

# Country Club Vibe For Everyone

BY DIANE FEEN | PHOTOS BY MELISSA KORMAN

Everyone knows that Delray Beach has a terrific tennis center on Atlantic Avenue. A few times a year you can hear the cheers and read about top notch players serving balls at 120 miles per hour.



PICKLEBALL HAS BECOME CONTAGIOUS AT THE DELRAY BEACH TENNIS CENTER

But what most people don't realize is that these courts are easily accessible to the public. And, you don't have to live in Delray Beach to use them.

All you have to do is show up with a racquet – or maybe not. You can either pay for court time (that is reasonably priced) or join and become a member.

The best part is that by joining the Delray Tennis Center you automatically become a member of Delray Beach Swim & Tennis Club. The DBST has 24 Har-Tru courts, a clubhouse, pro shop and locker rooms.

The Delray Tennis Center - in downtown Delray - is an oasis of purity and camaraderie. It feels like a country club with 14 Har-Tru tennis courts, four hard courts and eight pickleball courts. Activities abound every day – from adult tennis clinics to Round Robins and yoga classes for pickleball and tennis players.

It also has Jeff Bingo center court as General Manager of Racquet Sports. Bingo is a tennis legend of sorts. He played his first State Championship match (at age 11) at Delray Tennis Center and lives and breathes tennis. His resume would make the most ardent tennis player green with envy and his excitement for the Delray Tennis Center is infectious.

“My dream was to work in a public tennis facility that anyone can come and play at. I want to give back and create a country club atmosphere for the public,” said the former Director of Sports Operation at Addison Reserve Country Club and head coach at Lynn University.

Under Bingo's leadership the Delray Tennis Center (and DDST) has resurfaced the tennis courts, added doubles strategy summer camps and men's and ladies' leagues. “Women have flown here to take my doubles strategy camp from Atlanta. We teach them to play offensively and defensively with a focused doubles strategy.”

Bingo has been bullish on Pickleball since its inception. About 100 people a day play pickleball at the Delray Tennis Center, where Yoga classes for Pickleball players (and tennis players) are offered. There are also Pickleball Group Clinics, Semi-private and Private lessons.

According to Bingo people drive from as far away as Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale to play pickleball, “mainly because we have built a reputation that the top Pickleballers play at DBTC.”

The same is true of tennis. There are adult tennis clinics for intermediate and advanced players, and stroke technique and drills for all level players, including beginners. And, there are private, semi-



JEFF BINGO, GENERAL MANAGER OF RACQUET SPORTS AT DBTC

private and double strategy tennis lessons offered as well.

If you think you can't play tennis because you work during the day think again. They have evening classes and clinics for all level players, and evening and daytime Cardio Workout Clinics each week. There are Friday Night Tennis Mixers where winners can move up or down in progressive mixed doubles round robins. There is food, drinks and prizes (for a nominal fee for members and non-members).

There are also Sunday morning tennis mixers with mixed doubles round robins (for members and non-members). If you want a private tennis lesson there are half hour or one-hour lessons available with one of their 12 tennis pros, or pickleball pro. There are also lessons available at the Delray Swim & Tennis Club on Har-Tru and clay courts.

For Junior players there are after-school programs and summer events. There is also a Delray Beach Youth Tennis Foundation that offers scholarships for after-school programs for underserved youths. An elite tennis tournament is available for juniors as well.

And Bingo knows about Junior tennis. He was a top-ranked player as a youngster and his parents moved from Rochester, New York to Boca West so Bingo could work with renowned tennis coaches. “I wanted to pursue my dream of becoming a top tennis player.”

Members and non-members can also rent a ball machine to hone up on their strokes and cardio endurance. You might also get a glimpse of tennis legends Serena or Venus Williams or top ranked player Kevin Anderson or Coco Gauff on the courts.

Are you looking to host a corporate event or outing? Look no further than the Delray Tennis Center. Guests can play tennis and then gather at the upstairs pavilion for lunch or a meeting. There's a conference room, pro-shop with locker rooms, racquet stringing and merchandise.

The Delray Tennis Center is a breath of fresh air for anyone looking to play tennis, pickleball or just share the sporting camaraderie that the games entrust.

“I feel like the luckiest guy in the world. I get to duplicate what I've been doing at private clubs for the public. I never thought I would have that chance,” said Bingo.

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