



# ADVANTAGE

Official Newsletter of the USTA/PNW Tennis Officials Organization  
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## Notes from the Editor

By Dave Muhich

Greetings my fellow PNW officials! Just a couple quick notes from your editor to start off the latest edition of the Newsletter:

- First, a quick note about a change to the frequency of this newsletter. In an effort to ensure that each edition of this newsletter has a consistently high quality of information and news that is beneficial to you, we are changing the frequency of distribution from monthly to bi-monthly. Sending it out every 2 months will allow our contributors more time to produce their pieces, and ensure that this publication consistently contains a higher number of quality articles. Of course, if there are time-sensitive items that we want to get in front of everyone that happen to fall in the window in between editions, we will send out "special" editions of the newsletter to ensure that you remain adequately informed of those events.
- Second, at the recent Officials' Committee meeting in Portland last month, more than one member of the committee expressed their desire to have a forum for us to collaborate more efficiently in real-time, both as a vehicle for long-time officials to stay abreast of happenings in our section and, most importantly, as a place for us to direct new officials to, in order to aid in their on-boarding. To that end, I will be spearheading the setup of a PNW Officials Blog as the method for us to share information and collaborate a bit more efficiently. This will be a password-protected site and also a moderated blog, with all postings first needing approval by me or one of the other editors before being viewable by the larger group, and will also have some specific guidelines for usage that will be posted for all to see (no specific names mentioned, no derogatory postings towards other officials or players, etc.). Stay tuned for more information on this in the coming months, and feel free to contact me directly with any questions or suggestions on this item.



## Reflections on 2007

By Carl Bergquist

The holiday seasons fast approaches and I think it is time to reflect on all the great officiating out there, as you have donated so many hours of your time. **2007** has been a banner year from October to October this year officials spent **1,646 hours** at USTA sanctioned tournaments in Western Washington at a total of **47 local tournaments** from the Junior challenger and champs to league playoffs to the Washington State Open. These tournaments can not be accomplished without your help.



Now if you were not called 'stupid', 'blind' or 'worst official ever' please try harder next year 😊. As we all know, when we do our job right people sometimes become upset, it's just the heat of the moment and 99% of the time you probably did an excellent job in that situation. We are lucky enough to observe matches from a premier location: courtside. It is a location from which very few actually experience a match, but along with location comes the responsibility of making code violations and overrules.

If you do give a code violation during a tournament please write up a PPS form and return to the PNW via mail or fax. If you need the form please contact me directly. They use this information for suspensions as well as sportsmanship awards. The USTA/PNW does not visit as many courts as we do during the year and need this vital feedback to stay attached. This is similar to my position where I love to hear a little story about what went on at a tournament, so I have a feeling about the tournament as well as being kept abreast of issues that might come back in the form of a complaint.

I have spoken with many tournament directors this year and they have many positive things to say about the officials that have worked their tournament, and I mean every tournament, which is kudos to all of you who work so hard to implement these tournaments.

A special kudos goes to *Joseph Bella, Ira Moss and Betty Rankin* who worked more than their fair share of hours this year at dozens of tournaments near and far in Western Washington. Kudos go out to *Sam Sambrano and Reini Vanderheyd* who put in well over 100 hours at the two biggest tournaments in Washington: the PNW Open and the WA St Open. A special thank you is deserved for *Michael Matuszak, Barbara Farnsworth, Phyllis Westerman, Steve Halberg, Rich Kedroski and Perry Hines* who in many cases traveled over 200 miles roundtrip to help officiate at a Western Washington/USTA sanctioned tournament.

However, there are too many of you to thank and I appreciate all the hard work that you have done over the past year it has been a true pleasure and I look forward to working with you again this coming year. I especially look forward to our officiating class, where we get to all mingle and discuss fun, entertaining and 'I can't believe that happened' stories.

I hope everyone has a safe and joyous holiday season. Cheers to a New Year, I wish it brings you hope and success.

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## Guide to Navigating Career Opportunities as a USTA Official

By John Rodenberg

The following information is meant to serve as a guide in planning and developing in your role as a United States Tennis Association (USTA) official, or if you are a person interested in becoming an official.

All tennis officials must be members of the USTA. The USTA is comprised of 17 sections, each representing different regions of the United States. The USTA is the governing body for tennis in this country. Once you become a certified official, you automatically become a member of the National USTA Officials Council at no cost.

To be certified, every USTA tennis official must attend an annual training course and pass an annual open book exam for the type of officiating you plan to pursue. The next training class will be held Sunday, February 10, 2008, in the Seattle area. This training is open to anyone in our section (Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Northern Idaho and British Columbia).

After serving as a Provision Official (PV), you will first become a section official. There are three certification categories of section officials:

**Sectional Umpire (SE)** - General entry-level certification for on-court officials. Even if you are experienced, say five years or more, you will still retain the SE certification. To obtain this level you will need to have officiated in one or more of the following capacities for a total of at least five times: chair umpire, roving ump or line judge.

**Sectional Chair Umpire (SC)** - As a beginning on-court official, you may want to pursue chair officiating as soon as you have become familiar with the tennis rules, chair umpire procedures, and techniques. There is a booklet entitled "Basic Chair Umpire Handbook" that is available from the national office via their web site.

The USTA Pacific Northwest (USTA/PNW) will sponsor a chair clinic in Seattle, during the Washington State Open in August of 2008. This clinic will be taught by a national trainer/evaluator.

You can also apply to attend the National Chair Academy in Florida or South Carolina that will be held in June and paid for by the USTA. The National Chair Academy is invitation only so call me if you would like to be considered. You may also wish to talk to Dave Muhich of Seattle or Steve Halberg of Eugene who attended in 2006 and 2007, respectively.

In addition to the above mentioned trainings, there are a number of other chair clinics held throughout the country but no financial assistance is available.

**Sectional Referee (SR)** - Many individuals just beginning their career as an official pursue this option. Section referees must referee at least one USTA local or college-level tournament per year.



As you get more involved, you may want to officiate in more tournaments. We have no shortage of junior, adult, collegiate or low-level professional tournaments (sometimes called Open level tournaments) in the Seattle and Portland area. There are also opportunities to work these types of tournaments in Spokane, Medford, Anchorage, Bend, Yakima, Cour d'Alene, Twisp and Klamath Falls.

Keep in mind that less than 10 percent of the approximately 3500 USTA officials regularly officiate at professional tournaments. The only major pro tourney in our section is the Vancouver Open also known as the Odlum Brown Vancouver Open held in Vancouver, British Columbia. Lois Ker, a member of the USTA/PNW Officials Committee, is the chief of this event.

Call or e-mail John Rodenberg, USTA/PNW Chair of Officials, if you have questions.

John Rodenberg, USTA Pacific Northwest Chair of Tennis Officials

[tennisracq@wa.net](mailto:tennisracq@wa.net)

(253) 848-9033

Cell: (253) 224-7681

## A Unique Tennis Timer

by Ivar Husa

ivar@pocketinet.com

Over the last few years, many of you in the PNW have seen me carry a timer of my own design. It is shown in the upper left of the picture below. It was practical, but as you can see, larger than the most common stopwatches. The distinguishing feature of my timer is that a single press of a button restarts a timing interval. This is ever so much simpler than using the common stopwatch. I timed more intervals, and with greater confidence with my own device. *But I wanted more.*



So, I built the device shown at the right (image to the left), whose size is much more comfortable, and it offers *two* timers in the single device. It fits conveniently in my palm, measuring 1"x2"x4" and weighing under 3 oz.

I am fond for the beaded wrist straps you see on all my timers. These straps are easy to make with materials available out of any craft store. This keeps my timer snugly at hand, literally.

I have published more details on how to build this device on the web at: <http://pages.pocketinet.com/~ivar/BuildTimer.pdf>

On the web page, I show pictures inside the device, and circuit diagrams. I won't kid you, it wasn't cheap. Materials alone cost about \$80, and it took several "afternoons" to build. But I am satisfied knowing that until someone puts something like it into production (and I wish they would), mine is the most effective tennis timer out there.

If I were to dream about a Mark III model, it would display intervals in minutes and seconds, instead of just seconds, and have longer battery life. Current battery life is unknown, so I will be keeping spares at hand, which is a good idea anyway.



The USTA PNW Officiating  
Department invites you to:

Learn the Rules of Tennis,  
the Code of Conduct and  
Tournament Management

Train to be a Line or Chair Umpire,  
a Roving Umpire or a Referee.

Clinics are scheduled as follows:

**When: June/July 2008, exact dates TBD**

**Where: Vancouver, BC**

Check out the Officiating Page  
on the USTA PNW website at  
[www.pnw.usta.com](http://www.pnw.usta.com)

or

Contact [tennistracq@wa.net](mailto:tennistracq@wa.net)  
for more information.



**ADVANTAGE** is the Official Newsletter of the PNW-USTA Officials Organization. **John Rodenberg**, Contributing Editor and **Dave Muhich**, Managing Editor. Send comments to [tennistracq@wa.net](mailto:tennistracq@wa.net) and [davemu21@hotmail.com](mailto:davemu21@hotmail.com). We're committed to deliver you the "ADVANTAGE" when it comes to officiating in the PNW Section.