

THE PRO APPROACH

a monthly e-publication of the georgia professional tennis association

On December 8th, the GPTA honored the teaching professionals in Georgia who are creating innovative programming, breaking new ground and keeping players motivated and involved. The GPTA awarded members at all levels of teaching, from directors and independent professionals to head pros and assistants. Top honors went to two facilities equally worthy of The Georgia Peach Award: Atlanta Athletic Club and Crooked Creek Tennis Center.

The party at The Punchline in Atlanta began with dinner and drinks as well as entertainment. The feedback from the event was very positive. Many members liked the change in venue and the added entertainment. If you have any feedback that you'd like to share, please email execdir@gpta.com. We want to hear from you!



The 2010 award winners are pictured on the following pages along with information on why they won. This year's winners are Matt Grayson and Paul Bartholomai (Directors of the Year), Kendon Warren and Corey Davis (Head Professionals of the Year), Eric Baumgardner (Assistant Professional of the Year), Bryan Shepherd (Independent Professional of the Year), and Atlanta Athletic Club and Crooked Creek Tennis Center (The Georgia Peach Award). Congratulations to all of the award winners!

An introduction of the 2011 Board of Directors started the business portion of the evening. The following members make up the 2011 Board of Directors: Ben Hestley, president; Jim Harp, vice president; Ian Thomson, treasurer; Kendon Warren, secretary; Paul Bartholomai, director-at-large; Paige Miller, director-at-large; Bill Osterhold, director-at-large; Carmen Garcia, presidential appointee; and Arturo Nieto, presidential appointee. Jenn Burns will continue to support the Board as the Executive Director.

Many thanks to Signature Tennis Courts for sponsoring the event. Thank you, as well, to Sports Box & Awards for providing the 2010 awards.

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2010 director of the year



2010 Director of the Year for a Large Facility Matt Grayson Country Club of Roswell

Matt Grayson's 14-year career includes service on several boards of directors, including the GPTA Board. This year included state, regional and national speaking engagements focusing on the trends and new forms of management that are affecting country clubs around the U.S. Matt was a speaker at the USPTA Southern Convention in Memphis, the USPTA World Conference and a round table discussion this month at the USPTA Georgia Chapter Workshop.

Matt is the Athletics/Tennis Director at Country Club of Roswell. He manages tennis, fitness, swim team and youth care at CCR. He has turned these departments into new revenue streams for the club while adding new value-added benefits to the membership. Matt sees this leadership as a new direction in club management. "I believe this to be a way for tennis professionals to move up in the club settings beyond the Tennis Director position. The addition of these programs has really allowed CCR to continue to grow in these poor economic times."

"My goal as director is to teach the pros that I work with to be able to understand all the functions and responsibilities I have at the club so they can go forward in their careers and grow as professionals." Matt includes his staff in meetings with product representatives, annual budgeting, planning and pro-shop management. As a result of Matt's leadership and the hard work of the CCR Tennis Staff, participation numbers are up 19 percent from 2009. Congratulations to Matt Grayson, 2010 Tennis Director of the Year, Large Facility.

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2010 director of the year



2010 Director of the Year for a Small Facility Paul Bartholomai Peachtree Station Swim and Tennis Club

Paul Bartholomai became the Tennis Director at Peachtree Station Swim and Tennis Club in February, 2002. Currently, Peachtree Station has 21 ALTA teams, or 329 members. In 2010, four new teams were created, two of which were comprised of only beginning players. Paul has reached out to many members, encouraging them to take advantage of his “free lesson” promotion so they may be introduced to the game or re-introduced after a long absence. Peachtree Station’s junior program (ages 3-17) has grown from an average of sixty kids per session to more than one hundred kids per session.

Paul’s desire to teach and learn expands outside the club as well. For eight years in a row, Paul has donated hours of private lessons to different fundraising events. In 2010, Paul has arranged to go to elementary schools and preschools, with the goal of reaching 750 children. He has been in the USPTA GA Chapter for five years, two of which he has served as president. He also served on the GPTA Board from 1999-2003, and in 2006-2007. In the last seven years, he attended more than 30 workshops, conventions and specialty courses, and has attended a total of six PTR International Tennis Symposiums. Paul says his most memorable GPTA event for 2010 was the Tim Wilkison Workshop. The “take away” advice was “It’s all in the details, details, details.”

When one observes Peachtree Station over time, it is easy to see the kind of atmosphere that has been nurtured by Paul’s presence. There is motivation to be better tennis players, there is pride in how the club looks, there are more events held than there have been in a very long time. There is an intangible piece that Paul has brought to Peachtree Station that has resulted in the success it enjoys today. Despite the tough economy, Paul’s consistent and loyal dedication to the club has fostered a growth of tennis in a very significant way. Congratulations to Paul Bartholomai, 2010 Tennis Director of the Year, Small Facility.

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2010 independent pro of the year



2010 Independent Professional of the Year Bryan Shepherd

Bryan Shepherd is a full-time independent professional putting in 50-60 hours of court time each week in Dekalb and Gwinnett counties. His independent status has allowed him to grant access to goods and services often outside the normal hours of operation and without the restrictions often in place at facilities and clubs. "I have run beginner workshops at facilities that are often underserved because of location and the condition of the courts." These workshops have benefitted beginners of all ages and led to the formation of three Junior ALTA and USTA teams as well as several singles and doubles league teams.

Bryan supported the Leadership Academy youth in the 100 Black Men of Dekalb County this fall, instructing more than 20 youth ages 12-18 at Dottie Bridges Tennis Center in Decatur. "It's a privilege to work with these youth who are good students receiving mentorship, educational support and character building through the 100 Black Men program. They are also establishing relationships that will nurture achievement and enhance self-esteem through tennis," he said of the program. Sessions included two hours of on-court tennis drills and skills in addition to one hour of health education and life skills. The fall session ended with a round robin tournament and cookout.

Bryan's most memorable events of 2010 have been fundraiser events where GPTA members volunteer and give back to the community through time and expertise. "Each of these has turned into an informal drill exchange as I had an opportunity to see my peers strut their stuff!"

Congratulations to Bryan Shepherd, 2010 Independent Professional of the Year.

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2010 head professional of the year



2010 Head Professional of the Year, Large Facility Kendon Warren Druid Hills Golf Club

Kendon Warren manages the teams program (24 Adult Teams / 6 Junior Teams - 2 Jr. USTA State Champions) at Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta, as well as the Jr. Club Championships, which had 66 participants in 2010. He assists with events and mixers, organizes the club's stringing and racquet maintenance program (more than 550 racquets in 2010) and works in the pro shop.

As the lead stringer for the pro shop, Kendon increased stringing revenue each year, often completing jobs within the hour if necessary. Most jobs are turned around in 24 hours or less. Kendon works hard, accepting suggestions from members for strings, and he helps find the 'perfect match' for all players.

Kendon joined the GPTA Board this year, and he will continue to serve in 2011. His most memorable GPTA event for 2010 was the Greg Patton Workshop. "Greg is such a motivational speaker, and how he uses tennis to get through to so many is incredible. I left feeling energized and ready to tackle my next task at hand. It is always nice to hear such accomplished coaches and players at our meetings; that reassures us all that we, too, will make mistakes along the way, but we can always get back on track quickly."

Congratulations to Kendon Warren, 2010 Head Professional of the Year, Large Facility.

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2010 head professional of the year



2010 Head Professional of the Year, Small Facility Corey Davis Indian Hills Country Club

As a teaching professional at Indian Hills Country Club in Marietta, Corey Davis focuses on overseeing the junior program. This responsibility covers all junior USTA/ALTA teams, lessons, socials, in-house leagues, club championships and billing. He also communicates deadlines and sign-up information for all special club activities. Since Corey assumed the role of Junior Director/Head Pro in November of 2009, Indian Hills CC has increased the number of Junior USTA/ALTA teams from 14 to 24. This increase in the number of teams has brought in substantial revenue. In addition, Indian Hills was one of only three clubs in Atlanta (along with Dunwoody CC and Druid Hills Golf Club) to compete in this summer's 60-foot USTA Quickstart League. Some of the events that Corey manages throughout the year include the Junior Club Championships, the Parent-Child Social, a Junior Play Day and a Junior Rules and Etiquette Class.

Corey is a "regular" at GPTA Workshops and Drill Sessions. "Tim Wilkinson, Brett Hobden from (2009), and Clemson's Nancy Harris from were each very enlightening because they shared many helpful teaching strategies and experiences from their tennis backgrounds. I appreciate all that the GPTA does to bring in these influential speakers to Atlanta to better our teaching skills. However, the presentation I most enjoyed was Boise State's own Greg Patton. Mr. Patton is energetic, charismatic, humorous, inventive and an amazing storyteller. His most important asset, in my opinion, is the passion he has for the game of tennis and how he is able to share that and inspire other coaches to improve their teaching abilities. On the business side of it, my lessons have been more effective because I was able to bring back some of Mr. Patton's energy and strategies to share with my students. The lessons I plan have been far more dynamic, which has led my students to experience a higher level of play." Congratulations to Corey Davis, 2010 Head Professional of the Year, Small Facility.

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2010 assistant professional of the year



2010 Assistant Professional of the Year Eric Baumgardner Dunwoody Country Club

Eric Baumgardner is an assistant professional at Dunwoody Country Club in Atlanta. Eric manages the women's program at DCC, running every women's team throughout the year, organizing clinics, mixers and functions for the program. He also assists in the production of the DCC pro-am tournament and other charity events throughout the year, including the the DCC Club Championships.

Eric joined the GPTA Board of Directors in 2010 as a presidential appointee and co-editor of the monthly newsletter, The Pro Approach. He found value in GPTA Workshops and Drill Sessions, commenting in particular on the Greg Patton Workshop. "I enjoyed Greg Patton's approach and enthusiasm for the teaching game. The methodology behind his teaching, along with his anecdotes of past experiences with high level professionals, gave a sense of credibility and inspiration to what would otherwise be a 'cut and dry' lecture that we've all seen. For me, it re-invigorated this want to be a more dynamic teacher--not always searching for someone else's great drill, but bringing more originality to the sport and coming up with your own ideas to pass on to students. Keeping material fresh and ahead of the competition can motivate your students to keep coming to clinics and lessons and prevent the sport from becoming stale."

Congratulations to Eric Baumgardner, 2010 Assistant Professional of the Year.

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2 0 1 0 g e o r g i a p e a c h a w a r d



2010 Georgia Peach Award Atlanta Athletic Club

Atlanta Athletic Club is one of the largest country clubs in the southeast, if not the nation, and over the past year has taken steps to revamp its tremendous reputation with the multifaceted task of “offering something for everyone.” When surveyed, the club’s biggest asset was the staff. In 2010, the staff implemented a variety of programs, including Etcheberry Training and Eye Opener Clinics at 6AM. Also new is the Elite Junior Tennis Academy that includes four hours of clinics and four hours of off-court training (Etcheberry and circuit training) each week, as well as two hours of private lessons and two hours of mental toughness each month.

For the first time in three years, AAC hosted a charity pro-am tournament that benefited International Justice Mission. Furthermore, AAC hosted the Atlanta Tennis Championships this summer. In addition to this tournament, AAC hosts the USTA National 55 Clay Court Championships and the USTA National Indoor Husband/Wife Championship.

In 2010, the AAC staff hosted several GPTA events and made sure that it had at least one representative at all meetings. The Gregg Patton Workshop and Billy Pate Drill Session provided the AAC staff with ideas to implement in its programming. Congratulations to Atlanta Athletic Club, 2010 Georgia Peach Award Recipient.

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2 0 1 0 g e o r g i a p e a c h a w a r d



2010 Georgia Peach Award Crooked Creek Tennis Center

In 2010, Crooked Creek Tennis Center, under the direction of Silvia Tennis Academy, underwent a major reconstruction increasing its court number to 11 and adding a new clubhouse as well as tennis observation deck. It is now a state-of-the-art neighborhood facility. Currently, 53 percent of the 650-plus homes in Crooked Creek have one or more family members active in the program. STA has grown the program at record speed over the past 13 years, improving the quality each and every year by responding to the needs of the residents. In fact, realtors verify that prospective home buyers consider living in this neighborhood because of the well regarded tennis program.

This year Crooked Creek had two junior teams win the city championships, and Silvia has made plans to add permanent QuickStart lines. Also for the juniors, Crooked Creek hosts a Junior Club Championships in both the summer and winter. Adult programs include Late Bloomers for beginning adults an Adult Academy with high-performance drills, cardio tennis, men's drills and stroke and strategy of the week. There are 76 league teams that call Crooked Creek home.

At the heart of Silvia Tennis' success is a system of eight core values that the staff implements in each program: character, commitment, courage, honesty, humility, integrity, sportsmanship and excellence. Congratulations to Crooked Creek Tennis Center, 2010 Georgia Peach Award Recipient.