

California pro shares tennis secrets

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Curt Condon uses therapy for junior tennis players.

The 28-year-old pro from Singing Hills Golf and Tennis Club of El Cajon, Calif., recently conducted a clinic at Schoolcraft College, stressing the "mental aspects" of the game.

Ellese U.S.A. and Nike sales representative Tom Seavey of Southfield made arrangements for Condon to address students in Schoolcraft's junior development program.

"I make it as simple as possible and

practice with a purpose in mind," said Condon.

"You've got to make it fun. We play a lot of games. I have them try to accomplish a task so they can master another game and then reach that. It's very systematic."

And how does Condon's philosophy differ from the rest of the teaching pros?

"Basically we all say the same thing," he said. "It's the way you communicate with kids. I tell them when or when not to hit a certain shot. I try to give more insight."

Singing Hills, a resort complex, has housed several nationally ranked junior

players including West Bloomfield's Ed Nagel and Aaron Krickstein of Grosse Pointe.

"I teach all levels," said Condon, "and the main thing is to have fun."

"We work on fundamentals. I want them to get the ball across the net. I stress the baseline, first."

JUNIOR TENNIS today is often viewed as a minor league system for the pros. Some players, if they're good enough to qualify for national tournaments, do extensive traveling.

"I haven't seen so much pressure as there is in junior tennis," Condon said. "Most of the time it's because of the

parents. The pressure from them is often way out of proportion. A lot of them try to live their lives through their kids. They feel they might be helping, but they're really hindering."

Condon also has a simple solution for pampered junior tennis brats, the kind which produced players like John McEnroe.

"A guy like (Bjorn) Borg was handled the right way at the grass roots," said Condon. "You have to do it at the junior level or you're going to have problems."

"If they act up, I wouldn't let them play for a month, especially if it's a nationally ranked player."

Stingrays sizzle

Scott Christie and John Rudel helped spark the Farmington-based Michigan Stingray Swim Association (MSSA) to a third-place overall finish in the 1981 Michigan Long Course Swim Championships Aug. 7-9 at Southfield's Civic Center pool.

There were nearly 3,000 entries from 55 clubs in the three-day meet.

Christie, swimming in the 13-14 boys' age group, was outstanding in winning boys both won high point honors. Tim high point honors for his division. He Liu also placed first for the team in the splashed to firsts in seven events — the 13-14 boys' 200-meter breaststroke.

100-, 200-, 400-, 800- and 1,500-meter freestyle events and the 200- and 400-meter individual medley swims.

Christie was also second in the 50-meter free and fourth in the 100-meter breaststroke.

John Rudel captured the 200-meter freestyle and was second in total points scored in his 15-18 boys' age group.

The Stingrays' 11-12 girls and 13-14 boys both won high point honors. Tim high point honors for his division. He Liu also placed first for the team in the splashed to firsts in seven events — the 13-14 boys' 200-meter breaststroke.

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