

Smith Stearns would like to announce the early college commitments for eight students from our senior class. They are a fantastic group of kids who have worked so hard to achieve their goals of playing collegiate tennis and we are very proud of all of them. They come from diverse backgrounds and all have a special story of how they got to where they are today. Congratulations to all!



Hampton Drake - Clemson University

Hampton has committed to play for Clemson University next fall on a tennis scholarship where he is the Tigers top recruit. Since joining the academy, Hampton has been one of our great success stories as he has improved immensely becoming one of the nation's top players. He moved up almost 100 spots on Tennis Recruiting to a career high of #22 nationally this year. In the past year and half Hampton has earned three USTA balls from the Super National Championships. Last December, he was the singles finalist and earned 3rd place in doubles at the USTA Super National Winter Championships in the boys 16 and under division, earning silver and bronze balls respectively.



Carsten Fisher - University of Dayton

Carsten will be joining the University of Dayton men's tennis team next fall on a full scholarship. Originally from South Africa, Carsten has seen great improvement since joining the academy three years ago. He has moved up over 150 spots on Tennis Recruiting to a career high of #63 this year. He has now established himself as one of the top players in the USTA/Southern Section and has also had success on the international level making the doubles finals of the prestigious Eddie Herr International Championship last year.



Mariana Gould - University of Georgia

Mariana will be joining one of the nation's top teams next fall as she has signed to play at the University of Georgia on a full scholarship. Training at the academy since her freshman year, Mariana has consistently been one of the nation's best players during her entire junior career and has proven herself to be one of the most sought after recruits. She has won a total of eight USTA balls during her junior career - two gold, two silver, and four bronze. Mariana has also established herself as a top doubles player winning the gold ball at the USTA National Championship in the 16 and under division two years in a row.



Katelyn Jackson - Texas Tech University

Katelyn is preparing to become a Red Raider next fall as she joins the Texas Tech women's tennis team on a full scholarship. After moving to the academy from Arkansas two years ago, Katelyn has proven to be one of the most dedicated and hard working students improving her game very quickly. This year she earned herself the #1 ranking in the USTA/Southern Section in the girls 18 and under division which was an incredible honor. Katelyn also moved up over 100 spots on Tennis Recruiting to a career high ranking of #44 nationally this year.



Kelly Mengel - Penn State University

A Pennsylvania native, Kelly will be heading back to her home state as she has committed to play for the Penn State women’s tennis team next fall. Formerly a five star player on Tennis Recruiting, Kelly has battled through injuries over the past few years, and when many may have stopped, Kelly continued to keep trying, showing her true love for the game. Her talent far exceeds her current ranking as she has the potential to help the Nittany Lions achieve great success.



Harrison O’Keefe - University of South Carolina

Harrison has received a scholarship to play on the men’s tennis team at the University of South Carolina and will start as a Gamecock this January. Since moving to the academy from Virginia, Harrison has established himself as one of the top recruits in the nation, earning a career high ranking of #17 nationally this year. Harrison has earned the #1 ranking in the USTA/Mid-Atlantic Section, reached the round of 16 at the USTA Nationals in Kalamazoo this summer, and most recently won a USTA National Open all in the boys 18 and under division. He has also shown his talent on the doubles court earning a bronze ball, third place, at the USTA National Clay Court Championships this summer.



Jack O'Koniewski - Denison University

Jack has committed to play for the men's tennis team at Denison University starting next fall. One of Smith Stearns longest attending students, Jack moved to the academy from Massachusetts over six years ago. Before battling a back injury last year he reached a career high of #158 on Tennis Recruiting and was one of the top players in the state of South Carolina. During his junior career he has consistently been a four star rated player on Tennis Recruiting.



Samantha Russell - Wofford College

Samantha has received a scholarship to play for the women’s tennis team at Wofford College next fall. A former student during her sixth grade year, Samantha moved back from Atlanta to attend the academy as a senior this fall. She is a four star rated player on Tennis Recruiting, reaching a ranking of #199 nationally this year and #16 in Georgia. Samantha looks to help the Terrier’s achieve great success next year.