

Sunny skies, sibling rivalry highlight final day of Boose

By Mike Brohard | © 2011 Loveland Reporter-Herald

Bringing families together is one of the quaint aspects that makes the Debbie Boose Memorial Tennis Tournament popular, something that has held true as the event completed its 11th year Sunday at the North Lake Park courts.

The draws for the tournament are filled with husbands and wives, parents and children alike, teaming together as the event stands as the biggest annual fundraiser for Pathways Hospice.

But on the final day, it took an interesting twist as sisters stood on the opposite side of the court in the 4.0 mixed doubles finals in what Kelly Blanks and Erin Hauser-Roe figured was the first time they'd played each other competitively — save for the time when they were young teens and a disgruntled Kelly walked home after losing to the younger Erin.

The gathered crowd was even a bit subdued, with those who know both girls not wanting to pull for one over the other, and their parents, Al and Nancy Hauser, stayed perfectly neutral.

This time, the older sister and partner Brian Smith, prevailed, winning a three-set match at 10-6 in the 10-point tiebreaker over Erin and her husband, Nick Roe, after a pair of 6-4 sets put the duos even.

Thus, order is restored in the hierarchy of sisterhood.

“That’s right,” Kelly said. “She’s taller. That’s it.”

It was a very civil war, to be sure. The four of them couldn’t know each other much better, as all of them play league tennis together, and it led to a very competitive and entertaining match on a court filled with Loveland High School grads spread throughout the years.

“The problem is we know each other’s strengths and weaknesses, because we play together a lot,” Nick said. “That put a whole different spin on it.”

Even more so than when he “hit” his sister-in-law with the second shot of the game, a ball Kelly actually deflected with her racquet, leading her to quip, “So Nick, that’s how it’s going to be?”

And it was. Smith, who called every shot a “battle,” handled being thrust into the family feud without problem.

“He told me, ‘I have no idea how the dynamics of your family works, but I have no problem winning,’” Kelly said of Smith’s pre-match outlook.



Reporter-Herald/Gabriel Christus
Kelly Blanks, in purple, shakes hands with her sister, Erin Hauser-Roe, while Brian Smith, in white, shakes hands with Nick Roe after the 4.0 mixed doubles finals during the Debbie Boose Memorial Tennis Tournament Sunday at North Lake Park courts. Blanks and Smith won the match, 4-6, 6-4, 1-0 (6), against the married couple. The tournament raised money for Pathways Hospice.

The day started normally enough for the sisters who talk daily and live less than a mile apart, pairing up to win the consolation final in women's 4.0 doubles. And while Kelly had no problem taking the court against her younger sibling, Erin had some mixed feelings.

"I can't say I looked forward to it," she said. "Nick asked me that in the car on the way here. It's kind of bittersweet, because you really want to win, but do you really want to beat your sister? If you win, you're really excited for yourself. If you're going to lose, you'd rather lose to your sister than anybody else."

Most of the finals were played on the final day, with Derek Sebastian winning a pair of titles — the men's 3.5 singles final and later the mixed 3.5 mixed doubles crown Alyssa Sebastian.

Christian Bachelet and Isaac Duran won at men's 3.5 doubles; Jared Petersen and Craig Smith won the men's 4.0 doubles title; Susan French and Mitzi Johnson won at women's 4.0 doubles; the women's 3.5 singles title went to Katie Davis; Mel Fernandez and Debi McPhee teamed to win the women's 3.5 championship; Michael Jamieson and Rodney Wonenberg went undefeated in the round-robin of men's 4.5 doubles; Brian Kugeler won at men's 4.0 singles; Priscilla Dressen and Christine Ross went unbeaten in the women's 4.5 doubles round-robin; Joey Diaz won the men's 4.5 singles title; and trio of Erika Hamrick, Kristen Bruce and Dressen went 2-1 in the women's 4.0 singles round-robin.

Unlike last year, when rain played havoc with a good portion of the six-day event, this version of the Boose only had to deal with the odd, occasional wind storm, and Sunday's finals were played under sunny skies.

Cary Rentola, the marketing evens coordinator for Pathways Hospice, was thrilled with the tournament and hopes it holds form in terms of money raised.

On average, the tournament brings in around \$33,000 for the Hospice Care Center at McKee Medical Center, though Rentola said this year's exact amount won't be known for a couple of days.

There was good tennis throughout the tournament, the Quickstart kids program on Saturday was a hit, and Friday's pro exhibition and dinner drew a good crowd.

It's a reputation that keeps pulling people and families back year after year, even if occasionally they find themselves playing against one another.

Win or lose, the family will stay intact. Even the extended Hauser clan.

"Sunday night family dinners, I think they're still going to resume," Nick said.

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