

MAKING THE GRADE

One player with an exceptionally busy day on Friday, April 21, during the 2006 USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship, was Daniel Cohen of the University of Michigan "Maize." His day was not just about tennis. With graduation only eight days away, he had to play four matches in one day and also had to take his next-to-last final exam.



Daniel Cohen at the 2006 USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship. Visit the University of Michigan Club Tennis Team at www.michiganclubtennis.org.

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PORTRAIT OF A CHAMPION

Texas A&M University secured its place in club tennis history last month by winning its third straight USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship—its fourth title in five years. After facing a tough road, the Aggies handily defeated the University of Virginia, 29-15, in the final match to earn its three-peat.

"The competition this year was the best it's ever been," said Matthew Sumrall, the Aggies' captain. "All of our matches were tight and it just feels good to get another title."

How has Texas A&M been able to remain on top of the club tennis world for so long? The answer is: early involvement, great leadership, a positive relationship with its varsity tennis teams and, above all else, friendship.

After playing competitive junior tennis and entertaining options to play varsity tennis at a few smaller schools, Sumrall decided to pursue an engineering degree at Texas A&M and quickly hooked up with the club tennis team. His early involvement gave him the experience necessary to step into the presidential role for his junior and senior years and lead the Aggies' club tennis team of more than 100 members.

"We have pool play and ladders in the fall to establish a lineup," said Sumrall. "We try to go to at least one tournament every semester as a club where everyone, no matter what level, can play. We also run at least one inner-club tournament each semester. It's not always easy to schedule matches against other schools, but we're always sure to get in a match with the University of Texas."



Texas A&M University's club tennis team, winner of the 2006 USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship.

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PORTRAIT OF A CHAMPION *(continued from page 1)*

Sumrall has also made sure the club tennis team enjoys its relationship with both varsity tennis teams on campus.

"We're all avid fans of both teams," said Sumrall. "There's always a good size group of us from the tennis club at every varsity home match. Texas A&M leads the country in varsity tennis crowd attendance, which is something we're proud to contribute to."

The Texas A&M varsity programs reciprocate this show of support and have opened their courts for the club's practices. They've also asked the club to come onto the court between doubles and singles at home matches to announce their successes to the crowd and have taken a vested interest in the club's success at the USTA sectional and national campus championships.

Yet the pervading factor that glues A&M together is friendship. Similar to Sumrall, teammate Odion Dibua, one-half of the Aggies' so-called "Twin Towers," also joined the club early in his college career.

"I used to go out to the tennis courts to play pretty much every day during my freshman year," said Dibua. "I saw the club hitting and doing drills and always wondered who they were. One day I went up and asked them and they told me about it. So I thought, 'Wow, that is pretty cool.' I became a member after that and have been closely associated with the tennis club ever since."

Even after having won four USA Team Tennis National Campus Championships, when Dibua was asked why he likes playing club tennis, the answer wasn't about winning.

"I like club tennis because it gives me a chance to meet and be friends with people with similar interests," said Dibua. "Over the years, I have met some of my truly closest and best friends through the tennis club."

Sumrall confirmed this sentiment. "Just being part of the team is really one of my most special memories with club tennis and my entire college experience," he said.

Sumrall and Dibua will be graduating this year, but you may still see them around.

"We feel lucky and privileged to be able to compete with teams from around the nation. I have enjoyed all six years so much that I am planning on traveling to North Carolina to watch it next year," said Dibua.

And while Texas A&M's board and some of the more recognizable faces on the team will not be returning, their legacy will remain.

"I look forward to seeing what exciting things this group comes up with next year," said Sumrall. "Of course we'll be back at Nationals trying to pull off that number four!"

PICTURE THIS

If you have a picture you would like to submit for this newsletter's *Picture This*, please e-mail it to Justin Street, USTA campus tennis coordinator, at street@usta.com.



Calina Ciobanu,
a junior at Harvard University,
cracks a forehand at the
2006 USA Team Tennis National
Campus Championship
in Austin, Texas.

For complete results
and to view more photos
from the tournament,
visit
www.nirsa.net/sc/tennis/index.htm.

GRANT INFORMATION

The USTA is proud to offer financial support and resources through NIRSA and the ITA to colleges and universities interested in "serving up" recreationally based team tennis programs for their students.

"Of nearly 300,000 high school varsity tennis players, less than 10 percent will actually have the opportunity to play on a college varsity team," said Glenn Arrington, USTA National Manager, Collegiate and Corporate Tennis. "These former high school players are on campuses and are looking for a chance to participate in an organized team-based program."

Offering a USTA Tennis On Campus program through your recreational sports department will enhance the college experience for many of these athletes, promote a healthy lifestyle, increase social and networking opportunities for the student population and increase regular use of campus tennis facilities.

Three grants are available through NIRSA and two grants are available through ITA.

The Tennis On Campus Start Up Grant

is available for those interested in developing a new sport club tennis team or an on-campus coed league.

The Tennis On Campus Special Activity Grant

is available for those interested in hosting a promotional tennis event designed to generate awareness of tennis opportunities and initiate registration in leagues or a sport club on campus.

The Tennis On Campus Support Grant

is available for those interested in expanding existing tennis programs.

Grants are available for NIRSA and ITA member organizations. If you are not sure whether you qualify, contact your school's recreational sports department or varsity tennis coach.

For more information and to apply for these grants, please visit:

www.nirsa.net/spoend/tennis/index.htm
or www.itatennis.com.



MAKING THE GRADE

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The affable senior economics major from New York City and singles specialist for the Wolverines started his day with a 6:30 a.m. wake-up call so he could make it to the courts for a 7:30 a.m. singles match against James Madison University. He finally went on court at 9:00 a.m. due to a delay caused by wet courts.

Cohen's team defeated James Madison in a decisive manner, 30-9. Just after 11:00 a.m., he was called on duty once again and helped Michigan overwhelm the University of Alabama, 30-8. The victory enabled the Wolverines to win their pool and clinch a spot in the Gold Bracket.

While most players went to lunch, Cohen entered tournament headquarters to take his Economics 482 (Government Revenues) final exam, proctored by Tournament Director Valerie McCutchan of NIRSA. After graduation, Cohen will work at a hedge fund, where he interned last summer.

"This is a perfect example of these kids' commitment to tennis and the National Championship."

—Valerie McCutchan

Cohen spent the next 90 minutes filling his blue book with the answers to the exam. Then he was ready to head back to the courts. "This is a perfect example of these kids' commitment to tennis and the National Championship," said McCutchan.

"I used to play competitively in high school," said Cohen, who played three different years in the highly prestigious USTA Boys' National Championships at Kalamazoo, Michigan. "This tournament brings back the old fire."

At 4:30 p.m., Cohen led his team to a 26-16 victory over the University of Florida and the right to advance to the quarterfinals against UCLA. While he was waiting for the match to begin, he could be seen chatting and laughing it up with the Bruins.

The University of Michigan Maize wound up capturing third place in the tournament, while Cohen earned an A on his exam.

Later, Cohen was asked what the most difficult part of the day was.

"I'd definitely go with the exam," he said. "I have always taken my schoolwork seriously. The tennis comes easy."

PROGRAMMING IDEAS: SUMMER TENNIS OPTIONS

With summer rapidly approaching, you and your club tennis teammates will be parting ways for a few months to gain "real world" experience. Perhaps you'll be working at internships that pay peanuts. Or you could be traveling the world with everything you need on your back. Or maybe you'll just be spending some quality time at home. While summer may mean time off from classes and exams, it does not have to mean time off from tennis! The USTA and ITA have several summer tennis options for everyone:

USTA League Tennis — Established in 1979 to provide adult recreational tennis players throughout the country with the opportunity to compete against players of similar ability levels, USTA League Tennis now has approximately 550,000 participants. Many college players find that joining a league tennis team is a great way to continue playing and improve their game during the summer. If several members of your team are in the same area, you could form a team of your own! Leagues are available for all ability levels across the country. For more information, visit the USTA League Tennis homepage at www.usta.com/leagues.

USTA Tournament Tennis — Most tournaments take place over a weekend and are run as singles and/or doubles draws. Just like with USTA League Tennis, USTA Tournament Tennis is available across the country. The tournament calendar is always changing to include more events. For more information or to enter a tournament in your area, visit the USTA Tournament Tennis homepage at www.usta.com/tournament.

ITA Collegiate Summer Circuit — Formed in 2003, the ITA Collegiate Summer Circuit now has 24 regional circuit events that will take place from California to New Hampshire in July. These events will culminate in the 2006 ITA National Summer Championships at Indiana University from August 12-16. The ITA Collegiate Summer Circuit draws many varsity collegiate tennis players, but it is open to all amateurs—including collegiate club tennis players! For more information or to enter a circuit event in your area, visit the ITA Collegiate Summer Circuit homepage at www.itatennis.com/SummerCircuit/Summer06.htm.

Summer Tennis Employment Opportunities — Do you want to stay involved with tennis this summer but fear you won't be on the court as often as you'd like because you have to work? Why not do both at the same time? The 4 Star Summer Camps at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville is looking for tennis counselors. Contact Ann Grubbs at grubbs@4starcamps.com or call 800-426-0894.

Peter Kaplan's Westhampton Beach (N.Y.) Jr. Adult Tennis Academy is also looking for qualified staff. Please send your résumé, salary requirements, history, references and dates of availability to peterkaplan2002@yahoo.com or call 914-234-9462.

US OPEN SUITE LIFE

Play the US Open Suite Life Sweepstakes for a chance to win a trip for two to the 2006 US Open, including airfare, hotel, luxury suite tickets and a VIP tour of the USTA National Tennis Center.

Simply go to USTA.com/USOpenSuiteLife for your chance to win. Be sure to log on every day to see if you are an instant winner. And remember: The more times you play, the better your chances of winning! The US Open Suite Life expires June 30, 2006. So log on today and play!



2006 NATIONAL CAMPUS CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

A total of 64 teams from 56 schools made the journey to Austin, Texas, on April 20-22 to form the largest and strongest field yet at the USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship. The tournament took place at the University of Texas' Whitaker Tennis Facility and featured the World Team Tennis format. Included in the field were 16 of 17 Section Campus Championship winners and all three of the event's previous champions: the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2000-01), the University of Florida (2003) and two-time defending champion Texas A&M University (2002, 2004-05).

The tournament started slowly on Thursday; a night of torrential rains delayed the first day of play. A 20-person crew, which included tournament staff and players, worked with the sun to dry the courts on Friday morning, and the play on court began to heat up. The tournament saw 27 matches decided by only one game! Noteworthy matches in this group included two 21-20 pool play victories by the University of Arizona over Stanford University and the University of Miami, a 23-22 pool play triumph by the University of Florida over Lehigh University, a 25-24 pool play win for the University of Georgia against the University of Hawaii Manoa "A," a 21-20 gold medal-round win for the University of Southern California against the University of New Mexico, and a 26-25 gold medal-round squeaker for Villanova University over Cornell University.

A number of these one-game victories were candidates for "match of the tournament." But none could live up to the intensity, passion and excitement exhibited in the gold medal-round match between the upstart second-year club from Stanford University and the veterans from Texas A&M University. The Aggies had easily won their pool by an average score of 28-9, while the Cardinals stumbled early and went 2-1 in pool play, advancing to the gold medal round thanks to a favorable tiebreak.

On paper, Stanford should have been packing its bags early. But the West Coast team went shot for shot with the two-time defending champions and entered the mixed doubles trailing by just one game. Whispers of an early exit for A&M began to spread throughout the center, and a large crowd drew close to the action where the tennis did not disappoint. Every point was hotly contested—sometimes with players crashing into the back fences or diving onto the court to dig out balls.

In the end, Texas A&M secured a tight 25-22 victory. From that point forward, the Aggies did not look back and triumphed over the University of Southern California, Villanova and Virginia to claim their third straight USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship.

For complete results and to view more photos from the tournament, visit www.nirsa.net/sc/tennis/index.htm.

Gold Bracket

Winner: Texas A&M University

Runner-Up: University of Virginia

Silver Bracket

Winner: University of Central Florida "A"

Runner-Up: Miami University (OH)

Bronze Bracket

Winner: Western Washington University

Runner-Up: College of William & Mary

Copper Bracket

Winner: Harvard University

Runner-Up: University of Minnesota "Maroon"



Ayako Hasegawa of UCLA applauds an opponent at the 2006 USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship.



The University of Virginia club tennis team, runner-up at the 2006 USA Team Tennis National Campus Championship.