

Chippawa tennis court dedicated in honour of local tennis star Agostinelli Jr.

Davis Cup team members join family, colleagues at courtside ceremony



By Mike Zettel Niagara This Week - Niagara Falls

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The newly refurbished tennis court at Chippawa's Riverview Park will from now on be tied to local tennis star Bruno Agostinelli Jr., who is remembered for both his skill on the court and his leadership of rising talent in the game.

On Saturday, the city held a courtside dedication ceremony with Agostinelli Jr.'s family, including parents Bruno Sr. and Cindy, brother Gianluca, wife Andrea and son Alessio, who was born just two weeks before the tragic motorcycle accident on March 9, 2016, which claimed his father's life.

Several representatives of Canada's tennis community joined them for the occasion, including Tennis Canada senior vice-president of tennis development Hatem McDadi, who said it was an ideal way to remember Agostinelli Jr. "It's so nice to come together and share in this fitting tribute," he said.

Agostinelli Jr. began his successful career in Niagara Falls, where he played while studying at St. Paul Catholic High School. In 2009, Agostinelli Jr. won the deciding match for Canada against Peru in the Davis Cup. After reaching his dream of competing in the 2009 Rogers Cup Masters in Montreal, he retired from professional tennis and joined Tennis Canada as the national junior tennis coach.

In January 2016, he was inducted into the Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame.

McDadi said Bruno was humble about his accomplishments, and as a coach was generous and down to earth. He said Canada's tennis community is a family, and the Agostinelli family will always be cherished members. "You're part of our tennis family," he said. "You always will be. Remembering Bruno's spirit and his life is something we continue to do, and this is part of it."

Gianluca Agostinelli, who teaches at Brock and Niagara College, said the family is very close. When Bruno died he lost more than a brother, he lost a friend. He said the family appreciates all that has been done to remember Bruno, including at Queenston Heights, where a tree has been planted, and at Niagara's Catholic schools, where posters of his brother grace the walls.

Holding back tears, Gianluca said the family will always feel a connection with the tennis community, especially as the next generation of players take to the court. "As I look around I see the Agostinelli family continues to grow," he said.

That next generation may include young Alessio, who, joining Davis Cup team captain Frank Dancevic and Daniel Nestor, Canada's foremost player, helped break in the court, taking a few swings at a ball while holding a racquet nearly as big as him.

Andrea Agostinelli said that as her son takes up the sport, his father will be by his side. "He's there every time we visit a tennis court," she said

Bruno Agostinelli Jr.
1987-2016

Bruno Agostinelli Jr. began his successful tennis career in Niagara Falls. He started playing at a very young age and his passion for tennis continued throughout his life.

Bruno attended Saint Paul Catholic High School and during a student there he received an OJAA gold medal in the Mixed Doubles division and earned a membership in the Association of Tennis Professionals.

After graduating, Bruno then attended the University of Kentucky on a full athletic scholarship. While at the University, he won the Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Year and Player of the Week awards. In 2010, he was named the University of Kentucky's Male Athlete of the Year for posting a mark of number 2 in the NCAA Men's Singles Division and was selected for the NCAA All-American Team.

Bruno represented Canada at the Davis Cup on two separate occasions. In 2009, during a competition against Peru, Bruno won a tiebreaking set in the second round Canada's first doubles standing.

Having reached his dream of competing in the 2009 Rogers Cup in Toronto, Bruno retired from professional tennis. After his retirement, he joined Saint Catharines in the National Junior Tennis Centre.

In 2016, Bruno was inducted into the Niagara Falls Sports Hall of Fame in recognition of his tennis career.

While he led his life as a motorcycle accident on March 6, 2016, after his son Alessio was born.

Remembered for his athletic and contributions to tennis, humble, kind, and gracious spirit.

A monument was dedicated in memory of Bruno Agostinelli Jr. in Park City Council on Saturday, September 8, 2018.

Niagara Falls

A man in a red jacket and white shorts crouches on a blue tennis court, holding a small child. Another man in a red jacket stands behind him, holding a tennis racket. A tennis racket lies on the court floor.



Davis Cup team captain Frank Dancevic hands Alessio Agostinelli a racquet on the newly refurbished tennis court at Riverview Park in Chippawa, which was dedicated in honour of his father, the late Bruno Agostinelli Jr.

- Mike Zettel/Metroland

Andrea Agostinelli, widow of Bruno Agostinelli Jr., with son Alessio, speaks at the dedication ceremony of the tennis court at Riverview Park in Chippawa. The newly renovated court was named in honour of the local tennis star, who died in a motorcycle accident in March 2016.

- Mike Zettel/Metroland



Davis Cup team captain Frank Dancevic and top Canadian tennis player Daniel Nestor get a photo with neighbourhood children Tatiyana and Michael Yerich, who will soon be playing on the newly refurbished tennis court dedicated in honour of the late local tennis star Bruno Agostinelli Jr.

- Mike Zettel/Metroland