



Media contact: Kelly Gaines
North Carolina Tennis Foundation
kelly@nctennis.com
2709 Henry Street
Greensboro, NC 27405

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The North Carolina Tennis Hall of Fame to induct Bobby Taylor, Virginia Dumas Skillman, Bonnie Vandegrift and Calvin Davis

When you hear the name “Bobby Taylor” you think of eastern North Carolina and of course, Snow Hill. Bobby, who grew up in the town that became the epicenter for tennis east of I-95 and west of the beach! After a successful run as a high school player, he left the coastal plains and headed for the mountains. He played varsity tennis for the Catamounts of Western Carolina University. After college, he headed back down to Snow Hill and found a passion for league tennis and volunteering in many aspects of the sport he loves. One could say he is a true ambassador for the sport of tennis. Taylor has an innovative mindset that allows him to create positive solutions that keep people playing league and tournament tennis. He has always been and remains a strong advocate for the player!

In 2000, Bobby developed and opened Greene Ridge Racquet Club in Snow Hill. This solidified the vote that Snow Hill became one of America’s Top Ten Tennis Towns in 2010. The USTA awarded Green Ridge Racquet Club the Facility of the Year in 2018. He has also had financial and management interests in Lake Wilson Racquet Club and Neuse River Racquet Club, both outstanding clubs that promote and develop tennis.

Bobby has been a leader and advocate for tennis. His volunteer service and passion for the game have helped so many be a part of the sport he loves.

It is hard to place Virginia Dumas Skillman in only one category of excellence for tennis. She has excelled as a player, a teacher and an ambassador. Whatever she did in tennis, she did it very, very well. In a time when women did not have the many opportunities that exist today, Virginia managed to find a way to be a champion and grow our sport. She was a trailblazer as a player and, additionally wanted to do all she could to share the joys and benefits of tennis with others through her teaching (on the court, in the classroom, with publications and a lot of community involvement). She is the quintessential grassroots advocate.

After winning the women's singles championship four straight years in Birmingham, AL, her home, she won the Georgia State Women's crown at 17 years old. As a result, she was ranked as the #1 girl in the South in 1948.

She was a member of the Southern Girls' Team in the National Team competition and played doubles against "Little Mo" Connolly in the Girls' Nationals. Virginia was also the runner-up in the Eastern Intercollegiate Girls' Championship in June 1952. Competing well into the 1990's, her playing career spanned close to 50 years.

Skillman was a teacher of tennis both on the courts and through multiple instructional publications. Virginia Skillman has led a life full of a passion for tennis and has left a legacy for us all.

Since moving to North Carolina thirty years ago Bonnie Vandegrift has been a force for tennis. Bonnie began playing tennis in Columbia, S.C. and quickly became an avid league and tournament player. In 1994 she and her husband, Mike, moved their family to Brevard, N.C. where they purchased the Brevard Racquet Club. Because there was no active league program in Western North Carolina, Vandegrift started the local league and served as the local league

coordinator for nine years. She was also instrumental in starting the local CTA in Transylvania County.

Bonnie became involved in the North Carolina Tennis Association serving and chairing several committees. She went on to become president of NC tennis from 2008-2009. She then served as president of the NC Tennis Foundation from 2010-2011. Bonnie has not just served North Carolina. She has served on numerous committees at USTA and USTA Southern, chairing both the Southern and National League Committees for four years. Bonnie was the USTA Southern Section President from 2019-2020 and now is leading the Southern Tennis Foundation. Bonnie Vandegrift is known as a national expert on league tennis. So much so that she received the USTA League Award in 2023.

With dedicated volunteers like Bonnie Vandegrift the future leadership of North Carolina, Southern and National has a bright future.

What is left to do when you have over 30 years of coaching, more than 35 High School state championships, created a pathway to college for over 80 juniors, coached 4 tour players with one reaching the US Open Men's Semifinals. Coach Calvin Davis has done so much for a sport that he loves. He has given so many young people the opportunity to see their dreams play out on the court. Davis has always looked for a way to make a child's life better.

Coach Calvin Davis has 35 plus High School State Championships to his credit. He was honored as the 2017 National High School Coach of the Year by the PTR. He has been honored by the Charlotte Observer as one of the TOP 10 of all time coaches across ALL sports. Davis continues to volunteer his time at all levels of the sport. He offers his experience and expertise in High School and competitive space.

As founder of the Davis Foundation, Coach Davis has seen the foundation reach over 2000 underserved youth by providing free tennis programming through the Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation programs and the Greater Enrichment Program. His desire to make sure every child that comes under his tutelage will see a forward and successful life ahead.

The North Carolina Tennis Hall of Fame now includes 115 members with the addition of Rebel Good, Jeff Joyce, Sam Paul and Cliff Skakle. The inaugural class was inducted in 1975. The North Carolina Tennis Foundation selects two or three members each year to add to the Hall of Fame during Tennis Weekend. Currently, this class will be inducted on Saturday January 27, 2024, at the Pinehurst Resort and Country Club. For up-to-date information, visit www.nctennisfoundation.com.

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About the North Carolina Tennis Foundation

The North Carolina Tennis Foundation was organized in 1961 for the purpose of promoting tennis and serves tennis players in North Carolina with its sister organization, the North Carolina Tennis Association. The Foundation provides financial support to many worthwhile tennis programs across the state. These programs include the National Junior Tennis & Learning (NJTL) Network, the NC State High School Championships, Adaptive Tennis, and numerous grants. The NCTF is also responsible for maintaining the North Carolina Tennis Hall of Fame. <https://www.nctennisfoundation.com/hall-of-fame>