

# Aztec Tennis Reporter

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COVERING SAN DIEGO STATE TENNIS SINCE 1999

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## Cinny's Tale: Honoring Her Fight for Life

Tragedy has turned to triumph for Cynthia (Cinny) MacGregor and her family.

She was shy and quiet, yet one of the most successful



Cinny MacGregor

athletes in San Diego State history, a five-time All American who starred for the Aztecs between 1983 and 1986, then joined the pro tennis tour for three years. She died at age 32, felled by complications from anorexia, an eating disorder

that afflicts thousands of young women each year.

Now, San Diego State has honored her for her accomplishments on the tennis court by inducting her into its athletic hall of fame. Finally she can be remembered as a superb athlete rather than as the victim of a dread disease.

Yet the story of her struggle against mental disorder, (the medical profession's definition), provides a cautionary tale for young women

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SDSU Athletic Department

**GLOBAL STROKES:** Aztec Alesya Vidov of Moscow and New York. Students recruited from ten foreign lands are playing for SDSU in the 2007 tennis season.

## Tennis Star Cynthia MacGregor Inducted by Aztec Hall of Fame

The San Diego State Athletic Hall of Fame posthumously inducted Cynthia MacGregor, announcing the honor in a campus ceremony and at an Aztec football game in December.

MacGregor, who died in 1996 of complications from anorexia, earned All-America honors three times in doubles and twice in

singles in the 1980s. The Aztecs were 84-35 during her four seasons and finished in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association top 10 each year, including fourth in 1984, the all-time high.

MacGregor's sister Cammy, who played professional tennis with Cinny, represented the family at

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Peggy Curtain

**CELEBRATING MACGREGOR:** At SDSU-Colorado State football game, from left, SDSU President Steve Weber, Cammy MacGregor, who played professional tennis with her sister, Cinny; Dennis Wise, the Hall of Fame's benefactor; and SDSU Athletic Director Jeff Schemmel.

## Aztecs Poised for 45 Matches In 85th Season

### Ecuador's Gomez, Son of Champion, Joins Men's Team

San Diego State's two intercollegiate tennis teams begin their 2007 season with two doubleheaders on Jan 20 at the Aztec Tennis Center.

The Aztec women face Cal State Fullerton at 9 a.m. and UC Riverside at 3 p.m. The Aztec men play UC Riverside at 10 a.m. and Concordia of Irvine at 4 p.m.

The teams are opening the 85th year of competitive tennis at San Diego State. The 1922 Aztec team, formed as a men's tennis club, was the school's first. Women began competing as an Aztec team in the 1970s.

Coach Gene Carswell's Aztec men ranked 41st in the nation last year.

His newest recruit, Juan Gomez of Ecuador, is the son of Andres Gomez, who ranked 4th in the world in singles in 1990 and 1st in doubles in 1986, winning 21 singles titles, including the French Open, and 33 doubles titles in 13 years on the men's professional tour.

Peter Mattera begins his 14th year as Aztec women's head coach. His toughest assignment this year is facing USC's Trojans, ranked third in the nation in 2006. The teams meet Feb. 13 in Los Angeles.

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SDSU

Juan Andres Gomez

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living in a culture that glorifies the super-thin and super-fit.

Teammate Jean Dillingham was a good friend of MacGregor's. Their contrasting eating habits were well known.

"When we traveled with the team," she recalled, "coach would tell us to choose what we wanted to

## Cinny's Life:

eat, but to switch orders when the food arrived." The advice, offered gently and with mild humor, was meant to make a point: Cinny MacGregor should eat more and Jean Dillingham should eat less.

Among those who knew her well, some



MacGregor

## In a New Light

said her final years were painful to witness, partly because she was in denial about her physical condition

"I saw her not long before she died," said one close friend.

"I told her I had just seen a video on anorexia's effects on the body." MacGregor exhib-

ited all the symptoms of an anorexic, said her friend, yet replied: "Yeah, it's difficult for them."

But now, by recognizing her as a talented athlete, San Diego State has cast Cinny MacGregor in a new light. By its celebration, it has replaced the tragedy of her death with the triumph of her life. — John Martin (1957)

## Cynthia MacGregor Inducted Posthumously by Aztec Hall of Fame

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ceremonies attended by relatives and friends.

"It's quite an honor and we're really proud," MacGregor told Leighton Ginn of *The Desert Sun* in Palm Springs. She is director of tennis at Rancho La Quinta. "We wish (Cinny) was here to accept this honor."

Cinny MacGregor is the third Aztec women's tennis player inducted into the Hall of Fame. Nicole Storto (1990-93) was honored in 2003. Micki Schillig (1980-83) was honored in 1995, and Ann Lebedeff (1972-74) in 1993. Coach Carol Plunkett (1976-1994), the most successful coach in San Diego State tennis history, was inducted into the hall in 1999.

In 1984, Aztecs MacGregor and Linda Howell gained the NCAA doubles semifinals. The following year, MacGregor reached the third round of the NCAA singles championships.

As a professional, MacGregor won three doubles titles on the ITF Women's Circuit and one on the Sony Ericsson Women's Tour. She earned \$96,714 in prize money, winning 38 singles matches and 78 doubles matches. In her best singles showing, she gained the second round of the 1988 Australian Open.

MacGregor ranked 177th in singles on March 14, 1988, and 50th in the world in doubles on April 11, 1988. She retired in 1990 and taught tennis at the Palm Desert Resort Country Club.

Plunkett called her "absolutely the greatest, a dream to coach."

## Dear ATR: How Tennis Opened a Window; Latest on those Pearsons

**Dear ATR:** Great issue! (November, 2006) So many players and alumni calling attention to SDSU tennis program. I especially liked the coverage of Carmack Berryman and the comments by Ben Press. As a kid growing up in San Diego, Ben was a role model. My first paid tennis lessons were taught by Wilbur Folsom at a public park (three courts) in North Park. Maureen Connolly lived across the street and watched from her front window to see when a court was available. Whenever there was a vacancy, she shot out of the house and captured the court. Wilbur then moved to a new tennis facility called Morley Field. I played a couple of playground tournaments, but never got past the first round.

It didn't matter, I still loved the game. This was the foundation for my attitude that "it could only get better." Happily, it did.

**George Sunga**  
Los Angeles

*The writer, an alumnus of San Diego State, is an award-winning television producer and director; his credits include The Smothers Brothers' Comedy Hour, Three's Company, and The Jeffersons. He is a recipient of the Monty, the San Diego State alumni award for achievement.*

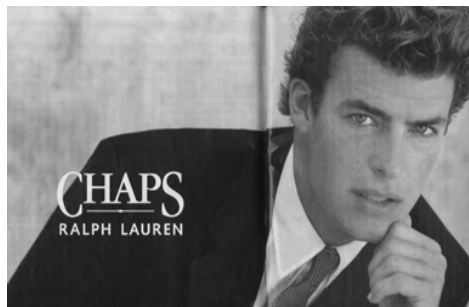
**Dear ATR:** My sons Jason and Blake are doing well. Jason is working for a trading company in Doha, Qatar, and Blake is living in his own triplex three blocks from the ocean in San Francisco. He

passed the California State real estate test and was signed again by Ralph Lauren for Chaps and will appear in ads this winter and spring.

**Russ Pearson**  
Solana Beach, CA

*The writer's son Jason played SDSU men's tennis in 1995-96; his son Blake (above) played on the Aztec teams of 1996-98. Blake's modeling credits include appearances in GQ, Yankees, the Abercrombie and Fitch catalogue, and Glamour. After playing at San Diego State, Blake served on Capitol Hill in Washington as an Agriculture Committee aide to U.S. Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana.*

*The Pearson family has a tradition of serving tennis: Esme Pearson, Jason and Blake's mother, was a longtime USTA umpire and lineswoman. After her death, the USTA's San Diego District Association established a memorial junior tournament in her name played each year at the Barnes Tennis Center in San Diego. It's one of the big-*



*gest tournaments of its kind in the country, with more than 600 entries, according to Russ Pearson, who, with his sons, proudly hands out the trophies to the winners.*

**Dear ATR:** Question: Is Larry Belinsky related to Bo Belinsky?

William Weinbaum  
Riverdale, NY

*The writer, an avid tennis player, is the ESPN television bureau chief in New York.*

*Larry Belinsky replies: That comes up, from time to time, but, no, there is no relation; however, we have met.*

*Larry Belinsky played tennis at San Diego State (1973-76) and was the prime mover last year in establishing San Diego's Tennis Hall of Fame.*

### Aztec Tennis Reporter Vol 9, No 1

This is the 33rd edition of *Aztec Tennis Reporter*, established in 1999 and published privately for players, coaches, alumni, and friends of San Diego State University tennis. Neither the university nor its athletic department is responsible for the opinions expressed or articles appearing in *ATR*. To subscribe, comment, or seek a correction, write to [aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com](mailto:aztectennisreporter@yahoo.com).

Edited and published by John Martin (SDSU men's tennis, 1957)



## Where Are We Now? The Great Search (1922-2007) Continues

**Anne Moeller (1984-87):** We were the best Aztec women's team of all time! Coach Plunkett's influence on me was (and is) the best thing that has happened to me in my adult life. I was assistant coach (1987-90), assisting Peter Mattera in my first year. I'm still playing tennis (with the top Danish players until I turned 39 and on my club's top team for more than 20 years). I moved back to Denmark (I live north of Copenhagen) after finishing my master's in Spanish in 1990. I'm not married; no kids. Professionally, I've been a translator, export assistant, secretary, desktop publisher, and now my dream job: technical writer.

**Peter Mattera:** I've been coaching at San Diego State 25 years! (I graduated in 1980, got my masters' degree in 1991, and inherited Carol Plunkett's job in 1993). This is my 14th year as head coach. The year this picture was taken, we won 26 matches. Three years ago, we won 22 matches, the best since 1985. I live in Carlsbad with my wife, Beth. And yes, I'm still surfing!

**Catherine Berry Davies (1982-86):** I'm a business consultant in the U.K.

after working 13 years for Merck pharmaceuticals. My husband, Dai, and our three children, Jack, 9, and identical twins, Lauren and Nicole, 6, live in Southampton. I ran the 2006 London Marathon and still love playing tennis (for Yorkshire!). This was our best Aztec team. We had such spirit, we pulled for each other. Getting to the top 5 and beating UCLA and USC was fantastic. Carol and Peter were our "rocks". It would be great to have a reunion!

**Note:** The 1984 Aztec women compiled a 26-9 win-loss record and ranked 4th in the U.S. The 1985 women were 26-8 and ranked 7th. Seven of the nine players pictured above played on both teams.

### 1985 Aztec Women's Tennis Team

**Cynthia MacGregor (1984-86)** played on the women's tour (1987-89) and passed away in 1996 (See Page One).



**Tenley Treat Gritts (1981-85):** I'm an accountant for small businesses and mother of Kaitlyn, 10, who's taking tennis lessons, and Sierra, 8, who's taking golf lessons. I play tennis for fun (once or twice a year) and I'm looking forward to hitting with Kaitlyn as she gets better. We live in Chula Vista and my husband, Kurt, teaches math and coaches baseball at Hilltop High.

**Dana Bleicher Adler (1983-87):** Tennis? I'm not playing at all (I'm a mom!). I've played about 10 times in 20 years, but I'm in good shape! I remarried in June. My kids are Trevor, 9, and Emily, 7. We live in Carmel Valley with Ray, my husband, and his daughter Channing, 16. Ray's company trains bank executives (CEOs and CFOs). I worked in the garment industry in L.A. before and did corporate recruiting. Playing on this Aztec women's team was one of the best experiences of my life — we were a great team!

**Taiche Kantner Rudee (1983-85):** I've been married to David for 12 years. We have two wonderfully loving (and athletic) boys, Kyle, 6, and Sean, 3. I'm teaching tennis in junior development at La Jolla Country Day School. It's great because we introduce so many kids to tennis. I still play (not competitively but you never know when the bug will bite again.) Our team tries to stay in touch but it seems to happen only when Cathy Berry Davies comes to town from the U.K.

Photo: SDSU Library  
Special Collections

**Jackie Geller Newman (1985):** I'm playing USTA League Tennis in LaGrange, Georgia; we're going to the sectionals in Baton Rouge! (Somebody found out I played college tennis). I was a sous chef in San Diego before moving here. My husband, Mark, is the chef at a private dining club in Columbus, GA. Our kids, Joshua, 5, and Jamee, 3, have a great place to grow up, but we still see ourselves back in San Diego with my mom and my dad, who played top tennis, including the U.S. Nationals at Forest Hills.

**Sara Longbottom Thomas (1985):** I teach physical education at Clifton College and Redland High School in Bristol, England. I play tennis now and then at Wimbledon (Yes, I belong to the All-England Tennis Club). My husband, Chris, and I met at Loughborough University after I returned to the U.K. in 1985. He is a chartered surveyor. Our children Jodie, 7, Emily, 6, and Jamie, 4 are starting to play tennis. I assume William, 7 months, will be along shortly.

**Carol Plunkett (1976-1994):** I've moved to Whitbey Island, Washington). After coaching at SDSU, I did tax consulting and taught conditioning and weight training at Reed College. Then it was time to move up here and travel (this year, we'll take a wine/ walking tour in Tuscany). I haven't been playing tennis. For me, it's biking, hiking, and kayaking. Cinny MacGregor? She was absolutely the greatest kid. A dream to coach.

**Tracy Ribant Young (1983-86):** My husband, Desmond, and I own a family tile and marble business in Indian Wells, CA. We married in 1998. (I was teaching tennis at the Marbella Country Club in Orange County and the Newport Beach Marriott). I'm now a mother of two boys, Jack, 6 (he's about to start tennis), and Peyton, 3 months.

# Aztecs Playing 45 Matches (26 at Home) in 2007 Season

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In two key home matches, the Aztec women (47th last year) play Cal Berkeley (13th) on Jan 28, and Pepperdine (14th) on Feb. 27.

The Aztec men face defending NCAA Champion Pepperdine in Malibu on Feb. 10. At home, they play Boise State (27th last year) on Feb. 4, North Carolina (12th) on Mar. 17 and TCU (31st) on Mar. 31st.

The 2007 Aztec women are Holly Bagshaw of England, Alesya Vidov of Russia and New York, Yuki Hagiwara of Japan, Esther Cadua of San Diego, Ellie Krasnova of Czech Republic, Sisse Nielsen of Denmark, Kathryn Kitts of Pennsylvania, Milana Yusupov of Israel, and Ozge Atalay of Turkey. Assisting Mattera are Lindsey Hedberg Gamp (2000-2003), and Volunteer Coach Larry Willens

In addition to Juan Gomez, the men are All-American Markus Dickhardt and Christopher Groh, both of Germany; Michael Beron of San Diego, Achim Ceban of Russia, Anthony Gomez, Robert Sabo, and Matt Tosches of Southern California, Nima Ossareh of Maryland, and Billy Timu of Canada. Matan Shitrit of Israel, a transfer, will sit out the season to gain eligibility.

Brandon Fallon will assist Carswell,



ATR Photos

**ALL AMERICAN Markus Dickhardt of Germany. His 2007 Aztec teammates hail from Canada, Ecuador, Russia, California, and Maryland. Their spring season opens on Saturday (Jan 20).**

2006 Mountain West Coach of the Year.

Juan Gomez arrived in San Diego with international tennis experience. Last July, he won a Davis Cup singles match representing Ecuador against Peru, defeating Leonardo Ramirez, 6-1 6-2. Later, playing a second Davis Cup singles match, he lost to Venezuela's Daniel Vallverdu, 6-3, 7-5.

In August, Gomez gained a wild card entry to a Futures tournament in his hometown of Guayaquil and defeated Mexican Davis Cup player Daniel Langre,

6-2, 3-6, 7-5. (Langre attended and played for USC in the Pac 10). Gomez eventually lost to third-seeded Ivan Miranda of Peru, 6-3, 3-6, 6-0.

The North Carolina men's match on March 17 could prove especially hard fought: The Tar Heels defeated the Aztecs, 6-1, last year and dealt Aztec All-American Benedikt Stronk a rare defeat in doubles. He and Billy Timu lost, 8-7 (7), to Raian Luchici and Brad Pomeroy.

Stronk and Dickhardt gained revenge in the NCAA Championships, upsetting Luchici and Pomeroy, seeded fourth, 6-1, 6-4, to gain the quarterfinals.

Two Ivy League men's teams return to the Aztec Tennis Center, Yale on March 19 and Princeton on March 21.

The Aztec women face rival USD at USD on April 10, the Aztec men face USD at San Diego State on April 15.

In Mountain West Conference play at home, the Aztec men face UNLV, New Mexico, and TCU on March 29-31, and the Aztec women face BYU, Utah, and UNLV on April 13-15.

All 26 home matches are free and open to the public.



## 2007 Aztec Tennis Home Matches

\*Mountain West Conference matches

Jan 20 Sat	Cal State Fullerton (women)	9 a.m.	Mar 13 Tues	Iowa (women)	2 p.m.
Jan 20 Sat	UC Riverside (men)	10 a.m.	Mar 17 Sat	North Carolina (men)	Noon
Jan 20 Sat	UC Riverside (women)	3 p.m.	Mar 19 Mon	Yale (men)	1:30 p.m.
Jan 20 Sat	Concordia-Irvine (men)	4 p.m.	Mar 20 Tues	Washington (women)	2 p.m.
Jan 28 Sun	Cal Berkeley (women)	Noon	Mar 21 Wed	Princeton (men)	1:30 p.m.
Feb 4 Sun	Boise State (men)	11 a.m.	Mar 29 Thurs	UNLV* (men)	11 a.m.
Feb 7 Wed	LSU (women)	2 p.m.	Mar 30 Fri	New Mexico* (men)	11 a.m.
Feb 9 Fri	Arizona (women)	2 p.m.	Mar 31 Sat	TCU* (men)	11 a.m.
Feb 16 Fri	Long Beach State (women)	2 p.m.	April 7 Sat	Oregon (women)	Noon
Feb 24 Sat	Rice (women)	Noon	April 10 Tues	USD @ USD (women)	1:30 p.m.
Feb 27 Tues	Pepperdine (women)	2 p.m.	April 13 Fri	BYU* (women)	2 p.m.
Mar 1 Thurs	UC Irvine (men)	2 p.m.	April 14 Sat	Utah* (women)	Noon
Mar 12 Mon	Arizona (men)	1:30 p.m.	April 15 Sun	USD (men)	Noon
			April 15 Sun	UNLV* (women)	Noon