

# Island Sports

## Islander coaches young players to national tennis tournament

By Adrienne Downing

When islander Drew Goldstein took his eight-player team to the Junior Team Tennis National Championships 18 and under division in Alabama on Oct. 30, he knew the team was a good one.

But he also knew it would face stiff competition.

Goldstein, a senior professional instructor at the Newport Tennis Hall of Fame and the team's coach, has coached a lot of the kids on the team since they were young.

"I remember Dan Hanson was always out before clinics hitting the ball with his mom. He was and still is a very hard worker," Goldstein said. "Sam Baines also showed potential from a young age. He has always been such a good athlete."

Hanson, Baines and the team finished in 13th place at the national championships with a record of two match wins and three

losses.

The team is comprised of one male and one female singles player, one girls' doubles team, one boys' doubles team and one mixed doubles team. The individual scores are combined for a team score, so each player must do their best to secure a team win.

"This was the team's first year in the 18 and unders and they were playing against a lot of college-level kids, so the competition was really tough," Goldstein said. "It was a great learning experience for them, though."

Making the nationals is not a given every year, he said, so he will spend the winter season working on things like footwork and serves.

"I don't think anyone realizes how close it was for them making it to nationals. They won New England sectionals in the last match on the last day," Goldstein

said. "They are a good team, and with another year experience under their belt, they will be even stronger next year. They just need to believe they can compete with these kids."

Goldstein has been a full-time pro at the Hall of Fame since 2005, and coached there during summers while he was in college.

He started playing tennis at age 8, was ranked in the top 20 in the New England region by the time he was 18, and played four years for Union College in New York.

The best thing about tennis, he said, is that anyone can learn the game.

"Tennis is fun exercise. It is a mental game, so it helps you think," he said. "So, it is mentally and physically challenging."

Tennis is also a sport that is ageless, he said. An adult can learn the game and still play to a proficient level for most of their life.

"I teach kids from 3 years old all the way to adults that are 90," Goldstein said.

Although he teaches some 3-year-olds, he said that most children are ready to learn at around 5 years old.

"A 4-year-old could do it if they have good coordination and are really into it, but 5-year-olds really are the most ready," he said.

The toughest part about teaching young children, he said, is to come up with games that keep their attention, which is part of the pro's job.

He is also responsible for organizing clinics, ensuring the court schedule is full and running the summer and winter programs for children.

His competition time is limited now that he is a professional, but he said that does not bother him at all.

"I have more fun coaching

than playing," he said. "It is my favorite thing to see someone improve their game no matter what age they are."

Goldstein must be a constant student of the game to be a good instructor. He keeps up on the latest U.S.T.A. teaching techniques and watches other professionals to ensure his students are getting the most current instruction.

"The way pros hit now is different from when I learned to hit. You learn a lot from watching other people, especially the kids," he said.

One advantage to teaching at the Hall of Fame is the ability to instruct on indoor or outdoor courts.

"It is easier for someone to move from playing outdoor tennis to indoor than the other way around," Goldstein said. "When you are playing inside, you have a point of reference to gauge where the ball is. The vision is also better. There is no sun or wind."

One thing Goldstein would like to see is the popularity of the game increase, especially among the younger set.

"It has become more popular over the last few years, but something has to happen to make it more mainstream. I would like people to see that it is a really cool game," he said.

Lessons at the Hall of Fame are not limited to members, and clinics are available to all age groups. For more information, visit [www.tennisfame.com](http://www.tennisfame.com), click on "play tennis" and then instruction.

### Volleyball programs start this month

The Jamestown Recreation Department will begin two recreational volleyball programs this month.

A youth recreational volleyball league begins Tuesday, Nov. 17, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Lawn Avenue School gym. The program will run every Tuesday through March 10.

An adult recreational volleyball league (18 years and older) begins Tuesday, Nov. 24, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the recreation center. The program will run every Tuesday through March 10.

Visit [www.jamestownri.net/rec/programs.html](http://www.jamestownri.net/rec/programs.html) for registration forms. Call Jill at 423-7260 or email [jgoldstein@jamestownri.net](mailto:jgoldstein@jamestownri.net) for more information.

### South County Chamber Singers to perform this weekend

The music of Dr. Enrico Garzilli will be performed at the Towers in Narragansett on Saturday, Nov. 14, at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, Nov. 15, at 2 p.m. by the South County Chamber Singers, of which several islanders are members.

Garzilli will conduct the South County Chamber Singers and soloists Phoebe Madden, Michael DiMucci and Sean Hopkins in selections from his five musical plays: *Rage of the Heart*, *Shadow of the Wall*, *The Smart Set*, *Michelangelo* and *The Family*.

Tickets are \$25; call 782-2597 or visit [www.thetowersri.com](http://www.thetowersri.com).

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