

# FIRST SERVICE

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NEWSLETTER of the EAST ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY TENNIS ASSOCIATION

## COACH RACHEL'S STORY

RACHEL STRIBLING TELLS A TALE OF TENNIS • PAGE 2



## THE RETURN OF COACH D'S CORNER



ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Wimbledon Highlights in Pictures..!





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*Quitemni stie intus, plibusse in se vere, terei consunt mena, C. Serum. Si ium octorum ere, te conicatabus? incus, conictala nos fachum. Viveris, consilin ducericiam nonloct mulem esta, confinte novenihi, confent amdium atus vivis*

# COACH RACHEL STRIBLING'S TENNIS

*A VETERAN TENNIS PRO REFLECTS UPON HER LIFE AND EXPERIENCES*

*by COACH RACHEL STRIBLING*

*Proudly born and raised in South Central Los Angeles, California, I am the daughter of Grady and Rosemary Stribling Sr., both of Mississippi. Dad played football at Grambling State University and Mom played basketball at Alcorn State University. Couple years before I was born they relocated with my grandmother, Carolyn Ficklen, who was a Registered Nurse. She passed when I was 7. All very education oriented and with 5 siblings which were all very competitive, made the person I am today. Although all have preceded me in passing, I take them with me on the court, especially when I get nervous or lose confidence in my game.*

*I Graduated from Manual Arts High School and attended Antelope Valley and Mira Mesa Colleges. In 1981,*

*after the strike, I was hired by the Federal Government into Air Traffic Control. Upon arrival in 1998 I pretty sure I was the only Black female Air Traffic Supervisor/management in the state of Missouri. I served in the NBCFAE, National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees, as Regional Secretary. For many years. I received many awards from the FAA as well as 2000 Directors award from the NBCFAE. At age 50 I retired in 2006 from STL Tower as an Air Traffic Supervisor.*

*My Claim to Fame:*

*I couldn't have been more than 8 or 9 years old and I was in a hugh track meet at Exposition Park in Los Angeles. I ran, and won a trophy with the girls The boys team was short in the 4X40 relay and I volunteered,*

*see COACH RACHEL, NEXT PAGE*

### **COACH RACHEL from PAGE 2 (CONTINUED)**

*(I had raced my brothers all the time) and WE WON! Very cool that I had a boys trophy as well.*

*In about 1996 I was working a Burbank TRACON, a radar facility in Southern California with not unusually mostly white males. They had a softball team with played in a men's league. There were a few women controllers but not enough for a team. Bottom line, I petitioned Burbank Parks and Recreation and was allowed to play on the Men's team. We, of course, keep stats and I maintained 6th, 7th or 8th place on our Team of 12 Lol. The next season they allowed one woman on each team.*

*Growing up I played softball and ran track in school and leagues. In junior college I was watching a women's track meet and I was thinking they could use some help. I joined the team and asked the coach which events I should do and he replied "All". So I did. I ran the 50, 100, 4X40, long jump, high jump and threw the javelin. I went to State in the 100 and javelin throw. After that, I decided track and field was taking up too much of my time??????? Lol*

*TENNIS!? (A sissy sport!)*

*At 19 my girlfriend, Paris, and I buy tennis racquets and the cutest outfits. We couldn't stay on the court 10 minutes.....But we were too cute! Couldn't keep the ball in play. Ok? Lol*

*Now, that's what I love about the sport, the daily challenge. "One never really arrives at perfection but never stops reaching for perfection." Hm*

*About 1995 my job transferred to San Diego to the Southern California TRACON now of about 300 controllers I am 1 of 2 black female. Few came later.*

*So tennis, I go to San Diego for a house hunting trip. I meet Valdimar Pitts, a tall, well spoken older man,*

*told me of Martin Luther King Park and black tennis picnic the next day! I arrived and they asked if I could play tennis? I picked up a racquet and was immediately hooked when I kept the ball in play! Until my move, I returned to San Diego twice a week to hit with Valdimar. This is in July, ok, PCC (Pacific Coast Championships), are in August, Valdimar says, "You should play", I'm like ??? I said "but you haven't taught me to serve," he says, "Can you get the ball in the box?" I say "Yes." He said, "well you can serve!" I won the 1st round! When I lost the next round Valdimar gave me one of his old trophies with my name written on a piece of paper taped to the trophy. Best trophy ever! RIP Valdimar.*

*I played in tournaments in California sometimes 2, 3 times a month! Wow! Now that I think of it, that was a lot but you could play in one almost every weekend. Great weather remember.*

*Took the job as Air Traffic Supervisor in STL Tower with plans to stay in Missouri a year maybe 2. I did not even participate in tennis due to the demands of training for the first 2 years in Missouri. Once I was certified in the tower I began to play at Heman Park and hit with Roger Horton. Shortly after I started drills at Creve Coeur and Sunset Tennis Centers. Then USTA 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 (Note: I did not know regular people could be 5.0 or I would have worked harder. :) I was Pat Purcells hitting partner for awhile and I assisted her with coaching her drills.*

*Pat introduced me to Yeshiba Girls High School which I coached the best Orthodox Jewish girls team for 3 years. After that, I temporarily moved to California and taught private lessons as well as assisted coaching of youth tennis in South Central LA.*

*During those times I completed the PTR and USTR training as well as I attended a Master Coaching class for a week....*





# COACH D's CORNER

by **DARIAN BANKS**  
Certified Tennis Coach

Tennis is often said to be the sport of a lifetime and in the beginning when I started playing, I never thought of it like this but it has held true to this day. Especially due to the fact that I have held different positions and perspectives within the sport.

In the beginning I became a student of the game really fast due to the fact that I fell in love with it and wanted to get better as soon as I could. While practicing upwards of four times a week with friends and teammates and then on Saturdays with a local tennis nonprofit, I excelled quickly and enjoyed every moment on court. Then when I began college tennis, I found coaching through my university and within the same non-profit so I started the process of learning from another perspective.

This was effective in helping my tactical mindset when playing matches so essentially, I was my own coach.

As you may know, just like every sport, tennis continuously grows each and every year with new technology, statistics, athletes and the way athletes are taught. It is very

demanding and in order to stay competitive you must stay on top of the most current information and trends. Coaches who want to stay on top of their game live and breathe tennis by going to workshops, reading books pertaining to coaching/leadership, having a mentor or listening to podcasts that involve their favorite coaches. Just by doing these things you will never fall behind or get too comfortable, thinking, tennis can sometimes be a sport of uncertainty and uncomfortability. So by staying prepared and ready for the unexpected, you never really are caught off guard.

Since this sport has allowed me to continue growing and never let me become too complacent with what I knew at the time. I have grown tremendously from when I began playing and coaching within my career and was excited when I got accepted into the tennis fellowship at the National USTA campus in Lake Nona, Orlando, Florida. Since arriving, I have been challenged in ways that have helped me to grow as a coach, player and individual and I know that I will continue on that path for a lifetime.

Darian Banks  
Certified Tennis Professional  
<https://eaststlouis.org/>



## COACH RACHEL from PAGE 3 (CONCLUDED)

I played in tournaments in California, Missouri, Illinois, (Edwardville Open), first time I had ever won \$\$\$\$\$ \$125.00 \$\$\$\$\$ You would have thought I won an Oscar! Indiana, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, St. Thomas, Virgin, Islands.

MidTac and ATA are the National tournaments that I usually participate in for the last 25 years. I was pretty successful at singles but found doubles more exciting! I love the net play and finding angles and space. Almost like air traffic! Lol.

My doubles partners I give the glory. Karl Morrison, Indianapolis, is amazing! He and I have played for over 20

years and we work well together and win.....a lot! Then I have a brilliant female partner as well, Brenda Cullen, Wisconsin. She is an outstanding problem solver and knows how to stay focused! They both ROCK!

July 2019 I was acknowledged as a 'LIVING LEGEND' by MidTac Tournaments...

ATA has been a good tournament for me as well. Usually if I don't win, I make it to the finals which is great! Lots of tennis. Last year I talked Karl into going for the first time and guess what? We won!!!!!! Brenda and I won women's doubles as well!

I have coached with the Alphas, (Spencer Howard,) at Sumner High

School, Arthur Ashe courts for about 3 years. I play with the guys at WOLH's Gym during the winter and spring. Those guys have helped my game tremendously as they take no prisoners! Roger Horton asked if I could fill in a couple of weeks as Coach Dorian was going to Florida. I am so thankful Roger was busy! :)

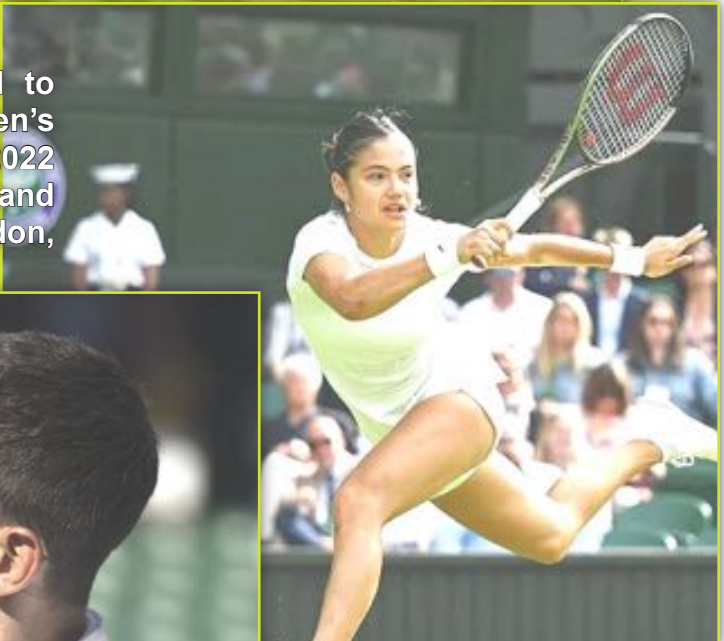
Haha! 2 weeks, now they can't get rid of me! I immediately felt right at home and so welcomed by Lincoln Park participants and ESTL tennis staff. I love my people and I am passionate about what I do. I pray that translates. I am more than excited to work with East St Louis, AKA, South Central...I am truly grateful.





Wimbledon Centre Court

Britain's Emma Raducanu returns the ball to France's Caroline Garcia during their women's singles tennis match on the third day of the 2022 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Tennis Club in Wimbledon, southwest London, on 29 June.



Djokovic completes hat-trick of final wins against Federer





Serena Williams of the US during a practice session ahead of the 2022 Wimbledon Championship at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Wimbledon, London, Saturday, June 25, 2022 (John Walton-PA via AP).



No.2 seeds Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniaková captured their second Wimbledon title with a straight-sets win over No.1 seeds Elise Mertens and Zhang Shuai.

## AN AMAZING SUMMER OF TENNIS AHEAD

by **SCOTT STINSON**  
*President, East St. Louis Tennis Assn.*

We are having an amazing summer. A tennis community is blossoming around the Lincoln Park Courts. Spring started with Darian Banks receiving a USTA Fellowship at the National Tennis Center in Orlando. You will read more from Darian in this newsletter. We began our summer outdoor programming and have been teaching about 25 kids and adults every Saturday and Sunday mornings on the courts. We were blessed with some visits from



East St. Louis Alums Kevin Hood and Rita Daniels! With Darian gone for the summer we have added in some great coaches with Johnnie Singleton, Teaira Spencer, Rachel Stribling and Kion Hudson

filling in each week as needed. In July/August we are adding in more programming and will be teaching at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Center and with the Griffin Center on site. We have two great events coming up on July 27th we will participate in The Edwardsville Futures Diversity Day and on August 20th we will have a Welcome Back Party for Coach Darian at Lincoln Park! We hope to see you at the courts this summer and appreciate all of you who support us to continue to grow the game at Lincoln Park and the surrounding community.





# TENNIS LESSONS

**FREE and OPEN to the PUBLIC**

**11AM – 2PM**

*AT THE*

## LOVE THE CITY

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*Kion Hudson (left) welcomes Rita Daniels. back to East St. Louis Tennis*



*Rita Daniels shows off her backhand.at East St. Louis tennis courts*



## EAST ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY TENNIS

Welcomes Home  
 Darian "Coach D" Banks,  
 Kevin Hood (Past Lincoln HS Tennis Star),  
 & Kimberly Hughes (Past ESL Tennis Star)  
 Saturday August 20, 2022  
 9:00am - 2:00pm  
 Tennis Exhibition's, Tennis Tournament,  
 Kid's Games, Food, music and Awards  
 Volunteers and Players Welcome  
 Contact for more information:  
 Scott Stinson (314) 550-6561  
 Kim Hughes (314) 740-1888  
 Joe Lewis, Jr. (618) 593-3435



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QUESTIONS? CONTACT DAVE LIPE AT [DLIPE@ECLUST7.ORG](mailto:DLIPE@ECLUST7.ORG)



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