

# Tennis club offers plenty of benefits

■ Only clay courts in Metro Moncton are located in Riverview

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HF - Sports & Recreation  
Facilit

Charles Hébert, president of the Riverview Tennis Club, is proud to offer the community a non-traditional club in a traditional sport.

Along with a new executive board, Hébert, president since 2009, has focused his mandate around benefitting the membership in four ways: health benefits, community outreach, a enjoyable social atmosphere and developing tennis skills.

To date, he's extremely pleased the progress the club has made.

"The positive things we've had at the club over the past few years is really a result of a team effort," he said.

"We're not afraid to think outside the box and dare to be different. This distinctiveness is reflected in several aspects of our club. I think, fundamentally, the thing that distinguishes us the most is our clay courts."

RTC, situated on Blugs Drive next to the Dolson Arena, is home to six clay courts, the only ones in the Metro Moncton area and only one of two facilities in the entire province. Hébert said the courts are a draw for tennis players for a variety reasons, but mainly for its health benefits.

"Several of our members simply could not play on a hard court several times a week. They're still playing tennis because it's a clay court."

He said the natural material its made with (crushed rock) makes the surface much more gentler to play on, limiting the detrimental effects on leg joints that would accompany a hard surface court.

He advises all players to switch to clay courts, if they haven't already, as you get older.

The softer court not only absorbs the player, but it also absorbs the ball as well, essentially slowing down the pace of the game. According to Hébert, this aspect of the courts is another reason why they've become so popular.

"When the rallies are longer, you have to be more consistent and develop a more solid game," he explained.

While the playability and comfort of their clay courts typically keeps players returning, it's the RTC's many different programs that entice prospective members to join in the first place.

Hébert noted how the new executive sought a stronger community focus when taking over the club and part of their platform was to offer programming for all ages.

"We've made it our mandate to make tennis accessible to as many people as possible within our community."

The club currently offers free lessons for juniors and

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## Riverview club will host open house July 4

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adult beginners as well as many other unique programs, including Cardio Tennis and Social Mix Doubles.

Cardio Tennis, held Tuesday evenings during the summer, is a high-intense workout which emphasizes exercise over technique.

For those looking for a leisurely time, the club holds the popular Social Mixed Doubles every Saturday morning. In addition to playing, participants are offered coffee and treats at no expense. Hébert said it's a fantastic way to socialize and meet new people.

The RTC will also be participating in Riverview's Sunfest on July 4 by offering an open-house to the community. All are welcome to event and instructors will be on hand to provide pointers and equip-

ment if needed.

Hébert is also proud to be support the P.R.O. Kids (Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids) organization to ensure under privileged children can join in on the fun as well. The RTC and P.R.O. Kids have been partners for several years now, according to Hébert.

While the club offers a variety of programming promoting the sport to the community, it does not lack the competitive aspect more advanced tennis players seek.

The club president said another part of his mandate is to become a top clay court facility in the development of advanced players. Tennis Canada will also be hosting a clay court training session for high-performance players at the RTC as well.

"It's unique programming, but it's also a great way to develop

performance player, both juniors and adults."

In addition to their already busy summer, the club will be hosting a number of tournaments, including the ATA Junior Tournament (postponed after being rained out the June 17-19 weekend), the Mood Media East Coast Open from July 1-3 and the NB Junior Championships from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1.

When asked about further growth, Hébert said he's excited future and the executive is already planning new events. Yet, at the end of the day, he's simply content the club acts as community haven for tennis.

"That's how we gauge our success. By offering programming that our members want. It's not a numbers game. It's about offering the best experience we can."



DEED ABBEY/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Lise Godin and Bernice Cormier play a spirited game of doubles at the Riverview Tennis Club.