

World Tennis Gazette

FAME:

San Diego's Tennis Hall of Fame Refines the Idea With 6 New Inductees

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LARRY, ESTHER, AND ARNOLD
BELINSKY



CATHIE
ANDERSON



GEOFF
GRIFFIN



ROZ
KING

BY JOHN MARTIN

When he launched San Diego's Tennis Hall of Fame in 2006, Larry Belinsky's screening committee reached deep into the ranks of the world's top players, amateur and professional.

The long line of local residents who achieved fame was led by Maureen 'Little Mo' Connolly, only the second player (after Don Budge) to win all of the world's four major international tennis championships in a single year (1953).

The first group included 1989 French Open Champion Michael Chang, 1938 Australian National Champion Dodo Cheney, and 1962 Wimbledon Singles and Doubles Champion Karen Hantze Susman.

Another early inductee, Franklin Johnson (2008) had been a nationally ranked junior, played college tennis at UCLA, and risen to be president of the United States Tennis Association.

What made the first class remarkable beyond its four international champions,

however, was a set of seven additional categories from which the hall chose to honor the community: College Greats and Junior Stand-Outs, Coaches, Teaching Pros and Mentors, Community Service, Philanthropy, Officiating and Media; and Senior Success.

This year, the process produced a surprise. After honoring more than 50 San Diego tennis personalities over 15 years, the hall's screening committee made an unexpected selection. It chose **Larry Belinsky** and his parents, **Esther and Arnold Belinsky**, to be inducted in August into the class for 2020.

"Not only was I surprised," Larry Belinsky told *World Tennis Gazette*, "it was icing on the cake."

Under the hall's bylaws, the three Belinskys had been previously blocked from consideration because his roles as chairman and committee member constituted a conflict of interest. The choice only became possible, Belinsky said, when he stepped down recently for health reasons.

"Our names had been 'in the bank' for several years, he said. "John Broderick took over

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MAUREEN
CONNOLLY
U.S. STAMP

San Diego Tennis Hall of Fame Honors 6 New Members

as chair and when he called to inform me of the news, needless to say I was ecstatic.”

The decision by the six committee members ended a remarkable irony: For 15 years, three of the city’s most deserving candidates were blocked at the doorstep, their extraordinary contributions and achievements left unsung because of their family relationship.

The committee cited the Belinsky couple for its philanthropic generosity in restoring older courts and building new courts throughout San Diego and refurbishing the Balboa Tennis Club as well as their founding membership in the Barnes Tennis Center.



Arnold Belinsky ranked number one in San Diego Men’s 65 Singles in 1997.

Larry Belinsky, who played college tennis for 3 years at San Diego State, was honored for his success as a senior player who topped his age group rankings 20 consecutive years ending in 2010, won the USTA Gold Ball in the 2000 Men’s 45 hard court doubles and top ranking in the USTA Men’s 45 doubles, and provided many services to the tennis community.



One major factor, of course, was conceiving and creating the San Diego Tennis Hall of Fame.

The three remaining honorees:

Cathie Anderson, a senior teaching pro named United States Professional Tennis Association Senior Player of the Year in 1990 who won the World 50 Women’s Singles Championship in 2006, as well as 30 USTA Gold Balls, 58



Silver Balls, and 24 Bronze Balls in senior competitions.

Geoff Griffin, tennis director at the Balboa



Tennis Club for 30 years and a senior player and longtime teaching pro who has created training and fundraising activities for wounded military veterans. He has served 25 years on the San Diego District Board of the USPTA. He founded and directed the popular Tennis Fest event for 18 years.



Roz King, a latecomer to the sport who has won numerous community tennis awards. The committee cited her broad community service and her unusual achievement of winning USTA “Gold Ball National championships on all 4 surfaces (hard, grass, clay, and indoor).” The Hall of Fame also cited King for honor as San Diego’s Female Player of the Year in 2008 and 2013 and for her service on the San Diego District Tennis Association Board (17 years), Balboa Tennis Club Board (20 years), and the United States Tennis Association National Committee (6 years).

The selection committee is chaired by John Broderick and composed of Jennifer Dawson, Simon Shen, Jim Kellogg, David Jaehnig, and David Whitehead.

Broderick is a 4.5 level competitor. Dawson is a longtime respected teaching pro who played college tennis at the University of San Diego, was 2004 USTA Women’s 35 National Grass Court Champion and 2004 National Clay Court finalist, and ranked Number 1 in USTA Women’s 35 singles (2004). She was USTA Women’s National Hard Court Champion (2011) and represented the United States in ITF competition in Australia and Turkey. Shen played college tennis at UC Santa Barbara, Kellogg played college tennis at San Diego State, Jaehnig played college tennis at Point Loma Nazarene. Whitehead is the author of *The Tennis Junkie’s Guide to Serious Humor*.

A public induction ceremony is planned for 4:30 p.m. on Aug. 29, at the Balboa Tennis Club on Morley Field Drive in Balboa Park. The club displays memorabilia honoring the 56 inductees of the San Diego Tennis Hall of Fame.

Editorial

Bravo, San Diego Tennis Hall of Fame. Most halls of fame bar founders from induction to avoid conflicts of interest. By inducting its founder and his parents when it became legal (see story) the San Diego hall’s committee has shown remarkable respect for three extraordinary contributors whose actions might have never been honored. The committee brings honor to itself and the hall.