



Chickee Chatter

Royal Palm Tennis Club

Founded in 1960

February, 2022

7001 SW 98th Street Miami, FL 33156 Pro Shop: 305.661.3350 Office: 305.667.4006 www.rptc.org

OFFICERS

2021

President
Joan Sanz

Vice President
Tbd

Secretary
Javier Siu

Treasurer
Doug Orth

DIRECTORS

(serving through)

- Jeanne Spital '22
- Marla Ferreira '22
- Bruce Koniver '22
- Robert Rubin '22
- Joan Sanz '22
- Cindy Augustyn '23
- David Elkins '23
- Bruce Hornik '23
- Steve Rigl '23
- John Sullivan '23
- Tim Battle '24
- Janine Burke '24
- Corinne Kayal '24
- Doug Orth '24
- Neil Sosler '24

From the President,

When the pandemic first hit, the new President, Andy Herron, promised to get Royal Palm safely through the pandemic. Well, two years later, the pandemic is still lingering. I wish I could blame Andy for that (and come to think of it, I probably will), but everything else he did during the pandemic for Royal Palm was incredible. His thoughtful leadership and perspective, his weighing of the pros and cons of different policies meant to protect the members, staff and pros and his great communication with everyone made a huge difference in how the Club weathered this storm. The early pandemic was particularly terrifying, and Andy steered the Club through treacherous times. For this, we should all be grateful.



Andy did a lot more than that. With the aid of some incredible board members, we have a great long range plan that is well on the way to being implemented (kudos to Bruce Koniver and Alan Rosenthal), we have a new business manager and new tennis software soon (kudos to Glenn Huber), our budget is well in hand (thanks to Doug Orth), our construction projects are progressing (thanks, Javier Siu), we have a new intraclub league (thanks to Eric, Alison McLaughlin and the Tennis Committee), updated bylaws (kudos to Cindy Augustyn) etc etc. Our membership waiting list is at an all time high (thanks to Bev & Eric for all their work there) and our tennis program is phenomenal (thanks to Eric and the pros) and our facilities and pro shop are great (thank you maintenance and pro shop staff).

Thank you to our outgoing Board members: Wendy Coles, Glenn Huber, Alison McLaughlin and Javier Siu, for all your hard work. It made a difference. Welcome to new Board Members: Tim Battle, Janine Burke, Corinne Kayal, Doug Orth and Neil Sosler. Also, welcome to Jeanne Spital, who will be taking over Paco Comparini's spot for one year. Rumor has it that after two years of Andy's zoom meetings, Paco felt a real need to leave Dade County.

And so now we continue to move forward and continue to always improve our Club. My family has a long history at this club. I love this place. My perspective has been evolving over the past 29 years:

1983 – Royal Palm has a two story Pro Shop, a rock Clubhouse and a pool. I am a

brand new mother, taking up tennis for the first time. I spent approximately \$200 on tennis lessons and clinic and was a horrendous tennis player.

2003 - Royal Palm has a very rickety two story Pro Shop, a rock Clubhouse, but no pool. I am busy working and I also am constantly praying that my two sons will make it out of high school and college in one piece. I am a two term RPTC Board Member who just became President. I have spent approximately \$5,000 on tennis lessons and clinics and am a very mediocre tennis player.

2022 - Royal Palm has a beautiful new Clubhouse/Pro Shop, a rock Clubhouse about to be demolished, and yes, pickleball courts in the making. I am still working and am now a grandmother to five toddlers under the age of four. I am a multiple term Board Member (they do tend to blend together) who somehow has become President again. I have spent approximately 5 million dollars on tennis lessons and clinics and have now been elevated to the level of a mediocre tennis player.

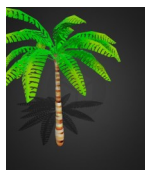
Time passes.

While looking at the listings of current RPTC members, I am struck by how the vast majority of active members have joined the Club after 2000. In conversations with so many of these newer members, I realized that they have a wonderful appreciation of the Club, but no knowledge of the Club's history.

There are all sorts of variations on the saying "appreciate the past, celebrate the present and embrace the future". So, with your permission, not only will I bore you with my monthly letter, but I will also give you a few glimpses of RPTC past, thanks to an old scrapbook and members' institutional memory of our founders and their vision of Royal Palm Tennis Club. It is a good past and Royal Palm is a great Club, which is still embracing the future. I know it is going to be a great one.

See you on the courts,

Joan Sanz



Royal Palm Tennis Club – The Beginning

In 1959, a group of tennis enthusiasts, led by several executives from Pan American World Airways, got together to form a tennis - only club in South Dade. Their feeling was that tennis was not given enough importance in the typical country clubs, which focused on golf and social events. They chose South Dade (currently Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay) because that area was still very agriculture focused, and large tracts of land were available. The original small group of tennis enthusiasts was enlarged to 35 people (each paying \$100), and Palmetto Tennis Club was founded as a private, not-for-profit, Member owned organization.

One of the founding members was Phil Delany, a realtor, who helped choose the Gautier estate due to its high elevation and location. It had ten acres of mangoes, a house and pool.

The Gautier's were a prominent family in South Florida during the thirties and forties. The Gautier estate was owned by John and Spec Gautier. Once the estate was sold, they bought a house on the Riviera Golf Course, and the newspapers reported that John said "we still have an enormous yard, but now I don't have to mow it!" Miami was still a small town in the early sixties!

The property was bought in July, 1961. In a letter from Rear Admiral Rafael Benitez, who was the Chairman Pro Tem, he stated that the purchase price was \$97,500, with a down payment of \$19,500 and a mortgage of \$78,000 payable in thirteen yearly installments with 6% interest. The amortization of principal started in the third year.

There was no reference as to the source of the deposit, but it was probably loaned by some of the founding members. Delayed amortization was important, as they had to recruit members and raise funds for getting plans approved, construction of tennis courts and improvements to the Gautier home, which became the "Clubhouse". Unfortunately, the pool on site was in poor condition and was removed during the first years.

At some time, during that first year, the name was changed from Palmetto Tennis Club to Royal Palm Tennis and Racquet Club. That name change did not last long, as the Racquet Club of Miami protested the use of the word 'Racquet', so Royal Palm Tennis Club became the permanent name - even though there were no actual Royal Palms on the land!

- Joan Sanz



Welcome



Family Members Approved Waitlist

Jedd & Danielle Wider & Family

Ed & Gigi Willett

Ted & Nathalie Caplow & Family

* * * * *

Golden Member

Terresa Buoniconti

* * * * *

Junior Members

Kat Sullivan, Lucas Bacardi, Alex Ramey, Kai, Nina & Conrad Weeman, Juliet Cardoso, Valentina Martinez -Fraga, Lincoln Ginieres, Asher Elias, Fabian & Paulina Mora, Olivia Arguello, Sebastian Campo, Ryder & Tyson Dalal, Stefano Gheresi, Anabella Hevia, Max Hoppe, Lilliana Sayed & Juliet Torres.



Events to come



**** Presidents Party****.... Moved to **March 12th, 2022 @ 7pm**.....Save the date!



Kids Match Day - February 5th & 19th @ 1-3pm * Note new time



Ladies RP League - February, 7th & 21st @ 9:30 - 12noon



Club Championships Singles Finals - March 5th Come out and watch some good tennis!



****Doubles Club Championships*** "A & C" will be played April 1st, 2nd, 3rd (4th if needed)

"B" April 8th, 9th, 10th (11th if needed)

Men's: "A" Any level; "B"- 8.0 & below; "C"- 6.5 & below

Ladies: "A" - Any level; "B"- 7.5 & below; "C"- 6.0 & below

Finals will be held on Saturday, April 23rd for all divisions - Men's & Ladies.

Sign up in the pro-shop.



These gentlemen from RP have played together over the years and enjoyed each other's company both on and off the courts.



Pros Corner



The Angle

Every shot in tennis has a unique purpose. The angle is a shot that can be used in a multitude of ways to set up the point, change the rhythm, attack and even play defense. The angle can also be hit with topspin as well as slice.

In singles, the topspin angle can be used to open up the court by bringing the opponent off of the court as well as up into the court setting up the next shot to either beat your opponent deep or wide. The best time to hit an angle is off of a wide shot because an angle begets a larger angle. A poorly hit angle will open up an angle by your opponent as well as an opportunity to attack down the line. Also, the topspin angle can be used effectively as a passing shot. A volleyer typically should cover the line (there)for? as a short angle is a very difficult passing shot to cover.

In doubles the topspin angle can also be used as a way to open up the court and nullify the opposing volleyer. However, hitting an angle in doubles does take your own volleyer away from the middle and poaching. A topspin angle in doubles is also an effective passing shot to create space amongst the opposing volleyers, as well as an effective way of returning serve.

The slice angle is commonly an underused shot and can be a safe substitute for a drop shot. A drop shot requires a very high degree of skill and can oftentimes backfire. A slice angle in singles or doubles is a way to bring your opponent to the net against their will by making them hit upward from a low wide short position in the court creating much easier passing shots to finish the point.

Next time you hit the courts, use the angle to compliment your arsenal of deep hitting to change the rhythm and set-up finishing shots.

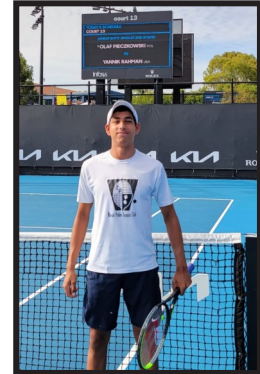
- Eric Hechtman



News from RP

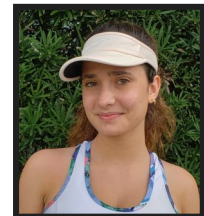


- ◆ Thank you to our elite ballot counters, Maria Bandklayder, Adrienne Vynne, Julie Gutierrez, Sharon Johnnides & Anita Shuffield, for once again doing a fantastic job.
- ◆ Congratulations to Yannik Rahman, 17 year old, Family Member of RP, for playing phenomenal tennis in the Australian Open Junior 2022. Firstly, it was exciting as he has earned enough points to get him into the main draw for a Grand Slam Event. He then went on to win his first round and next defeated #8 seed, who is ranked #10 in the world. He then lost his match in the round of 16, but not without a great effort. Eric has been his coach since he was 10 years old, along with his dad, Amin.
Very proud of his accomplishments over the year's.
Well done Yannik!



Playing it Forward

Since 1960, Royal Palm has fostered a welcoming environment that has brought families coming back year after year. Members learn and improve their tennis at Royal Palm, but a sense of community is what sets the club apart. Introductions to countless friends, both coaches and members, develop because of one's time spent at Royal Palm.



Many grew up taking lessons on these courts unaware that years later, they would sign up their own child for lessons too. As a prime example of this scenario, I have had opportunities to play with my friends, coaches—and even my father and grandmother. These clinics, lessons, and matches have taught me and countless generations lessons that can be applied in college and beyond.

For some members, Royal Palm provided more than just community this past year - it served as a consistent staple providing normalcy during the most “unnormal” year. Luckily, tennis' layout allows players to engage in an outdoor no-contact game. The ability to see one's friends in a safe manner is what kept many sane, and most importantly, up to par on their tennis skills.

People leave their mark, whether on the clay courts or within the community. From Golden Members, or those who have been with the club for over 50 years, to the youngest four-year-old member, Royal Palm has a place for all generations.



Trivia question:

Currently, how many families are there spanning three generations from the same family playing tennis at Royal Palm? Read our next Chickee Chatter to get the answer !

by **Samantha Elkins** (Family Member of RP)