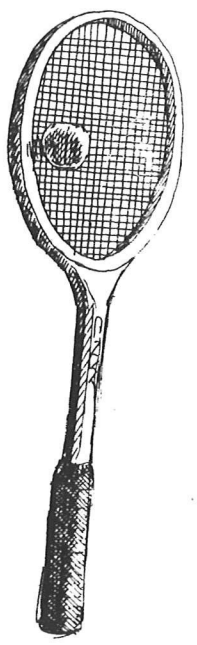


'Tennis, anyone?'



By JACKIE LOWTHAN
and BRIAN BOOTH

If, one lovely Sunday morning in June, all the tennis players in Portland converged simultaneously on the popular Washington Park courts, the ensuing traffic jam would wind through nearby Forest Park all the way to Forest Hills, according to computations made by a local statistician while waiting for a court.

Over 30 million Americans are now playing tennis, and Portland shares the craze as everyone who plays here knows.

The number of public courts in the city now totals 101, with 14 added in the last two years and eight more proposed by 1978. Private clubs have proliferated—six years ago there were two in the area, today there are seven including two under construction. When those two are complete, the clubs will have a total of 60 courts among them.

Indoor courts have made tennis a year-round sport. Six years ago the only indoor courts were the four at Irvington Club and two at Catlin Gabel School. Today there are 47, including some still under construction. More are proposed for the next two or three years.

Private courts are not the only ones going under cover—the City of Portland owns four indoor courts at Portland Tennis Center (Buckman Field), which opened in 1973. These were the first

municipally-owned indoor courts on the West Coast, and the first anywhere to be financed with revenue bonds payable from court fees.

More courts to come

Others are following Portland's lead in building public indoor courts. Lake Oswego recently opened a similarly-financed facility with four. Vancouver will start construction in the next few weeks of a tennis center including four indoor courts and four outdoor. The Tualitan Hills Park and Recreation District, southwest of Portland, has just passed a bond issue for a proposed complex which will have six indoor and eight outdoor courts. Completion is expected in the next two or three years.

The question of how many public tennis courts Portland needs is being considered in a comprehensive plan now being worked out by the Portland Park Bureau. The National Recreation and Park Association says the ratio should be one court for every 2,000 people. Portland double-faults on that standard with slightly more than one court per 4,000. Still, that's not too bad when compared to Los Angeles, tennis capital of the world and hometown of Pancho Gonzales and Billie Jean King, where the ratio is one court for every 10,000 people.

Ed Erickson, director of planning and development for the Park Bureau, says there's no question

that more courts are needed, particularly on the West side. The five-year plan will establish budget priorities for all types of park facilities. What gets built will be determined by how much money there is for new construction.

Economy measures

Problems with the budget mean the cracks on many city courts, and in some cases peeling paint, won't be repaired this year. Still, most courts are in generally good condition, and even those which need resurfacing are playable.

One of the park bureau's economy measures, sure to annoy many tennis players however, is the use of chain link fencing, rather than nylon, for new nets (and for replacing worn-out old ones). A metal net has already been installed on one of the Washington Park courts. It is curled up along the bottom, allowing balls to roll under, and when balls are hit into it they roll back onto the middle of the court. Metal also tends to develop permanent sag from mistreatment such as people leaning over or sitting on the net.

Lessons are offered at several city courts during the summer for nominal fees. The most concentrated program is on the eight outdoor courts at Buckman Field, where 1,600 people learned last year. Lessons are also available at the Portland Tennis Center's indoor courts September through May.

Young local greats make strong play

Tentative 1975 rankings of the Pacific Northwest Lawn Tennis Association (USLTA), based on 1974 tournament results, confirm that Portland is developing its strongest contingent of young tournament players in years. Indoor tennis facilities and active junior programs in the clubs have contributed to the good showing.

Former West Hills Racquet Club assistant pro Steve Dochtery is ranked first in men's singles and Irvington Club's Hedy Jackson is top-ranked in women's singles, replacing former Portlander Joanne Kraft. Wilson High School star Lindsey Berman is ranked second in women's singles and first in junior women's (18) singles.

Jon Herranson and Tim Carr are first and second in boys' (16) singles and Robin Lacey is ranked second in girls' (16) singles. Heidi Rose, daughter of professionals Bill Rose and Mirja Rose, is number one in girls' (14) singles. Mike Carr and Todd Bonine are first in boys' (16) doubles and Bart Bonine and Todd DeNette are number one in boys' (14) doubles.

Any Oregon Tennis Hall of Fame should include Phil and Henry Neer, Wayne Sabin, Elwood Cooke, Sam Lee, Emery Neale, Jack Neer and Bill Rose. Phil Neer was Oregon's first national tennis champion in the twenties, and his brother Henry was a top player for two decades. Sabín and Cooke left Oregon for national fame in the mid-'30s and stayed in the East. Neale and Lee came back to Portland from Stanford, dominated Oregon tournaments in the 1940's, won national championships as seniors, and have been instrumental in developing tennis in Portland. Jack Neer and Rose were top Oregon high school, college and tournament players and are now professionals at Portland clubs.

Phil and Henry Neer
Phil Neer won the national intercollegiate title for Stanford in singles in 1921 and doubles in 1922 after winning the Oregon singles championship in 1920. Phil's brother, Henry Neer, never won the Oregon singles championship but he was in contention for an amazing twenty years. Henry was a four-time runner-up in the event, losing in the finals the first time in 1925 and the last time in 1945.

Wayne Sabín and Elwood Cooke
Sabín and Cooke burned up Portland high school tennis and played at the Irvington Club where they both won state singles championships in the 1930s. In the mid-'30s they headed west for the national circuit and met with the greatest success of any Portland players. Cooke became one of the country's top doubles players, winning the last Wimbledon doubles championship held before World War II in 1939 with Bobby Riggs and losing to Riggs in the singles final.

Oregon has no tennis ranches, like those run by John Gardiner and top professionals in sunnier parts of the country. But there are less-intensive, less-expensive places nearby.

At the Inn of the Seventh Mountain, near Bend, eight weekend tennis clinics for adults are scheduled between Memorial weekend and mid-September. These will be two-day affairs, with a package price of \$39 for lodging and instruction. One five-day adult clinic will be held July 21-25; the cost for instruction only (four hours daily) will be \$99.

The Inn of the Seventh Mountain also offers six five-day clinics for juniors in July and August. Package price for room, board and instruction is \$189.

Cooke was ranked in the USLTA's top 10 four times and Sabín made the top 10 three times. Sabín won the USLTA indoor championship in 1939, and lost with Gardnar Mulloy in the finals of the 1941 national doubles championship at Forest Hills to the new team of Jack Kramer and Ted Schroeder. Sabín and Mulloy now run a tennis camp in Florida.

Emery Neale and Sam Lee
Lee won the national intercollegiate doubles championship for Stanford in 1935 with Joseph Coughlin. In 1942 Neale played in the finals of the same tournament, on a great Stanford tennis team with Ted Schroeder, who won the national singles championship at Forest Hills and was ranked number one by the USLTA in 1942.

Neale and Lee concentrated their tournament playing on the Pacific Coast and in seniors (over 45) events. As a team Neale and Lee have won the Oregon doubles championships a record six times. Lee also won once with Elwood Cooke and Neale won three times with Leonard Clark as his partner. Neale won the Oregon singles championships an amazing eight times from 1941 to 1955, and Lee won singles in 1937.

On the national level, the records show that Neale has won at least eight USLTA seniors championships, including the open doubles championship with Bobby Riggs and national indoor and hard court singles championships and doubles championships with Sam Lee. Robert Sherman, Bobby Riggs and others as partners. Neale is a manufacturer's representative in Portland and is involved in organizing the new Mt. Hood Racquet Club. Lee is president of Schmitt Steel Co., has served as president of Multnomah Athletic Club and Irvington Club and has been active in developing the city's indoor tennis program as president of Portland Tennis Center. Still active as a player, Lee is ranked first in the Northwest in men's senior (60) singles.

Jack Neer and Bill Rose
Jack Neer and Bill Rose have been winning tennis titles ever since they played in the Oregon state high school championship finals in 1951. Jack Neer is the nephew of Phil and Henry Neer. Jack is now the head pro at Irvington Club and Rose is at The Racquet Club after five years as head pro at West Hills Racquet Club. Rose has been making his living from teaching tennis since college, while Neer, a bookkeeper for many years, became a pro only last year. Neer has won the Oregon singles and doubles championship twice, has been runner-up in singles five times, and has been ranked first in the Northwest three times. Rose has also been ranked first in the Northwest and won the Oregon championship twice in singles and once in doubles with Neer.

The head instructor at the Inn will be Buzz Summers. University of Oregon tennis coach, Sports Acres, near Elsie (just off the Sunset Highway 30 miles this side of Seaside), is a co-educational sports camp for kids from 9 to 19. Tennis is among the offerings this summer, and campers can register for one or more weeks of concentrated tennis between June 13 and the end of August. Room, board and instruction for the week will cost \$110.

The University of Portland is offering a tennis camp for the first time this summer for 12-18-year-olds. The sessions are five days long and are scheduled from June through August. Cost is \$95.00 per session, and includes room, board and instruction.

SUBURBAN PUBLIC COURTS

LOCATION	NUMBER OF COURTS
Beaverton-Tualatin	2
Camille Park SW Scholls Ferry Rd. & Marjorie Ln.	
Garden Home Park SW Olsson Rd. & Alden Rd.	2
Raleigh Park SW 78th & Fairway	3
Sunset Park NW Cornell Rd. & Murray Rd.	2
Mitchell Park NW Leaky Rd. & 99th	2
Cedar Mill Park NW Cornell Rd. & 102nd	2
Cedar Hills Park SW Cedar Hills Blvd. & Walker Rd.	2*
RESERVOIR	2
SW Ingwood & Knollcrest	
West Sylvan Park SW 75th & Westlape Dr.	1
Highland School SW Wilson Ave.	2
Terra Linda Park NW Perrygrove & 138th	2
Ridgecrest Park SW Crescentor	2
Albion High School SW 18th & Kinnaman Rd.	6
13000 SW 2nd	
Sunset High School 13840 NW Cornell	2

Mountain Park Racquet Club

Mountain Park Racquet Club opened in 1973 and has probably the classic clubhouse and indoor facilities of any Portland tennis club. The indoor courts feature controversial indirect lighting and have seating for 250 spectators behind a glass wall. A nursery is available for kids while their parents play tennis. The pro shop is probably the best stocked in the area. A drawback to the club is its lack of a swimming pool. The club was developed and is owned by the privately held Mountain Park Corporation.

Membership was built up during 1974 by offering "corporate" memberships for \$1,500 to any five families and \$1,000 to any three families. This has filled the courts, but apparently hasn't resulted in an increase in communal living in the Lake Oswego area.

Unlike most private clubs, Mountain Park allows non-members to take lessons from professionals Mirja Rose and Craig Flint on the club courts. Mountain Park has a large contingent of beginning and intermediate adult players, but hasn't emphasized junior tennis.

Mr. Hood Racquet Club

Mr. Hood Racquet Club expects to have its outdoor courts ready this summer, and the indoor facilities by fall.

The club was launched after a sample of the population showed that East County was ready for club tennis. Memberships are about half sold, and the ground hasn't even been broken; some of this is undoubtedly due to the initial newspaper, direct mail and radio advertising.

When it opens, the million-dollar complex will be one of the largest member-owned tennis clubs anywhere in the country. Brian Parrott, former Seattle University star and head pro at Irvington Club, is developing Mr. Hood and will serve as head pro.

West Hills Racquet Club

West Hills Racquet Club opened in 1969, as Portland's first new tennis club in forty years. It aggressively solicited members, and has become the area's largest tennis-only club. It has more courts than any other, and a beautiful resort-like setting for outdoor family use. The large pool is surrounded by a wide terrace and nicely landscaped grassy picnic areas. It's not unusual on summer nights to see members sitting around drinking gin and tonics (brought from home)

The Racquet Club looks like a scene from an F. Scott Fitzgerald story. The comfortable clubhouse, pool and courts and a grassy setting would make Jay Gatsby feel right at home, if he could get in. Built in the late 1920s by L.B. Menefee, Sr., developer of Portland Highlands, it was a neighborhood club known as The Highlands Racquet Club until 1945, when it was reorganized in its present form. The club is owned and run by its members. New members need to be sponsored by existing members, and the total resident proprietary membership is limited to 200.

The Racquet Club

The Racquet Club is member owned and managed. The current waiting list for membership is six to eight months long.

Irvington Club is Portland's oldest tennis club—it opened in 1901 with one court and a cabin-like clubhouse. For the last 75 years it has been the home of the city's best players, with more ranked and tournament players than any other club.

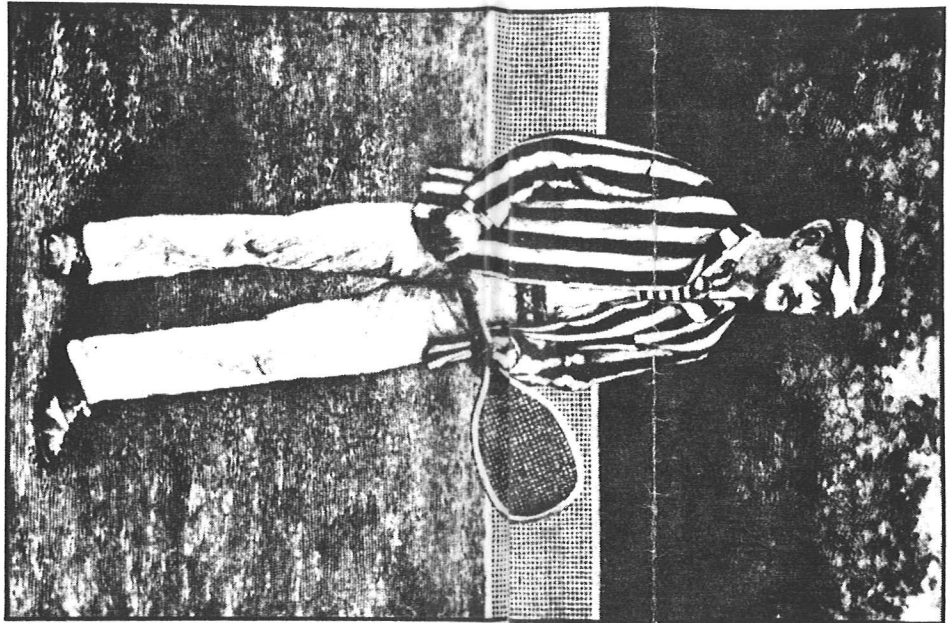
The names of Irvington's top players are recognized by sports page readers, now that sports pages are covering tennis. Past and present stars include Emery Neale, Sam Lee, Warren Farmer, Jack Neer, Brian Parrott, Bill Rose, Michelle Carey, Art Fish, Martin Blackburn, Jim Jackson, Lindsey Berman, Hedy Jackson, Don Tisel, Mike Kohloff, and many others.

Irvington is the site of Oregon's three major tennis tournaments—the Oregon State Championships, the Rose Festival, and the nationally-recognized Pacific Coast Indoor Championships.

The club is comfortable but not elegant. Its location on over half a city block in the middle of a Northeast residential neighborhood seems cramped—for example, landscaping around the outdoor pool consists of a six-foot concrete strip.

Although Irvington calls itself "the tennis players' tennis club," it's not unlike other clubs. It has its share of average players, hackers, and non-players.

The Racquet Club looks like a scene from an F. Scott Fitzgerald story.



RICHARD D. SEARS, FIRST NATIONAL CHAMPION (1881-1887)

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West Hills Racquet Club

West Hills Racquet Club is Vancouver's first new tennis club. It sounds horsey, but the plans don't include a major sport after the club's four new indoor courts opened in April 1974. An estimated 1,100 players now play each week, usually filling the courts from 5-4:30 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Club