

**2021** was another successful year at Smith Stearns!

*Our students dazzled on the pro circuit, in college, and in juniors!*

Smith Stearns Tennis Academy students and alumni brought their **A-game**, despite the lingering pandemic!

They pushed themselves to **super high levels** – both on and off court. Smith Stearns academy students **aced** their matches at USTA super national tournaments, taking home:

**2 Gold Balls, 4 Silver Balls, and 1 Bronze Ball!**

This **success** also included additional great performances at sectional, collegiate, and professional levels.

In juniors, SSTA earned **48** singles championships, **50** doubles championships, **8** national titles, and **14** sectional titles - all included in a grand total of **323** individual trophies!



## Alumni Highlights

- **Jessie Pegula** reached a career high WTA ranking of #15 in the world in singles and #46 in doubles, and competed in the 2020 Olympic Games! She also reached the Singles QF of the 2022 Australian Open!
- **Hayley Carter** reached a career high WTA ranking of #25 in doubles and made the finals at the Miami Open; she's now retired and is the Assistant Coach at Vandy!

- **JJ Tracy** was named ITA Midwest Rookie of the Year and Big Ten Freshman of the Year! JJ also made the finals of the 25K USTA Pro Circuit event at Ohio State. He is currently ranked #14 in college!
- **Andres Martin** continues to dominate at Georgia Tech and is currently the #9 player in the country in singles and #3 in doubles!
- **Kylie Collins** and her Texas Longhorns won the NCAA Team title where Kylie had a dominating freshman season in singles and doubles! Kylie also won two \$25K Pro Circuit events this year!
- **Cleeve Harper** is thriving at the University of Texas and is currently ranked #13 in doubles in the nation! He also won his first pro title at the \$15K in Cancun!
- **Meg Kowalski** earned All-American honors at the University of Georgia and earned a career high national singles ranking of #12!



## Strong College Commitments

Smith Stearns students from both the Class of 2021 and 2022 have signed with some of the best tennis and academic schools in the country, demonstrating prowess on and off court.

### Class of 2022 Commits

- **Aethreya Mahesh** – James Madison University

- **Aidan Lee** – Colgate University
- **Akari Matsuno** – University of Notre Dame
  - **Charlie Piegza** – Samford University
  - **David Saye** – Michigan State University
  - **Ella Faessler** – College of Charleston
- **Graydon Buckingham** – U.S. Naval Academy
- **Jeffrey Etterbeek** – U.S. Naval Academy
  - **Madison Cordisco** – Elon College
  - **Mia Thomann** – Williams College
- **Sanjana Tallamraju** – University of Toledo
- **Savie Seebald** – Villanova University



## Class of 2021 Signings

- **Belle Kuhnert** - College of Charleston
- **Davis Phillips** - University of Dayton
- **Jake Sweeney** - University of Arkansas
- **Matt Ray** - Mary Washington University
- **Rebecca Stepleman** - Eastern Illinois
- **Regina Talavera** - University of St. Thomas
  - **Robert Hagen** - Radford University
  - **Romi Hodor** - Colorado College
- **Sophia Moore** - Loyola University Maryland
- **Will Kistler** - Washington and Lee University

## Collegiate Graduate Next Steps

- **Harry Brown** - graduated from University of Michigan and is now attending graduate school at William and Mary
- **Paul Hendrix** - graduated from the Air Force Academy and is serving in Combat Camera Maintenance

## Noteworthy News

- **Stan Smith** - In 2021, Stan celebrated the 50th anniversary of his Men's Singles US Open Championship title, defeating Jan Kodes in 1971; this year in 2022, he will celebrate his 50th anniversary of his Men's Singles Wimbledon Championship over Ile Nastase in 1972 and his ranking as the No. 1 Player in the World. Moreover, Stan celebrated his 50th anniversary as the touring pro for The Sea Pines Resort - Amazing milestones Stan! We're so proud of you!





## **Smith Stearns hosted two junior tournaments!**

### **Smith Stearns Junior Championship, Oct 30-Nov 1, 2021 had 9 champions!**

Boys 12s Singles Champion Tylan Lamb  
Boys 18s Singles Champion David Saye  
Boys 12s Doubles Champion- Tylan Lamb /  
Johnny Bart  
Boys 16s Doubles Champions- Blake Queiroz/  
Leo Nedkov  
Boys 18s Doubles Champions- David Saye /  
Drew Rukavina

Girls 12s Champion Saraswati  
Gowda  
Girls 16s Champion Willow  
Renton  
Girls 18s Champion Marina  
Fuduric  
Girls 14s Doubles Champion-  
Brooke Bibee



## Stan Smith Jr Championship Level 3 Open, Sep 10-12, 2021 with 3 champions!

B14 Doubles - Lachlan Buckingham Champion

B12 Doubles - Tylan Lamb Champion

G16 Doubles Marina Fuduric & Lucy Schmeil Champions



## Fall First-Ever 2021 Spirit Week

The week of November 8-12, Smith Stearns Tennis Academy hosted its first-ever Spirit Week! Spearheaded by Senior Savie Seebald, along with her fellow senior peers, the week was filled with excitement and truly made a memorable splash. The entire full-time academy participated.



## Coach Jolene Watanabe

In Nov 2021, the annual UNLV Women's Tennis invitational was renamed to honor former UNLV standout player, Jolene Watanabe. Jolene was instrumental in bringing success and notoriety to UNLV. Watanabe was a beloved Smith Stearns Tennis Coach and sadly passed away in 2019 after a battle with cancer at the age of 50.

## Parting Shots

Overall, 2021 was a year to remember! Despite ongoing interruptions from the pandemic, our players continued to stay focused, improving their games and playing awesome at the tournaments!! We're looking forward to a robust spring of high-performance play and individual personal growth. Can't wait to see what 2022 will bring!



