

## The Episcopal Academy Celebrates Its History of Squash

Dateline February 20, 2019 --- A sold-out crowd of nearly 140 attendees packed the Fenimore Family Athletic Hall of Fame on the second floor of the Dixon Athletic Center at The Episcopal Academy on the evening of February 9<sup>th</sup>. Billed as a “Celebration of Episcopal Squash,” the event featured a true “gathering of the clan,” as well as the unveiling of the 140-page hardcover book “A History Of Squash at The Episcopal Academy,” written by Rob Dinerman. Episcopal’s nine decades of excellence are highlighted by 42 pennants in the Philadelphia-area Inter-Academic Squash League, an amount that exceeds the total amassed by any other Inter-Ac school, as well as the four-straight U. S. National High School Championships that the boys’ team won from 2009-2012 (no other school has won this title more than twice in a row) and the 23 National Junior titles that its players have annexed. Two EA alumni were in the inaugural class of 15 inductees when U. S. Squash established a Hall of Fame in 2000, and in the years that have followed three more alumni and three coaches have been similarly honored. In addition, seven Episcopal Academy graduates are members of the College Squash Association Hall of Fame.



EA Squash players with Coach John Russell, John Nimick, Coach Demer Holleran, Champion Todd Harrity and Athletic Director Gina Buggy

It is fair to say that over the years EA has produced some of the best players and most historically important figures in the history of American squash, both on and off the court. Eight of its brightest stars (and two of its leading teams) have been inducted into the Episcopal Academy Athletic Hall of Fame. Six EA alumni --- Charles Brinton '37 in 1941-42 and 1946-47, Diehl Mateer '46 in 1954, 1956 and 1960, Tom Page '75 in 1977, John Nimick '77 in 1982, David McNeely '96 in 1999 and Todd Harrity '09 in 2015 and 2016 --- have won a combined 12 U. S. Nationals, and six of its graduates (Brinton, Mateer and Roger Campbell '51 twice each, as well as Palmer Page '68 in '71, Nimick in '81 and Harrity in 2011) annexed the Intercollegiate Individual title. Dozens of its former players went on to play major roles as captains and/or top-tier players on championship college teams and many more later earned high national rankings and notched national doubles and/or age-group championships. There is by all odds no prep school whose graduates have left a larger hand print on squash in the United States throughout the generations than those from Episcopal Academy, and their compelling personal stories constitute the essence of the history chronicled in this book.

The Celebration was organized by Palmer Page, who worked closely with Head of School T. J. Locke, Director of Alumni Engagement Lauren Berry Maloney '10 and Gina Buggy, EA's longtime Director of Athletics. After Mr. Locke's welcoming remarks and dinner, Nimick introduced the four guest speakers, namely two-time U. S. National champion Todd Harrity '09, who is currently ranked in the top 50 of the PSA professional tour; Tim Kent, a Classical Languages teacher whose 15-year tenure as boys' squash coach (from 1983-98) is the longest in EA history; Lauren Patrizio Zaba '97, the Executive Director and founder of SquashDrive, an after-school enrichment program serving Oakland youth; and Dinerman. The book was distributed to all attendees while dessert was being served.



John Nimick and his mother at the dinner



Recognizing Tom Poor, coach '65-'70, and others



Rob Dinerman speaking about EA's history



Lauren Patrizio Xaba, founder and Executive Director of Squash Drive, Oakland CA., speaking to the EA Dinner speaking about how EA prepares you for life

Noting that, “Squash and competing have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember,” Harrity asserted that in recent years he had evolved and acquired a different perspective on what truly matters as opposed to what SEEMS to matter. Reflecting on his years at Episcopal, Harrity remarked, “I am reminded of Episcopal’s school motto, ‘Esse Quam Videri,’ which translates to ‘To Be, Rather Than to Seem to Be.’ I think it is the best motto that a school can have, and I am proud to be a part of Episcopal Academy, a part of the school’s very impressive squash history, and I am most proud because of the things that truly matter, the experiences of winning and of losing and the friendships I have made through the experiences I shared with my teammates over the years. All of these things are reasons to celebrate.”



Todd Harrity, winner of Juniors, Intercollegiate and SL Green Men's Titles speaking to the attendees, stressing the value of the school motto "Esse Quam Videri"

Tim Kent, who coached the boys' varsity team from 1983-98 years, explained that, although the nature of squash is inescapably one-on-one, the legacy of playing squash at Episcopal, however, is that one's individual efforts are elevated to a more meaningful level. "You are, at Episcopal, always part of something larger, something greater than yourself," Mr. Kent pointed out. "Victory is never solo. Your win, no matter how monumental, is meaningless unless combined with those of your compatriots. And that battle that is taking place on court one is no more meaningful than the battle you wage on court nine." Addressing his concluding remarks to the handful of current varsity team members in attendance, Kent invited them to, "Take a careful look around you. Recognize that you are a part of a remarkable legacy. When you wield the racquet under the EA banner, you are carrying on a tradition in which excellence is measured not by your win/loss record, but by the way you conduct yourself both on and off the court. When you play for a team, the entire experience is far richer, far more rewarding."

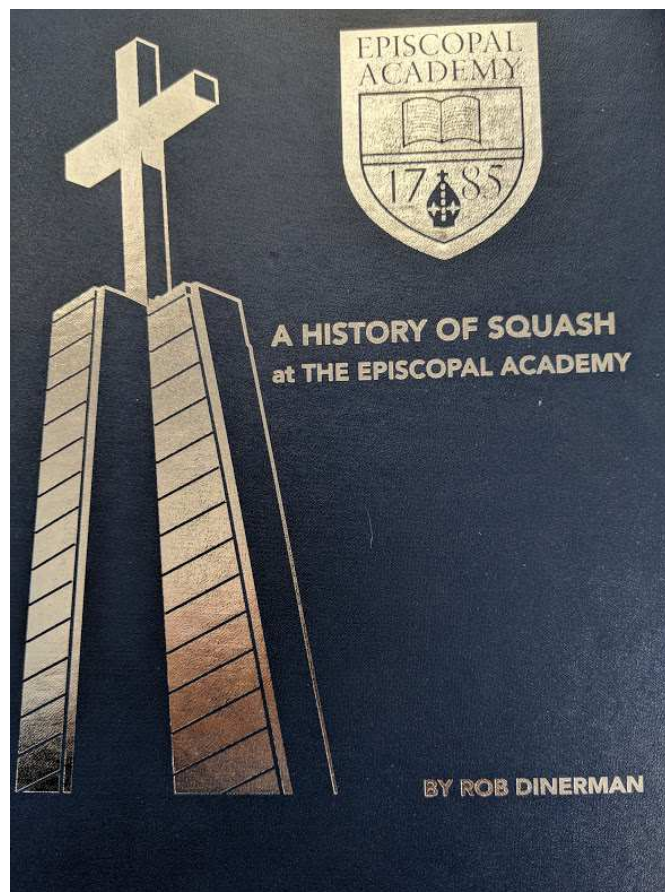


Tim Kent, the “Mr. Chips of EA squash”, speaking to the gathered at dinner

Overall it was a magical night, filled with reunions of former players and coaches, reminiscences of great matches and a salute to the school’s historic squash legacy.

**Some copies of the EA squash history book are still available and the link is**

**<https://www.episcopalacademy.org/alumni-link/squash-book>** for anyone wishing to acquire one.





Palmer Page giving “A History of Squash at The Episcopal Academy” to Athletic Director Gina Buggy and Head of School Dr. T. J. Locke, John Russell foreground, Rob Dinerman and Lauren Maloney background

Pictures can be seen here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/152456618@No8/sets/72157706686399674/>

Submitted by Palmer Page

Photos courtesy of The Episcopal Academy