



# Center Court

JANUARY 2026

## BTC Champions Shine on the World Stage

Roz King, Liane Bryson, Christina Kaus and Hiromi Sasano have each earned World Championship honors. They deserve to be recognized as this is no easy feat. For Roz King, winning on the world stage has happened many times, yet each one is still special. She and her 85 team captured the Angela Mortimer Cup at the ITF Master's World Team Championships, played in Bol, Croatia, beating Great Britain for the title in October 2025 on red clay. Liane Bryson and her teammates won the 75 Queen's Cup at the same event. Liane was the heroine as she won both singles and doubles in the final match, helping the team defeat Finland for the title. BTC member Christina Kaus won the World Cup Individual 60 Doubles Championship played on Har-Tru in Palm Garden, Fl. May of 2025. She is pictured below with partner Stina Mosvold from Texas/Sweden. One more BTC World Champion that needs to be mentioned is Hiromi Sasano, who won the 45 World Championships at Ariake Tennis Park in Tokyo, Japan. She is shown with teammate Julie Thu from Texas. This event took place in November of 2024. All these women from Balboa Tennis Club worked hard to bring home a world title for their country and our Club. We salute them!

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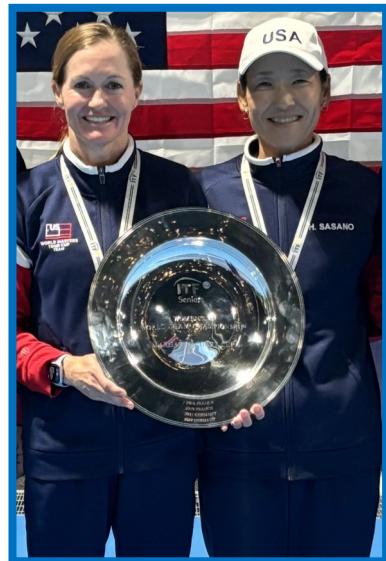
Roz King



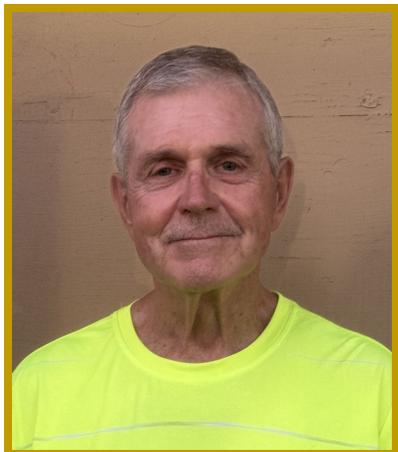
Liane Bryson



Christina Kaus (left) with  
Stina Mosvold (Texas/Sweden)



Hiromi Sasano (right) with  
Julie Thu (Texas)

**Message from Balboa Tennis Club President, Dr. Gary L. Smith**

Collectively, the Balboa Tennis Club enjoyed a very successful 2025 year, and we have high expectations this positive enthusiasm will surely continue throughout 2026. Thanks to all of our BTC members, there is always a concerted effort to create a welcoming and responsive environment. You can actually feel the energy and enthusiasm constantly generated throughout our club, that gives BTC an identity that has consistently been recognized as one of the finest public tennis facilities in the United States. The BTC 2025 year was one of continued growth, noticeable upgrades and modernization.

There is a reason why our courts are often filled on a regular basis throughout the day. Our staff constantly strives to keep the BTC courts in excellent condition, ensuring they remain in top shape for all players. We continue trying to increase shade around the courts, which is an obvious plus for all of us. Some examples of BTC property augmentations which helped BTC win the "Club of the Year!" award, include:

- A) Six new benches by courts 19-24 (\$9,000)
- B) Additional awning above courts 19-24 (\$5,000+)
- C) Beautiful landscaping/signage in front of Clubhouse (\$6000)

Thank you M.A. Hillier for your continued generosity!

- D) Plumbing (\$18,000+)
- E) Club Patio resurfacing (\$7,000+)
- F) Windscreens on courts 1-3 (\$5,000+)
- G) Additional security cameras (\$4,000+)

As the BTC President, I find it an honor to work alongside Colleen Ferrell and the other amazing six Board Members. Each of them truly demonstrate a positively focused vision, purpose and a sincere heart. The Board is responsible for establishing broad policies and setting out strategic objectives, while assuring the availability of adequate financial resources. I feel blessed to work with leaders like Director-Colleen Ferrell, Vice President-Andrew MacFarlane, Secretary-Maegen Demko, Treasurer-Mario Suarez, contributing board members Angie Crawford, Charles Hamori and Michael Massaro. We all work closely and cooperatively, as a team, thereby ensuring the perpetual growth and prosperity of our Balboa Tennis Club. Their leadership is essential to everything we do, and we are incredibly fortunate to have such a talented group of individuals guiding our club.

The Route 6 Coffee and Smoothies team continues to provide excellent service, great food and a welcoming atmosphere. The positive energy in the café makes it a perfect spot to eat, relax and connect with fellow members.

Our tennis programs keep expanding under the leadership of HJK Ventures Tennis Director Hiromi Sasano and HJK General Manager Matt Previdi. They have kept our programs strong and thriving, providing top flight instruction in every aspect of their operation.

Entering my 5th year as President, the goal is to continue embracing the guiding principles that make our club such a special place: community, health, and, of course, the exhilaration of tennis. Together, we all make our "Club of the Year" a really special place.



**BALBOA  
TENNIS CLUB**

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[www.balboatennis.com](http://www.balboatennis.com)

**President**  
Gary Smith

**Vice President**  
Andrew Macfarlane

**Treasurer**  
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**Secretary**  
Maegen Demko

**Board Members**  
Angie Crawford  
Dr. Charles Hamori  
Michael Massaro

**Director**  
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**Tennis Director**  
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619-318-6002

**Reservations & Info** 619-295-9278  
**Director's Office** 619-295-4242  
**Pro Shop** 619-677-4676  
**Route 6 Café** 619-230-5898

**Club hours of operation:**  
**Monday - Friday** 8am - 9pm  
**Saturday & Sunday** 8am - 8pm

## Club Director's Report

by Colleen Ferrell



Looking back on 2025 puts a smile on my face and fills my heart with pride. As Director of this great Club, I am most impressed with the tremendous community of players, volunteers, Reservation, Pro Shop and Cafe staff, teaching pros, BTC Board of Directors and vendors who care about giving 100% for the betterment of "The Club." There was a reason we won "Club of the Year" from the USTA in 2025 as together, all aspects contributed to receiving this award.

2026 will bring expected challenges to be tackled and met head on with the same positive approach used in the past. The infrastructure continues to breakdown, especially the plumbing, but we've been able to patch the holes and keep things moving without interruption. Of course the most prized possession - the 25 tennis courts - need continual attention and resurfacing. This upcoming year, it's time for the lower six courts to get resurfaced, followed by the teaching courts in late fall or 2027. The annual rotational schedule is a main priority for the Club and the City of San Diego, as outlined in our Special Use Permit.

Thank you BTC members for your support along the way as we keep moving forward to showcase and enjoy one of the finest public tennis facilities in the USA. Happy New Year to all.

## Questions for Maegen Demko - BTC New League Coordinator/Current BTC Board of Director Secretary



Maegen Demko

### *1. What purpose will your new role at BTC as League Coordinator serve for the Club?*

Part of my role as league coordinator will be focused on organizing and responding to requests for fielding USTA teams at the club. This is part of a new effort to ensure that the court time needs between league teams and club members are balanced and that captains have the information they need to run their team throughout the season. I will also help new league players learn about league play, connect prospective players with captains, help captains find players when needed, and ensure that captains and players are aware of the rules, regulations, and best practices related to running leagues at the club.

### *2. How does an inquiring member of BTC get matched up with a league team?*

We share prospective players' contact information with relevant team captains (based on player level and interest) from the start of the season until the final roster deadline. We don't require that captains roster prospective players, but it's a good first step for getting connected with league players and captains, getting invited to practices, and so on.

### *3. As a potential league player, what player credentials are necessary?*

For USTA league players, an NTRP rating is required if you do not already have one. (I'd highly recommend playing with some current league players at your prospective level before creating a self-rating; reach out to us for more guidance on this step.) Beyond that, there are no formal credentials per se, but there are a few things you can do to make yourself a good prospective teammate:

**Be proactive:** Check out the challenge courts. Get contact info for people you meet at the club. Join and participate in chat groups for organizing informal play.

**Be available:** Even if you can't get on a team's roster, offer to play with the team in practice. Get contact info for players you meet on the courts.

**Be flexible:** Keep an open mind when it comes to playing with different partners in doubles. Having very few potential partners means you're less likely to be rostered. Captains need more options for doubles teams, not fewer. (questions for Maegen Demko continues on page 5)

## Year End Review from Tennis Director Hiromi Sasano



It's hard to believe this is already our fourth year at BTC. When we first started, we could only imagine the growth and community we've been fortunate to experience. Today, HJK Ventures has grown to more than 30 employees - a milestone made possible by the dedication, passion, and hard work of every member of our team.

Tennis has always been more than a sport to us. It creates friendships, offers a sense of therapy and escape, and becomes a lifelong source of joy. That's why we're committed to keeping this community strong, inclusive, and growing continuously.

This year also marked an exciting step forward for our nonprofit, Dream Team HJK Tennis. We launched our first online fundraiser, and we are so grateful for your support. Your generosity helps us expand our mission and reach more families who can benefit from the power of tennis.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Here's to continued growth, impact, and community in the years ahead.

## Recap from HJK Ventures General Manager – Matt Previdi



What an unforgettable year for Balboa Tennis Club. This September, the club was honored with the prestigious USTA National *Club of the Year* award at the 2025 US Open - a recognition that reflects the strength of our entire community. We are grateful to have played a small part in the team effort that helped earn this distinction. A thriving club is defined by its members, programs, leagues, and spirit, and Balboa continues to set the bar high in all four.

One of the brightest highlights of 2025 has been the explosive growth of our adult beginner programs. This year alone, we offered over 4,000 clinic spots dedicated specifically to new players - a remarkable investment that is already paying off. New players are the key to a healthy and sustainable tennis ecosystem, and we're proud to say Balboa now hosts the largest adult beginner program in Southern California. These clinics aren't just classes; they are the entry point into a lifelong love of the game, and they've strengthened our community in ways we could have only hoped for. Of course, none of this happens without you - the players who take our clinics, trust our pros, show up day after day, and support what we do. We work hard to meet the needs of every player who steps onto our courts and to offer programming that matches your goals,

your level, and your love for the game. Because of your enthusiasm and commitment, Balboa Tennis Club has become the largest provider of adult clinics anywhere in Southern California, offering over 15,000 clinic spots in 2025. We cannot thank you enough for being the heart of our tennis family.

We also want to extend a heartfelt thank-you to our incredible pro staff. We are fortunate to work with talented coaches from across the globe, each bringing unique backgrounds, perspectives, and strengths. Their ability to collaborate as a cohesive unit to meet the diverse needs of our players with enthusiasm, professionalism, and care has been the engine behind our success this year.

Finally, our deepest gratitude goes to the Balboa Tennis Club Board of Directors and to Colleen Ferrell. Year after year, they make thoughtful decisions that keep our club on a path toward excellence. Their commitment allows us to operate in a friendly, clean, and consistently improving environment - one where both players and staff feel supported. Colleen's unwavering trust and advocacy are invaluable. Without her leadership, much of what we do simply wouldn't be possible.

Here's to an extraordinary year and to an even brighter 2026 at Balboa Tennis Club. Thank you for being the heartbeat of our community.

## Maribeth Rivera – HJK Ventures Junior Tennis Director



“Coach Maribeth”, BTC Junior Tennis Director is now in her second year at this position. She is happy with the program development. There has been an increase in the “Colored Ball” program consisting of Red Ball (4-8), beginner, Orange Ball (8-10) intermediate and Green Dot (10-12), advanced, prior to playing with the regulation yellow tennis ball. One of her big challenges has been increasing the High Performance level, defined for players 10-14 ages with a 5-10 UTR, who already possess basic tennis skills and are looking to advance at a high level. “The pros have created this pathway between recreation and competitive play,” Maribeth commented. “Finding the balance for kids and parents that just want to have fun and those determined to work their way up the ladder of competition is the challenge.”

HJK Venture junior programs offer these opportunities and advancements for all ages and levels. During this past year, Maribeth has worked diligently at getting the programs filled up and flourishing. The retention of the current students and also continuing to grow the programs is her main goal. “Communication and follow up are a very important part of my job,” she says. “I don’t like mediocrity. I had the best coach in Puerto Rico growing up – Pedro Valentin – who taught me as a player, how to teach and strive for success.” Maribeth’s goal overall is to fill up the BTC programs at every level, but to also keep the high quality of instruction.

*(Questions for Maegen Demko continued from page 3)*

### **4. Is it necessary to have tournament experience to play on a team?**

No! In fact, league and tournament play are quite different. League play involves playing several matches over the course of a season at different locations throughout the county. In a league match, the outcome of each “line” contributes to a team win or loss; the team with the best record in a flight (a group of teams) advances to the playoffs. This makes for a lot of exciting moments - you may find yourself cheering for your teammates to win a deciding line in a close match - or be on the court trying to win the match for your team! League play combines the format of a team sport with the game of tennis, enabling players to experience the camaraderie and companionship of the former while playing the latter. Such a fun combination!

### **5. Do league players need a USTA and Club membership?**

Yes! All rostered players must have a current Balboa membership throughout the team’s season. Players must also have a USTA membership to be eligible to register for a team. If a player registers for a team and is not a member, the team captain will be informed and instructed to remove the player from their roster. Players will get a league credit - not a refund - from USTA in this case, so captains should take care to ensure the players they invite are members before they invite them to register.

### **6. Is it possible to become a League Captain at BTC?**

Yes! If you’re interested in captaining a USTA team, fill out the form on our website. You can learn which league formats happen at what time of year by visiting this USTA website and checking under San Diego. We provide all captains with a timeline of steps to follow during the course of a season and are available to help with any questions you may have as the season progresses.

### **7. How many courts are dedicated to league play at BTC?**

Typically, no more than 6 courts at a time will be committed to league play at the club. (Leagues are usually played on courts 19-24 or occasionally 8, 9-10, or 16-18.) We limit league teams to 2 of the same format at the same time.

### **8. How long have you personally participated in league tennis?**

I’ve been playing league tennis since 2018 when I began playing on USTA league teams in Boston, MA.

### **9. What in your opinion is the most fun part of league play?**

The most fun part of league play for me is the team aspect of the competition. I grew up playing softball, so I became very accustomed to participating in sports surrounded by my teammates and drawing inspiration from them, cheering them on, and giving them hell when it’s warranted!

### **10. What are the steps involved in reaching the national level of league play?**

Reaching Nationals in league play requires you to win your local league flight and then win at sectionals, which is a tournament played by all the teams who have won their flights from districts across Southern California. It’s no small feat! There have been several successful teams from San Diego (both at our club and at others) that have made it to Nationals in league play. If you want to make it there, be proactive and ask them for some advice!

## **“Homegrown Sasha” Makes her Mark at BTC**



Sasha Goldschmid

Balboa Tennis Club attracts players of all ages for recreation, competition and fitness. Whatever the reason, the feeling of community within the Club soon envelops the members. Over the years, the Club has taken pride in those special players who are “homegrown” and began their careers at BTC, such as Sasha Goldschmid. Of course, it’s also convenient when the tennis club is located in your neighborhood, said Sasha. “I’ve grown up here. BTC has always been a fun place to play.”

She started with soccer and tennis at age 5, yet soon discovered a preference for an individual sport instead of a team. Sasha was initially coached by BTC Pros Mike Rogers and Geoff Griffin during summer camps between ages 5-7. She graduated to private lessons during ages 8-9. Her father preferred Sasha to stay away from tournament play in the early years so she wouldn’t burn out, which worked out well to keep her interested in the game.

In 2020, she competed in her first level 6 junior tournament. “I was excited about competing, and I learned that I like to win,” she said. At age 13 during 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Sasha started taking lessons and instruction more seriously. She practiced daily with adult club members and grad students to improve her game in preparation for the next level. Sasha made varsity as a freshman at San Diego High School, but unfortunately, a skateboarding accident left her with a broken ankle and temporarily sidelined her career. Not to be discouraged by this setback, Sasha became even more determined to get back on the court.

Her tennis took off the last three years of high school. Sasha developed her game in many different aspects. “I liked the strategy of tennis,” she said. “I began hitting with more control instead of just power and developing consistency overall.” Playing under BTC member and coach of SDHS Sean Sands, Sasha’s game continued to get better each year. “Coaching Sasha for the past four years has been amazing. She went from entering the league as a freshman, competing with some of the top schools in the City, to her senior year when she made the final of the Western League tournament. She had a lot to do with raising the level of play at San Diego High. Sasha was a joy to coach,” said Sean

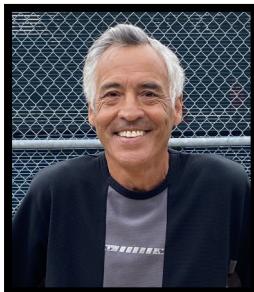
As for collegiate tennis aspirations, this is still a question mark and remains to be seen. “I hope to keep practicing even though high school tennis is over,” she says. Collegiate tennis may happen if everything falls into place depending on what school she selects.

Sasha’s educational aspirations are lofty. She plans to major in neuroscience and specifically in the psychological aspect of the brain. Having been raised by two parents who are both psychologists, this pathway seems natural. Sasha anticipates attending a college in a big city, surrounded by “a dense population,” she says.

When asked what aspect of tennis she enjoys most, Sasha said, “The mental aspect because it makes me a stronger person.” With great ambitions in the psychology world ahead and an accomplished high school tennis career in the rear view mirror, the road forward looks full of possibilities for this well-rounded, homegrown player from the Balboa Tennis Club.

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## **BTC Financial Update from Treasurer Mario Suarez**



BTC has been able to maintain a solid financial and fiscal standing. Revenue continues to increase primarily due to increased membership rates and record membership levels. A source of additional income from the purchase of CD’s paying higher interest rates than passive savings accounts has helped the cash flow. Income from outside court rental, tournaments, HJK rent and daily permits have all risen, which has helped offset BTC’s Operating and Administrative expenses. On the expenditure side, BTC general liability insurance increased 18%. Repair & Maintenance increased 63% (plumbing issues) with janitorial & cleaning services increasing 10%.

Other major costs which are rising annually include: payroll, utilities (electricity and water), and improvements to the courts (resurfacing of four courts and the hitting wall surface) increased 29%. Defacing at BTC caused by graffiti on our courts has continued, which has added additional costs to repaint surfaces and repair damages. We have also experienced vandalism of electrical enclosures which control lighting. In an effort to help to mitigate this situation, the Club added additional security cameras in areas which did not have any visibility.

Balboa Tennis Club’s overall financial situation has been able to keep pace and slightly improve. Many thanks to Club CPA Jere Batten for her fiscal guidance over the past 12 years.

## BTC Juniors on the Rise - Tadele Lew and Alex Markmiller



Alex Markmiller and Tadele Lew

Tadele – He has been playing tennis for 2½ years now. He first started playing baseball and then gravitated to tennis. He thinks tennis is “fun and exhilarating.” Tadele enjoys both singles and doubles. He says his best strokes are his serve and his backhand drop shot. If someone brings him forward on the court, Tadele will come to the net. He says, “I like to compete and know I can continue to improve.” Tadele loves playing with his Dad; they are evenly matched. His favorite pro player is Jannik Sinner. “I like that he is consistent and that he takes the opportunities presented to him on the court.” What does Tadele like about BTC? “It’s well maintained, convenient and I like the smoothies from the Café.”

Alex – He has been playing tennis for 2 years. Alex also competes in soccer and competitive rock climbing. He started taking lessons and clinics with Tadele at BTC and was hooked on tennis from the beginning. Alex is in his second season of Junior Team Tennis, which he really enjoys. He claims his best shot is his forehand. “I am learning to construct a point and trying to be more consistent,” he says. When Alex gets to high school, he will have to make a difficult decision between rock climbing and tennis. Yet for now, Alex can make time for both sports. Like his buddy Tadele, his favorite tennis pro is

Sinner, although he also likes Taylor Fritz. As for the instruction at BTC, Alex says “Coach Vidal is super supportive and he keeps us focused.” Both boys plan to attend Mission Bay High School.

### Comments from BTC Coach Vidal Castillo

“Tadele and Alex started taking private lessons with me in the summer of 2025 after winning the San Diego JTT L7. We have done multiple drills to work on technique, footwork and strategy. They have learned that training hard allows them to be prepared for matches and enjoy the game more. Tadele likes to hit slices and go to the net. Alex likes to be a grinder and hit powerful forehands. Both of them are hard workers and passionate. I enjoy working with them because they have learned to be disciplined. They have improved their tennis skills/game a lot in a short period of time.”

## Mike Carrico - Senior Sensation at 90 Years Young



Mike Carrico

Ninety year old BTC Member Mike Carrico still plays tennis 3-4 times per week and competes in national tournaments. He will soon be competing in the Wilson Category 2 tournament at Mission Hills Country Club along with local senior legend Saul Snyder and five other entrants in the singles and doubles divisions. Mike plans to keep competing in the 90 nationals. He has earned an ITF and USTA national ranking in singles and doubles. He still enjoys playing the tournaments and the camaraderie. “The competition and player’s parties are great fun,” he says.

As for his background, Mike served in the Marine Corp from 1956-1962 in San Diego. He is very proud of his service for the country. He graduated from UCLA with a degree in business and then received his MBA from Cal State Long Beach in Computer Science/Information Technology. Mike started playing tennis in his 30’s after a two year collegiate basketball career at Montana State. “The transfer skills from basketball to tennis were helpful – especially the movement using quick stops and starts.”

Mike has been playing 60 years of tennis which started in the 35 Junior Vets division. Overall his body has held up after having one hip and a knee replaced. Currently he utilizes a physical trainer to treat his neuropathy with bands and stretching. When asked about his keys to longevity, Mike responded, “Everyone my age is dealing with issues. My advice is to never quit playing. You have to love the game and competition.”

# Calendar of Events 2026

<b>January</b>	16 SDDTA Annual Dinner - La Jolla Beach & Tennis Club
	20 BTC Board Meeting
<b>February</b>	7-10 Little Mo International Tennis Tournament - side site
	17 BTC Board Meeting
<b>March</b>	6-7 SCTA Sectionals
	17 BTC Board Meeting
	21-22 Harper Ink Tournament - side site
<b>April</b>	5 San Diego Tennis Federation Team Tennis
	11-12 K&W Junior Tournament
	21 BTC Board Meeting
	25 Level 7 One Day Tournament
<b>May</b>	4-9 CIF High School Boy's Individuals
	17 Tennis Fest
	19 BTC Board Meeting
<b>June</b>	5-6 SCTA Sectionals
	16 BTC Board Meeting
<b>July</b>	3-5 San Diego Open
	21 BTC Board Meeting
	18-19, 24-26 Maureen Connolly Balboa Open Championships

## Route 6 Café - Message from Guillermo Sanchez - Owner



This past year has been an exciting and rewarding chapter for our café, marked by steady growth and wonderful support from the Balboa Tennis Club family and the local community. We were especially proud of our new resurfaced seating area, which quickly became a favorite spot for members and guests to relax, meet friends, or settle in with a good cup of coffee, smoothie or sandwich.

One of our key goals for the coming year is extending our operating hours, giving guests more flexibility to enjoy the café later into the evening. As we plan for the future, we remain focused on delivering great service, a warm environment, and an experience that continues to grow alongside our Balboa Tennis Club family and our local community. We would like to thank everyone for your continued support.



52 players showed up for the Turkey Shoot Social on November 22. A good time was had by all!