow-up. Also, an email from the junior coordinator was sent to the parents' of players for a follow-up on the end of the winter session and the spring session.

GC – All Professional staff are encouraged to keep in touch with their students and provide motivation, inspiration through check-ins, video suggestions, and match replays.

b) Your staff

CC – By email too. Also by a video on YouTube. I'd say two communications a week to the partners either by the owner, the president or the CEO. In addition, for my part, I use e-mail and also my cell phone to communicate with my coaches. Once a week, we have a video meeting (Zoom) with the directors of the club. We are 7 directors and the general manager.

GC – We have provided updates as needed on all new developments regarding wage subsidies as well as links to videos including many that are in the Club Professional Stream. We've also included the Jim Loehr videos as well.



c) What has the response been like?

CC – All my emails received have been forwarded since March 21st to the Executive Director. She answers members' questions on a daily basis.

GC – Staff appreciate feeling informed and supported, as it's important to keep the connection. Many departments have sent some of the appropriate videos to their staff and students as it relates.

d) Have you already, or are you now considering online, virtual technology?

CC – As said before, once a week, the 7 directors and the CEO of the club have a meeting on Zoom.

GC – We are using Zoom and Google Hangouts for meetings and conversations. Used for Senior Management meetings as well as Board and Board Committee Meetings. Have also used Zoom for providing complimentary live class opportunities for our Members in Fitness, Children's classes and Bridge along with filmed Tennis Tip.

3. Marketing for your Club Tennis/Academy business is an ongoing and creatively challenging process at the best of times. During this time of uncertainty, what are you doing now and planning for in the near future with respect to:

a) Summer rec/HP Camps

CC – Marketing and registrations started in February, but since March 16 nothing has been sent to members. Very difficult at the moment because of the uncertainty of the reopening date. Our Executive Director and the parent company in Chicago are preparing the next steps and are considering several scenarios.

GC – Our registration and promotion for summer camps went out in February with ability to register then so on-going on line bookings of programs and camps.

b) Unique programming/training

CC – Too difficult to answer now because of several uncertainties.

GC – I believe the Member/Professional relationship is very strong and Members will want to activate that as soon as possible when allowed. We will have to monitor the guidelines regarding groups and social distancing, so social events and large gatherings will be postponed until we know more regarding numbers allowed as well as potential vaccine availability.



c) Welcome back club member/players initiatives

CC – Same answer as b.

GC – If no restrictions, we will ramp up Random Acts of Kindness to welcome back our members. For example, could be free can of tennis balls each hour for all courts and players for the first weekday and weekend day.

d) Community outreach program

CC – It's still too early to answer. Our owner donates 10% of the company's profits every year to charity. The donation may have a connection to Covid-19 this year.

GC – We have provided food from the Club's kitchen fridges to a local charity.

4. What advice and guidance would you offer your tennis coaches and professionals as employees/independent contractors for now and over the next two years to assist them in their career?

CC – Coaches will have to improve their ability to make better use of the technology available. The use of video equipment on the court for example. Be able to edit the video afterwards so that it can be sent by email to our students. Various training sessions on new technologies will be useful. Distance learning, at home, on the web. Learn how to organize group meetings on the web. To know the different programs and apps that can allow this kind of meeting. Mandatory use of baskets and tubes to collect balls. To respect the social distance (2 meters) with our students. Rethink our way of doing things to eliminate physical contact. In the next two years, take the time to upgrade your certification or attend a professional development opportunity.

GC – The importance of staying connected to their players when not on the clock. Sending an e-mail summary of lesson with key points, video clips of lesson, matching up players in the Club that would be great fit playing and socially. Sharing best practices, increasing their network of peers, establishing a mentor relationship with two or more outside of the tennis field. Becoming a mentor for others. Financially make sure to have a good accountant and financial advisor to help with current and future opportunities.

5. What do you feel are the biggest challenges and opportunities for your Club/Academy and our Canadian Tennis Industry over the next 2 years? How can the coaches/professionals play an active and important role?

CC – Naturally, this break will be difficult for the economy. Being a member in a private club is a luxury that some may no longer be able to afford. We will have to be very creative to see all our members again. Communicating directly with members before the



reopening, on the phone, to invite them to come back will be crucial. A personal follow-up by the coaches according to the groups that revolve around them. Explain to them the changes that have been made to take away the fear of the virus. This direct follow-up with the members will be an opportunity for the coaches to get to know their students better. For greater sanitary reassurance, to be a little more certain that our members are not contagious, the company will surely have to equip itself with a device to take the temperature of the players at the reception desk.

To continue the social distancing, it will be necessary to eliminate the handshakes at the end of the matches and replace them by some sign of social distancing. Change our double benches on the courts to chairs with 2 meters of distance! Have Wi-Fi on the tennis courts for a better use of the new technologies by the coaches. All of these changes will surely be appreciated by our members, who I hope will recognize the efforts of the company and its associates to ensure that everyone, both members and associates, are and train in a safe and healthy environment.

GC – Canada was at the peak of its tennis history with all key indicators green when this pandemic hit. The cancellation of our Professional Tournaments, Rogers Cup Toronto still pending, will have a huge impact on Tennis Canada's ability to support the Professional Development and grass roots initiatives. This will require a reset of priorities, aggressive pursuit of sponsorship opportunities and heavy promotion of the great results of Canadian Tennis Players globally. I think everyone wants to return to as normal as possible life and routines and really need feel good stories. We have had the most success in tennis history in the last couple of years so highlighting Davis Cup, Bianca, Felix, Dennis, Vasek, Gabby, Sharon, Leylah would all bring smiles and pride to tennis players in Canada. Coaches will have to be out front not just for the instruction but connecting to all Members. Those that have learned new skills like video instruction, Zoom classes should continue to offer these complimentary to their Members. If working for a Club, will help build the Club Brand, if independent will build your brand. Use social media to share your knowledge and passion for the great game of tennis.