



The
Newsletter
October 2006

Making Headlines

Dmitry Tursunov has grabbed quite a bit of attention, not just for his tennis results. Recall, Dmitry was the number one seed here in the '04 Challenger, and at that point was the best ranked player to have ever played in Binghamton. That got the ball rolling for what has been 3 years of great Challengers. He has received loads of attention lately for his journal entries via the ATP website... crossing his humor with daily routine and the flair of professional athletic travels. Ironically, his results have received attention as well, taking that next step from the 60-120 range in the last few years to #21 in the world in the beginning of October. He ousted the USA in the Davis Cup in September, with a marathon 5 setter against Andy Roddick. Both big hitters not conforming well to the clay, but Tursunov showed enough will to win it 17-15 in the well-publicized clincher match. A week later, Tursunov reached his 2nd ATP final of the year, and won his first title. Tursunov's Russian Davis Cup victory is interesting; he is distinctly remembered for "showing no interest in the media and specifically suggested he doesn't like to be labeled as Russian or American" when he was here, according to dBI tournament officials.



Tursunov at Rec Park in '03

Reigning Doubles champion **Scott Lipsky**, originally of Long Island, reached a career high doubles ranking recently with a finals appearance in the Bronx Challenger, then another title in Texas, and a final again in Tulsa. He currently sits at #104, the 12th best American.

Recent winners include Janko Tipsarevic, Tripp Phillips(doubles ATP), Jonathan Erlic/Andy Ram (doubles, 2 ATP titles), Chris Guccione, Bobby Reynolds, and Sam Warburg (doubles).



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Jamie Murray, doubles finalist this year, has reunited with his brother, Andy, in doubles. Jamie has had tremendous success in doubles throughout the year on the pro circuit. The inevitable question arose: “When would he join his brother to sell some doubles?” Who wouldn’t want to watch the pair? Growing up as fierce brother competitors; Jamie showing the most potential as a youngster yet getting a bit of bad luck; Andy storming the tennis world in his late teens; significant hardware from their days of doubles competition as juniors; different personalities; different results; the ultimate doubles pairing in siblings. It was a question that was asked of Jamie when he



Scott Lipsky and Jamie Murray (foreground)
in the doubles final

was in Binghamton; that is, will he reunite with his brother in the near future. Certainly would have sold interest at the US Open and the Davis Cup. “It’s not very likely”, Jamie said back then, insinuating that the schedule and difference in rankings are the obvious reasons. So much for that, because it was in Bangkok late September, where Andy had great singles success last year, and Jamie’s success in the rankings enabled the pair to become a reality on the ATP stage. They are both at an all-time high of rankings in doubles (ranked as individuals, not teams)... with the elder brother, Jamie, getting the edge on this one at 87. They did team up over the summer at Newport, but it had been the juniors prior to then. Well, Bangkok

again treated Murray to a good week. They made the final of the doubles and as of this writing, are in the quarterfinals of the ATP event in Japan. Andy helped his older brother get an even more solid stance for doubles at the ATP level. This pair is one of the most interesting stories in tennis right now, and we had the pleasure to see them both in the last couple of years.

Current players in the top 50 entry rankings that have been to Binghamton

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| #7- James Blake | 38- Xavier Malisse |
| 18- Lleyton Hewitt | 41- Tim Henman |
| 19-Andy Murray | 45- Nicolas Massu |
| 21-Dmitry Tursunov | 46- Julien Benneteau |
| 32-Olivier Rochus | 48- Hyung-Taik Lee |



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Community Involvement

Our Challenger continued to raise its profile as a community friendly event. The YMCA and Discovery Center again hosted successful fundraisers onsite during the Challenger. Over \$10,000 was raised for those organizations for the 2nd straight year. The Discovery Center came on board last year because the opportunity greatly increased the exposure of their Pastabilities event to the general public, according to organizers. The Challenger presents plenty of facilities for special events, just like those for the YMCA and the

Discovery Center. The Challenger also hosted more events geared toward exposing juniors to tennis, including clinics, Dick's Sporting Goods Carnival Day, and helping local amateur tournaments during the summer.



New blue at Rec Park

US Open highlights

Our motto of “on the road to the Open” was apparent again this year as we had many familiar faces in Flushing Meadows a couple weeks after our tournament. Five participants from the 2006 dBI Tennis Challenger made the US Open main draw.

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Perhaps the most glaring name on the draw sheets was **Jesse Witten(USA)**. Jesse qualified into the open, taking out our reigning champion, Scott Oudsema, in the opening round of qualifying and eventually losing in 5 sets to Paul Goldstein. Jesse has had a good run since turning pro in 2005, though he looked a bit worn out in August when he lost here in the 2nd round. **Noam Okun (ISR)** also qualified at the Open, along with a 1st round victory in the main draw. None of the '06 dBI Tennis Challenger participants faired well in the main draw. **Mark Philippoussis** had a tough opener against #2 great Rafael Nadal. **Andy Murray**, last year's champ, was a bright star again. Andy made his 1st ever Grand Slam 4th round appearance. He has climbed to #16 in the world with another stellar American summer hard court season. #16 in the world, and he was here just last year. **Alejandro Falla**, a dBI finalist against Murray last year, also had a good Open. He qualified and won a 1st round match.



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The **Davis Cup** quarterfinals in September was full of names we've seen here in Binghamton. It highlights the unique internationalism of our event. This past summer our Challenger had 13 countries represented, matching the year before. That is unique for tennis and may explain the broad interest of fans. In the US, tennis is the only popular sport to be growing in participation*. The ATP reports record attendance across all events globally. Yet another indicator is the broad tools available for tennis. A search on the internet for teaching aides and information about tennis yields a phenomenal wealth of knowledge and demonstrates how much global interest there is in tennis. Just looking up New York yields "TennisWeek", a magazine distributed to all USTA members. Tennis is a very large sport and New York is one of its hot beds.

*according to a study by the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association

Recent Binghamton participants playing for their country:

Dmitry Tursunov (RUS)*
Mark Philippoussis (AUS)
Danai Udomchoke(THA)*
Paradorn Srichaphan(THA)
Andy Murray(GBR)*
Hyung-Taik Lee (KOR)*
Alejandro Falla(COL)*
Carlos Salamanca(COL)*
Santiago Giraldo(COL)*
Lukas Lacko(SVK)*
Florin Mergea (ROM)
Peter Wessels(NED)



Laurie Bowen with Mark Philippoussis

A word from our director

Wow! It was an another incredible year for the dBI Tennis Challenger. In case you hadn't noticed, all seven courts at Rec Park were redone in US Open blue thanks to a grant arranged through the office of Senator Libous. (The same color as all the US Open Series Events!) The Discovery Center and YMCA charity events were able to raise over \$10,000 once again this year. Throughout the nine

days we had wonderful weather and record attendance at all of our features matches. We even had to bring in extra seating to accommodate the crowds. Our wild card choices of Jan Michael Gambel, a former #14 in the world and Mark Phillipoussis, a former #8 in the world lent a level of excitement for both the fans and press alike. Part of our mission is to also help grow the game of tennis in the Southern Tier. We are looking forward to the 2007 Challenger with the continued community support/sponsorship along with the assistance of hundreds of volunteers who make the tournament a reality.

- Laurie Bowen