

On Near-By Tennis Courts

New York Is Scored for Poor Facilities It Provides for Public Game

By ALLISON DANZIG

Our town is charged with making a poor showing in providing facilities for the playing of tennis by its youngsters and grown-ups. The secretary of the Central Park Tennis Association, H. Bennett, takes a dim view of the city's efforts in this direction. We are far behind other communities, he avers.

Bennett is a grave man. He faults not only our Mayor but double faults Robert Moses, no less. Commissioner Bob is a dangerously sensitive man to buss around these days, particularly on the subject of park play areas. On just any day at all he's a good man to steer away from unless you're looking for an argument.

Taking his pen in hand, which he does regularly as editor-in-chief of The Chemical Formulary, Bennett writes, "The U. S. Lawn Tennis Association on this spring has sponsored a number of tennis clinics in some of our city's parks. Its purpose is to give our youth another healthful outdoor interest—a step in reducing juvenile delinquency.

"William Talbert, captain of the Davis Cup team, and Don Budge, former world's tennis champion, volunteered to play an exhibition match as an additional attraction. The Department of Parks agreed to this program. Recently, for some unknown reason, they withdrew permission for this exhibition. The lame excuse which they offered was that the courts were too crowded on Sundays. Doesn't it appear that Robert Moses' team has again done the wrong thing?

New York City has allowed its tennis courts to deteriorate steadily. It has built no new ones for many years. It has raised its playing fees from nothing to \$5 per season. The officials in charge of recreation have been written to, spoken to and petitioned many times. They have shown no interest and have taken no positive action."

Under separate cover, Bennett sent the following:

"New York City rates very low in the interest which it takes in outdoor sports for youths and adults. This is particularly so in the case of tennis. While smaller cities have built new modern facilities for tennis, New York City not only has not built new tennis courts but has allowed the old ones to deteriorate grievously.

"Specifically, the courts in Central Park, the busiest and most centrally located, suffer from lack of suitable clay for surfacing. After a rain they are closed for one or more days because of poor drainage and waterflow from the surrounding elevated terrain.

"The courts are marked by depressions, tire marks of trac-

tor wheels and pebbles. After a dry spell, the sandy surfaces are slippery and hazardous. Visitors from other cities and foreign countries have commented on the poor and dangerous condition of these courts. The city championship tournaments are held here under very disheartening playing conditions. * * *

"A few years ago more than 15,000 permits were issued. The number of permits has been decreasing in recent years. It is believed that this is due to the poor playing facilities and lack of attention by the city in stimulating interest among our youth in this good and healthful sport.

"Many cities in California, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts and other states recognize the value of tennis as a deterrent to juvenile delinquency and in improving the health and morale of adults. They have planned programs with active administrators who are doing an excellent job. Why can't New York City become active and try to develop a greater interest in tennis?"

For many years, says Bennett, "We have tried to get the Mayor, the Commissioner of Parks and others to help. Wouldn't it be nice to have a New York boy develop into a national champion or Davis Cup player?"

Roslyn Rising Center

One of the rising centers of junior activity on Long Island is the Roslyn Country Club. The No. 1 boy player in the Eastern rankings, Larry Nagler, learned and developed his game on the club courts. He ranks ninth nationally in the boys' list.

Dick Razzetti, Catholic Schools champion and sixth ranking junior of the East, is another Roslyn member. He and John Clark of Cherry Valley are the No. 1 junior doubles team of the East. Andy Gilmore, ranked eleventh, is another junior member.

John Nogrady and Ted Martini, professionals at the club, have done much to stimulate interest in tennis at Roslyn Country and to help develop its rising players. Nogrady, who has competed as one of the leading professional players in the East, teaches three days a week. He and Martini both have strong followings. Martini also coaches at the Cherry Valley C. C.

Englewood Invitation Today

The Englewood (N. J.) Field Club invitation tournament for men starts today and runs to the 16th. Calvin D. Mac Cracken was the 1955 winner.

Frank J. Misar is the referee and Gerry Mallory is the assistant referee. Robert Lawrence Jr. is tournament chairman.