



**Eastern Tennis Association, Inc.**

**1995**

**Eighth Annual  
Hall of Fame Dinner**

## HUNTER L. DELATOUR, JR.

Call him "Mr. Tennis." Read his list of tennis accomplishments, from his first involvement as a USLTA umpire in 1935 to the present day, and you'll see why.

An active player all his life, Hunter Delatour first played tennis in the late 1920s on Long Island, where he nurtured his game on the Great Neck High School tennis team and in local Eastern tournaments. He went on to play for the Princeton tennis team under famous coach Mercer Beasley. During those formative years, Hunter also managed the Twilight Park Tennis Club in Haines Falls, N.Y., where his parents spent their summer months.

"Twilight was one of the old line, well-respected USLTA member clubs," he said. "It was noted for an annual tournament which I ran during my tenure. Bill Tilden had played it, and while I was there Gardnar Mulloy was a regular participant. It was during this period that I would hold the proxy and represent the club at the USLTA Annual Meeting, which was held each year at the Vanderbilt Hotel in New York."

In the 57 years that have elapsed since he left Princeton in 1938, Hunter has managed to combine two rewarding careers—as a high profile volunteer in tennis administration and as an innovative leader in his own optical business. He manufactures and markets products designed to preserve and improve eyesight, and serves on the Northern California Society to Prevent Blindness. During the war years he took a brief detour into another worthy endeavor. From 1941 to 1946, he served in the U.S. Navy, entering as an Ensign and retiring in the rank of Lieutenant Commander. He was honored by the British Government as a Member of the Order of the British Empire—



Hunter and Eugenie Delatour enjoyed the 1990 U.S. Open. Photo by Russ Adams

"an honor I cherish," he said—and was also awarded a commendation ribbon by the Secretary of the Navy. While serving in Washington, he met his wife, Eugenie, who was working in the British Embassy. They married in 1944

and later returned to civilian life, spending the next 18 years on Long Island's North Shore.

In 1962, Hunter's good friend and Princeton classmate, Alastair Martin, recruited him to serve on the Eastern Lawn Tennis Association Board of Directors as a delegate from Long Island. From that point on, he maintained a steady involvement and climb on the administrative side of the sport, all the way to the USTA presidency in 1983-'84.

"Hunter has always had an instinct for knowing what is best for tennis," Alastair Martin said recently. "And perhaps his greatest contribution to the game has been his subtle ability to get officials to accept his views. He has always had great respect for good sportsmanship and has championed a liberal view toward Open competition—more tennis for more people."

In 1966, Hunter and Eugenie, who have three grown daughters—Anne, Debbie and Susie—moved to Portola Valley, California. He was elected to the Board of the Northern California Tennis Association and in 1972-'73 served as Northern Cal's president. In 1975 he was elected secretary of the USLTA, followed by two-year terms as second vice president, first vice president and president. His two years as immediate past president culminated 12 years of service on the USTA Board of Directors. He has also served as president of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, vice

president of the International Tennis Federation and in many capacities on various USTA committees.

"Being involved in tennis has resulted in our having traveled to all corners of the earth to be with people interested in the game...We can go anywhere in the world and find a fellow tennis player who is already a friend, or who will be, once the tennis relationship is cemented," Hunter Delatour said. "I have enjoyed doing all I could to encourage grass-roots tennis at all levels. During my term as USTA president, the schools program was inaugurated. The National Junior Tennis League (NJTL) and the USTA were merged, and the USTA formed a closer relationship with the International Tennis Hall of Fame and collegiate tennis."

The recent unrest between labor and management in professional baseball and hockey—and tennis—reminds us that the art of merging ideas among any sport's diverse organizations to promote growth and harmony can be a complex challenge. And tennis leaders from New York to California regard Hunter Delatour, Jr., as one of the great diplomats in that effort for tennis.

"Hunter has diffused much of the acrimony that is present at the tennis bargaining tables," according to one source who reflects the consensus. "His image is one of a gentleman and a conciliator."



Hunter Delatour (l) and past ETA president Les Fitz Gibbon surveyed construction of the new U.S. Open site at the USTA National Tennis Center in 1978. Photo by— Russ Adams.

### TENNIS HIGHLIGHTS

USTA Board of Directors (1975-1986): Secretary, Second Vice President, First Vice President, President and Immediate Past President.

USTA Committees (1972 to the present): Men's Ranking, Management and Executive Committees, Scholarship Awards, Olympic Pan-Am, Constitution & Rules, Credentials, U.S. Open, Tennis Rules, Ranking Committees' general chairman, Davis Cup, Olympic, USTA/International Tennis Hall of Fame chairman, Budget & Finance, Federation Cup, Governance & Planning.

Member Committee of Management, Vice President, Honorary Life Counsellor, Life Trustee, International Tennis Federation; Director National Tennis Foundation/Hall of Fame; President, International Tennis Hall of Fame; President, Northern California Tennis Association; elected to Northern California Tennis Hall of Fame; honorary member, All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club; member, International Lawn Tennis Club of USA; honorary member, International Lawn Tennis Clubs—Great Britain, France, Sweden, South Africa, Australia, India, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, Japan and Israel.

# VITAS GERULAITIS

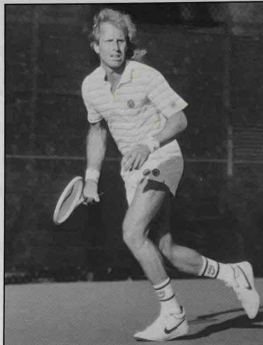
By Mike Lupica  
Excerpted from *Newsday*, Sept. 19 & 23, 1994

This was such a long time ago, in whatever was the hot Italian restaurant of the moment in London in 1977. Vitas Gerulaitis always knew where the hot place was, where to find the people who wanted to laugh the most and stay up the latest. It was a big group, I remember that, because dinner with Vitas in those days was always dinner for just about everyone. He was always the life of the party.

But he could not make himself the life of the party that June night in 1977. He went through the motions, but his heart wasn't in it, because this was the night after the afternoon when he should have beaten Bjorn Borg at Wimbledon. He sat at the head of the table a long time and somehow kept a smile in place, and finally about 11 o'clock he said he was meeting some people at some hot new club.

He was out of Howard Beach, in Queens, which is not supposed to produce the Wimbledon champion. Howard Beach was not even supposed to produce a player who could chase the great Borg around for five thrilling sets that are still discussed in tennis today. But he had done that. Borg was the defending Wimbledon champion. Vitas was 23 years old and a comer, a tennis celebrity already, not just the life of the party but someone who felt like the life of the sport when he was going good, and he was going good at Wimbledon in 1977.

Vitas had stayed with him until 6-all in the final set. He had run and hit all his shots, and Borg, who would turn out to be one of his best friends, had run and hit all his shots. The tennis was something to see. Vitas had his best shot when he was up a service break early in the fifth set. He had a point to go ahead 4-2. The score was 40-30. He had been coming in hard behind his weak second serve all day and getting away with it.



Vitas Gerulaitis. Photo by Russ Adams.

This time he hesitated. Borg took control...won the match (8-6 in the fifth) and two days later he beat Jimmy Connors in the final.

Vitas didn't know anything about that on this night, in the hot Italian restaurant. He just knew he stayed back when he could have come in. He finally stood up and grabbed the check, because he always did that, too.

"That\_\_\_second serve," he said, putting a smile on the obscenity. Then his voice dropped, and he dropped the smile, and Vitas

Gerulaitis said, "I could have won Wimbledon...Imagine that, me winning Wimbledon."

He threw some money on the table and walked into the London night, alone all of a sudden.

He was born in Brooklyn, raised in Howard Beach, attended Archbishop Molloy High School and even Columbia University for a while. He came from public tennis courts all over the city and Long Island, and the Port Washington Tennis Academy. He owned a mansion in Kings Point once, with all the money you could make from tennis if you could make it to No. 4 in the world, and do it with style, make the whole thing alive and fun just by showing up. He never won Wimbledon. He won the Australian Open, though. He won the Italian Open. He made it to the finals of the U.S. Open and lost to his pal John McEnroe. He had long blond hair and one of the biggest hearts I have ever known about, and he was my friend.

He is a hundred stories, a thousand stories, from the time he won his first big tournament, the U.S. Pro Indoor. That was in Philadelphia. He came right back to New York and tried to spend all the money on clothes the next afternoon, in about two hours. If you ever knew Vitas Gerulaitis, you understand about the hole

cut into tennis...God he was fun.

He beat Borg one time at the Masters tournament when the Masters was still held in New York. I don't recall the exact number, but Borg had beaten him something like 16 times in a row...When he came into the interview area, Vitas looked very grave, very serious. Before a question could be asked, he sat down and pointed a finger at the crowd of reporters and said, "Nobody beats Vitas Gerulaitis 17 times in a row." And brought down the house.

I saw him for the last time during the (1994) U.S. Open final. Now Vitas was a comer in television...So I watched another match with him...And then all these years later, for the first time in a long time, I brought up the Borg match. Vitas smiled.

"I shoulda come in on that second serve," he said.

He should have been 41.

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John Lloyd stood at the top of the steps outside St. Dominic's Church and watched as the casket slowly came through the double doors. Three of the pallbearers were Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors. There was a time back in 1979 when they were ranked No. 1 and No. 2 and No. 3 in the world. No. 4 was...Vitas Gerulaitis.

"You should have seen Vitas last week in Seattle (at Jimmy Connors' Citibank Champions tour for over-35 world-class players)," John Lloyd said quietly...There was this doubles match, and even with Borg and Connors in it, the show belonged to Gerulaitis.

"After the first set," Lloyd said on the church steps, "I said to Jimmy, 'The other three of us might as well not be here. This is Vitas' room.' And Jimmy said, 'Aren't they all?'"

The last room was a church with a high ceiling at the top of Anstice Street in Oyster Bay. They had come from tennis and television and New York City nights to mourn Gerulaitis. Mary Carillo, remembering the first time she saw Vitas when they were both teenagers at the Port Academy, said, "I remember this big blond streak. He was the most dazzling thing I'd ever seen."

Mary made the church laugh with stories about Vitas, because he was still in the room and that meant you had to laugh. She told of a pajama party Vitas threw in some Pittsburgh hotel on the occasion of his 21st birthday. Then Jimmy Connors was up there, talking about how Vitas still had the magic with people that he took out of New York and all over the tennis map. A fan once mistook Vitas for Borg, even with Borg in the same elevator. Vitas signed Borg's name and when Connors asked him why later, Vitas grinned and said, "Always give them something to make them happy." Connors finished his eulogy and then cried. Because you also had to cry in Vitas' room at St. Dominic's.

After Ruta Gerulaitis had read a simple prayer for her brother, there was this slight pause...Then the three top guys in the world once picked up No. 4, and started down the aisle, all laughter gone now from the church, only memories of laughter left behind. . .

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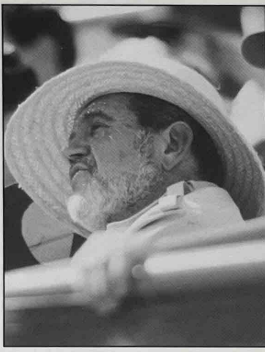
## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS (1973-1985)

Highest ATP world singles ranking — No. 3 (June 11, 1979). Ranked No. 4 for the year. Singles winner — Australian Open, 1977; singles finalist — French Open, 1980; singles finalist — U.S. Open, 1979; singles winner — Italian Open, 1977, 1979; singles winner — Canadian Championships, 1982; singles winner — Tournament of Champions, Forest Hills, 1980; singles finalist — The Masters, Madison Square Garden, 1979, 1981; doubles winner—Wimbledon, 1975. Compiled 11-3 singles record in U.S. Davis Cup competition. One of the most consistent players in U.S. tennis history. Ranked in the top 10 for six years from 1977-'82 and in the top 20 from 1975-'84. Captured 27 career singles titles (in 55 finals) and 9 doubles crowns...Ranked No. 17 in Open Era singles titles...After retiring, moved to the television booth to provide color commentary for CBS, USA Network and ESPN...Ran free tennis clinics for inner-city kids in City Parks Department, 1979-'89...Supported numerous other charities, including cancer and the Special Olympics.

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## ALAN KING

You all know Alan King. He's the famous U.S. Open spectator decked out in straw hat, chinos and Gucci loafers, the guy you look for in the courtside celebrity box every time you walk into the expanse of Louis Armstrong Stadium. You see him at every session and at every match, from Day 1 to Day 14. Just like the blur of colorful uniforms in the ball kids' perch above him, he is part of the ambiance.



Alan King sits courtside at the U.S. Open. Photo by Ed Goldman

"I've been watching the Open for 50 years," said King, 67, who has lived most of his life nearby on Long Island's North Shore. "It's my two-week tennis vacation. About 40 years ago I threw my golf bags in the lake along with the caddy and went out and bought a tennis racket. I was 27, an old man already in terms of tennis."

*"...I threw my golf bags in the lake along with the caddy and went out and bought a tennis racket..."*

Though King made his name as a standup comic, he is also a well-known actor—*Night and the City* and *Bonfire of the Vanities*, a best-selling author—*Anyone Who Owns His Own Home Deserves It and Help, I'm a Prisoner in a Chinese Bakery*, a producer of stage and screen—*Memories of Me* with Billy Crystal, and a generous philanthropist. But he is being honored by the Eastern Tennis Association for asserting himself as an influential promoter of professional

tennis dating back to the early years of the Open era.

"While I was working for Howard Hughes in Las Vegas (in the early 1970s), Dinah Shore and I put on a celebrity tennis tournament as a way of attracting celebs to Vegas," he said. "I saw how the audience reacted, not only to the celebs, but to tennis itself.

"The next year I was negotiating with several hotels for a long-term contract as a comedian

and the people at Caesar's Palace came to me and asked, 'What else can we do to sweeten the pot?' I said, 'I want a pro tennis tournament.' They all looked at me like I was crazy. But one boss said, 'Okay, you're faded (covered).'"

King hooked up with oil tycoon Lamar Hunt, one of the first pro tennis promoters in the Open era who founded the World Championship Tennis (WCT) group and the famous Dallas final. Hunt was expanding his tour and agreed to support a \$50,000 tournament at Caesar's Palace, which became known as the Alan King Tennis Classic.

"The tournament was so successful that the bosses, with their gambling mentality, said to me, 'This is too good. Why do we need Hunt as a partner?' The next year they gave me \$100,000 for the tournament with all expenses paid for the players." It was the first tournament to boast a \$100,000 purse and the first to pick up players' full expenses. American greats such as Arthur Ashe and Jimmy Connors

played the Palace, and so did Aussie legends Ken Rosewall and Rod Laver.

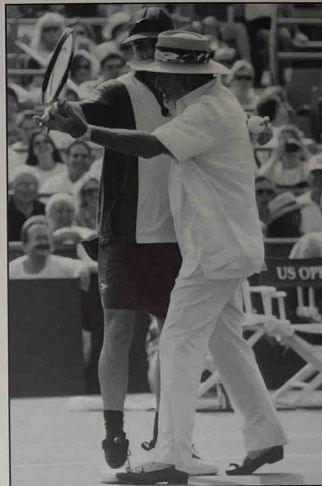
"The Australians were the great serve-and-volley players. They don't make them like that anymore," King said in an interview with *The New Yorker*. "They never got better than Rod Laver... ZaSu Pitts could have coached Laver. And they never threw their socks into the stands."

Nine years ago, King and Charlie Pasarell built the Grand Champions Hotel in Indian Wells, California. "We combined his tournament at LaQuinta and my tournament in Vegas. It has evolved into the Newsweek Champions Cup with almost \$1,800,000 in prize money," said King, who co-chairs the event.

Perhaps because he was exposed to reality early as a high school dropout who grew up in the tough Williamsburgh section of Brooklyn and Manhattan's lower East Side, Alan King is heavily involved in humanitarian causes. He founded the Alan King Diagnostic Medical Center in Jerusalem, established a non-sectarian scholarship fund for American students at the Hebrew University as well as an Albert Einstein scholarship fund, and has led a fund-raising effort for the Nassau Center for Emotionally Disturbed Children, to name just a few of his favorite charities.

And for the past three summers, he and Bill Cosby have brightened spirits at the USTA National Tennis Center as emcees of the annual pre-Open Arthur Ashe Aids Tennis Challenge. (Since it was established in 1992, the Ashe foundation has raised over \$4 million.) King said plans are underway to add the Vitas Gerulaitis Foundation to next year's challenge.

King has received many tributes over the



Alan King danced with Andre Agassi at last year's Arthur Ashe Aids Challenge. Photo by Russ Adams.

years for his contributions to tennis. Gene Scott, for one, has said, "In a game that hasn't always had much humor, Alan King has been a Hall of Famer for contributing this quality to the sport."

And King's tennis buddy Dick Savitt, who in 1951 won both Wimbledon and the Australian Open, added his thoughts about his friend's well-deserved induction into the ETA Hall of Fame.

"Alan has done so much for the game of tennis as a promoter, as a fan, and as the possessor of a major forehand," Savitt said. "It is ironic that Alan is to be inducted with his friend Vitas. We all had some great times with Vitas at Alan's court. I'm sure that all the players to whom Alan has been so helpful are very happy and proud of his new honor."

# KING VAN NOSTRAND

By Nancy Gill McShea

Excerpted from Newsday, Oct. 16, 1994

King Van Nostrand has been figuring all the angles with his sharp, logical mind and dry sense of humor for half a century now. On tennis courts around the world, in the classrooms of Long Island's Bay Shore school system, where he taught geometry for 31 years until he retired in 1989, and within his own family structure.

When all the math was computed for the 1993 & 1994 tennis seasons, he was ranked first in the world, in the United States and in the East on the men's over-55 and 60 circuits, respectively. "When I won the '93 world tournament in Barcelona, Ian Hamilton of Nike told me he was extremely proud because I was their only client who was No. 1 in the world," said King, laughing as he recalled beating former top-10 player and Spanish Davis Cupper Juan Couder, 1-6, 6-2, 6-0, in the men's 55 World Senior final. Nike also represents Andre Agassi, Jim Courier and John McEnroe.

King won his second straight world championship last May in Los Gatos, Calif., routing Florida's Rey Garrido, 6-0, 6-1, in the 60s final. In August, he returned to California and claimed his first of three 60s USTA gold balls at the national hard courts in Santa Barbara, crushing Buddy Lomax of Texas, 6-0, 6-2, in the title match. One week later, he won the national indoors in Seattle, defeating Russell Seymour of Texas, 6-2, 6-2. In early October, he again beat Seymour, 6-0, 6-1, to win the clay courts in Duluth, Ga.

Much like the veteran pitcher who finessees the plate with curves and sliders to set up the strikeout, King bisects the angles of the tennis court to set up the appropriate coup



Boots and King Van Nostrand.

ner could be a job or a simple cross-court drop volley. It's certainly not going to be a power shot at this stage."

King's court sense, strong conditioning and natural talent help offset the effects of a cumbersome black brace he began wearing two years ago to protect his left knee (on which he had surgery more than 10 years ago). "Last year in Santa Barbara, a spectator at the hard courts asked if he could look at my leg brace to see if I had a motor in it because I ran so fast," he chuckled.

Since winning his first national title in 1971 at the Shelter Rock Tennis Club, King has won 20 USTA gold tennis balls and 10 silver as runner-up, plus more than 17 individual and team trophies in international competition. "The first one is always special," he said. He had lost three USTA finals before beating Lester Sack of Mississippi in the title match at Shelter Rock.

"The USTA gold tennis ball is a cherished thing -- I don't believe in just collecting them, so I give them away to special people...family and friends who encourage me."

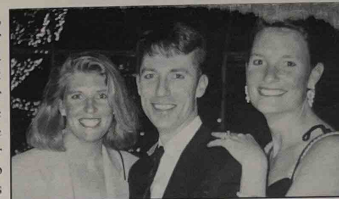
His family has always been No. 1. Wife Boots, her husband's sweetheart, coach, trainer, scout and nutritionist, first met King in 1953 when they sat next to each other in class while training to become teachers at SUNY-Cortland. They were

engaged in 1954, married a year later and then raised a close-knit family that played tennis together for recreation. The couple taught the game to their four children and a group of high school players in a junior program at the Eastern Athletic Club (EAC) in

Comack during the late 1970s and early 1980s. (Today, both Van Nostrands teach at EAC's Half Hollow Racquet Club in Melville.)

"He sacrificed for us. He absolutely loves playing tennis," said daughter Molly, who was a quarterfinalist at Wimbledon in 1985. King taught his kids math during the school year, but tennis was the focus of the family's summer vacations. He and Boots would pack the kids in the car and alternately drive south -- to North Carolina, Tennessee and Florida -- north to Massachusetts -- or upstate to Schenectady, stopping at tournament sites which accommodated multiple age groups. "We took the kids wherever we could afford to go," said Boots. She and King played in the adult events while their children played in four of the five junior divisions.

"We had a little hibachi. We'd cook out in state parks and stay at Holiday Inns. The kids were free and there was always a pool." All four Van Nostrand children received tennis scholarships to college. Jane was recruited by Furman College in South Carolina, finishing up at Simmons in Boston. Young King opted for Pfeiffer College in North



King taught math and tennis to his children: (l to r) Molly Rice, King Van Nostrand, Jr., and Jane Wilkey.

Carolina. Molly attended SMU before turning pro. She later earned her degree at North Carolina. And John went to Pepperdine in California before venturing onto the pro circuit.

Tragically, John and New Jersey's Joey Heldman were killed in a 1984 automobile crash while traveling to a satellite tournament in Mexico.

"John is still a very important part of our family," King Van Nostrand said. "He's always with us. It was a very traumatic event, something we'll never get over. But you have to go on."

Molly, currently a graduate student in speech pathology at NYU, believes her parents' relationship and her dad's sense of humor -- "He wore Nike sneakers under his tux at my wedding," she said -- have kept the Van Nostrand family well grounded. "My parents are best friends and they really respect each other. They taught us not to take life too casually, to remember that love and thoughtfulness are especially important."

King's angle on competition is less philosophical. "I don't like losing," he said. "I'm a lousy sport. One of my best wins last summer was when I beat Boots at gin rummy out in Seattle three nights in a row."



King and his late son, John (l). "He is always with us."