

CPTL set to kick off seventh season on Friday

By Mike Santillo
MOULTRIE NEWS

Seven years ago, three men came up with an idea. Not sure how it would turn out, they decided to take a chance and turn their idea into a reality.

Residents throughout the Lowcountry are glad they did.

The three men are Dave Maness, Chris Henderson and Stewart Small; their creation - The Charleston Pro Tennis League.

"We really didn't know what to expect at first, but to say we anticipated this much success I'd be lying," Maness said. "There were concerns that we would not get enough talent but we knew the talent was here; we didn't know if we'd be able to get sponsors, but we just decided to go for it."

The CPTL is a nonprofit organization.

"That's the beauty of this," Maness said. "Money raised goes directly into the program. The purpose of the league is to create a competitive environment for high-level tennis players and to promote local tennis while providing high-quality community support and entertainment."

The league consists of four teams with 12 players per team who will play for one of four major team sponsors.

The format will be three Davis Cup style doubles matches and two singles matches each Friday night beginning this Friday evening at Snee Farm in Mount Pleasant.

The first match is slated for 6:30 pm.

The four team sponsors are 4 Spine, Lowcountry Tennis Association, HSI, and Thurmond Kirchner & Timbes, PA.

Unlike in years past, this will be the first time the CPTL will feature singles play.

"A lot of players specialize in singles play. There was a demand for it, so we felt it was the best move to



Pictured are CPTL team members at the Andy Roddick Exhibition. Seen here from left are, Stuart Small, Matt Hane, Charly Rasheed and Toby Simpson.

make," Maness said. "This is a chance for people to see their teachers (tennis pros) play," Maness said.

For spectators, the CPTL is more than just viewing a tennis match.

"The music, DJ, beer and food and fun atmosphere are all ideas that make us unique from traditional tennis," Maness said. "The

crowd can even decide if a ball will be counted as in or out, based on cheering. It's a one-stop shop; tennis, dinner, fun, and so on."

A typical crowd can range anywhere from 400-1500. That's pretty good considering the popularity of high school football in the Lowcountry.

"We're happy with the turnout we get. Of course,

we'd like more people, but it's tough with high school football. Outside the tennis community, we don't really get a lot of press. We need more ability to advertise, which we don't really have the budget for," said Maness who has a message for all the people out there who need convincing of why they should come out and watch the CPTL.

"If you enjoy tennis you will be totally impressed. No doubt, this is the best tennis in the South at any level. I can honestly say this is the best tennis talent in the country, right here in the Lowcountry."

Applicants usually played college tennis and some even pro. Players must have at least a 5.0 ranking to play. A 5.5 rank-

ing is around what a teaching pro would be ranked. A 6.0 is a pro, right off the tour.

For the past four years, the CPTL has sent a 5.5 and 6.0 team to the National Championships in Las Vegas representing the South.

"That facility is awesome, it's like the Family Circle Cup on steroids," Maness said.

People have come from Greenville, Columbia, Rock Hill and other cities just to play in the CPTL.

Maness made it a point to mention Jimmy and Brenda Hunter.

"They put forth the money to help support the program. Because of them, we can go to Vegas."

As good as the CPTL players are, the program is more than just about on the court benefits.

"This program helps mentor players to become tennis pros; it also helps place people into jobs, connect with people that are hiring and just help get your career going," Maness said.

The executive committee is made up of:

Chris Henderson, president; Stuart Small, vice-president; Maness, treasurer and Fred McKay, secretary.

The CPTL has become so popular over the years, it has had to turn down host sites.

Host facilities throughout the regular season include:

Farmfield, FON Club, The Players Club, Family Circle Tennis Center, Snee Farm, Country Club of Charleston, Pine Forest Country Club and Daniel Island Club.

After the regular season is concluded, there will be one playoff round followed by the finals on Oct. 24 at the Family Circle Cup on Daniel Island.

(Mike Santillo can be reached at news@moultrie.com)

Key to the City



PHOTO PROVIDED

Council member and chairman of the Mount Pleasant Recreation Committee, Gary Santos, presents the head coach of the Snee Farm Country Club Swim Team, Jason Kreutner, the Key to the City on behalf of Mayor Harry Hallman for winning the 2008 Charleston City Swim Meet. The win marks the 20th City Swim Meet in a row that coach Kreutner and the Snee Farm swim team has won. Pictured from left are: Bucky Buchanan, Chelsea Joyner, Gary Santos, Jason Kreutner, TJ Medlock, Brock Fraser, Fred Varn.

DI Club hosts PGA tourney Sept. 23

The Daniel Island Club will host the Carolinas PGA Professional Championship Sept. 23-25 at the club's Ralston Creek course where approximately 160 club professionals from North and South Carolina hope to qualify for the 2009 PGA Professional National Championship.

This is the second year the Daniel Island Club has hosted a qualifying event for the Professional National

Championship. The 2007 Carolinas Section championship was played at the Beresford Creek course.

More than 3,600 PGA professionals will compete in 41 PGA Section championships this year to qualify for the 2009 PGA Professional National Championship at Twin Warriors Golf Club in Santa Ana Pueblo, N.M., June 28 through July 1.

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