

# Aztec Tennis Reporter

VOL 10 NO 1

SERVING THE SAN DIEGO STATE TENNIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1998

JANUARY 2009

## IN THIS ISSUE



How Sweet It Was!

**SWEET:** Aztec Alex Waske played in NCAA's Round of 16 in 2000. A glance at SDSU tennis history. 2



Where Are We Now?



**WHERE?** In our first issue, Aztec George Holland (1946) and others answered *ATR's* most popular question. 3

## Aztec Tennis Center Expanding Aztecs Start 87th Season On the Road



Aztec Tennis Reporter Photos

**GIFT HOUSE:** A locker room structure rises beside Aztec Tennis Center. Volunteer Coach Larry Willens gave funds.

### Coach Donates \$700,000 Building

San Diego State is building a \$700,000 locker room structure within the Aztec Tennis Center which will be named in honor of the late Harold and Grace Willens, Los Angeles tennis fans and parents of Volunteer Aztec Tennis Coach Larry Willens.

In late December, construction teams were building four locker rooms, containing lockers, showers, sinks, and toilets. The facilities are for the use of the Aztec men's and women's teams and visiting opponents.

The building sits on land beside the tennis center clubhouse completed in 2005 without changing rooms or showers due to lack of funds.

"I decided that we needed it badly," said Willens, "so I donated the money." The structure's furnishings are included in the estimated project costs. In 2007, Willens furnished the existing clubhouse with tables, sofa, chairs, and a wide-screen television set and desks and chairs for a coaches' office.

The locker room was scheduled for completion in time for the Jan 24 opening day for the

women's home season.

Willens said he wanted the facility to honor his parents. He described them as "tennis fanatics, definitely. They played six or seven days a week."

Willens' father was a prominent California businessman.

"I think this gives us the number-one college tennis facility in the country," Willens said.

Aztec Women's Coach Peter Mattera called the project "beautiful" and said it "completes the facility nicely."

"It's gonna be fantastic," said Aztec Men's Coach Gene Carswell. "I'm really

excited about everything that building has become."

Willens has served as a volunteer for both Aztec women's and men's teams. He coached the San Diego Friars of World Team Tennis (1976-78, 1981-85) and the Sacramento Capitals (1986-1990). Among players Willens has coached are Butch Walts, Kerry Reid, Gretchen Magers, and Aztec Alex Waske, one of the world's premier doubles players.



Larry Willens

San Diego State's men's tennis team opens the 2009 season on Jan 17th with an appearance at the University of Hawaii Tennis Classic. The women's tennis team begins play at home, opening with a doubleheader on Jan 24th against UC Riverside and Cal State Fullerton at the Aztec Tennis Center.

The two teams return with more than a dozen players from last season. Three newcomers have joined the women's squad: sisters Roxanne and Sierra Ellison of California and Emma Cioffi of Australia. The newest men's recruit is Luis Rattenhuber of Germany.

Holly Bagshaw of Britain and Julia Trunk of Germany

*Continued on Page 2*

### One Aussie's Arrival Assisted by Another

Emma Cioffi has joined the SDSU women's team as the first Australian to play Aztec tennis since Blair O'Hara (1999-2000).

Here's how it happened: Last spring, Ozge Atalay of Turkey decided to return home, freeing a scholarship.

Coach Peter Mattera had already invited Cioffi for a visit. "We liked her, she liked us. It worked out very well," he said.

O'Hara operates an Australia-wide athletic scholarship service based in Melbourne, Cioffi's hometown. The two talked. It paid off.

"He helped her," Mattera said. "He was able to reaffirm it (SDSU) was great place to go to school and play tennis."

## Ten Years of *ATR*: Watching 'Sleeping Giant' of NCAA Tennis Awaken

Approached in 1998 about a tennis newsletter, Coach John Nelson agreed immediately. SDSU, he said, is the sleeping giant of NCAA tennis.

For a decade, Aztec tennis has been waking up to its potential.

The defining moment for the men came in 2000, when they knocked off Pepperdine in the NCAA regional and reached Sweet Sixteen in Athens, GA. The team fought like Aztecs but lost to Virginia Commonwealth.

We could have won, Alex Waske said, realizing how close they had come. Waske had beaten Robert Kendrick of Pepperdine to lead the way out of the West, then defeated the number-two ranked college player in the country, VCU's Daniel Andersson.

A year later, Oliver Maiberger and Ryan Redondo embraced on a court in Dallas after winning the NCAA's National Indoor Doubles title, bringing Aztec men their first national championship trophy.

The Aztec women awakened far earlier. In 1974, Ann Lebedeff and Karen Reinke won the USTA national college doubles title at Kalamazoo, Michigan. (See *USTA Yearbook* entry inset above). Today, Lebedeff is a highly respected



DECADE: Pages of *ATR* (1999-2009), *Fault Lines*, and *World Tennis Gazette*.

tennis educator, having coached at Arizona and Cal Poly, and now at Pomona-Pitzer. Tennis has been a part of San Diego State since 1922, when students formed a men's tennis club. It was 50 years before women got

**USTA Women's Collegiate Champions — Doubles**  
1974 Ann Lebedeff, San Diego State — Karen Reinke, San Diego State

to play, but they more than made up for it. Between 1976 and 1993, Coach Carol Plunkett led the Aztec women high into the Top 10 and coached 14 All-Americans. Since then, under Peter Mattera, the number of All-American honors has climbed to 35. Mattera has won championships in the Western Athletic and Mountain West and his teams have gained NCAA post-season invitations 10 times in 13 years.

Skip Redondo (Ryan's father) coached

Aztec men's tennis (1977-1988). Then Hugh Bream (1989-1993). And John Nelson (1994-2003). Gene Carswell's teams have won conference season titles in 2005, 2006, and 2007 and the conference tournament in 2005. Between 1992 and 2007, eight Aztec men won All-American honors.

*ATR* has awakened. It started with 100 readers and now goes to nearly 1,600. The experience taught me how to create *Fault Lines*, a journal I use to teach at Columbia University. Now a sister publication, *World Tennis Gazette*, reaches about 2,300 worldwide.

Playing Aztec tennis (1957) was a privilege; editing this newsletter (1998-2009) has been a blessing. Thanks for your wonderful support. —John Martin

## In 87th Tennis Season, Aztecs Face Trojans, Bears, Huskies and Others

*Continued from Page 1*

appear likely to battle for the number one position on the women's team.

We'd be very good this year if we stay healthy, said Aztec women's coach Peter Mattera. We have a lot of depth, a lot of good players, and a lot of skill and energy.

Bartosz Golas of Germany begins his senior season as the top men's player. Achim Ceban of Russia, who sat out the fall semester, returns to the university and could make a run at the top spot.

We're very excited about our prospects for the year, said Aztec men's coach Gene Carswell, who has won Mountain West Coach of the Year honors three of the five years he has led the Aztecs.

Carswell said he would willingly trade his conference coaching honors for more trips to the NCAA regional and main draw playoffs. The men's team

has faltered in recent years on post-season doorsteps.

Of the men's prospects this season, his sixth as head coach, Carswell said: We know that we have depth and the potential to be really good.

The Aztec men face three formidable early opponents: the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets on Jan 30 in Waco, Texas, the UCLA Bruins on Feb 4 in Los Angeles, and the USC Trojans Feb 6 at the Aztec Tennis Center.

We have got a high-level schedule here. We've bitten off quite a bit, said Carswell, who succeeded John Nelson as Aztec men's coach in 2003. The Aztecs play Nel-

son's University of Hawaii squad in Manoa, HI, in mid-January at the Hawaii Tennis Classic.

The Aztecs prevailed in the 2008 meeting of the two teams. Hawaii later won the Western Athletic Conference crown for the first time and reached the NCAA regional playoffs.

They've much improved, said Carswell. I'm sure he (Nelson) is gonna be hungry to knock us off.

The Aztec women also play a strong schedule, hosting a dozen nationally-ranked teams, including the California Bears on Feb 6 and the Washington Huskies Apr 10. They face the USC Trojans, another formidable opponent,

on Feb 14 in Los Angeles.

Mattera rated Washington, California, Pepperdine and USC as among the Aztecs' top non-conference opponents.

The Mountain West Conference teams will be strong as well, Mattera said. BYU, UNLV, and Utah, they'd probably be better this year. And TCU (Texas Christian) is always tough.

Mattera is entering his 29th consecutive season at San Diego State. He became an assistant women's coach in 1980 and head coach in 1993. His teams have gained NCAA regional championship invitations in 10 of the last 13 years.

The coaching staff all returned for a new season. Ryan Redondo (men) and Lindsey Gamp (women) are assistant coaches. Larry Willens is the volunteer men's coach.

Nichole Diggs has served as trainer for both teams. Vicente Tulliano is men's team manager and strings racquets.

### **Aztec Tennis Reporter, January 2009**

*Aztec Tennis Reporter* is a newsletter for players, coaches, alumni, and friends of San Diego State tennis. Neither the university nor its athletic department is responsible for its contents. This is the 40th edition. To comment, correct, or subscribe, email [aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com](mailto:aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com).

Editor: John Martin (Aztec Men's Tennis, 1957)

# Where Are We Now? The Great Search Continues (1922-2009)



1938

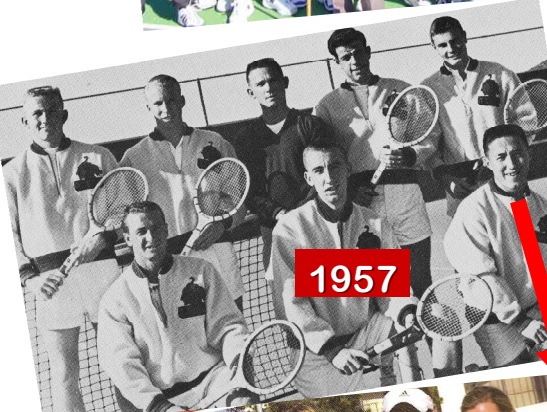


1984



2002

1936



1957



2003

Most popular *ATR* feature in our first 10 years? That's easy: *Where Are We Now?* Tracked down through teammates, families, year-books, telephone directories, and the Internet, nearly 140 Aztecs have told *ATR* their stories.

Highlights: George Holland (1946 Aztec men's team) was under fire at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. (Photo, Page 1)



Nicole Storto (1990-93) and Jeanette Bhagandas (aka 'Triniti') (1995-98) are both Storto Triniti songwriters, singers, and professional musicians.

Two Aztec women served as police officers: Heather Petty (1981-84), a San Diego police detective, and Susheel Gulati (1992-1993), a London bobby.



The 1932 Aztec men's coach, Leslie Wilbanks, wore three-piece suits and later coached Hollywood starlets and celebrities.

Most amazing career path: Bill Ereneta (1957 Aztec men's team) flew Marine jet fighters, worked on America's supersonic transport, became deputy director of the San Jose International Airport, and then retired — to sing professional opera and perform in at least 30 musicals in the Bay Area.



Most unusual circulation route discovery: An ex-wife refused to reveal an Aztec tennis player's address but lovingly forwarded *Aztec Tennis Reporter* to him for many years.



1975



1997



1975

1983



1992

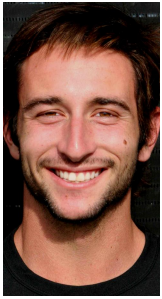


1985



1996

1958



Beron



Ceban



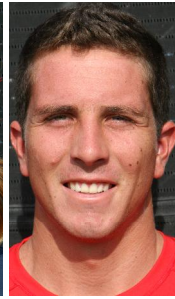
Colman



Feliz



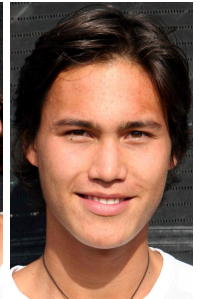
Golas



Gomez



Rattenhuber



Schulz van Endert



Shitrit



Tosches



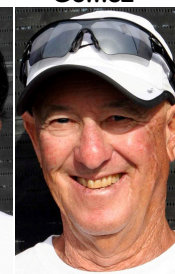
Diggs



Tulliano



Redondo



Willens



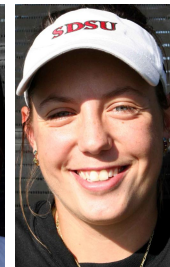
Gamp



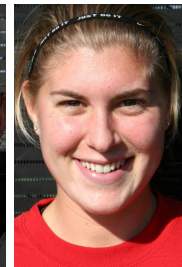
Bagshaw



Cadua



Cioffi



Colman



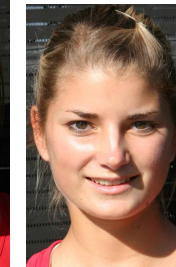
R. Ellison



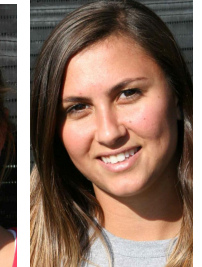
S. Ellison



Kitts



Trunk



Yusupov



Mattera



Carswell

# SDSU Home Tennis Matches

## Aztec Tennis Center: Jan 24-Apr 11, 2009

### Women

- Jan 24 UC Riverside 9 am
- Jan 24 Cal State Fullerton 3 pm
- Feb 6 California 2 pm
- Feb 10 Pepperdine 2 pm
- Feb 13 Long Beach State 2 pm
- Feb 20 Arizona 2 pm
- Mar 1 Sacramento State 10 am
- Mar 17 Nebraska 2 pm
- Mar 19 Purdue 2 pm
- Mar 24 Harvard 2 pm
- Mar 27 TCU 2 pm
- Mar 28 New Mexico TBA
- Mar 29 UNLV 10 am
- Apr 10 Washington 2 pm

#### Women's Roster:

Holly Bagshaw, Esther Cadua, Emma Cioffi, Olivia Colman, Roxanne Ellison, Sierra Ellison, Kathryn Kitts, Julia Trunk, Milana Yusupov.  
Coach Peter Mattera, Lindsay Hedberg Gamp (Assistant)

### Men

- Feb 6 USC noon
- Feb 6 UC Riverside 5 pm
- Feb 17 USD (tentative)
- Feb 19 UC Irvine 1:30 pm
- Mar 12 Georgia State 2 pm
- Mar 13 Texas Tech 2 pm
- Mar 15 Minnesota 10 am
- Mar 15 Nevada 3 pm
- Mar 25 Harvard 1:30 pm
- Apr 4 UC Santa Barbara noon
- Apr 9 Brigham Young TBA
- Apr 10 Texas Christian TBA
- Apr 11 Utah TBA

#### Men's Roster:

Michael Beron, Achim Ceban, Jordan Colman, Andre Feliz, Bartosz Golas, Juan Andres Gomez, Luis Rattenhuber, Tim Schulz van Endert. Coach Gene Carswell  
Ryan Redondo (asst.), Larry Willens (vol.)

### Men Away

- Jan 17-18 U of Hawaii Tennis Classic
- Jan 30 Georgia Tech
- Jan 31 Baylor or Utah
- Feb 4 UCLA
- Feb 13-16 National Indoors (Chicago, IL)
- Feb 27 Fresno State
- Feb 28 Middle Tenn
- Mar 5-8 Pacific Coast Doubles (La Jolla)
- Mar 20-22 Rice Invitational (Houston, TX)
- Mar 27 UNLV
- Mar 28 New Mexico
- Mar 29 Air Force
- Apr 2 Pepperdine
- Apr 23-25 Mountain West Championships (Albuquerque, NM)

### Women Away

- Jan 29 Hawaii
- Jan 31 UC Irvine
- Feb 24 USC
- Mar 7 Loyola (LA)
- Apr 3 Wyoming
- Apr 4 Colo State
- Apr 5 Air Force
- Apr 14 USD
- Apr 17 BYU
- Apr 18 Utah
- Apr 22-25 Mountain West Conference Championships (Albuquerque, NM)