



USTA NORTH CAROLINA

2019 TENNIS WEEKEND RECAP

TENNIS WEEKEND

FEBRUARY 1, 2019

He didn't even know if he would be able to return a serve, let alone return to competitive play. It was 2017 when the J.S. Love Adult Male Tennis Player of the Year (2018) Simon Cagle underwent surgery to repair a pre-existing heart condition.

Doctors sidelined him for months, but Cagle persisted in his recovery. In 2018, he returned to the game he loves with a jaw-dropping 30-4 record, helping to lead his Lake Norman 4.5 team to an 18 and over state championship.

Inspiring stories like Cagle's were on full display at the 2019 Awards Luncheon in Pinehurst, during the annual USTA North Carolina Tennis Weekend meeting.

The ceremony focused on more than three dozen winners and their families from across the state representing the best of what the lifetime sport of tennis has to offer.

And it was his lifetime for which James Reid was honored. Reid grew up in the small, rural town of Selma where, he tearfully recounted, town officials removed the nets from and chained off the only courts in his area when he was only a child. "Those were my courts," Reid recalled. "They were my refuge. I asked the Lord, 'what am I going to do now, God?'"

He began to do a lot as an adult. Reid began working with the First Missionary Baptist Church and its after school program, and then he reached out to USTA North Carolina five years ago to rejuvenate tennis in Johnston County. Most recently, this Mary Milam Award winner helped Selma repurpose a dilapidated court into four new 36-foot courts for youth to use to learn the sport.

Teaching the sport with a generous heart is what earned William Davis Jr. the 2018 Junior Tennis Council Award Given in Honor of John Peddycord. Davis is a certified coach who instructs juniors of all ages, many times for free. He uses his own money for balls and equipment, never wanting to turn away any child.

Davis can often be found working with a diverse group of athletes and some days with more than 30 at once. He volunteers his time developing a deep and abiding interest in his students, believing each child is able to develop a champion's mentality.

The Adaptive Tennis Award winner already has the champion's mind. She noticed a need, a problem, a gap in her community, and Helen Leonard set about filling it. She is a volunteer for the Adaptive Sports and Adventures Program in Charlotte and created a new wheelchair tennis program.

The program quickly grew and evolved into play opportunities for a variety of people with disabilities. Success, however, was breeding new challenges, and Leonard realized families could not afford sports chairs, equipment and transportation. She tackled that obstacle too and founded the "Strokes for Spokes" charity tournament, which has now raised more than \$60,000 for the Adaptive Sports and Adventures Program.

If you know someone in your community who is making a difference in the lives of those around him/her through tennis, let us know. USTA North Carolina wants to recognize wonderful supporters, friends and volunteers across the state.