

NEWS & UPDATES

News You Can Use!



Jolyn de Boer

The good news is people continue to play tennis in a down economy; frequent play may actually increase (see chart). With tennis

relatively inexpensive to play and offering great social, exercise and health benefits, we have an opportunity to reach those who were lost to the "ever-growing list of competing activities" for peoples' leisure time over the years. Not to mention, the entire family can participate at thousands of facilities, parks and recs across the country. The USTA will kick off the season with an exciting tie-in between communities and professional tennis, on March 2 (see below), and together with our industry partners, we are dedicated to finding ways to help you increase your business plus attract and retain players. With tough economic times ahead, it's more important than ever to do what we do best and work together. Please keep in touch and informed at TennisIndustry.org and involved at GrowingTennis.com.

Tennis Night In America

Sign up your facility now to host a Youth Registration Night event on March 2, which is part of Tennis Night in America. Youth Registration Night events put tennis center-stage in local communities across the country and jump-start youth tennis signups for your spring and summer programs. Go to TennisNight.com to register.

Tennis Continues Strong Participation Growth

The latest USTA/TIA Tennis Participation Survey shows that 1.8 million players joined the game in 2008, which boosted total U.S. participation to nearly 26.9 million players, the highest level since 1992.

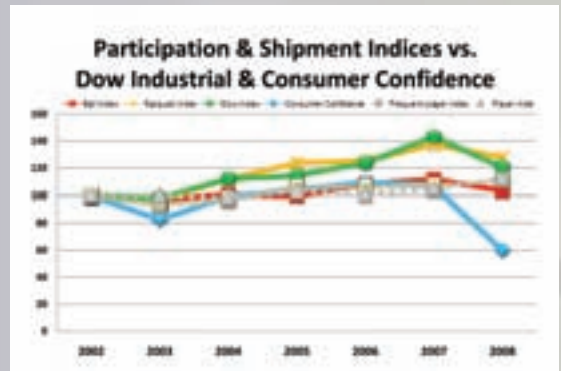
Nearly 6 million new players tried tennis for the first time in 2008. And frequent players, those who play at least 21 times a year, increased by 7% to 5.62 million in 2008. The annual survey was conducted for the TIA and USTA by the Taylor Research Group.

The jump in total participation is a 7% rise over the previous year's 25.1 million players, and a 12% increase over the five-year period beginning in 2003 through year-end 2007, when total participation was at 24 million.

Related to the rise in tennis participation, data also shows that shipments of tennis racquets and balls over that same five-year period have followed this same trend. Since 2003, adult racquet shipments were up 30%, and youth racquets increased a remarkable 80%. Tennis ball shipments were up 15% over that same time period. However, total 2008 shipments are projected to be down slightly from 2007.

There are many contributing factors for tennis's growth, including:

- ▶ The combined efforts of the USTA, TIA and other groups bringing tennis to more and more kids through school programs and other curriculum, helping to make possible the growth in youth racquet shipments.
- ▶ Our front-line of dedicated teaching professionals and facilities who attract and keep players engaged in our sport.
- ▶ Positive role models with tennis's professional players and increased tournament attendance.
- ▶ The sport has developed, and continues to improve, a strong infrastructure that provides more places to play, programs to learn the game, and partners to play with.
- ▶ Tennis is relatively inexpensive to play and promotes a healthy, active lifestyle with great social benefits. And an hour of competitive tennis burns more calories than most other sports.



The TIA compared shipment and participation data vs. main economic indicators (2008 projected). Download chart at TennisIndustry.org.

Consumer queries to the "postcards" on the GrowingTennis System to find local tennis programs doubled from second quarter 2008 to third quarter, from 13 million to 26 million. And, the number of facilities using the GrowingTennis System increased by a remarkable 67% in that same period.

TennisIndustryNews.org is your one-stop search for tennis industry news and information. The site features the latest newfeeds from RSI, along with TIA member news, plus an official tennis industry calendar, GrowingTennis newsletters and archives, quick-links to industry partners, industry newsletters, and a tennis media and manufacturer search.

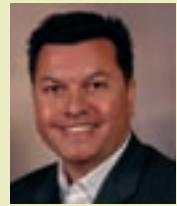
Share Your News and Views on Growth at TennisIndustryNews.org

We want to hear from you! This industry has had great momentum. In 2009, it will be more important than ever to continue our best practices and find supportive ways to keep the industry vital and strong. Please share any comments—your views and feedback are important to us.

- ▶ What do you feel are contributing factors for tennis's growth?
- ▶ Please share any individual or business success stories, which we hope to publish in future issues.
- ▶ How can we make our industry stronger?
- ▶ How is this current economy affecting your business?

Q&A with New TIA President Jon Muir

Jon Muir, the worldwide general manager of Wilson Racquet Sports, began a two-year term as president of the TIA on Jan. 1. Muir grew up in Southern California and has been a lifetime USTA member since his junior tennis playing days and went on to play high school and college varsity tennis. Muir, who is a certified professional by both the USPTA and PTR, began his tennis career as a private tennis coach working mainly with junior players. He joined Wilson over 11 years ago as a Territory Sales Manager and has had various positions in Wilson management, where he was promoted to his current position in 2006.



Q: What are your priorities as you begin your term?

A: The TIA needs to continue to focus on the growth of tennis from a business and economic perspective. Sustaining our growth and continually improving our infrastructure are vital. We must further define and communicate our initiatives to ensure we continue to work closely with both the USTA and all of our partners throughout the industry. It's important to maintain the momentum we have collectively worked towards the past few years.

Another major area is in technology, especially in how it can address our 24/7 society today and improve our efficiencies for capturing and retaining new players. The TIA along with the USTA are taking a lead role in this area, helping potential tennis consumers easily find places to play and programs in their area. We will place a big emphasis towards online enrollment access for all facilities and programs with our focus on communicating and enhancing the tools that have already been developed. Integrating these tools and technology can help retailers and facilities manage their business more efficiently and profitably.

Q: What are some of the key issues facing the industry?

A: Given the current economic conditions, we need to ensure we are balancing the reality of our short-term challenges with longer term opportunities for our sport and industry to expand to even higher levels in the years ahead. As an association, we need to work better in general with our tennis retailers, including communication and continuing to provide tools that can directly support their business day to day.

We also need to begin a concerted effort to develop a clearer career path in tennis in all areas (teaching professionals, associations, manufacturers, etc.) that will support

the future opportunities and growth of our industry. Lastly, I think we need to continually challenge ourselves to ensure we are staying focused on what really will make the difference in our industry and in our sport longer term.

Q: Where do you see growth opportunities for the sport?

A: We need to improve awareness that tennis is relatively inexpensive to play and truly is a lifetime sport. If we look at all sports, there are very few where the majority base of players can continue to play and excel even further after high school or college. Our challenge is to help accelerate the younger base of new and continuing players prior to high school.

The QuickStart Tennis format is beginning to show early success and get real traction at this key time. Expanding the awareness of this approach and format for entry-level players is a huge opportunity to not just get more kids in the 6 to 10 age range into our sport (and their families), but also an opportunity to increase revenue per court and revenue overall coming into our industry. If we can get more kids started and staying in our sport, our core serious player base will continue to grow in the years ahead.

Q: What do you think is important in terms of keeping everyone—manufacturers, teaching pros, retailers, etc.—focused on growing the brand of tennis?

A: Having strong research that shows our joint efforts are making a difference. No other sport pulls together both in our research and efforts like our industry. We need to maintain open and direct communication with everyone to maintain a clear focus on the growth of tennis and economic vitality of our sport. In working together, we will continue the success we have already experienced.

Our Focus for 2009—And Beyond

As we start this year, our goal is to take an increased focus on strengthening the industry—building stronger businesses, retailers and facilities—to further the economic vitality of tennis, and to work with our industry partners to aggressively promote the positive messaging for our sport.

- ▶ **New Research Analytics**—for greater insight and trends in the marketplace.
- ▶ **Business Advantages**—to reduce your costs and expenses, including TennisInsure, a comprehensive insurance program specifically for the tennis industry (does not include personal liability insurance), shipping discounts, merchant card processing discounts, travel and media discounts.
- ▶ **TennisConnect**—Powerful online software for any size tennis business, designed to save you time and increase

your profits, and in 2009, TennisConnect Retailer adds an online catalog, string center and racquet demo center to make your website the ultimate in customer service.

- ▶ **Online Registration**—including TennisCollect, an online payment system to help streamline your business.
- ▶ **Technology through the GrowingTennis System**—Log in to update your free facility listing and programs for consumers to find you, sign up for workshops, apply for funding, and much more at GrowingTennis.com.