INSIDE THE STMS

SEPTEMBER 2019

STMS Member Spotlight
With Dr. Carol L. Otis MD, FACSM

Coaches’ Corner
With S&C Coach Justin Pimm

Physically Speaking
Strategies to Amplify Your Life
We're deep in the first week of the US Open Tennis Grand Slam as I pen this today. As expected from this year's event, the thrill and excitement of the Flushing Meadows stage never disappoints. So, what is it about this Grand Slam that has so many attractive features to tennis players and fans alike around the world? I can only imagine the myriad of answers to this question, and quite rightly so. Considering the tennis players perspective, the US Open series which culminates in the Grand Slam event - the final Grand Slam of the calendar year – is played on hard court. The nature of the surface being fast when compared to the clay of the French Open played mid-year. In the May issue, as you may remember, we discussed the many variables associated with all things related to clay court tennis. In this issue, we're privileged to consult with some of the world’s finest minds on all things relating to hard court tennis.

The stellar group of contributors for our September issue is as follows: Up first, we are thrilled to learn a little more about the life and legacy of one of our long time STMS members, Dr. Carol Otis in our STMS member spotlight section. I'm sure you'll be as excited as I am when you read about Dr. Otis and her valuable contribution to our great sport. Secondly, we feature an S&C Coach, Mr. Justin Pimm, from the UK who breaks down some key features of strength and conditioning specifically geared at the junior tennis player’s game and the preparation/transition for hard court tennis. Thirdly, we share another great segment from the WTA "Physically Speaking" section. This issue doesn’t disappoint with more relevant information in ‘bit size’ form to assist us in making informed decisions relating to our health and well-being as tennis players.

As always, we trust that you enjoy reading and learning more about the various complexities that make our sport great.

Yours in tennis,
Deb Skinstad, MA
(PhD Sport Science candidate).
STMS Member Spotlight with Dr. Carol L. Otis MD, FACSM

1. Occupation/Certification(s)

I am a physician board certified in internal medicine and primary care sports medicine with an emphasis in women’s issues. I have been most involved with and am the primary author of the first ACSM Position Stand on the Female Athlete Triad and the WTA Age Eligibility Rules and Player Development Programs. I am retired from clinical practice and now work as a consultant in sports medicine and athlete development.

2. How long have you been involved in tennis and in what ways?

I have been involved with tennis my whole life thanks to a great start by my father (a ranked So Cal player and captain of the tennis team at Stanford in 1920s) who had me start learning to play and follow tennis at age 6 in the 1950s before girls were encouraged to be in sports. I played competitively in high school and college (before Title IX) and then taught tennis to pay my way through medical school.

As a physician I worked with the Tennis teams at UCLA 1980-2000. I was the USA Olympic tennis team physician for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, and US Fed Cup physician 1998-2002. I have served on the ITF and USTA Sports Medicine committees and as a trustee of the American College of Sports Medicine and on many of their committees.

I started working with the WTA in 1994 as chairperson of the Age Eligibility Review Commission and have continued an association with the WTA as a medical advisor 1997-2002, and chairperson of the WTA Player Development Advisory Panel (1997- present).

3. What is your current role in tennis or tennis medicine?

I am the chairperson of the WTA Player Development Advisory Panel since 1994. We are an international group of sports science and medicine experts that annually review the player development programs and age eligibility rule on the WTA Tour.
I am a member of STMS and PAADS (Professional Association of Athlete Development Specialists www.PAADS.org)

4. What do you find most interesting about tennis medicine?

Tennis is the most interesting, diverse and complex sport and tennis medicine reflects the sport - involving all aspects of the mind, body and spirit. It is a sport that people love and learn and live with their entire life. It is played by all ages, around the world as well as by both men and women and involves many different disciplines. In conjunction with the sport, the science and medicine are continually evolving in technique and knowledge. I so enjoy meeting and learning about what is new and what coaches, physicians, therapists, researchers, scientists and players are doing to advance the sport and the fields. STMS has been at the forefront on the interdisciplinary approach to all aspects of tennis and is a role model and world leader for how other sports specific groups can add to and advance knowledge and best practices about sport.

5. How do you think we can improve the field of tennis medicine?

In my career I have seen incredible gains in knowledge, particularly about women. And hope to see researchers and clinicians continue to break down and push the boundaries and research more about tennis injuries, optimal training and rehab, the mind-body connection, and more about the psychological aspect of the game and life. We need funding and centers that can do sport-specific multidisciplinary longitudinal research about injuries, prevention, best practices and position papers to inform not just the sports science community but reach out to inform parents coaches and others in the tennis community about best practices for all aspects of the sport from environmental factors to surface to equipment to rehab and injury prevention. We need to be able to take large scale studies and then individualize them to the unique individual playing or coaching or treating tennis players. More needs to be known and disseminated to the entire tennis community from the scientists about sport specific imbalances, the impact of training amount and best practices for periodization of training, the interaction of travel, adolescent developmental stages, recovery and rehabilitation, and psychological aspects of the game, injury and rehab.

6. Why did you join the STMS and how are you involved?

I joined STMS in the earliest days and found it to be multidisciplinary, cutting edge and collaborative. I credit the early founders of STMS, especially Dr. Ben Kibler, for being welcoming and inclusive of women and women’s issues. I have been a featured speaker particularly on aspects of women’s training, the Female Athlete Triad, and best practices for evaluating and treating adolescents.
1. Overview of hard court tennis - what stands out to you as an S&C coach?

Hard Court tennis has in recent years highlighted the need for tennis players to be exceptional athletes. This encompasses all facets of athleticism: speed, endurance, strength, power and flexibility. Athletes like Djokovic for example illustrate just how supremely “fit” tennis players need to be these days in order to succeed at the top level of our sport. No matter what style a tennis player adopts, they need to have the physical characteristics to support that style, be it a power baseliner grinding it out from the back of the court, or the speed of movement required for serve & volley tactics. I would go so far as to argue that our youngsters need to be able to be proficient in all these areas irrespective of their chosen playing style. Due to the rigors of hard court tennis, the body is exposed to a high volume of physical stress - which highlights the need for the body to be conditioned adequately in order to cope with these forces. Not only from a performance aspect but arguably more importantly, from an injury preventative standpoint as well.

2. Transitioning from grass court season to hard court season

Coaches and players alike are all familiar with the concept of having to adapt to different playing surfaces. Apart from the obvious tactical adjustments a player needs to make, the physical conditioning of their body needs to be addressed as well. The hard playing surface of hard court tennis means the reactive forces experienced by the body are at a higher intensity than those of grass courts. Meaning we want our players’ bodies to be able to cope with these demands. If we look
at COD (change of direction) on hard courts, we can see that due to the higher frictional coefficient compared to grass courts (https://grantland.com/features/the-physics-grass-clay-cement/) we want stiff compliant tendons and ligaments with which to transfer the reactive forces applied to changing direction. This is something that as S&C practitioners we must build in to our players' programmes.

3. Hard court training – Describe a ‘typical’ S&C program for a top junior tennis player

So what exactly does a ‘typical’ S&C programme for a top junior player look like? Well, as much as it irks me to say this, it really depends, and unfortunately there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Having said that, I like to see a programme which incorporates a PAP (Post Activation Potentiation) response in preparation for the hard court season. Obviously when we start talking reps/sets and weights, these will be specific to your athlete's training history and capabilities; however the reasoning behind incorporating a PAP session is to ensure we not only work muscle fibre recruitment, but muscle firing frequency as well. This helps to condition the physical adaptations of the muscle fibres of our athlete. Bearing in mind we want a 'stiff' tendon in order to reduce energy leakage and maximise the return of stored elastic energy, we need to illicit a physical change in the muscle's properties.

This is where an experienced S&C coach comes into play as they will be able to work closely with the young athlete monitoring their progress and either regressing or progressing the programme accordingly.

It is imperative that we illicit a state of over-reaching in order to achieve a super-compensation effect, and not a state of over-training which we leave our athlete fatigued and at a higher risk of injury.

4. Take home message – your advice for S & C Coaches and tennis players summed in 4 -5 points:

In my experience, everyone is constantly on the lookout for the ‘next best thing’ or hoping for a magic bullet effect that will revolutionize the industry. While I’m not suggesting we don’t continually strive to get better, I think it's important to pass on the message that there are no short-cuts and that hard work is the best approach. Crucially this doesn't mean you can't have fun, on the contrary, we as professionals and experts need to find a way to make the journey as enjoyable and as much fun as possible- after all these are still young children with whom we're working with.

So my take homes would be:

**TAKE AWAY POINTS:**

1. **Enjoy yourself** - the journey is a long one, so if you're not having fun you will only start to resent what you do.

2. **Work hard** - it's not rocket science nor does it have to be, put in your greatest effort all of the time.

3. **Be patient** - success is not the opposite of failure. The biggest part of learning is failing, but getting back up from that failure and continuing on.

4. **Reflect** - sometimes you need to look back in order to see just how far you’ve come. Don’t beat yourself up if you’re not where you want to be just yet.

Written by Mr. Justin Pimm, ASCC BSc (hons) Strength & Conditioning Head of Fitness at Lime Wood.

Follow him:

www.tennismedicine.org
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Who to Follow:
- Behind the Racket @behindtheracket
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Save the Date and Call for Submissions

The Organizing and Scientific Committee of the STMS World Congress in Tokyo 2020 invites everyone interested to actively contribute to the program by presenting their research to an audience of medical experts through Oral and Poster Presentations. Abstract submissions are open until October 31st.
7 SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO AMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

STRATEGY #1: “GET REAL!”
WE CAN ONLY CHANGE WHAT WE FIRST ACCEPT

The key to improving any shortcoming or limitation is to first understand and accept our own limitations. Increasing self-awareness takes courage and patience, as it is not always easy to look at one’s own short comings or admit there are “areas to improve.” Identifying areas for improvement is necessary to have the full power and ability to adjust and enhance both, your tennis and your life.

- Tip for practicing acceptance and self-awareness
  Implement a “Daily Inventory” Habit = Every day, write down at least one accomplishment or achievement for the day and one area where you recognize a need for improvement.

This practice recognizes the positive things you’ve accomplished, while allowing for an honest inventory of what needs improvement and to clearly identify the areas in tennis (or life) that you haven’t yet mastered. Additional questions to ask yourself: “How might I do this better next time? When I am functioning as the best version of myself (on or off court)? How would this part of my life/game be different?”

“I think self-awareness is probably the most important thing towards being a champion.” -Billie Jean King

STRATEGY #2: “NO GRIT, NO PEARL”
PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT FRUSTRATES YOU

When something irritating happens, in tennis or in life, we must make a choice...we can become angry and distracted by the irritation (which often causes a decline in functioning/performance) or we can choose to embrace the irritation, adapt to it and learn from it. In nature, a beautiful pearl forms as a response to an irritant (usually a parasite) within a mollusk, due to the organism’s ability to embrace the irritant and transform it into something beautiful (rather than deadly). In high performance athletics, it is important to pay attention to what frustrates you and practice honoring this irritating event and allowing it to be your teacher. Allowing irritations and setbacks to empower you, thereby strengthening “grit” in your tennis and your life.

Grit is defined as the ability to persevere, overcome, and keep moving forward in the face of adversity, failure, rejection, and obstacles; with increased grit, you can work hard for a long period of time toward a goal. Success doesn't happen overnight, anything worthwhile takes time to build. Along the way, you will face countless challenges, failures, and setbacks that will become roadblocks unless you persevere to find a way forward. Elite performers and athletes build and maintain grit, which empowers them to find a way to navigate the roadblocks (or run through them) to move closer to their vision and goal. Without grit, there are no pearls.

STRATEGY #3: “UNPLUG”
TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY

This strategy is simple: Take a break from your phone, computer and social media. We live in a world with endless digital input that can often be compelling, but also mentally exhausting. Constant distraction by technology leaves little room for cultivating connections with people we love and decreases time/space for the mental rest and recharge necessary for optimal brain and body functioning and performance.

- Tip: Create a “tech-free zone” in your home environment (example: no phones at dinner table or no laptops in bed); Turn your phone on Airplane Mode when wanting to exercise or listen to music without added distractions.

Reduce Stress: Taking mini-breaks from technology allows the brain and body to recharge and rest, which decreases overall stress and anxiety.

Improve Cognitive Benefit: Consciously taking regular “pauses” from technology is an excellent strategy for preventing “mental burn out” allowing the mind to reset and to be more receptive to new learning and mental absorption, both on and off the tennis court.
7 SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO AMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

STRATEGY #4: “DAILY PRACTICE OF GRATITUDE”

“Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude.” - Dennis Waitley

It’s easy to get caught up in thoughts like: “If only I could be prettier, win more matches or make more money, then I would be happier.” People often do not realize that happiness isn’t something external, it must be established and nourished from within. Gratitude is the key to nourishing an inner sense of contentment and happiness in life and in sport. Those who are the happiest are not happy because of how much money they make or how they look, but instead because they are grateful for what they do have. Your attitude and outlook determine your outcome, and your outlook is greatly impacted by the amount of gratitude you practice. Life and work satisfaction (i.e. happiness) increases when you engage in the simple practice of paying attention to what you are grateful for in your life.

- **Tip:** Establish a routine of “daily gratitude” journaling. Every night write 3 things you are grateful for (these can be little or big things) to build your sense of contentment and appreciation for what you have in your life.

STRATEGY #5: “GET CURIOUS”
ALLOW FOR EXPANSION, CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY

A champion thrives when there is room to push beyond the emotional and physical “comfort zone.” Curiosity provides an athlete the ability to create improvements in life and in sport. New discoveries about oneself and one’s abilities can be exhilarating and rewarding, but it requires a willingness to get curious about one’s actions, choices, and even the surrounding environment. Elite athletes will often exercise a healthy curiosity by asking questions such as: “Is there a better, more effective way for me to mentally or physically prep for my match today?” or “What thoughts am I believing today that either help or hinder me from reaching my next goal?” Allow curiosity to fuel your creative approach toward growth and expansion in your life and your tennis.

STRATEGY #6: “DIVERSIFY YOUR IDENTITY”
BROADEN YOUR SENSE OF SELF TO ENHANCE PSYCHOLOGICAL STABILITY

There exists an old proverb, “Don’t put all of your eggs into one basket”, which is a simple way to describe this strategy. A healthy financial portfolio includes diversification of assets to protect our financial well-being. Similarly, it is wise to adopt a practice of “diversification” as it relates to constructing a well-rounded sense of self and identity. Driven individuals often devote years and decades, with intense focus on one specific area (becoming an elite athlete, for example), which can naturally lead to the underdevelopment of other important areas of one’s life and aspects of identity. To protect and enhance psychological stability, it is important to nurture interests, talents, and relationships that exist outside of the sport or profession you’ve chosen.

- **Tip:** One excellent way to broaden a sense of self is to identify all of the parts of self that create the totality of you and your identity. For example: Elite Athlete; Sister; Scholar; Book lover; Adventurer; Hiker; Interior Design Artist; Daughter; Romantic Partner; Music Lover; Car Collector; etc. Recognize the various parts of you that exist and then evaluate how much time and energy you wish to devote to nurturing each part of yourself. This ensures that you have greater psychological stability, balance, and a broader sense of self.

STRATEGY #7: “NAME IT BEFORE YOU CLAIM IT”
LIVING WITH INTENTION AND PURPOSE

You must be clear about what you want before you can fully manifest it. Performance increases when you become clear about your intention and purpose.

- **Tip:** When creating personal goals in life and in sport, identify the intention beneath the goal: “Why does this matter to me?” and possibly, “How can this contribute something good to others”

**APPLY THESE HABITS TO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE AND DISCOVER THE RICHES THAT YOU’LL GLEAN**
The STMS Mission

To disseminate current and practical tennis-related medical and scientific information to all our stakeholders (players, coaches, health care professionals, scientists, and tennis organizations) in order to optimize the health and performance of tennis players worldwide.

STMS Membership & Benefits

Joining the STMS entitles you to receive tennis-specific educational information from leading Sports Medicine and Sports Science professionals from around the world. Becoming a member of the STMS allows you to become part of the world's leading medical authority on tennis – an invaluable investment that will pay dividends in your future when optimizing the health and performance of tennis players worldwide.

Benefits:
- Subscription to the Journal of Medicine and Science in Tennis (3 issues per year)
- Online access to all editions of the Journal of Medicine and Science in Tennis
- Subscription to the Inside the STMS Newsletter
- Discounts to attend STMS Meetings and Conferences
- Online access to the exclusive STMS Member Community

Annual Dues:
- Physicians and STMS Fellows: $195 USD
- PhD/PT/ATC/DC: $95 USD
- Tennis Coaches/Players/Enthusiasts: $30 USD

Please inquire about discounted memberships for clubs or academies as well as large group memberships at: membership@stms.nl