

John Austin

John Austin, director of the John Austin Center for Tennis at the AAA 5-Star Fairmont Scottsdale Princess resort in Scottsdale, AZ, will serve as the honorary chairman of the 13th Annual MTEF Tennis Ball on Sept. 24.

Austin, 53, is a former professional tennis player who reached a Top 40 world ranking in singles during his six years on the ATP Tour. In 1980, he and his sister, Tracy, were the first brother and sister team to win the mixed doubles title at Wimbledon. During his singles career, he defeated No. 1-ranked John McEnroe, former French Open champion Yannick Noah and Wisconsin natives Tim and Tom Gullickson.

He also was selected three times as an alternate/practice partner for the US Davis Cup team. Prior to turning pro, Austin was a member of the 1976 NCAA champion UCLA Bruins team. He won the NCAA doubles title with Bruce Nichols as a Bruin in 1978.

After retiring from the pro tour, Austin became a teaching professional. Among players he has worked with as a touring professional are Pete Sampras, Michael Chang, Jim Grabb, Chuck Adams, Robbie Weiss, Alexandra Stevenson and Amy Frazier.

Still passionate about his own tennis, Austin attained two No. 1 USTA rankings – in the Men's 40-and-over Singles in 1997 and the Men's 35-and-over doubles in 2002.

He also has served as tennis director at several prestigious clubs and facilities including the La Quinta Resort and Club in La Quinta, CA and Desert Highlands in Scottsdale, AZ.

In 2007, Austin opened the 25-court Surprise Tennis and Racquet Complex in Surprise, AZ. In 2009, the facility hosted quarter-final Fed Cup match between the US and Argentina. It also has hosted the National Campus Championships, Senior League Nationals and the USTA Jr. Team Tennis Nationals.

Tennis director at the Princess since November 2010, Austin has opened one of the nation's premiere tennis facilities to Phoenix-area residents – both adults and children – through a tennis-only membership program.

Youth tennis instruction at the Austin Center roughly parallels what MTEF provides to its TEAM participants. Pee Wees is offered to children ages 4-6. The USTA's QuickStart program is used for youngsters ages 7-11. Futures is geared to kids 12 and older. In addition, a high performance program, the Princess Junior Academy, grooms youngsters 12 and older who are seeking to play tournaments and/or high school varsity tennis.