



## 10 AND UNDER TENNIS FACILITY DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR

# HINDING TENNIS

**S**arah Boone, club manager at the Guilford (Conn.) Racquet & Swim Club, was skeptical at first. “We’ve had a strong junior program for years and have used temporary 10 and Under lines and nets,” she says. “But now, we realize adding permanent blended lines is the next step in building the ability and confidence of our youngest players.”



Tom Hinding of Hinding Tennis in West Haven, Conn., helped convince Boone that permanent lines were the way to go, and he helped her shepherd a funding request through to the USTA. “With the grant process, the USTA is paying for 50 percent of the project [and most USTA sections also pay a portion of the lining fee], so it’s really a no-brainer for a club,” he says.

But Hinding has gone well beyond simply “suggesting” facilities add either blended lines or permanent 36- and 60-foot courts. “Tom has really taken the initiative on developing courts for 10 and Under Tennis,” says Virgil Christian, the USTA’s di-

rector of Community Tennis Development.

In New England, Hinding actively campaigns for 10 and Under Tennis. For his total involvement in the process of bringing tennis to youngsters, Hinding Tennis is the winner of RSI’s inaugural 10 and Under Tennis Facility Developer of the Year Award.

“We started educating facility owners a few years ago,” Hinding says. “There were a lot of skeptics, but today they’re putting 10 and Under lines on multiple courts. I don’t know of a single club we did this year that we didn’t do either 36- or 60-foot lines or courts. I’m really excited for the next year.”

—Peter Francesconi

### Tips for Success

- ▶ While there may not be a huge profit margin in lining 10 and Under courts, “it gets you in the door” for future surfacing work at a tennis facility, says Hinding.
- ▶ A key selling point to club owners with 10U is they’ll get more kids on one court at a time, and make more money.
- ▶ Maintain a good relationship with the USTA at the district, section and national levels and know what resources they can provide to tennis facilities.