

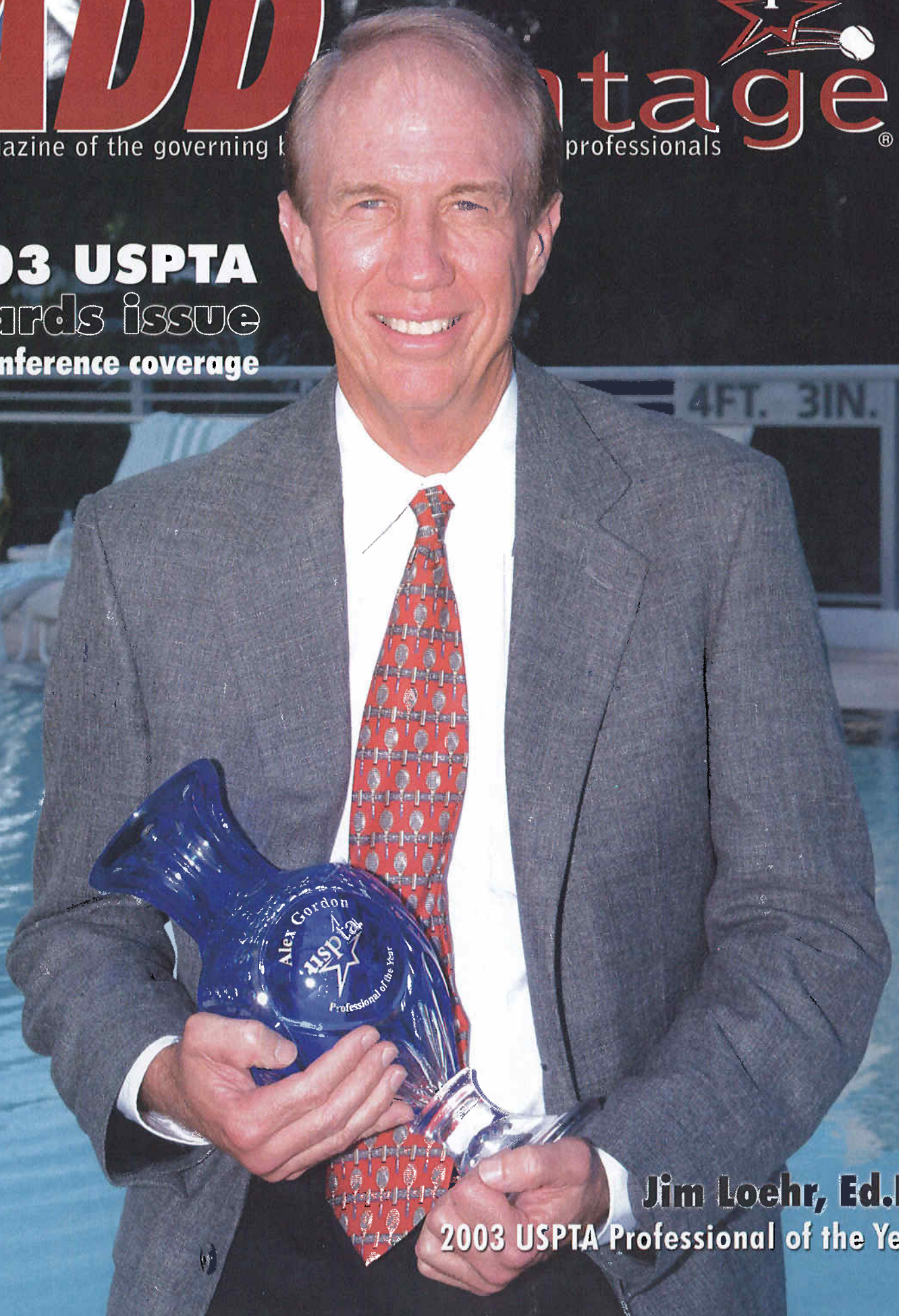
ADD

the magazine of the governing k

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Oct./Nov. 2003

**2003 USPTA
awards issue
and conference coverage**

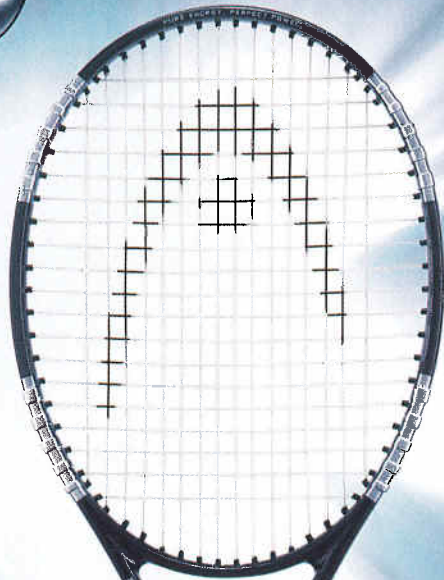


Jim Loehr, Ed.D.
2003 USPTA Professional of the Year

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Special checklist

This issue of ADDvantage features an insert with a checklist to help you promote your professional status and USPTA affiliation.

On the cover ... Jim Loehr, Ed.D., 2003 USPTA Professional of the Year

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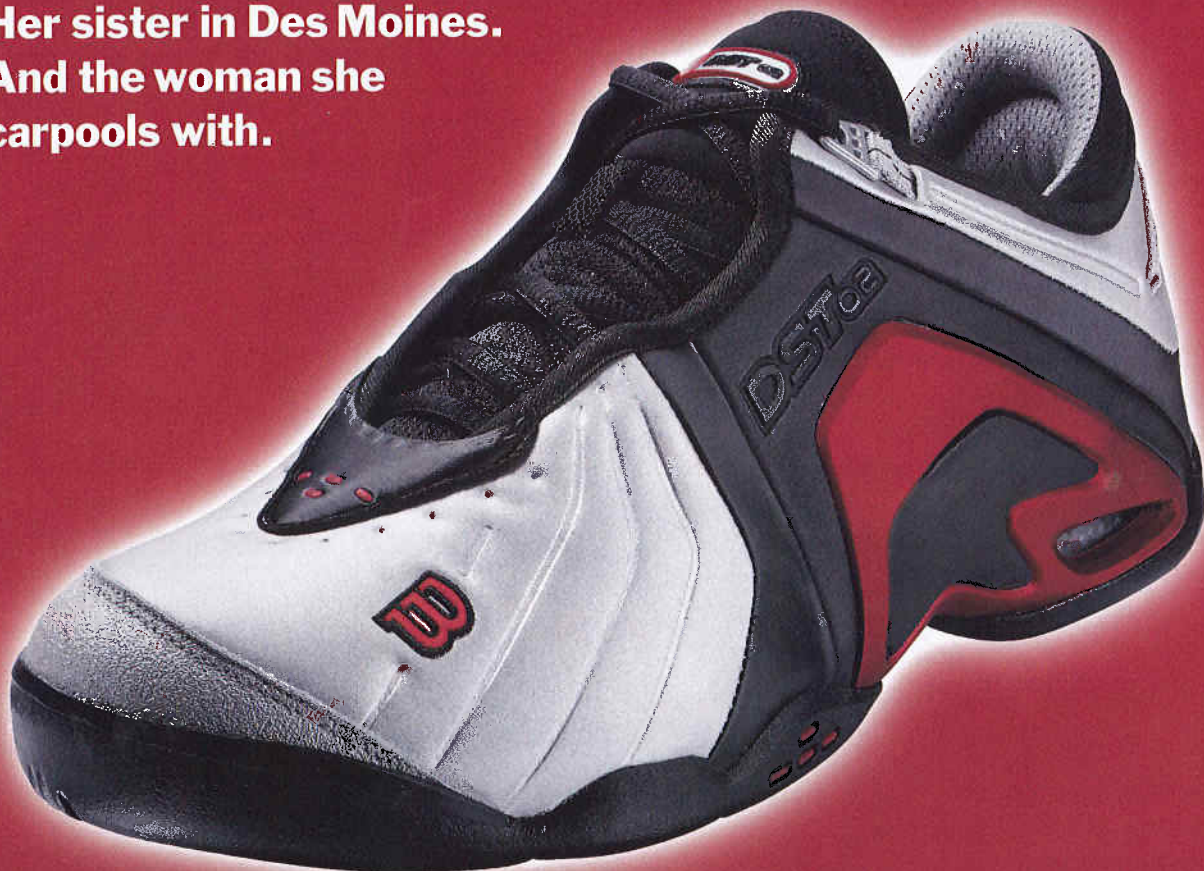
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"If it is to be, it's up to me!"

USPTA and Tennis Welcome Centers

I can still remember my first USPTA Executive Committee meeting back in 1990. I was listening intently, trying to learn what issues were facing our organization and how I could best represent Hawaii with regard to those issues.

The two concerns that seemed to surface were, first, why USPTA was not given enough respect and name recognition in the tennis industry and, second, what we were going to do about it.

For the past 14 years I have heard a variation of this theme coming from our membership through the Executive Committee and in conversation with members at various division conventions. Why are USPTA pros not given enough respect, and what are we going to do about it?

Individually, many of us may receive recognition for what we do, and in some way USPTA is acknowledged. Collectively, we have never taken full advantage of our unified strength and demonstrated the impact that membership in the most prestigious tennis-teaching organization in the world has.

I would like to share an excerpt from my remarks at the awards breakfast during our recent World Conference.

I believe that we are on the threshold of a new era in the growth of tennis. I see the tennis industry acknowledging the work that we do and the impact we have on player retention and the growth in our sport. I see that industry coming together as never before and laying all its cards on our table. I see this opportunity as too significant to overlook. We must step up and demonstrate the strength of our unified voice in growing the game of tennis as our facilities become Tennis Welcome Centers to millions of new tennis players. Each one of us may tip the balance of the scale and we should believe in our hearts that **"If it is to be, it's up to me."**

Let me expand on those remarks. Kurt Kamperman, USTA chief executive of community

tennis development, and Jim Baugh, president of the TIA, presented at the TIA board meeting in New York a new concept to "grow the game."

The latest research indicates that there are 70 million Americans who have tried to play tennis (at least once), but stopped playing, and 97 percent of them have no interest in playing again. Looking deeper into the research, it was found that the majority of those who were dissatisfied with tennis had never experienced a formal lesson and certainly not from a certified USPTA professional.

The research also showed that when **you** teach people they keep playing. With that in mind the TIA and USTA have rallied the entire tennis industry behind one approach: Get the new player to a certified professional.

Beginning in 2004 all new entry-level racquets in big chain stores will carry a hangtag that

encourages people to "Learn to Play Tennis ... Fast: TennisWelcomeCenter.com." The tag and the site will encourage new players to visit a local club, municipal facility, etc., that is signed up as a Tennis Welcome Center.

We are not just talking about USPTA endorsees. We mean HEAD, Wilson, Prince, Babolat, Dunlop, etc. - over 2.5 million racquets. In addition, over 25 million cans of balls (that's right - 25 million), including Penn, Wilson, Dunlop. Entry-level tennis shoes are no different; they'll have the same message on an insert in each box.

In short, the entire manufacturing industry along with the USTA, TIA, ATP, WTA, etc., have all joined together and are saying, "If we can get new players to take a lesson from a USPTA professional, they will stay in the sport."

My 14-year wait is over. There could not be a more significant demonstration of respect or acknowledgement than for the tennis industry to say, "The teaching professional **is** the answer to growing the game of tennis." They are saying



David T. Porter, Ed.D.

continued next page

