

Pasero Says:



By **GEORGE PASERO**
 Journal Sports Editor

GEORGE: Your (The Journal's) excellent coverage of the Oregon State Tennis Tournament and Wimbledon as well is most appreciated.

Tennis interest and play is growing so rapidly that we are having problems with numbers. There were 120 in the state men's singles draw at Irvington. A few years ago, 64 was tops.

What has happened? There are so many more good players in the U.S. today. They want to go East in the summer, but the Eastern circuits are crowded. So they are attracted to our Northwest circuit.

To relieve the congestion at Irvington tournament week, we moved the State Junior Tournament to the Portland Tennis Center at Buckman Park.

Year-round play in Portland has increased tremendously. All our clubs with indoor courts have closed memberships — Irvington, West Hills, Catlin and the Multnomah Club, which will have four indoor courts in the new clubhouse.

Many tennisers even prefer indoor courts in the summer to neutralize the hot sun and wind. Lighted courts permit play at all hours, day and night.

There is an urgent need for a public indoor tennis facility to fill the demand for year-round play in Portland.

At the Portland Tennis Center this summer we will give instruction to approximately 1100 men, women and children. Last year the total was 950. At the end of the summer, many ask . . . where can we play through the winter?

The Portland Tennis Center is an excellent centrally located place at which to develop a year-round public tennis program. There are eight outdoor courts, and four indoor courts could be constructed in adjoining Buckman Park.

City Commissioner Frank Ivancie and retiring Parks Director Harry Buckley endorse this program, but the city doesn't have the \$200,000 required.

Obviously, we need a sponsor. It doesn't have to be a gift

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)



SAM LEE
 . . . indoor tennis, everyone

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(Continued from Page 1)

because the indoor courts will pay themselves out. We have figures from the City of Omaha which operates four indoor courts, charging by the hour, and it is very successful.

I wrote a story for the Portland Chamber magazine in January to develop some interest in this program. I am sure a word from you on this would be a great assist.

Thanks again, George, for your continued support — Sam Lee.

P.S. On Wimbledon: We are all proud of Tom Gorman for his accomplishment in beating Rod Laver (twice) and reaching the semi-finals.

Actually, Portlander Elwood Cooke has the best Wimbledon record of any Northwest player. In 1939, Elwood lost in the singles finals to Bobby Riggs, and he and Riggs won the Men's Doubles.

COMMENT: "Tennisers," you call them? OK, Sam, it's a living, changing language.

"A Game For All Seasons" . . .

Sam Lee, and Emery Neale, too, deserve so much credit for "giving back" to their favorite sport . . . over many, many years and through some trying situations.

Sam's article, "Tennis — A Game For All Seasons," is a most informative one . . . and one we'll copy and pass on to some of the young men who lack background on the Oregon tennis scene.

Sam is, in fact, the game's No. 1 local historian . . . and he recalls: "The forerunner of our modern indoor courts . . . was a makeshift one rigged in Portland's poorly lighted old Armory . . . and there, 20 years ago, tennis diehards spent the rainy season crawling under jeeps and trucks to retrieve balls that escaped the restraining nets

"Then a group of Portland businessmen built an indoor court for the Catlin Gabel School."

(Some good exhibition matches were played at the old Armory, too . . . featuring such as Bobby Riggs and Jack Kramer and Pancho Segura).

"In 1898, Malcom D. Whitman, tennis champion of the U.S.; Dwight Davis, who placed the famous cup in competition; George Wright, Beals C. Wright and Holcome Hard, all outstanding players, visited Portland.

"This gave Portland tennis the impetus it needed, and the game immediately moved from the society pages to the sports section.

"Irvington Club was constructed at its present location in 1898. MAC built two new courts at Multnomah Field, where the Irvington Club sponsored the first Oregon State Championships in 1899.

"Lt. W.A. Bethel, U.S. Army, who was stationed at Vancouver Barracks, became Oregon's first singles champion. He later served on General Pershing's staff in World War I

"Runnerup to Bethel . . . was Walter C. Goss, who, for the next 50 years, was Portland's Mr. Tennis. Goss won the Oregon State singles titles in 1900, 1906 and 1918, retired the Fisk trophy . . . devoted his time and attention to his favorite sport over a half century.