

## FRIENDS of BIOLA TENNIS MEETING

Date: April 8, 2004

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Biola Café, Banquet Room

Attendees: 63

Facilitator: **Dee Henry, Head Coach, Biola Women's Tennis Team**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform existing and potentially interested individuals of the current status of the Biola Tennis Complex and the future plans.

- Welcome and invocation – **Dr. Wes Wilmer, V.P. of Advancement, Biola University**  
Dr. Wilmer informed the audience that Biola University was strongly behind the project and supported the efforts to start the next phase (4 additional courts), with January of 2005 as the targeted finish date. The clubhouse may or may not be done during this time depending upon the funds raised.
- Beginning of slide presentation – **Dee Henry** – The object of the project was to illustrate that Biola tennis is unique! It meets the following needs in our community:
  - Tennis is for everyone
  - Programs encompassing a wide range of ages and abilities
  - Instruction and competition for all ages
- **Core Values (3)**
  - Safety is our priority
  - Character development is our cornerstone
  - Community service is our distinctive
- **Mission Statement** – The Biola Tennis Complex exists to offer top quality instructional programs, competition, events, recreation, and community outreach to a wide range of tennis enthusiasts in our community and its surrounding counties. The Biola Tennis Complex is designed to attract high-performance Christian athletes to our collegiate programs at a university that is passionate about caring for the campus and serving the community.
- Current Programs – These programs encompass four distinctive areas (instructional, competitive, recreational and outreach). Examples of some of the programs are NJTL, adult, wheelchair, learning impaired, junior leagues, annual tournament, collegiate workouts, Tennis Across America, plus other special and social events.
- Intercollegiate – The new tennis complex would allow us to have the women's team matches on campus, host regional events, re-establish the men's team, allow university students to support matches, provide a work environment for students, and give Biola University more drawing power for high-performance Christian athletes.
- The new tennis complex would allow us to host National, Regional, and Satellite tennis events, whether wheelchair, Special Olympics, or other sponsored tournaments. Our center court would be one of only two sunken center courts in Southern California, which is adequately accessible for wheelchair players. The 8-court complex would also allow us to greatly expand our 25-year-old annual tournament.

- NJTL – Started in 1983, it averages 175 children participants per year. There have been at least 30 high schools teams, which have benefited from the Biola NJTL participants, whose skills have developed enough to qualify for their high school tennis team. A number of players who started with NJTL have played in the collegiate ranks. Several have become coaches, teachers, and instructors in tennis.
- Speaker – **Dennis Tinseth** – Dennis had 2 kids go through the NJTL program and both kids have retained tennis as a life-time sport. In fact, tennis has been the one sport/activity that they truly love and care about to this day. As Dennis said, “the qualities of character my kids learned from this program have had a strong impact on who they are now”.
- The new tennis complex would allow us to greatly expand our Tennis Across America program, which is a clinic for the whole family.
- Students would benefit tremendously from the new complex because of the interaction they would have with community at-large. Many students would benefit directly through the pro shop, clubhouse, instruction, programs, and special events. The complex is set up to have an on-campus working environment for the students.
- Speaker – **Tim Redmond** – Tim has 6 kids, all learned to play in Biola’s NJTL Program. Two were in Junior Team Tennis, also known as Penn League, and oldest daughter played on the high school team, but the child who benefited the most is, his son, Tim, who has Downs Syndrome. He looks forward to each new semester with the Challenger program. His eye hand coordination and confidence have been greatly improved and his game has grown by leaps and bounds. He particularly looks forward to the weekly interaction with the volunteer student helpers and the extra chance to be around his friends. Tim said “tennis has given our kids a chance to grow and learn in ways that bring the best in each of them.” Tim hopes the facility will expand and would love to see “Special Olympics” Tennis be held at the Biola complex.
- This Biola program is one of the very few programs that provide instruction to wheelchair participants who have never played the game before. The fun and great student helpers give people new to the game a love for the game. Nobody is turned away.
- Two of the Nationally ranked wheelchair players who’s “first SERVE” was at Biola are
  - Vicki Sarantakos - #36 ranked in USTA wheelchair division
  - Eddie Medel - #18 ranked in USTA men’s B wheelchair division
  - Both have traveled all over the US competing in tournaments. Vicki who’s world ranking is 95 in ITF, has competed in 5 countries. She also did an exhibition at the Indian Wells pro tournament.
- Speaker – **T.J. Ballard**- T.J. started playing wheelchair tennis at Biola when he was 12 years old. He was in NJTL and soon became a tournament player. When he started college, his education became his priority. T. J who only uses a wheelchair for tennis said that “tennis helps bring people together and has helped my self-confidence tremendously”.
- Speaker – **Gretchen Hausman** – Gretchen said that Coach Henry and the tennis program was an overwhelming positive influence on her life. Originally wanting to be a physical

therapist, Gretchen now is a third grade teacher who has her class buddy with the handicapped and special education students for PE class. The main reason is the influence that will have on her kids just as it had with her when Coach had her involved as a Biola student. Gretchen remembers the times that Coach Henry would lead them through the life in Christ series and which impacts her life yet to day. She valued the teaching of character development which emphasized that the way you compete is much more important than the results on the scorebook. As Gretchen says, “even today my leading motto in life is ‘be flexible when you can’, you never know the lessons life will bring you”. Coach Henry taught her that lesson in many ways during her experience at Biola.

- What will the Biola Tennis Complex look like in the future?
  - 8 lighted courts
  - Sunken center court
  - 2,000 square foot club-house
    - Classroom space
    - Coaches offices
    - Lounge/Reception area
    - Restroom/shower facility

How do we know that will happen?—ask Coach about her 6 minutes of affirmation about the completion of this project, and read Mathew 14:19 to see how God can multiply the gifts we give to him in the same way.

- **Vision Statement** – The Biola Tennis Complex is becoming a program with a first class facility that creates opportunities for intercollegiate competition and events at a high profile and national level to enhance the reputation of Biola University. We pursue high levels of tennis, character and service excellence while cultivating like-minded alliances, sponsorships and friends of tennis to expand our programs for collegiate students, disabled, youth, and adults to maximize court usage and community service year-round.
- **Speaker – Ken Bascum – Director of Planning, Biola University** – Ken’s emphasis was on the **immediate** needs to keep the momentum going so we can have the courts completed by January 2005. His points were:
  - Steel prices have doubled the past few weeks and the groundwork for the facility needs steel reinforcement, which is critical to the foundation of the courts.
  - The momentum needs to be maintained so we can keep the bureaucratic process moving (it takes much longer today)
  - We need the initial \$20,000 to \$40,000 to (1) bring back the civil engineering group who did the lay out for the current courts in order to get the project moving and (2) get our permits so we can start moving the dirt for the courts.
  - The enthusiasm level needs to stay high and we need to reach our fund goals
  - We need to get the initial money (20,000-40,000) by May 1<sup>st</sup> so that construction on the courts could begin in September 2004.
  - We need to have appx. \$300,000 to start the construction of all four of the courts and get all of them done at once—which would be of significant savings.
  - We need an additional \$300,000 for the construction of a 2000 sq ft club house
  - We will build the courts even if the money is not all in yet for the club house – which would then be built as soon as the a year later

Speaker – **Rick Bee – Director of Alumni, Biola University** – Rick emphasized the need to have everyone fill out the response cards and give to Dee. **HOW CAN YOU HELP?** We need

your prayer support. Also some can connect us with individuals who would have a special interest in the project. Since the first of May comes real soon it is important that as soon as you think of other ways you can help, please contact Coach Henry either via email [dee.henry@biola.edu](mailto:dee.henry@biola.edu) or voice mail 562.944.0351 ext 5931.

Tax deductible financial gifts also may be made to Biola University “tennis complex” and directed to the office of Rick Bee, 13800 Biola Ave. La Mirada, CA 90639.

My special thanks to Jim Johnson for submitting this excellent summary of the meeting. Now you can easily share the vision with others.

Here to SERVE,  
Dee Henry  
[www.biola.edu/tennis](http://www.biola.edu/tennis)