



Your Serve

A Titan of Our Sport

Alan Schwartz stands alone as the 2009 Tennis Industry Hall of Fame inductee.

BY JEFF WILLIAMS

On Sept. 1, at the TIA Tennis Forum held at the Grand Hyatt in New York City, during the US Open, Alan G. Schwartz was inducted into the Tennis Industry Hall of Fame, joining Dennis Van der Meer and Howard Head, who were the inaugural inductees last year. (The Tennis Industry Hall of Fame inductees are recognized with plaques on display in space donated by the International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, R.I.)

Schwartz's tennis leadership can be traced back to his college years when he captained the Yale University tennis team. In 1969, he built Midtown Tennis Club in Chicago, where he pioneered the 4-inch baseline, indirect court lighting and cushioned playing surfaces. He also co-created the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP). Since that time, Midtown has become the anchor club for Schwartz's 45-club Tennis Corporation of America (TCA).

Now chairman of TCA Holdings, Schwartz served as USTA vice president for two consecutive terms before becoming first vice presi-

dent and, from 2003 to 2004, the USTA's chairman of the board and president. During his presidency, he played a key role in making the US Open Series a reality, hired the first master planner for the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, enhanced the financial stability of the USTA and strengthened its relationships with organizations industry-wide.

He continues to serve as a member of the board of directors for the International Tennis Federation (ITF), on various ITF committees and with the International Tennis Hall of Fame. He is a member of the Club Industry Hall of Fame and Chicago District Hall of Fame, and past president of the National Indoor Tennis Association (now known as the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association).

Racquet Sports Industry co-publisher and Tennis magazine publisher Jeff Williams, who also is the chairman of the TIA's Hall of Fame Committee, introduced Alan and presented him with the honor. Jeff's heartfelt introduction is presented here.

I think it is ironic that on a day when we honor Alan Schwartz, that we do so at an event that brings together so many different parts of the tennis community. It seems hard to believe that just 20 years ago we were not a united family, and because of the efforts of Alan, Lucy Garvin, Kurt Kamperman and others, the bridges have been built that bring us together today.

Few people in the history of the tennis business have had the influence and prolific presence that Alan has had in his more than 40 years in this industry. I think it is only fitting that Alan is the sole inductee into the 2009 Tennis Industry Hall of Fame. Alan stands alone as a titan of our sport.

We think of Alan and we think of USTA President and longtime board member, but there is also the Alan that captained his Yale tennis team and won eight national tennis titles.

We think of Alan and we think of Midtown Tennis Club, by the way, the world's largest indoor tennis facility, and Tennis Corporation of America. But there is also the Alan that pioneered the use of an industrial revenue bond as a vehicle to finance multi-sport facilities.

We think of Alan and we think of "Tennis in No Time" or the NTRP rating program, but there is also the Alan that helped write and teach the first management



Courtesy: TIA/Fred Mullane

"I love tennis, I love the sport, I love this industry and I love being a contributor," said Schwartz. "You have my promise that I will continue with undiminished passion to give back to this game I love so much."

training course for club professionals.

I could go on for quite some time. When I think of Alan and all of his accomplishments, the one that stands out for me is one simple eight-word statement that Alan wrote during his first year on the USTA Board of Directors back in 1995: "To Promote and Develop the Growth of Tennis"—words that have guided the USTA, and the industry, ever since.

Alan, there are those in life whose accomplishments we celebrate—and to them we say "congratulations." There are those in life whose efforts mean so much to so many and have had such a positive impact on the lives of so many—and to them we say a heartfelt "thank you."

On behalf of everyone in the sport of tennis, it is my honor and privilege to say Congratulations and Thank You.

Ladies and gentlemen—your 2009 Tennis Industry Hall of Fame Inductee: Alan Schwartz. 🏸

