

Play For A Cause

(Colorado Tennis Summer 2010 Newsletter – Page 8)

Beyond rising participation in sanctioned events, there is a growing number of charity events that are starting to gain traction as well. Charity tournaments frequently package player mixers, round-robin draws, pro-ams, and fun and unique giveaways in order to maximize value to participants. And while some are not technically "tournaments", the social atmosphere of the events helps to tame the fierce competitive drive and makes the experience more fun for some participants.

The Debbie Boose Memorial Tournament, which benefits Pathways Hospice in Larimer County, is one such example. "Our numbers get stronger every year," says Kristy Harris, whose mother is the namesake of the event. "The response from the community has been incredible. We had 214 players in 2008, and this year we were up to 287 participants."

Harris says that they've added divisions and numerous tennis-related community activities since the event began 10 years ago, all in an effort to serve the interests of the tennis community and draw more people to the event each year.

"We love to cater to families," says Harris, "so adding Family Doubles divisions has been great for us." She adds, "The addition of a QuickStart clinic for the 10 and under crowd helps us to really focus on tennis as a family activity. That's really what the tournament is all about, celebrating family."

Other charity events – like the Tennis Marathon for Breast Cancer at the Harvest House in Boulder, the 24-Hour Tennis Marathon at Arvada Tennis Center and the Great Education Colorado Family Festival and Tennis Open at Gates Tennis Center – combine drills, lessons and fun for the whole family, all in the name of a good cause. When participants get to experience some fun competition, they become more comfortable with the notion of competing in other events, and as a result, sanctioned tournament play gets a bump.