

Tournaments to test amateur netters

This year, there are more tennis tournaments scheduled for all levels of ability and age groups than any previous year.

I just finished reading the latest edition of the Western Tennis Association publication and there are 15 pages of tournaments listed in small print. That doesn't include the many area tournaments, sponsored by municipalities that aren't listed in any directory.

There are many of you who have never entered a tournament or any type of competition.

You should.

Not that you're going to win or even get past the first couple of rounds. But you will improve your game.

Local netter earns letter

David Epstein, who was part of more victories than any other tennis player at Ohio's Bowling Green State University this season, has earned his third letter in the sport.

Epstein, who lives in Farmington Hills, played at No. 3 singles and posted the team's best singles record — 12-9 overall and 6-3 against Mid-American Conference opponents.

He also teamed with Bud Vetter to compete in No. 3 doubles. Their 14-6 doubles record was the team's best doubles showing this season.

Epstein lost his first five singles matches before charging back to win 12 of his last 16 outings. He and Vetter won 10 of 11 doubles matches during one stretch.

Epstein lost in the consolation finals of the MAC championships at No. 3 singles. The Epstein-Vetter team was eliminated in the quarterfinals of the doubles competition.

Bowling Green recorded its first losing tennis record (10-15) in six years. The team was 5-4 in MAC dual meets and placed sixth in the conference championships.

Whoever you are, if you take your game seriously, you should enter at least one tournament this summer. Just the mere act of signing the entry form, showing up for your first match and battling your opponent will give you an edge over your regular friendly foursome.

A tournament — any tournament — sharpens your game. You get experience under fire. Win or lose, you come away with more confidence, a little more savvy, and the realization that you must move faster and fight harder.

You might think you'd be completely outclassed. And you might be — but do you have anything to lose? Why not take a beating for the sake of toughening up your game? There is nothing disgraceful about going down in love sets in the first round of the tournament. Your friends can only respect you, regardless of how much kidding you might take from them.

PLAYERS ENTER Wimbledon with the full knowledge that they may never even win a game. They get pulverized

and go home happy because of the experience they've acquired.

Once you're convinced yourself to take the major step and enter a local tournament, you might be able to use a few suggestions to help prepare yourself.

If you are calm and unworried before a match, you are likely to be eaten alive by any opponent who really wants to win. Take the match seriously. During the warm-up, keep telling yourself to relax and be smooth. If you concentrate on those two things before the match, you are most likely going to keep thinking it during the match.

Look sharp when you walk to the court. You should look happy, eager and full of energy. When you talk to your opponent, tell him or her how great the day is, even if it's the hottest on record. Whatever the weather, tell him that, in your opinion, it's perfect for tennis.

There is something terribly discouraging about an opponent who is so eager and happy.

A tournament match is a war of



from courtside

David Stewart

nerves. When a player's nerves get jangled, he or she loses some coordination. The precision shots that are normally winners are lost.

When you miss an easy shot or a close decision is called against you, don't show it. Your opponent expects you to be annoyed. When you're not, he or she starts to worry. It may even make your opponent mad. Either way, you've shaken them up psychologically and their game will be affected.

NEVER TRY to analyze your form during a match. It can have a disastrous effect on your game. You should always be playing the ball — never

think about your form while playing a point.

Never drink too much water. Limit yourself to a couple of sips. A glass can slow you down in a strenuous set or long match.

The last suggestion is one to prevent something that has been the downfall of far too many players who were supposed to win: Never let your temper take control of your game. A temper tantrum never helps you feel any better, and your opponent gains confidence when they think you are going to pieces.

When you get mad, you make mistakes which could eventually lead to your defeat.

in the pocket/W.W. Edgar

The Women's International Bowling Congress recently released its official list of all-time averages for those who bowled in the big tournament for 20 years and who do you suppose was the top Detroit woman on the roster? It was Helen Shablis, a former all-star now living in Brooklyn, Mich., who was forced to give up the game several years ago because of a severe case of arthritis. For her 22 tournaments she averaged 184.23. Prior to her retirement, Mrs. Shablis was considered not only a good bowler but an outstanding instructor who conducted large classes at Merri-Bowl.

While her 22-year average is below many of the women's averages today, it must be remembered that the conditions in her day were much different. She didn't bowl against plastic pins, markings on the lanes and virtually equal conditions from house to house.

Next to Mrs. Shablis came Elvira Toepfer, who still is a member of the Jac-Ro team in the all-star leagues. For 35 tournaments Elvira has averaged 184.38. The real veteran among the Detroit delegation is Eunice Powers, formerly a member of the Colonial Broach team, who averaged 174 for 42 years.

As expected, Marion Ladewig, of Grand Rapids, who still is rated as the best women bowler of all time, topped the Michigan group with an average of 188.48 for 27 years.

MIDGE POSHAKAT, one of the day managers at Westland Bowl, exploded the old myth that you never should use a new ball in a tournament. She journeyed to Chicago and averaged 163 for her eight games and did with a brand new ball.

"I didn't get in the money," she said, "but I missed my average by only two pins. It was the best I ever have done in the Petersen classic."

Pat Koshatt paced the Westland delegation of 32 bowlers with 1479 for his eight games.

JULIE ZIMMERMAN rolled an unusual series to pace the ladies classic at Westland Bowl. After opening with a 199, she found the range and followed with a 279, only to fall back to a 145 for 623. Bev Schiff was the only other women to reach double century figures and she posted a 601.

To round out the top five, Ann Ahoie landed third with 588. Jo-Jo Martinus next with 586 and Del McCallum had a 227 in 581.

KEN KOSSICK showed the way in the strong trio league at Bel-Aire Lanes when he rolled an 856 for his four games. Next to him came Jerry Jamison with 851 and Dave Hamilton, the young Farmington bowlers had a 234 in 845. High game for the night

went to Bill Leffler with a 258.

ANSWERING THE MAIL: The high-st sanctioned series ever rolled by a woman was an 821 series bowled by Anne Spain, of Youngstown, Ohio, and she did it on Dec. 7, 1979.340

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