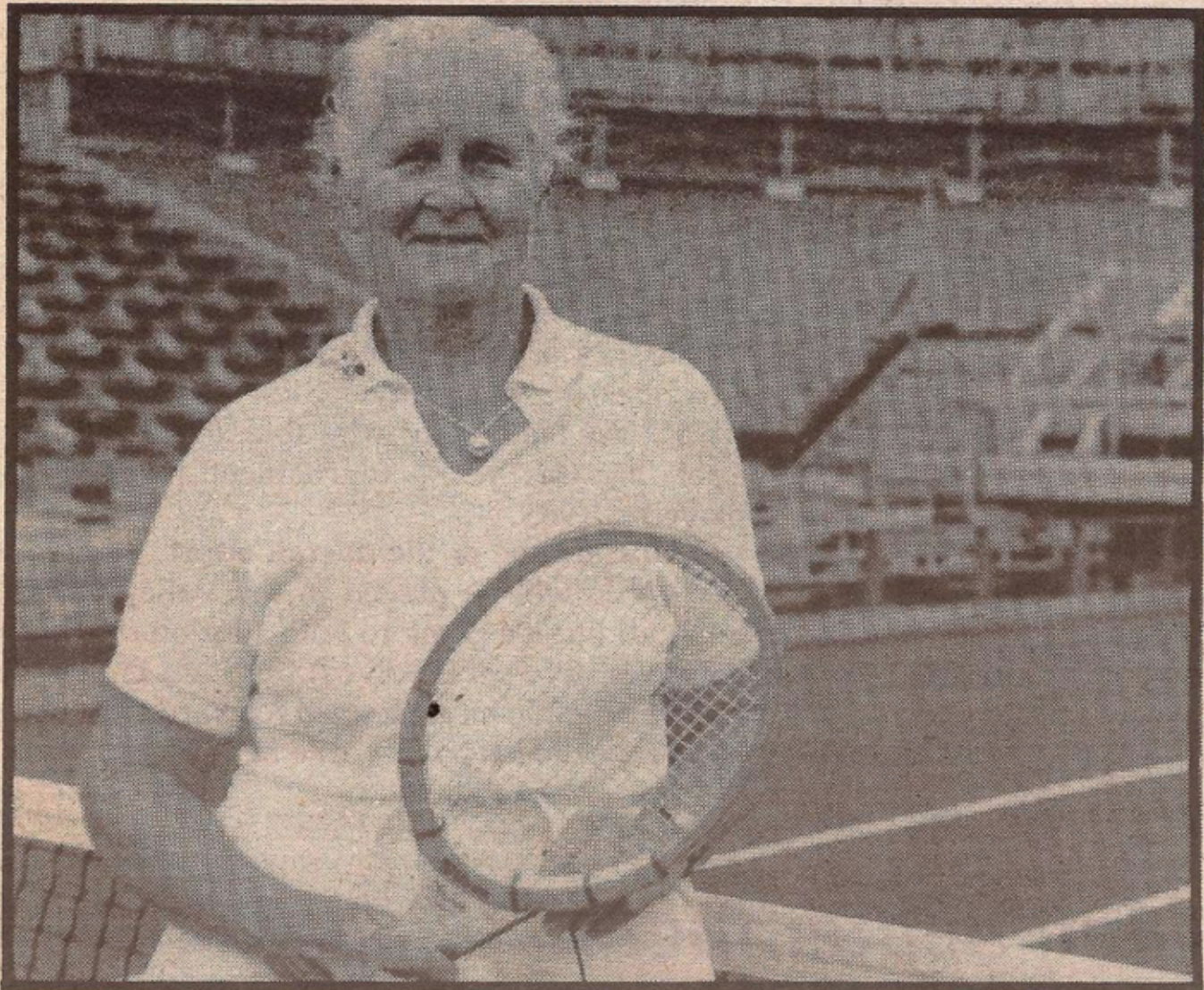


Profile



(Karen Cummings/Mountain Ear Photo)

Right here in our midst, we have someone who can give us a first-hand account of what it's like to play on Center Court, Wimbledon before a crowd of knowledgeable Englishmen. Kay Hubbell, together with her partner Heather Brewer, played in the women's doubles semi-final in 1954.

Here, in the Mt. Washington Valley, we have someone right in our midst who can give us a first-hand account of what it's like to be on Center Court, playing before that crowd of knowledgeable Englishmen. Kay Hubbell of Conway played in the women's doubles semi-final in 1954. She lost. "It didn't take us long out there," Kay remembered. "I think we lost 6-0, 6-1, but it was something to get there."

Attributing their rise through the ranks to the semi-final duel mostly to lucky breaks, Kay and her partner Heather Brewer of Bermuda nevertheless got their day in the sun and a Wimbledon

bronze medal to treasure for the rest of their lives. "There is no question that it is awesome out there," said Kay. "The crowd is very close and the standing room people are all right there next to the court and everyone really knows their tennis."

Kay and Heather came up against two big guns, Margaret DuPont and Louise Brough--the Navratilova and Shriver of their day--and were overwhelmed. "They were really strong players," said Kay, "and we were just lucky to be there."

Kay has been involved in tennis almost all her life. "I took a break from playing tennis this spring when the indoor courts were closed," she said, "and I think it was the longest break I've ever taken." Growing up in Boston, Kay first learned to hit the ball in the school gym, hitting it consistently against a wall. Hazel Hotchkiss Wightman, for whom the Wightman Cup is named, was Kay's first teacher. "She volunteered her time to teach young people to play tennis," said Kay. "Consistency was her motto."

Honing her game on the grass courts of the Longwood Club in Boston, and on the family's clay courts at their vacation home in Chocorua, Kay started playing on the amateur circuit. "It certainly was different than it is now," she said. "The emphasis was not on making money, so the atmosphere was more relaxed. We were competitive, but we still considered it a game."

Playing on what was affectionately referred to as the "country club" circuit, Kay played throughout the United States, and twice traveled to England, in 1954 and '55 to compete in Wimbledon and the grass court tournaments that preceded it. "It was a more personal thing then," Kay explained, "because the club members housed you and you got to meet a lot of different people at each one of the stops. It's good that you can make a living at it now," she added, "but it's stupid in a way the kind of money that some people are making."

Constantly keeping up with the game, Kay is the first to admit that a lot more has changed besides the money. "The women are more athletic," she said. "Although Billie Jean (King) and Maureen Connolly trained hard, too, the emphasis wasn't on so much training in my day." Kay also doesn't like the trend toward hitting the ball with a two-handed grip. "I think it's an unnatural shot," she explained, citing the injuries of Andrea Jaeger and Tracy Austin as examples. "Chris Evert is the only one who doesn't look twisted out of shape when she uses it."

Another innovation she would prefer to do without is the rise of popularity of the topspin shot. "I used to love to play on grass," she said. "We couldn't have those loopy endurance contests, and shots were more effective."

Kay's finest wins came in the early '60s when she played on the Seniors Circuit, often winning singles or doubles titles at the National Indoors or the Grass Court Championships. "They used to give gold tennis ball charms for Forest Hills [the U.S. Open Championships until the move to Flushing Meadows] and silver ones for all other national championships," Kay explained. "I have a bracelet with four or five of them at home." Currently Kay and her partner Ace Parker, with their combined age of 131, qualify to play in the Super Seniors Circuit, and Kay is looking

forward to it. "I'm not as tournament tough as I used to be," she said, "but it is still good competition."

Speaking of good competition, anyone of any age who has recently played against Kay knows that she still takes her tennis seriously. Though admittedly not as fleet of foot as in her younger days, Kay strategically places shots to humble her opponents. "Ellie Thompson used to give me a hard time and Louise Murphy does now, but I can still beat the other women in the Valley that I've played," said Kay. "Most of them haven't had the tournament background."

Kay has been happy with her life in tennis. "It's been a lot of fun," she said. "I got to meet a lot of people I wouldn't have met otherwise." When the past women champions were introduced this last week at Center Court, Wimbledon, Kay could remember meeting or playing against most of them except for the most recent, Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova. "I knew most of those people," Kay remembered, "and some of them like Maria Bueno, Doris Hart, Margaret DuPont, and Maureen Connolly were just the nicest people to know."

NOTE: Katharine "Kay" M. Hubbell passed away on April 22, 2017, one week shy of her 96th birthday. She actively participated in tennis up to the age of 90.



**THE
NEW ENGLAND
SENIOR
TENNIS
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THE NEW ENGLAND SENIOR TENNIS FOUNDATION BULLETIN

Ken and Dorcas Miller 2010 USTA New England Family of the Year

By Helaine K. Block

Ken and Dorcas Miller were named Family of the Year for 2010 for their many contributions to the game, but primarily for their institution of their newly instituted amateur Grand Slam circuit.

Dorcas and Ken Miller have a genuine passion for tennis. Their love of the sport is apparent from the moment you meet them and pose the question of when did they first become involved in the sport.

A very likeable and humble couple, the Millers are a pair of highly skilled and highly ranked tennis players who have participated in national and New England senior tournaments on a regular basis for just shy of three decades.

Dorcas currently holds the No. 1 ranking for 2010 in the Women's 70-year old division in New England and is seventh nationally. Ken represents half of the No. 2 ranked doubles team in New England in the 70-year-old division.



Ken and Dorcas Miller

Ironically, neither picked up the sport until they were in their 30s. In her younger days, Dorcas was a stay-at-home mother and an equestrian who enjoyed riding horses.

One day, while riding, she was thrown from her horse. Fortunately, her injuries were minimal and she walked away with only a separated shoulder. Once the injury healed, her doctor recommended rehabilitation in either physical therapy or playing tennis to regain the strength in her arm. She chose tennis and the passion for the sport began. Shortly afterward, Ken joined her on the court and tennis became a large component of their lives.

Back in the summer of 2008, while driving to a New England senior tournament in Williamstown, MA, the Millers began discussing what could be done to spice up senior tennis for the New England region. They felt as though local senior tennis could use a much needed boost and the timing was ideal.

"Ken and I both believed that the sport was fading and no one had an interest in revitalizing it," Dorcas said.

Equipped with their love of the sport, sense of determination, and genuine passion, they started the New England Senior Slams, a series of three United States Tennis Association New England-sanctioned tournaments for senior men and women between the ages of 50 and 85.

As the Millers' dream was becoming a reality, it was time

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LEGENDS of N.E. TENNIS

The New England Tennis Hall of Fame exists to recognize those members of USTA New England, players and nonplayers, whose achievements as players and as sportsmen or sportswomen are worthy of the highest commendation and recognition; or whose contributions as officials or as people in some tennis-related activity have been so outstanding over a significant period of time as to justify the highest commendation and recognition.



New England Tennis Legends USTA Hardcourt champions. Men's 75 Singles – 1977 Clarke; 1978 Chaffee. Men's 75 Doubles – Clarke and Chaffee 1977. Mens 80 Singles – 1981 Chaffee; 1982 Clarke



Helen Jacobs and Sarah Palfrey Danzig National Doubles championships – 1934.



Recipients and others representing recipients at the first annual New England Tennis Hall of Fame induction, May 16, 1990. Left to right: Charles Swanson, **Kay Hubbell**, Lois Felix, Katharine Winthrop McKean; back: representing Williams College for Clarence Chaffee, Dave Johnson, Bill Power, Ms. Chauncey (Ann) Steele, George Wightman, Ned Weld, Don Manchester, and Gretchen Killins (representing Bud Collins.)