



USTA NORTH CAROLINA

D. CURTIS LAWSON

Black History Month Q&A

D. Curtis Lawson serves as the Director of Tennis and Head Men's Tennis Coach at North Carolina Central University.

"I take great pride in our program and the positive impact it has on our players and the community," Lawson said.

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

Q&A with Coach Lawson:

Brief description of your tennis background – playing and coaching:

"My tennis background includes life member of the USTA, life member of the ATA, member of the USPTA, President of the MEAC Coaches Association, Board Member of the Durham-Orange Community Tennis Association, member of the ITA Carolina Region Ranking Committee, and member of the NCAA Division I Men's & Women's Tennis Committee.

In college, I was a two-sport student-athlete (tennis and basketball) and following college I've remained active in tennis – playing in USTA Adult Leagues & Tournaments.

As a coach, I was blessed to begin my career as the youngest Head Coach (in 1990) at North Carolina Central University (NCCU). Twenty-one seasons later (1990-1996, 2006-Present), I am one of just a select few NCCU Coaches to have coached at the university when NCCU was a NCAA Division II member and now as a DI member institution."

How were you first introduced to tennis?

"My parents introduced my siblings and I to tennis when we were in our pre-teen years. We participated in summer camps, played in junior tennis competition and by age 16, I had the opportunity to be a summer tennis instructor with the local recreation department."

What is your favorite part about coaching?

"My favorite part about coaching is preparing my student-athletes for the game of life and watching their development and countless success stories. The majority of my players matriculate to graduate & professional schools.

Since my first team (1990-91), my former players are now doctors, lawyers, coaches, educators...and several married with kids."

What makes your institution/program special?

"North Carolina Central University has a variety of characteristics that make it special....some of which include the location, extensive course curriculums, and the university is in the middle of a multiyear expansion initiative that has already resulted in the construction of three new high-tech dormitories and a new state of the art student center. NCCU is a mid-major institution that offers an intimate college experience.

Similarly, what makes our program special is the family-like culture we have developed.

Additionally, as a double-Eagle (Undergrad-Biology, Grad-Biochemistry) I take great pride in all aspects of our program...and by many measures we have a first-class program."

What is your favorite tennis memory?

"I'm a bit conflicted because of so many memorable moments but if I were to name one, it would include two separate seasons. The memory would begin in 2013 when I took the team to Puerto Rico to compete during Spring Break – and blossom the following year by winning the 2014 HBCU National Tennis Championship."

What life lessons have you learned from tennis?

"In my many years of coaching, I have learned to be adaptable, compassionate, consistent, and committed to excellence without excuse. Most importantly, my faith and the loving support of my wife (Mrs. Coach), sons (Curt Jr. & Tory) and Assistant Coach (John) have given me the awesome opportunity to play a positive role in the development of tomorrow's leaders."