

TENNIS CLUB OF ROCHESTER

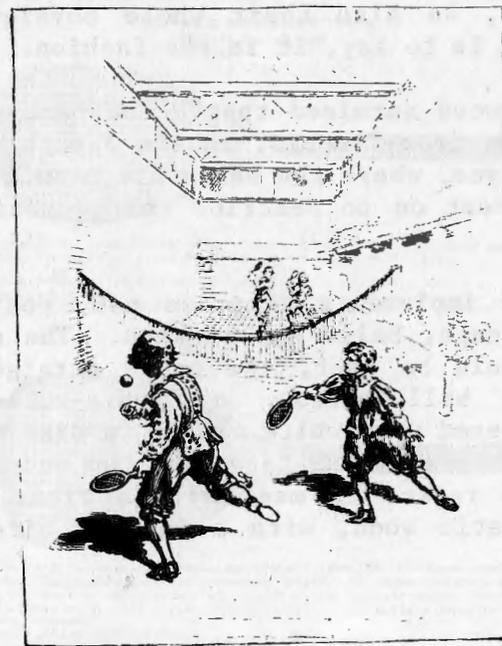


1886 - 1986

THE MAJOR'S GAME OF LAWN TENNIS

The Tennis Club of Rochester, 100 years old in 1986, is the oldest sports club in the area. The game played at TCR is a descendent of one that was played in ancient Greece, called Sphairistike. The Romans called it Pila.

In the fifteenth century, the French originated a game quite similar to the tennis played today. Court tennis, as it was known, became the exclusive sport of the wealthy because of the expense of erecting and maintaining covered courts. (It was always played indoors.)



A TENNIS COURT OF THE MIDDLE AGES

It was a Major Walter Clopton Wingfield, of the First Dragoon Guards of Great Britain, who took the net outdoors in the year 1873. His invention of lawn tennis was explained in a little pamphlet entitled, "The Major's Game of Lawn Tennis; dedicated to the party assembled at Nautelywdjin, December, 1873, by W.C.W." It was illustrated with an elaborate pictorial diagram and a sketch of a lawn tennis court set in a lovely garden. M.E.W. Sherwood, in his 1881 book, Home Amusements, noted that:

Now, in 1881, as in the days of Henry III of England (about 1222), it is a favorite with people of superior rank, well befitting the tastes of the nobility, in the performance of which they could exercise a commendable zeal, as also their whole physique; that is to say, it is the fashion.

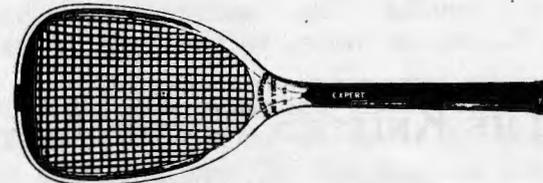
Sherwood surmised that, "the name undoubtedly comes from Tennois, in the French district of Champagne, where the balls are manufactured." He then went on to describe the necessities of the game:

The implements comprise net, posts, cordage, balls and rackets. The net should be taut, the posts straight, the ball hollow, of India-rubber, covered with white cloth; in size two inches and a half; weight two ounces. The racket is made with a frame of elastic wood, with a webbing nicely

wrought of catgut. The large-sized rackets made at Philadelphia and in London are the best.

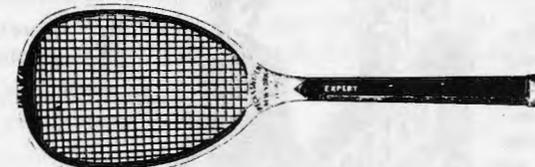
PECK & SNYDER'S CELEBRATED RACKETS.

"THE FRANKLIN," Expert, No. 1.
Patented Feb. 12, 1884.



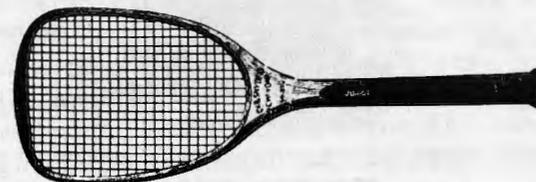
The "Expert" Franklin, which we offer this year for the first time must commend itself to Tennis players who know a good Racket when they see and use it. We have spared no expense in selecting and paying the price for the best gut that can be produced. The selection of the frame and the style of finish will recommend itself.
With octagon California Redwood Handle and patent concave beveled frame.....Price, each, \$5 50.
With Cork or Rubber Handle, 50 cents each additional.
With Inlaid Handles, Fancy woods.....Price, each, \$8 00

THE "FAR AND NEAR," No. 4.
Patented Feb. 12, 1884.



A first-class Racket, in all respects the same as our Expert Franklin, (excepting shape) with our Patent Concave Beveled Frame, size of face 8 x 12 inches, weights from 12 to 16 oz.
Price Each.
With Roughened Octagon California Redwood Handle.....\$5 50
" Octagon Cork or Rubber ".....6 00
" Fancy Inlaid Handle.....8 00

THE "FRANKLIN," Junior, No. 9.
Patented Feb. 12, 1884.



This Racket is the same in construction and stringing as our 1885 Franklin, at a reduction of 1.00 on each racket. The Franklin Junior must become very popular. The construction of the beveled frame enables us to produce an extra large face, with reliable stringing and light weight. They are all made full size, 7 x 11 1/4 inches, in weight varying from 12 oz. to 16 oz., 13 1/4 and 14 oz being the best weights for the general demand.
With octagon California Redwood Handle.....Price, each, \$4 50
" Cork or Rubber Handle.....5 00

The players don a costume of flannel for the purpose, wearing shoes with corrugated rubber soles, without heels. Indeed, a chapter might be written on lawn-tennis dresses, aprons, and other fancies. But these -- so they are loose and easy and not long or cumbrous -- may be left to the fancy of the individual.

JORDAN, MARSH AND COMPANY, BOSTON, MASS.

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THE KNITTED TUXEDO SUIT

FOR LADIES AND MISSES.

A complete costume of original design, novel, elegant, and graceful, consisting of Cap, Blouse, Skirt, and Wash, Full Fashion, knitted of the Finest Worsted Materials, made in a variety of Colorings, and in Patterns to match throughout.



Lawn Tennis,
Yachting,
Rowing,
Gymnasium,
Mountains,
Seaside,
Steamer Wear,
&c.

The Little Tuxedo Knitted Suit,
FOR CHILDREN.
SIZES 4 to 14 Years.

Mary Blue,
With Stripes of Scarlet.

Royal Blue,
With Stripes of Scarlet.

Silver Gray,
With Stripes of Blue.

Black,
With Stripes of Orange.

PERFECT ARTICLE.

The Skirts are made amply full, and gathered in the back, are made extra long, and are easily shortened if required. The sizes are 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, and 40, Bust Measure.

The Price of Suits, \$18.00 Each.

When ordering, simply state the BUST MEASURE, and COLOR desired.

FOR SALE ONLY BY

JORDAN, MARSH & CO., BOSTON.

Our great Retail Establishment is one of the most interesting sights in the city to visiting strangers.

Sherwood did not leave the rules of the game to the "fancy of the individual" and went to great lengths to explain them for the people who might have been confused by the "very absurd and contradictory rules published in the newspapers." His rules were those used at Newport, at the Casino, "during the famous Lawn Tournament of 1880...in which the victors were rewarded by prizes...of silver pitchers, bracelets, and rings of great value..."

Major Wingfield's new game had crossed the Atlantic the year after it began in England and rapidly gained ground in New England and the New York City area. It became particularly popular with Americans who had the money, leisure time and the space to play the game. The summer resorts in Newport, Rhode Island, Nahant, Massachusetts and Staten Island became early centers for American tennis. On May 21, 1881, the United States National Lawn Tennis Association was formed in New York by nineteen clubs from the East.

The popularity of tennis mounted simultaneously and as rapidly in England, with several lawn tennis courts being built in 1874. In 1877, the first championship matches were held at Wimbledon. It was four years later, in 1881, that the first men's national championship took place in the United States -- at the Newport Casino, with spectators watching from the grandstand. Competition for the cup offered by Dwight F. Davis began in the year 1900.

THE ROCHESTER LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Nine years after the first Wimbledon matches and four years before the first Davis Cup matches, the Rochester Lawn Tennis Club was founded. Its constitution was presented at a meeting in the Durand Building at 58 West Main Street, February, 16, 1886. Charles H. Angle, Holmes B. Stevens, Haywood Hawks and Harry C. Gorton were the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Constitution of the Rochester Lawn Tennis Club and Playing Rules for 1886 as Adopted by the U.S. National Lawn Tennis Association were printed together in a tiny (3-3/4 x 5-3/4) booklet. Among the sixteen articles we find:

OBJECT:...to promote interest in Tennis and other out-door games, and to provide and maintain suitable grounds and accommodations therefor.

MANAGEMENT: A Board of Management of 15 shall control all its affairs...and shall hold in trust all the Club property. This Board shall hold monthly meetings upon the first Friday of each month during the Tennis season...The Board of Managers shall exercise the right, at their discretion, of inviting strangers, who may visit the city, to enjoy the privileges of the Club during their stay...

LADIES' ADVISORY COMMITTEE: shall receive and consider all suggestions,

complaints and requests which shall be made to them by ladies, and report, with their advice, to the Board of Managers, such action as they deem proper...and shall generally seek to promote the general comfort of the members, and particularly of visitors.

ADMISSIONS: Every candidate for admission into the Club must be at least sixteen years of age, and must be proposed in writing by two members, over their signatures, to the Board of Managers...Three black balls shall be sufficient to exclude any candidate.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS:...every member shall pay an admission fee of \$20.00 and thereafter an annual fee of \$10.00 on the first day of June each year...Lady members shall pay an admittance fee of \$5.00 and one-half of the annual dues of active members...no child shall be allowed on the Tennis courts set apart for the use of adult members, at any time...No member shall give a gratuity to any servant of the Club.

INTRODUCTIONS: No person, not a member of the Club and residing in the City of Rochester, shall be introduced to the grounds, except upon occasions of Tournaments, and Saturday afternoons, and then only as spectators.

AMUSEMENTS: No games shall be played on the grounds on Sunday and no person shall bet on any game.

Under the "Playing Rules of Lawn Tennis," we find that the balls could not measure less than 2-15/32 nor more than 2-1/2 inches and could not weigh less than 1-15/16 nor more than two ounces! The receiver in 1886 was the "striker-out" and the server was to have "one foot outside of the base line, and the other on or in a perpendicular line above the base line." So much for foot faults.

THE REGULATION TENNIS BALL, 1886.

Patented September 22d, 1885.



This Ball has been adopted by the United States National Lawn Tennis Association and by the Intercollegiate Association, as the Regulation Ball to be used in all match games. The Ball for 1886 is much superior to any Ball that we have heretofore manufactured, and superior to any ever offered.

The *Cyclist and Athlete*, of Feb. 12th, 1886, in speaking of the new Ball, says:—"The contrast between the old and new Balls is very marked. Cut one of the old Balls in half and turn it 'inside out'—but very little manipulation is required to split the quarters and loosen the strips. Cut one of the new Balls in half, turn it 'inside out' and no amount of manipulation will either split the quarters or loosen the re-enforcing ribs—thus proving that the defects of the first Ball have been fully overcome. As to the playing qualities of the new Ball a trial will demonstrate that it possesses in a high degree all the qualities which are desirable in a perfect Lawn Tennis Ball, especially in the qualities of quickness and accuracy in responding to the blow given it by the racket. This year Peck & Snyder will place on the market the new Ball. It should not be confounded with the Ball of 1885. If ever imported balls are superseded in this market by American balls, it will be by this 1886 Ball."

	Price each.	Per doz.
No. 1. Best Felted Cloth Cover, Cemented.....	\$0 50	\$5 00
No. 2. " Plain Rubber, for wet weather.....	25	2 50

With its Constitution and Playing Rules printed (by "Union and Adv. Co.'s Print, Rochester, N.Y.), the Rochester Lawn Tennis Club began its first summer with two grass courts. The first site for the Club is thought to have been on Main Street East, between Prince and Alexander Streets. In 1886, the Club was located on the southwest corner of Prince and University and was listed there in the City Directory until 1896. There is reason to believe that it was while at this location that a fire occurred, in 1905, in which all of the early records were lost, with their dates and places, people and pictures.

MOVING FORWARD

In 1907, the Tennis Club was moved to Culver Road and University Avenue. Tennis was making quite an impact on the Rochester scene; it was the first big tennis boom.

One person who was helping to give the game a great name was Fritz Ward. Known at the time as the best of Rochester's tennis players, Ward not only ruled the local courts but also made a mark nationally as he competed in the Canadian tournaments and in the American championships at Seabright.

It was in the year 1915 that the Tennis Club was incorporated.

Said Club was organized for the following purpose: to provide means for the recreation and entertainment of its members by establishing and maintaining within the City of Rochester, County of Monroe and State of New York, a tennis club with the proper buildings and grounds and facilities therefor, and to promote social intercourse among its members.

The first meeting of incorporators and governors was held at the University Club on May 24, 1915. At that meeting, it was resolved "that the Tennis Club purchase from Anna P. Gould of Rochester, New York, for the sum of Eight Thousand dollars" property at Farrington Place, just off East Avenue. Under the energetic leadership of the President Arthur B. Headley, an architect, a new clubhouse was built and the old clubhouse was moved to serve as a locker room and tennis shop.

Their first summer there appears to have been uneventful but by early autumn there was talk of the general dissatisfaction over the groundsman and the unsatisfactory condition of the houses and grounds. The groundsman was "dispensed with."

The following spring, Rochester Railway and Light Co. was authorized to install a lighting system on one court at a cost "not to exceed Two Hundred dollars."

The annual meeting announcement was sent out in March of 1916; it included a ticket for the annual dinner, cost: \$1.00. At the meeting a committee was appointed to arrange a board for the rating of members! It was the year that Margaret Woodbury was admitted as a "Lady Member" and the year that members responding "to the call of their country in the present Mexican crisis" had their dues remitted for the season.

Signatures of 29 women were on a June 6, 1916 petition:

We the undersigned members of the Women's Committee of the R.T.C. (sic) and members at large, do urge that one court be given over for the use of the women after four o'clock in the afternoon.

There are many members among the women whose duties prevent their attendance at any earlier hour, and as this is the custom among many other clubs, we feel we are only suggesting a fair arrangement.

Unfortunately, the outcome is never reported in the minutes, which, however, do state on July 6, 1916: "Resolved that punch be eliminated from future dances of the Club." Were the women drinking too much?

By 1917, the Tennis Club membership was considered complete and a waiting list begun. Lights were installed on the court adjoining the one already lighted. Players were charged \$1.00 per hour to play under the lights, to cover the extra pay for the groundsman as well as the actual cost of the electricity.

DURING AND AFTER THE GREAT WAR

The Red Cross Tournament was held at the Club that summer and brought to Rochester a great influx of prominent national tennis stars, including Lindsay Murray, Fred Alexander, Chuck Garland, Molla Bjurstedt and Mary Browne. The Rochester tournament was third in all the cities of the country in funds raised for the Red Cross through tennis matches.

The Red Cross tournament was not the only sign of war times. Once again the dues of members "responding to the call of their country in the present crisis" were remitted. Also, the office of second Vice-President was created for the period of the war -- to assume the duties and responsibilities of the office of President in the event President and Vice-President were both absent.

When the war was over, board members began to look for ways to actively promote their club. They sent communications to the chairmen of the athletic committees at East High, West High and Kalbfus School, calling attention to the facilities of the club and the vacancies in the Junior membership. They also extended the privileges of the club to a reporter designated by Mr. Gannett of the Times-Union, in return for satisfactory publicity of the Club's activities!

Tournaments and exhibition matches have been on the agenda of the Tennis Club since its earliest days. In 1919, \$9.00 was appropriated to purchase cups for the winners in the Club's mixed doubles tournament and \$30.00 set aside for a cup for the winner of the City Championship. The following year, a Governor's

Cup for the City Championship was purchased. It was "not to exceed \$90.00." The Club was then part of the Iroquois Circuit and held inter-city matches between teams in Utica, Syracuse and Buffalo.

Mlle. Suzanna Lenglen was brought to Rochester for an exhibition match in the fall of 1921, with the hope that \$2,800 would be realized, with a guarantee to give the "Fund for Devastated France" \$1,500. The following year a singles match was held between Bill Tilden and the leading player of the Spanish Davis Cup team, and a doubles match between the Spaniards and Tilden and Hardy.

THE TWENTIES AND THE BLAZER

By the early twenties, the annual dues had risen from the initial \$10 to \$15 to \$20. But one could become a Life Member -- which included the member and the immediate family under his roof -- for \$250. Or one could obtain a Family Membership for the member and immediate family under his roof, for four consecutive years, for \$100. Names of those with unpaid dues were posted on the bulletin board.

In April of 1925, the Board felt it was absolutely necessary that new senior members be found in order to finance the Club for the ensuing year. It suggested that, if every two members would bring in one new member, the Club would have sufficient funds to carry through the year and finance any improvements which might be contemplated. One Board member thought it would be a very good idea if some "women members" could be appointed to run more social events to bring fresh interest into the Club.

It took three more years before the Entertainment Committee appointed two women to serve on it -- alongside four men. It would be fifteen more years before a woman was named to the Board of Governors. Helen Maurer became a Board member in April of 1943.

The make-up of the Board was changed in 1927 to include nine Governors -- three for a one year term, three for two years and three for three years. Later (1947) the number of Board members expanded to twelve. In its centennial year, the Board of Governors consists of fifteen members, five being elected each year for a three year term.

While the Board of the late twenties worried about their finances, it still tried to keep up with repairs and improvements to their Club by setting limits to the amounts to be paid for them. One painting job was awarded to a Robert Bristol for \$65 "with the understanding he would take out a Senior Membership."

Financial problems aside, the Tennis Club still maintained its prestigious ambience. A committee was appointed in 1928 to choose a standard blazer of Club colors and insignia. And \$100 was set aside to entertain the visiting players in the Inter-City Tournament. They did, however, put a limit of \$50 to purchase cups for all the tournaments that year.

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

During the Depression, a non-voting playing membership was initiated for the season of 1932, for payment of dues only. Senior dues that year were \$18 (reduced from \$24 the year before), ladies were \$12 or \$6 if husbands were members. One could still obtain a Life Membership for \$375.

When the Niagara Falls team came to the Tennis Club the summer of 1932, \$15 was appropriated to entertain the team and purchase tennis balls for the matches. The Club did not furnish more than three balls for each match. Nor would they supply any liquor when entertaining a visiting club.

Although money was tight during the thirties, the Board understood what really mattered to tennis players: they hired their first full-time groundskeeper, along with a full-time helper. They also felt an obligation to the community and allowed the public high school tournaments to be played there, giving both the winner and runner-up Junior Memberships. And they kept their classy image: all members were required to wear shirts (white, of course) while on the Club property, except in the locker room.

Financial problems continued to plague the Tennis Club long after the Depression was over. In the early forties, a motion was put to the Board that each member be assessed \$5 to make necessary improvements to the Club. Motion withdrawn -- renewed -- defeated. A new motion was made: to collect a voluntary \$5 contribution from each member. Motion passed.

An offer of the USLTA to send Don Budge for an exhibition match was accepted, with the stipulation that there be no cost to the Club. The summer of 1942 expenses were somewhat reduced by eliminating towels for the season. The serious financial status of the Club prompted dues increases throughout the decade until a Senior Membership was \$25 plus \$8.50 locker fee. The initiation fee was \$20 if paid the first year or \$30 when paid over a four year period. The hardworking Secretary/Treasurer was given a free membership and paid \$35.

It was thought that slot machines would be a good source of revenue. Should they build a special room for them? After looking into the matter, they realized that the minimum guarantee required by the slot machine owners was too high to permit a good profit. In their "desperate financial condition," they levied a voluntary assessment of \$4 for men and \$3 for women.

In 1945, a war bond raffle drive was held to "alleviate the precarious financial conditions." It netted \$465. Revenue from their juke box was averaging \$8 a week. Another source of income came from selling tickets to see the City Tournament: \$.50 for the finals and semi-finals and \$.25 for the quarter finals. Every dollar helped.

TENNIS IN THE FORTIES

Throughout the forties, groundskeepers came and went with great frequency. Sometimes they were to run the stand as well as care for courts and take down nets at the end of each day. Other years their work was confined to the courts. In 1947, a person was hired with responsibility for the courts and the Clubhouse. He was provided with living quarters which were furnished with four sheets, two army blankets and a hot plate, teapot, pillow and closet from a Mrs. Woods. The Club President donated a toaster.

Moving out of a high-tax area was first mentioned in 1941 but then the talk switched to the remodeling of the Clubhouse and the essential changes that were needed. A drive was held to raise funds to redecorate the lounge downstairs, install a service bar and enclose the upper deck with glass and screens. A piano and an icebox were purchased. The committee to buy furniture was made up of the President, Vice-President, and members of the House Committee which included one woman.

Always of more importance to the members were the courts. Courts 1 and 2 were resurfaced with a material called Redcort for \$264 in 1947. The other eight retained the light tan clay. Members kept trying new and better methods for signing up for courts; a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board gave way to a large blackboard. Numbers on wooden blocks were placed above the ten courts. If only two courts were available because of the weather, doubles play was suggested.

President Robert L. Lang said it best: "It was always remembered that this is a Tennis Club and that an interest in the sport drew our membership together. This means that, before anything else, the members must have good courts on which to play tennis."

Although there was an aggressive membership drive in the mid-forties, with prospect lists made up by Board members, and brochures mailed out within a 25-mile radius, the Tennis Club still allowed members of the staff of the two newspapers and three radio stations to use the Club at any time. Memberships were also granted in exchange for plumbing services and -- in one case -- in exchange for a gift of linoleum flooring for the women's shower room!

The Club was growing -- from 55 Seniors in 1944 to 135 in 1947. An address book with telephone numbers was published each year for the members.

The tennis players also enjoyed parties -- spring get-acquainted and 4th of July Jamboree, and regular Saturday night dances. The question of obtaining a liquor license and/or a six-month beer license came up frequently but usually a one-day beer license was bought for each party. Saturday night dance admission in the late forties was \$.75 and included beer, sandwiches and the juke box for dancing. In the summer of 1947, it was suggested that to improve the "rather ill-advised manner of drinking at the Clubhouse in recent years, the groundskeeper be in charge of a locked cabinet upstairs where Club members who wish may keep a bottle or bottles with their names on them."

The Tennis Club sponsored a number of exhibition matches during the 1940s. It was a good way to raise money and also helped stimulate interest in tennis which, they hoped, would lead to more members for the Club. Don Budge and Bobby Riggs played in Edgerton Arena in May of 1947; the Club made \$969 on the match. That November, Riggs, Segura, Pails and Kramer came to the Armory and the Club netted \$772. The Rochester District Championships also were a source of revenue with entries at \$2 for singles and \$3 for doubles. Tickets sold for \$.25 to \$1.

It was in the forties that Junior Development began to be fostered. Older Club members played with new Junior members to encourage them. The Democrat and Chronicle sponsored the Genesee Valley Junior Tournament with prizes and trophies. There was talk of having a tournament open to players from the parks and playgrounds, to promote Junior Tennis. Junior Development was reaching a new high.



TOURNAMENT TIME

In 1955, the New York State Junior and Boys Tournament of ELTA was held at the Club. As no admission was allowed to be charged, local businesses and the Junior Chamber of Commerce was asked for assistance with the expenses. All went so well that a much more dynamic Junior Development program was begun the following summer. Club members working with the Jaycee Tennis Program were enlisted to aid; a Junior challenge ladder was promoted; Junior matches and tournaments were held. Juniors were permitted to bring Junior guests during the daytime, without a fee, for a limited time. And a Junior boy and girl were designated to work with the Membership Committee.

In the spring of 1958, it was formally announced that a Junior Development Clinic would be held every Saturday morning from nine until one, with a section for both beginners and the more experienced.

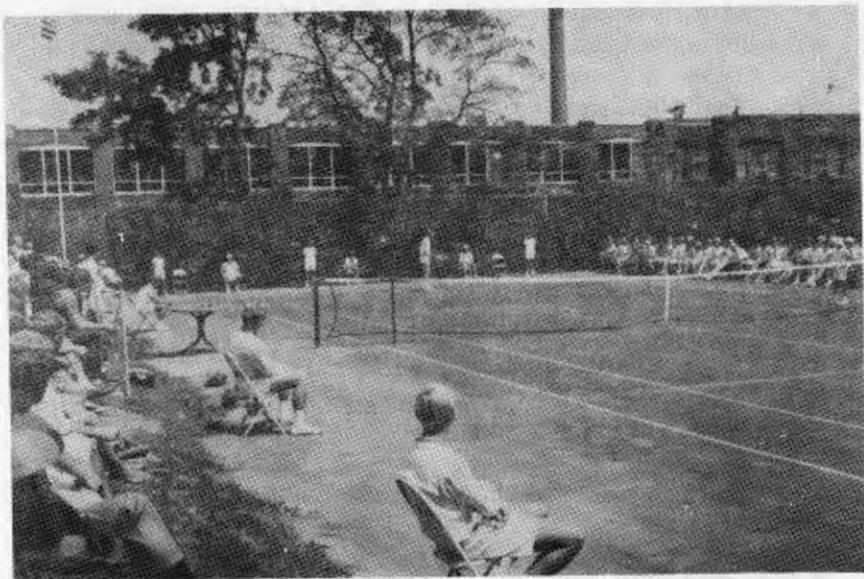
During the fifties, the first tennis pros were hired by the Club (there were three different ones between 1953 and 1958) and the publication of the Club newsletter was begun.

More and more tournaments were being held at the Club -- the ELTA Junior Tournament, the Rochester City Tournament, the Genesee Valley Invitational Tournament and -- in 1955 -- the Marsh Cup.

Named after Raymond Marsh, a Syracuse newspaper executive who donated the trophy, the Marsh Cup matches had begun in 1927. That first series lasted until 1931. The trophy was found

in an attic in 1954 and was returned to competition among four tennis clubs: the Tennis Club of Rochester, Sedgwick Farms of Syracuse, Buffalo Racquet Club and the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club. These four clubs each contributed \$25 to refurbish the Marsh Cup before the first match of the new series, held at the Tennis Club of Rochester in the summer of 1955.

Several other good tournaments were held that season at the Club but the attendance was uniformly poor at all of them. It was decided not to charge admission in the future.



FUN IN THE FIFTIES

There was great concern in the fifties about the apparent lack of interest in women's tennis. Meetings were held with representatives of other clubs in the city with the idea of promoting inter-club matches to stimulate interest in the women's game. Plans were made for a training group of new women players to meet Saturday mornings with lunch afterward. However, the women who were playing certainly were thinking along the right lines: they requested linesmen and referees for important matches!

The old "to be or not to be" beer license was still being discussed. The license was in effect by Memorial Day of 1950; the stock started with 15 cases. Six years later the vote was two to one in favor of retaining the beer license instead of attempting to secure a liquor license. While enjoying their beer, the tennis gang could relax with music from their new sound reproduction system -- a 78 rpm Webcor changer and four 10" speakers, all purchased for \$90.

There were Decoration Day parties, with flag raising, and afternoon exhibition matches, followed by cocktails, dinner and evening dancing. And there were "work parties," when members pitched in to do hard work, including spreading brick dust on the first four courts. There were also July 4th parties when "following tradition," men took over in the kitchen to prepare a festive strawberry brunch of pancakes, sausage, coffee and luscious red strawberries with whipped cream.

Starting in 1950, new members were voted in by secret ballot. Membership rose throughout the decade, reaching 230 by its end. It was thought that with twenty more members and a slight increase in dues, a Club Manager could be hired.

Each radio station was given two Press/Radio Courtesy Cards and each of the newspapers got four cards. They were told that they had to abide by the Club rules, with strict attention to only white clothing.

Members of the Tennis Club -- known as TCR by the fifties -- did care about the looks of the people on the courts but they cared more about the courts themselves. There were ten courts at Farrington Place; the first four had brick dust spread on top of the clay, to make them slower. Juniors were not allowed to play on these four. Courts 5 through 10 were of light tan clay. All ten needed to be rolled. In 1952, there was much excitement over the new roller just purchased. It broke down the very day it was delivered and spent its life in and out of repair shops. It was not until 1955 that the Grounds Committee was authorized to purchase another "new" roller. That one did its job.

Members used to roll and line the courts themselves. String was put down and one would take a jug of lime and pour it along the lines. Stand still too long, the line got wide; sneeze, it got crooked!

Lighting for two more courts, 3 and 4, was installed in June of 1959. A fee of \$1 per court was charged, unchanged from the 1917

ruling. The following month the lights had to be adjusted as people in the nearby apartments were complaining. The four lit courts were in use each evening, with spectators watching from above on the Clubhouse balcony.

CHANGE IN THE SIXTIES

When the Rochester Lawn Tennis Club was founded one hundred years ago, it was a small prestigious Club for a very small segment of Rochester society. When it was incorporated in 1915, its 81 members, all men, were the distinguished and prominent members of Rochester gentry, including Harper Sibley and Corrin Strong.

However, by the mid-sixties, the Tennis Club of Rochester was a far different place. The membership reflected the community it served. There were people from the suburbs and the four corners of the city. There were men and women with different ethnic backgrounds. But they all had one thing in common: they loved tennis. The 250 congenial members at Farrington Place made TCR a great place to be. When the Marsh Cup tournaments were held there, all the courts were used for the matches for the entire weekend. No one complained. The members enjoyed watching.

It was a very low budget Club, with only a paid groundskeeper. The treasurer wrote all the checks; there was no office staff. Every Board member had a real job which required elbow grease. All the operating details were handled by the committees -- Grounds, House, Social, Tournament and Membership. Each member of the Club was encouraged to work with one of these. They still had "work parties." They had real parties too, upstairs at the Clubhouse where there was a dance floor.

Although attempts had been made in the fifties to hire and keep a full-time tennis pro for the summer season, none had ever really worked out. Nevertheless, in 1961, the Board advertised through the USLTA, and Peter Cawthorn responded from Great Britain. Peter was the former coach for the Egyptian, Dutch, French, India, Irish, Spanish and West German Davis Cup teams. Here was a real pro! John Keelan telephoned him in England and Peter accepted the position, assuming that Rochester was just outside New York City. The members entertained him constantly that summer with the hope that friendliness would make up for the lack of Big Apple gaiety. In its centennial year, Peter Cawthorn, TCR's tennis pro, is still teaching and enjoying the friendly folks of his Club.

A BIG MARTIAN SPACESHIP?

In the year 1966, a momentous decision was made by the Board of the Tennis Club of Rochester. It was a decision that would have far-reaching effects.

The project brought winter tennis to the cold climate of Rochester, New York. A 40 foot high bubble, made of vinyl coated nylon, supported by nothing other than hot air, was placed over two courts. A one-horsepower electric blower kept a constant air pressure differential between the inside and outside. That differential supported the bubble. Tennis players really would be playing "under pressure!"

The caption under a photo of the bubble in the December 14, 1966 issue of the Times-Union read: "MOON, BALLOON OR UFO? The new plastic 'bubble', site of indoor tennis at the Tennis Club of Rochester, looms as an eerie sight for night time observers." Edward F. Cook, TCR's first manager agreed, "It glows like a big Martian spaceship that has come down in Farrington Place..."

"Time" was sold for \$10 per court for an hour and a half of playing time during the November 15 to May 15 season. An editorial (December 5, 1966) in the Democrat and Chronicle noted that:

With the season made so much longer, more Rochesterians should be persuaded to take up tennis seriously. And if that happened nationally, it would help restore

American tennis prestige..Enabling players in colder climates to volley year-round in facilities like the Rochester Tennis Club's "bubble" is a good way to go about it.



Vincent J. Stanley, Board Member at that time, was quoted in the Democrat and Chronicle: "We're going to try to be a center of tennis in this part of the country. There isn't anything like this in the state except near New York City." In 1986, Stanley looks back:

Based on over 40 years of close association with TCR as a member, a member of the Board of Governors as Vice-President and President...it is my considered opinion, that the most important event in those years was the decision to purchase a tennis bubble and to make TCR an all year-round facility. The short but successful all year-round experience at Farrington Place convinced the officers and members that TCR could have a great future. Its present status proves that early conviction and prediction.

JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT

The excitement caused by winter tennis did not end when the bubble came down in the spring. In May of 1967, President Harmon V. Strong announced that TCR would supervise and direct one of the most ambitious Junior Development programs ever conducted in the area. Talented Junior tennis players would have the opportunity to train and develop under an organized scheduled program, patterned after highly successful ones held in California and Australia. Concentration was on the best 40 or 50 Junior players in the Genesee Valley area, with a view to producing nationally ranked talent. This was, indeed, a most aggressive program. That same summer, the Club hosted the New York State Tennis Championships for Junior Boys.

Through the seventies, the Junior program grew and grew, thanks to many people. Peter Lyman had been a strong proponent of Junior tennis since the early fifties and he was still instructing the Excellence group, with volunteer help from Frank Okey. Juniors were striving for higher and higher levels of play. The idea that had begun so many years ago, with Inter-Scholastic matches, had evolved into a fine program of encouraging organized instruction.

Programs were scheduled to benefit Junior Development, including outstanding professional tennis championships. The matches were played on Court 4 at Farrington Place, with spectator stands set up on Courts 3 and 5. In July 1966, Alex Olmedo (Peru), Mike Davies (Britain), Luis Ayola (Chile), Butch Bucholz (U.S.), Pancho

Segura (Ecuador), Andres Gimeno (Spain) and Peter Cawthorn (Australia), played to an overflowing audience. The following year, Junior Development was aided by a one-day tournament exhibition featuring Fred Stolle, Barry McKay, Malcolm Anderson and Peter Cawthorn.



A NEW HOME

Thanks largely to the inspired efforts and hard work of Buzzy Frank and Board President, Ellis Slack, the Tennis Club of Rochester was going to get its first new home in 50 years. The Club at Farrington Place had reached the point where it was no longer adequate. The tennis courts were so over-crowded new members could no longer be accepted. There were restrictions on parking and the use of lights. They had even outgrown the Clubhouse -- less than half the Seniors could be accommodated at a social event.

TCR was moving to the suburbs. They sold their city parcel of land to RF Communications and headed for eight acres in Bushnell's Basin.

The Club was made more family-oriented with the inclusion of a pool. Pool discussions had been lengthy: Should there be a diving board? Should there be a deep end? Should it be all one depth? The Planning Committee used to meet in the very cold upstairs room of the Farrington Place Clubhouse and oftentimes these pool deliberations were held with the members wearing mittens and hats. The pool (without a diving board and with both deep and shallow ends) is still being enjoyed by the members.

The parking was plentiful. But members marveled most at the new courts: 12 clay and 5 composition. In its centennial year, the Tennis Club now has 20 clay courts and three hard ones.

With the move to its new and larger facilities, TCR became a year-round Club. The Clubhouse stayed open all year. Tennis courts

were available any time the weather was warm enough to play. The fast drying courts were maintained as late in the season as weather permitted. New members were able to be accepted; by the early seventies, there were 600 Senior members and 170 names on the two-year waiting list. By the late seventies, the waiting period was four to five years.



The bubble had been moved to the new Club and was raised over courts 1-2-3 by 12 able-bodied men at a "work party" in the fall of 1968. A second bubble was purchased and erected over courts 4-5-6 two years later. Tennis was truly a year-round sport at TCR.

Bleachers, installed the first summer at the new location, were filled with thousands of tennis fans the following July. Wimbledon accepted Pros that year, for the first time, which left the great college players playing in the United States Amateur Tennis Championships in Rochester.

This was the first national tournament ever played on anything but grass. It was a wonderful success. The Championship drew capacity crowds of 2,000 for the finals Saturday and Sunday. Attendance for the nine days was an incredible 6,000.

A press tent with 25 telephones and two teletype machines was set up. Matches on Court 9 were televised and seen all along the East coast. The women's finals between Linda Tuero and Gwyneth Thomas went on so long it had to be taken off Court 9 and put on Court 1, so that the men's finals could be televised. Tuero eventually (three hours, 41 minutes) won over Thomas. In one ten minute point, they hit the ball back and forth more than 300 times!

The following year TCR again hosted the U.S. Amateur Tennis Championship and again it generated great excitement. Roscoe Tanner was the winner after five inspiring sets. Although the Tournament was enjoyed and appreciated, the Board understood that it required much help from

many people to host and to chauffeur and it took up many courts for ten days. The Amateur Championships were held elsewhere after 1970.

Other great players continued to play on TCR's courts. Rod Laver, Kenny Rosewall, Roy Emerson and Andres Gimeno came for one wonderful weekend in the wintertime. Long lines of chairs were placed about the court under the bubble. For \$4 and \$5 a person, the members were treated to the best of tennis.

The new series of Marsh Cup Championships were ongoing. Shortly after their 25th anniversary celebration, the Marsh Cup was stolen. TCR had won the Cup twice in the sixties and then three consecutive years (1975, 1976, 1977) before its disappearance. Hans Christensen of the School for American Craftsmen of R.I.T. was commissioned to design a new trophy.

The Grand Champions came to Rochester in 1982. The players were all at least 35 years old, had either won a Grand Slam title, played on a Davis Cup team or been ranked #1 in his country. The total prize money was \$35,000. So successful was the Tournament that they returned the following summer with Stan Smith, Marty Riessen, Colin Dibley and Jaime Fillol.

LOOKING GREAT

"White is still right but so are approved solid colors and clothes clearly designed for tennis" was the notice put forth after unfavorable comments were made regarding laxity in the dress code at the general meeting of 1974. The logo of the crossed tennis racquets had been accepted as the Club emblem; some folks must have worried lest it was not put on proper clothing.

1974 was also the year that the card and starter system was first tried out but the permanent structure for the starter board was not erected until 1979.



Another wonderful improvement occurred in 1983 when the motion to "purchase electric water coolers to provide crisp cool water in profuse quantities and to be located in strategic locations, passed with a resounding sigh."

From water coolers to major rejuvenations, the Club has continued its improvements. The recently renovated Clubhouse is surrounded by flowering trees and shrubs. Pots of geraniums sit by the courts and tables. Members relax upstairs on the new deck, watching their friends' matches. In the freshly decorated interior, people follow a tournament on the giant TV while munching healthy food before they play their next game.

Much has changed in the 100-year life of TCR. Gone is the little summer club with a few courts and members in long trousers or flowing dresses whose social activities centered around tea and an orchestra. Today its members dash about in practical, short sportswear and plan winter parties as well as barbecues at "the Club."

The small elite summer pace of 1886 has become a year-around family facility with over 600 adult members and 1,000 children. 1,050 people play in the winter under the bubbles.

In 1982, the Board of Governors elected its first woman president, Gretchen Wright.

Members are proud of the Tennis Club of Rochester's accomplishments and are confident that the next 100 years will be as smashing.

Tennis, wrote M.E.W. Sherwood in 1881:

...is a game of science; it does exercise every part of the body; and it requires skill, good temper, staying power, judgment, and activity.

Some things never change.

Tennis Club of Rochester

- PRESIDENTS -

1886-1896	Charles H. Angle
1908-1916	Arthur B. Headley
1917	Edgar B. Cook
1918	Norris C. Orchard
1919	W. W. Nichols
1920-1921	William V. Ewers
1922	George V. Holton
1923	Frank E. Gannett (4/20-5/20)
1923	George Sullivan
1924	H. H. Stebbins, Jr.
1925	S. W. Symington, III
1926	James Brewer
1927	Frank Parker
1928-1929	L. L. Palmer
1930	Charles Benham
1931	M. S. Hutchins
1932-1933	Rev. Joseph E. Grady
1934-1937	Albert J. Fleig
1938-1939	C. Goodenough
1940-1941	John Hecker
1942	G. S. Smith
1943	Warren Hawkins
1944	Milo Tomanovich
1945	Harris Masterson
1946-1947	Robert L. Long
1948-1949	Roy A. Hock
1950	Howard L. Klein
1951-1952	Douglas La Budde
1953	Alfred Dasburg
1954-1955	Jack Englert
1956-1957	Frederick Thompson
1958-1959	David Tufts
1960-1961	John L. Burgher
1962-1963	Gen. William Bayer
1964	Albert Fisher
1965	Phillip Fitzsimmons
1966-1967	Harmon Strong
1968-1969	Ellis Slack
1970	Bernard Frank
1971	Marvin Trott
1972-1973	Frank Wickham
1974-1975	Robert C. Gebhardt
1976-1977	Leonard Treash, Jr.
1978-1979	Leonard Wolk
1980-1982	Harvey Anderson
1983-1984	Gretchen Wright
1985-1986	David Clark