

## **TENNIS CANADA DISTINGUISHES TENNIS COMMUNITIES FOR EXCELLENCE**

**Toronto, March 27, 2014** – Tennis Canada announced Thursday the recipients of the 2013 Building Tennis Communities (BTC) Excellence Awards. These awards recognize communities, individuals, and partners who have exhibited excellence and dedication in working to grow the game of tennis and develop the sport into an important facet of a healthy community. BTCs are located in towns and cities across the country and have played a valuable role in promoting the game of tennis through the development of partnerships with local leaders and associations.

Joaquin Mota of Morden, Manitoba is the recipient of the BTC Rookie of the Year award. Representing a small town of approximately 7,000 residents, Mota is using his passion for the sport to introduce tennis to kids in his community and provide them access to programming for a sport they otherwise may not have had the opportunity to try. Through the introduction of the BTC program to Morden, Mota is helping kids in the area learn how to play tennis and find their own passion for it.

The winner of the BTC Partner of the Year award is Canadian Tire Jumpstart in Quebec, which has been such a valuable asset for the entire BTC community in the province. Canadian Tire Jumpstart has been involved in the Tennis Quebec school tour since 2010, and played a leading role in the 2013 event. The foundation provided complete Kids Tennis kits to disadvantaged schools in the province, including two mini nets, 36 racquets of different sizes, 108 balls, and one carrying bag, allowing 26 primary schools to integrate tennis into their programs throughout the year. Thanks to Canadian Tire Jumpstart, Kids Tennis has become a priority of development at the community level.

Comox Valley, British Columbia, led by BTC champion Brenda Dean, is being recognized as the Tennis Friendly Community of the Year. A true leader and promoter of tennis in Comox Valley, Dean has a unique ability to connect people and get them involved in the community. She spends a great deal of her time building relationships with key stakeholders, and her tireless efforts are paying off as tennis in the community is growing as is the number of partners and supporters. Well-connected with the school district, city, tennis club, and recreation centre, she has also developed a great partnership with the Canadian Diabetes Association by promoting the organization at her events, which in turns increases awareness of diabetes and how tennis can contribute to staying healthy and active. Always looking to find ways to grow tennis even further, one of her next goals is getting an indoor facility built in the area.

The BTC Community of the Year is Shediac, New Brunswick and its champions Paul Poirier and Guylaine Chiasson. In just a couple of years, Poirier and Chiasson have turned their small southeastern New Brunswick town with three tennis courts into one of the province's most successful tennis communities. By partnering with the municipality and local school district, they have grown the sport immensely by offering programming for children of all ages and skill levels. Working with surrounding communities, Tennis Shediac has also developed an extremely active adult community with programs and leagues available to all residents.

"I am so pleased to be presenting these awards to our community champions and partners this year," said Richard Crowell, director, community tennis, Tennis Canada. "Each recipient is so dedicated to growing the sport of tennis across Canada and is the ultimate representative for tennis in their communities. We are lucky to have them all promoting and advocating for our sport. Thank you for all of your incredible efforts."

The Tennis Canada Excellence Awards were introduced in 1982 and are presented annually to the country's top tennis players, coaches, officials, communities, and administrators in recognition of their outstanding contributions made to Canadian tennis.