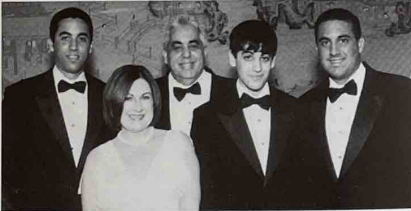




2005

18th Annual  
Eastern Tennis  
Hall of Fame Dinner

# Hall of



# Fame 2004

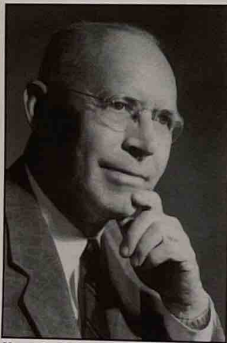


## HENRY J. BENISCH

By Nancy Gill McShea

Read about the late Henry Benisch and you come away with an upbeat script for a sequel to the movie "It's a Wonderful Life." You are inspired by his lifelong concern for people, a character trait he demonstrated through philanthropic commitment to numerous organizations and causes. Benisch was elected chairman of Big Brothers of New York in 1955, and in a real sense he was a Big Brother to tennis.

He was born in Brooklyn and ran a family business there, Benisch Brothers Monuments and Memorials. But he called Forest Hills home for more than 60 years and loved tennis — he won the 1946 Eastern Veteran's singles title, was once ranked fourth among national seniors, and in 1967 won the first Granddad Tennis Tournament — so his membership in the West Side Tennis Club and subsequent volunteer administrative work at the U.S. National Championships were a natural fit. He lived around the corner from West Side, first served as the captain of the grounds and



Henry Benisch.

was later appointed the chairman of America's Grand Slam tournament, a position he held in 1963, '64 and '65. He served as the president of West Side in 1966 and '67, and in 1967 and '68 was president of the Eastern Tennis Association.

Benisch was twice honored by the U.S.

(Lawn) Tennis Association: in 1960, he received the W. Dickson Cunningham Tennis Trophy for service to senior tennis; and in 1965, he accepted the Marlborough Award for overall service and contributions to the game.

He was also honored at awards dinners held in grand ballrooms such as the Waldorf Astoria — by his alma mater Cornell University, Big Brothers (now Big Brothers and Sisters), the YMCA, the Kiwanis Club,

the Industrial Home for the Blind, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, the Henry Street Settlement and the Faith Home for Incurables, among others — in appreciation of his work with those community organizations and charities. Benisch did not limit his support of charities to financial donations, but rather took a hands-on approach and worked personally with the people who benefited from an organization's mission.

"Dad thought people, education, tennis and music were most important," his daughter Peggy Ann Anderson said. "He was sensitive, took things to heart and made time for everyone, no matter how busy he was. He frequently brought guests home for dinner, saying there should always be room for one more."

She added with some amusement that dad had a good sense of humor, too, and sometimes played his beloved fiddle at tennis dinners. He had grown up playing the violin, and in his youth often used it as a way to earn a little extra money by playing in jazz orchestras at night.

He had been brought up to teach by example and was schooled in the ethic that everybody deserves a chance, so he searched for opportunities to help others. His primary mission involved motivating kids to set goals and pursue their education. His influence on young people was so profound, in fact, that a boy named Robert, whom he had helped in Big Brothers, once made a trip back east from California specifically to paint the family's kitchen ceiling "to thank Mr. Benisch, who has done so much for me."

In that same spirit, Benisch organized the staid, private West Side Club's first free junior tennis clinic and helped to conduct U.S. Junior Davis Cup tryouts, which were held there. He had a habit of proposing juniors for membership and felt it was important to start tennis when you're young so you would develop sportsmanship at the same time you learned to play the sport for a lifetime.

He was involved with the "People to People" sports program, a charity created in the 1950's by tennis fans who, like President Eisenhower, believed that participation in sports was one of the best methods of generating peace among nations. The program's benefactors pooled their resources and invited 80 players from foreign countries to visit the United States. The Benisch family and other members of West Side housed and entertained them. Henry was also the director of the Eastern Patrons program, which sponsored junior tennis activities in parks and schools. After he passed away in 1986, three months after his wife of 61 years, Catharine, had died, the Benisch family honored him in a way they felt he would ap-

prove, by establishing an Eastern tennis college scholarship in his name.

The Benisch sisters [Peggy and Barbara] were both junior players, "not great tournament quality, we just had a good time," they said. Tennis was obviously a social outlet, too, as Peggy met her future husband Carleton (Carl) Anderson on the West Side courts, when they were both about 16.

Just last month, Carl was awarded a "40-year service medal" for volunteer contributions to the sport, at the USTA Annual Meeting in La Quinta, Calif. It

all started when his father-in-law said he needed some help testing tennis balls.

Anderson asked, "How do you do that? And the next day all the equipment was dumped in our front room foyer...then I got the book out." Carl tests the quality of tennis balls year round in the testing lab, at USTA headquarters in White Plains, checking size, weight, bounce, rebound. "Then we put it in the Steven's machine, compress the ball [18 lbs. of pressure] and release it [after 5 seconds], make sure that when it hits the court or it's hit by the racquet it will reconstitute itself back to round within 5 seconds. After that, we do the forward and return compressions. If it responds it's a real live tennis ball and labeled 'USTA approved.'" Off-the-shelf testing follows, year round, in pro shops, stores, etc. The whole effort is a Benisch-Anderson legacy; the Andersons' son, Carleton J. Anderson 111 — known as Jay — is the current chairman of the tennis ball testing committee.

Benisch family members say their Patriarch never lost his enthusiasm for creating ways to help young people and often helped to establish summer camps through organizations like the YMCA, on whose board he served for 30 to 35 years. The Benisch sisters and the neighborhood children staged plays in their base-

ment, charged a fee to get in, and gave the money to the Y camps.

In 1972, the late Phil Dougherty wrote a piece in *The New York Times*, entitled "The Benisch Family: An Institution In Itself." A man had called to ask Dougherty if he knew Henry Benisch, and in response he wrote: "I immediately had visions of this tall, happy grandfatherly type all dressed up in a Santa suit off to drop in on the local kids on Christmas Eve, or on another occasion playing a sprightly tune on his fiddle at some party...A merry person indeed...a man whose business is closely associated with death, yet he does much more than his share of living for himself and others...."

"He's 72 years old and plays tennis three times a week...His bridge playing borders on a passion; he is an opera buff, frequent traveler, photographer, self-taught handwriting expert...long active as an officer...trustee...resident of [many organizations]. Had enough? There's more...."

"He graduated from Boys' High School with honors, Class of '16, and from Cornell, Class of '20, as a civil engineer...and before joining the Benisch concern in 1924, worked

...in Pittsburgh where he even played his fiddle at the debut party of one of Andrew Mellon's daughters. Who among you can make that statement?"

How did Henry Benisch manage to do it all? Peggy Anderson gives some insight. "Dad had the ability to sleep in 10-minute inter-

vals and wake up refreshed. A typical routine: nap after dinner, then evening activities, then bed-time. Up at 2 a.m., work on a project or business, back in bed by 5 a.m. Up at 7 a.m. to start all over again."

This is either déjà vu or you have just read the latest version of the movie "A Wonderful Life."



Henry loved his fiddle...



...And he loved children.

# FRED KOVALESKI

By Nancy Gill McShea

Whether it's been in the streets of Sudan or behind the shadows of the White House, Fred Kovalski has spent well over half a century refining his game on the tennis court and in the corridors of the international corporate world.

Kovalski, who last fall won the men's 80 singles and doubles titles at the ITF World and USTA grass and clay court championships, believes tennis is a perfect match for life. A rangy veteran, at 6-foot-3, Fred strolls onto the tennis court with a polite, yet determined demeanor reminiscent of Gary Cooper in "High Noon." He looks calm, with eyes focused, and quickly surveys his surroundings and his opponent in one take. All he needs to complete the picture are a cowboy hat, a holster and two six shooters.

His fascination with the sport defines Kovalski, who ranked among the world's best players in the early 1950's when he reached the round of 16 at the U.S. National Championships at Forest Hills and at Wimbledon, where he lost to the 1952 champ Frank Sedgman. Tennis gave him entrée to the courts of King Farouk of Egypt, King Paul of Greece and the Maharajah of Cochohebehar in India, which helped him put together a VIP career. He worked as a CIA operative with the government in Washington, D.C. — during which time he served in both U.S. and foreign assignments and even enlisted his wife Manya's knowledge of six different languages to translate tapes obtained through taps of the then-soviet embassy — and also as a high ranking executive of international operations with several blue chip corporations.

Since returning to organized tennis competition on a regular basis in 1990, after retiring in 1989 from his position as a divisional president of Nabisco's international operations, Kovalski has dominated his senior age groups, winning 59 out of a possible 68 USTA gold tennis balls, and eight individual ITF world singles and doubles titles. On the USTA men's 65 circuit, he was ranked first in the country in singles and doubles four out of five years. In the 70s, he finished first in the U.S. in singles for four years and in doubles for five. In the 75s, he was ranked first in the U.S. five times in both singles and doubles. He has also won a host of European senior titles and has emerged victorious in key matches for winning U.S. International Britannia, Crawford and Betsy Grant Cup teams.

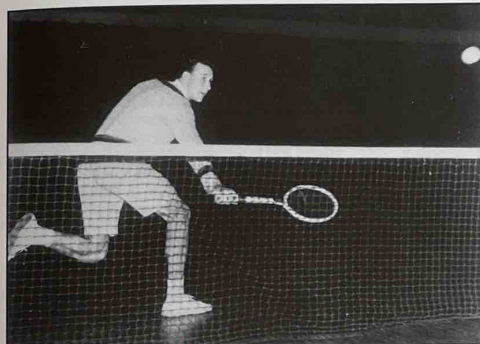
"Don't let Fred's polite, gentlemanly manner fool you," cautioned Kovalski's regular tennis partner Ray Benton, the president of KSB Ventures in Washington, D.C., and the former director of the Volvo Masters. "He is as competitive as any player I've ever met. He always hits the right shot and keeps a 'young' guy like me off balance. Sometimes I just want to drop my racquet and watch him because I learn so much."

Fred has enjoyed the whole adventure. He grew up in modest circumstances in Hamtramck, a small Polish enclave in Detroit where his father worked on the production line at the Ford Motor Company. Coach Jean Hoxie, who groomed many of this country's top players — including Peaches Bartkowicz — first tutored him at age 11 and was instrumental in securing a scholarship for him to the College of William and Mary in 1942. That same year, he was named to the U.S. Junior Davis Cup team and played in his first of 10 U.S. National Championships.

He detoured briefly, between 1943 and 1946, to serve during World War II in the 511th Parachute Regiment of the 11th Airborne Division. "I wanted to be in an elite unit," he said, "and the paratroopers were an all-volunteer group of physically fit, strong spirited men." He returned to William and Mary after the war and was a factor in his tennis team's successful run to the 1947 and 1948 NCAA Team Championships. He and teammate Tur Bartzten also won the 1948 NCAA individual doubles title. After his graduation in 1949, Fred journeyed around the world with the best players of his generation and defeated several of the game's Grand Slam champions.

"In 1950 I played all the major international championships and then decided I better go to work," he said, noting that it would be almost 20 years before the sport would enter the professional era of big prize money and the U.S. National Championships would be renamed the U.S. Open. "I realized I was not going to be in the top five in the world, which back then was the only way you had a chance of joining Jack Kramer's independent professional tour and making any money."

Yet he won tournaments that year in Algeria, Austria, Greece, India (Madras) and Yugoslavia. He was also a finalist in Turkey and again in India, this time in Bombay, beating Jaroslav Drobny (a future French and Wimbledon champ) in the semis before losing to Sven Davidson (the 1957 French champ).



Kovalski upset Bill Talbert to reach the 1949 USLTA National Indoor singles finals at Manhattan's Seventh Regiment Armory, eventually losing to Don McNeil.

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In 1951, he was a runner-up at the Monte Carlo International Championships, defeating Budge Patty (the 1950 French and Wimbledon champ) in the semis before losing to Straight Clark in the finals. Then, during a tour of Egypt, he met Manya, whose family had fled Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution because they were czarist supporters. He also met the consul of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, and it was through the consul's introductions that Fred secured his position with the CIA, which, in turn, led to the affiliations with corporations. For the next 38 years, he served alternately as a senior vice president and president of international operations with Pepsi Cola, heading up the Australian division; Revlon, in charge of Europe; Schering-Plough, the international division; and finishing up with Nabisco in 1989.

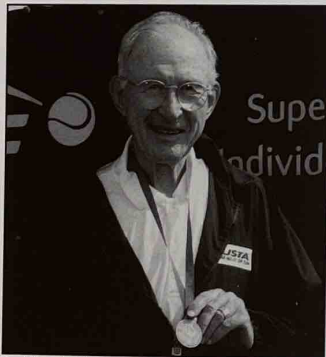
Fred's career abroad was exciting and sometimes traumatic. While playing the Indian International Championships in Calcutta, the Maharajah invited him to join a tiger shoot. (No, he didn't shoot any tigers!) During the late 1950's, when revolutionaries in Aden were fighting for their independence from the British, his English tennis pal, Arthur Charles, the Speaker of the House in Parliament, was assassinated. When he and Manya were newly married —

48 years ago this month — and Fred was working for Pepsi Cola in Khartoum in the Sudan, they were privy to two bloodless coups.

Despite living amidst political upheaval, Manya remembers their time in Sudan as a great adventure. "A young married couple always brings with them a breath of fresh air," she said, "so all the local business and embassy people invited us to parties. It was also a custom for corporations to give employees a month's hardships leave because Sudan was a tough place to live."

"It's not Paris or New York, you know. It's very hot all year long, so we went on leave to Beirut, which was great fun. And once, when Gottfried ('the Baron') von Cramm came to Khartoum on business, he and Fred played tennis exhibitions and everybody came to watch. It was a small place and the people knew who they were because they followed tennis."

"The tennis environment instills a certain degree of self-reliance, confidence and resourcefulness," Fred Kovalski said. "The game has played an important part in all facets of my life, even in the CIA. It's a perfect match."



Fred Kovalski won the men's 80 singles and doubles titles at the 2004 ITF World Championships.



Fred and Manya Kovalski enjoyed the Japanese Gardens.

## JACK H. NUSBAUM

By Nancy Gill McShea

Jack Nusbaum was once a confirmed Eastern junior tennis parent, an expert in the familiar ritual of pacing and wringing his hands in angst while watching his son Gary compete in tournaments or in team matches for Scarsdale High School. When Gary exited the juniors in 1984 to begin his college career at the University of Pennsylvania, Nusbaum borrowed Marlon Brando's famous line, "I coulda been a contenda," and lamented, "We coulda won Wimbledon!"

Twenty-one years later, Dad is the tennis champion!

Nusbaum, who is a partner and the chairman of the international law firm, Willkie, Farr & Gallagher—which retains over 600 lawyers and 138 partners with offices in Manhattan, Paris, Washington, London, Rome, Milan, Brussels and Germany—recently called his son Gary and announced, "We didn't win Wimbledon but I'm going to be inducted into the Tennis Hall of Fame." He is being honored for his years of volunteer service, dating to the late 1970's when Gary was starting to play junior tennis. He initially signed on as Eastern's general counsel during a proxy contest for ETA officers and wound up doing pro bono legal work for the section for 20 years.

"My introduction to ETA affairs was a contested election for control of the organization," said Jack, who heads up Willkie's Corporate and Financial Services Department and specializes in mergers and acquisitions. "I advised the incumbents on how to properly handle soliciting votes, how to use the power of the incumbency to their advantage. We treated it like a proxy fight for corporate control. Happily, we were successful, and in my succeeding years we never had anything quite so exciting."

Other hot items that often required legal attention were complaints about rankings, players' behavior and adult league rating squabbles.

"It's my bet that people don't get involved in the inner workings of a tennis organization like the ETA unless their kids play tournaments," he said, agreeing that the all-encompassing role of tennis parent ropes you in. "It's personal. I still follow some of those kids [from Eastern's junior ranks]. Just being a tennis player or loving the game is not enough to get you into it."

Jack said his own self-taught forehand and strong serve were weapons, yet admits that playing No. 1 singles for the Mamaroneck High School Tennis team and the freshman team at the University of Pennsylvania were the highlights of his tennis career. He became a fan of the game when he was a young kid playing sports in Long Beach, N.Y., and took one lesson from the local pro, Mr. Young. But in the early 1950's, basketball was the "Big" sport when he attended Camp Arundel in Maine, and Jack and his Long Beach teammate Larry Brown were the starting guards on the camp's basketball team.

Brown and Nusbaum would both become teachers and power players in their chosen careers—one in the NBA (National Basketball Association) and the other in the ABA (American Basketball Association). In 2003, Coach Brown led the Detroit Pistons to the NBA Championships; and in 1988, Nusbaum was the lead counsel to the Shearson Lehman group in the high-profile deal that was back-management and financing the \$27 billion effort to take over RJR Nabisco. It was the biggest leverage buyout in American business history and the subject of the best-selling book, *Barbarians at the Gate*, which details Jack's role in the negotiations. He is described variously in the book as a fine attorney, flinty, at one point uncharacteristically tense, cautious and as a commonsensical counsel with an angst-ridden face whose sense of humor permits him to utter a few profanities when called for.

His Shearson group lost out in the deal to Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR). "It was very deflating, extremely disappointing," Jack said. "It was so close, two groups offering the same money. The issue of who would be chosen was in doubt until the very last second. We were all sitting together at [Nabisco] headquarters waiting for word. A representative of one of the investment banks came into the room looking down at his feet, and we all knew."

"For everybody involved, it was the highlight of their career. \$27 billion! That won't ever be replicated."

At the same time Jack was working on the Nabisco deal he was overseeing acquisitions and private restructurings on behalf of Donald Trump, and also working for Ted Turner in his move to take over CBS. He calls it the "go-go" years, a time when he rated TV close-ups and lots of ink in

the press for his creativity in putting together tough deals and for his emergence as a leading player in the mergers and acquisitions field. Shearson chairman Peter Cohen once said that Nusbaum is as important an architect of a transaction as the business people. Another client has pointed out that he is terrific on the business aspects and has the ability to bring dozens of warring parties together and arrive at an amicable solution.

Jack graduated in 1962 from Penn's Wharton School and worked part time at Willkie as an accountant while he attended Columbia Law School, from which he graduated in 1965. Asked how he rose from accountant to chairman of the firm, a position he has held for the past 17 years, he mumbled something like "right place, right time, you know, all that stuff." But basically, he said, it's because he switched to mergers and acquisitions. He had started out as a tax attorney but told a senior partner he'd like to do corporate work instead.

His first assignment was to work out the business divorce, the break up of a little firm, Carter, Berlind and Weill. Arthur Carter was leaving and the firm's lawyers stayed with him, so Jack began representing the Sandy Weill, Roger Berlind companies. He handled 27 different acquisitions for them, including Shearson, American Express and Loeb Rhodes, among others. He also became involved in the historic merger of NASDAQ with the American Stock Exchange and the acquisition of McCaw Cellular Communications by AT&T.

He explains that the role of counsel is essentially one of facilitation. He advises clients on how to structure the deal and about barriers such as

government regulations. Then he assists in negotiations, including engaging in price negotiations, and does all the paperwork.

"I take it as it comes," he said. "Being a lawyer is just like anything else. I learned years ago that lawyers sell two things: ability and accessibility. Many, many lawyers have ability and not enough lawyers understand that when the client wants something you have to be accessible. A lawyer takes care of your financial health just as your doc-

tor takes care of your physical health. And when you have a real problem with either you don't want to be told, 'I'll call you back.' It's a lesson I've tried to impart over the years to the lawyers in my firm because it's all that differentiates you; there are lots of smart people out there. It's a fact.

"I have a rule. There are two things in life that get me aggravated in my firm: one is when I get a call from a client saying so and so didn't return my call. And the other is when there are typographical errors in documents that we send out. The former is lack of accessibility and responsiveness and the latter is lack of care. And both of those are easily curable."

Jack is, by nature, calm and well grounded. He is impressed by his clients' accomplishments but not awed by them. He was once having lunch at the Plaza with Donald Trump—who owned the famous Manhattan landmark—and Trump said to him, "I'll bet you come from the Bronx and your parents have been married for 50 years. Right?" Jack replied: "On the contrary, I had a very screwed up childhood. I was the only child of my mother and father who lasted together for two years, and then each remarried four more times and I have stepbrothers and sisters around the globe. When you're living under siege with multiple children in the house, one of two things happens: you either go crazy or accept the fact that if that doesn't throw you, nothing will. You learn to roll with the punches. So when you get older life gets pretty simple. I do attribute learning that to my childhood."

Trump still throws up his hands and says, "Can you believe this guy's background? This can't be!"

Doris Herrick, Eastern's longtime executive director who worked with Jack Nusbaum for 20 years, says he is a truly nice man. "I don't believe he treated any of his million dollar clients any better than he did our [tennis] association. He answered every call, solved every problem I ever threw at him and never made me feel insignificant. He really does practice what he teaches...accessibility and accountability...He is both!"



Gary Nusbaum (above), received an inscribed copy of Donald Trump's book "The Art of the Deal" that read: "Your father is a great man!"



Jack Nusbaum.



Gary and Jack Nusbaum (l & r) won a parent-child tournament at Scarsdale's Quaker Ridge Club.

# BUTCH SEEWAGEN

By Nancy Gill McShea

Walk into the brick building in Rockville Centre with the big CATS sign out front, and you're immediately swept up in a sea of buzzing children. The proprietor, Butch Seewagen, who has agreed to run an inventory of his life, ushers you into a back room far from the madding crowd. You notice that he no longer limps and seems fully recovered from his second hip replacement surgery last November.

Seewagen ranked among the world's top 100 professional tennis players during the 1970's at the same time he coached the men's tennis team at Columbia University and taught physical education there. But in 1975, at the age of 27, he tore a groin muscle while playing the U.S. summer circuit and wasn't able to walk for nine months. The medical consensus was that the injury had inflamed an undiagnosed arthritic condition, and four doctors told him he would never play again. Only Dr. Irving Glick offered hope and said he could resume playing with moderate success.

"I knew I was not going to be what I could be," said Butch, who laughs easily and often, yet admits that he also cried a lot and felt lost when he faced the reality of his life-altering injury. "I was depressed but accepted that I would be a part timer, a recreational tour player. And I loved Columbia, so I made lemonade out of lemons."

He could have settled for the role of celebrity magnet and dashing bachelor-about-town, but instead tried to live down the 'tennis bum' image during the sport's boom years in New York by devising ways to develop into a serious entrepreneur.

By 1985, after he had retired from the pro tour and was playing the senior circuit, teaching tennis and also tending to various business interests, Butch and his sister Barbara Steger opened CATS — the Children's Athletic Training School — to teach kids basic athletic skills so they would enjoy playing tennis.

"I was teaching one day, daydreaming," he said, explaining that after leaving Columbia in 1979 he was the director of tennis at Manhattan's East River and Murray Hill Racquet Clubs. "If a kid wasn't hitting the ball over the net, he wanted to leave. I wanted

to get paid for the lesson and you had to be a clown to keep him there...The kid who can hit over the net loves it and the others go running off. If they could bounce-catch, they could probably bounce-hit. If they could throw a ball, they could learn to serve. If they could catch a ball, they could volley. Kids need skills to have success and I didn't need a court to teach them."

CATS debuted in a Manhattan church gymnasium at 64th Street and Park Avenue and received national recognition for being the first skill-based program in the country.

Duly impressed by those revelations, you ask Butch to continue running an inventory of his life to date:

**1949** — His mother, Clella, pitched tennis balls to him at age 3 and drove him to every practice session and tournament between the ages of 8 and 18. "Mom gave up a big chunk of her life for me," he said.

**1954** — His father, the legendary coach George Seewagen, began dragging him to clinics at age 8 to demonstrate the forehand. "Tennis gave me everything in my life and dad gave me that gift," he said. "Dad was too nervous to watch me play, thought he'd jinx me, so when he did come he hid out in the woods."

**1957 to 1965** — Butch ranked first in every Eastern junior age division and among the country's top five. He won countless titles — including the Orange Bowl and Canadian National Championships — and was runner-up to Cliff Richey while winning the sportsmanship award at the boys' 16 nationals at Kalamazoo. He was named to the U.S. Junior Davis

Cup team at 16 with Bob Lutz and Stan Smith and played in the U.S. National Championships at 17.

**1966 to 1968** — Advanced to the mixed doubles semifinals at the U.S. Championships with Kathy Blake (mother of the Bryan twins); member of 'Final 8' Club. Beat future Wimbledon and U.S. Open champ Stan Smith at the Nassau Bowl. He was twice an All-American at Rice, the singles and doubles champion in the Southwest Conference, and was inducted into the university's Hall of Fame.

**1969** — Defeated Zan Guerry 6-4 in the fifth to win the U.S. National Amateur singles title. Traded two sets to one in the televised final (Channel 13) but dad was there and reminded him at the break that

friends back at the Bayside Club — where he had won six New York State Championships — were watching. "I was ready to lose but dad motivated me."

**1970** — He turned pro and took the Columbia job. At 22, was the youngest coach at a major university. Opened center court at Wimbledon against defending champ Rod Laver, winner of the 1969 Grand Slam. "Arthur Ashe told me not to look up and not to drink the orange juice or I'd get a bad stomach. After the match I took in the atmosphere and [as a bonus] drank all the juice." Rated a feature in *The Long Island Press* for his induction as a student-athlete into the New York City PSAL Hall of Fame, along with Whitey Ford and Red Auerbach.

**1971** — Returned to Wimbledon's Center Court to play mixed doubles with Kristy Pigeon against Evonne Goolagong and Kim Warwick. Butch tripped, cursed instead of bowing and Kristy smashed him in the head with her big lefty serve. "20,000 people were laughing and she was crying."

**1972** — Raised the bar for the Ivy League to match his innovative recruiting tactics. He beat Jimmy Connors, which attracted top-notch players Vitas Gerulaitis, Eric Fromm, Jon Molin, Lloyd Emanuel, Kirk Moritz, Rick Fagel, Henry Bunis, Bob Binns and Larry Parsont. He glamorized New York for recruits, inviting celebrities Arthur and Jeanne Ashe, Dave DeBusschere, Gordon Parks, Phyllis George, Oleg Cassini, George Plimpton and Dustin Hoffman to play tennis with the team. Arranged dates for recruits with top 10 finalists in the Ford Agency's "Model of the Year" contest; squirmed them to hot spots Maxwell's Plum and Hippopotamus.

**1973** — A good year! Notched wins over Wimbledon champ Jan Kodes and Brian Gottfried and founded the Seemar sporting goods company with Columbia professor John Markisz. They had a patent on a new ball hopper, the ball busser, and also represented Australia's titan gut, Kaepa tennis shoes and were the exclusive distributor of Yonex racquets in the northeast.

**1974** — Detroit drafted him for World Team Tennis. He took a leave from Columbia to play the tour full time. Got right into Wimbledon, "the place to be, the Super Bowl." Dad had never been to Europe and went with him.

**1975** — The year of the infamous injury! Players howled: "Osteoarthritis! What's that? Just go play!" During the Open at Forest Hills, he visited a gypsy, who said: "You're a pro athlete; I see you've suffered a severe injury. You'll resume your career in January, and for another \$5 I'll put in an extra prayer for you."

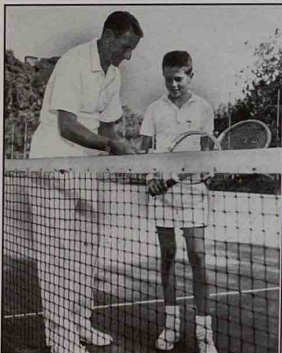
**1976** — Encouraged, he won 5 Eastern tournaments, the American Express Challenger, and came back from 0 to 200 on the ATP computer. Ranked No. 1 in the East and 37th in the country and returned to Columbia.

**1977 to 1979** — Was proud of his Columbia teams, which won three ECAC and two Ivy League Championships. He's still proud of his Columbia connection, as his son Chad is currently studying in the environmental science masters program there.

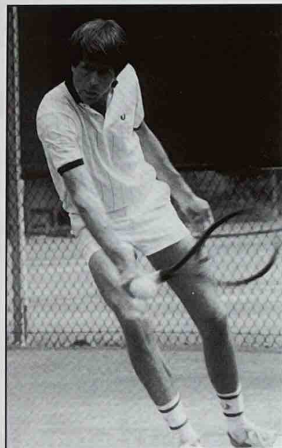
**The 1980's** — Butch opened the Center Court Restaurant opposite Lincoln Center. Attracted celebrities and tennis players from around the world. Gave his dad a surprise 75th birthday party there; Don Budge and Fred Perry were guests. Enlisted by Neil Amdur, then editor-in-chief of *World Tennis* magazine, to be the equipment advisor and write the "Coaches Corner." Won six USTA national men's 35 doubles titles and was a singles runner-up three times. Won the USTA national 40s and ranked first in the country. Played No. 1 for the 1985 U.S. team that beat Italy for the Italia Cup. Returned to the U.S. and was invited to play a pro-am at the Glen Oaks Country Club. His future wife, Chris, was running the tournament. "She was bossing everyone around, told me I was late getting onto court 3, but we've been together now for 20 years," he said.

After racing through a cliff notes version of some memorable moments in his life, Butch chuckled and said, "I'm resting now, but watch out, I'm gonna come back again when I have the left hip redone." Until then, it's back to the future with CATS and his position as director of tennis at the prestigious Pine Hollow Country Club in East Norwich!

Amdur sums up the inventory: "To know Butch Seewagen is to like him...not just for his skills or his tennis rankings, but for his genuine sense of self."



Young Butch Seewagen (right) was his dad's star pupil.



Butch Seewagen ranked among the world's top 100 tennis players.