

February 27, 2012

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In the early 1990s Nikki Bonzoumet nee Carpenter (Educational Advisor; Associate Professor, Physical Education 2000-date) was a student/athlete at Riverside City College. She was recruited out of La Sierra High School by then RCC Women's Tennis Coach Ingrid Wicken (Associate Professor, Physical Education 1989-date). Wicken herself was an RCC student/athlete in the 1970s. While at RCC, Bonzoumet changed her major several times eventually graduating with an A.S. degree in Natural Sciences. After leaving RCC she attended Northern Arizona University on a full athletic scholarship. After earning a Master's degree, she was just beginning a career in the aerospace industry when her former Tennis Coach Ingrid Wicken asked her if she would be interested in working part-time as the RCC Tennis Coach. Bonzoumet returned to her Alma Mater to coach and also taught part-time in the Physical Education Department. Later she was hired as an Educational Advisor in the Assessment Center. After two years, a full-time teaching opportunity came up in the Physical Education Department for which she applied and was hired.

Bonzoumet had this to say about her RCC Tennis Coach Ingrid Wicken:

"She helped as a student and a player by leading by example. She gave us a value system that extended far beyond the tennis court. We knew that we could come to her if we were having trouble in a class or having personal issues and she would help us find a solution."

Of being a member of the RCC Tennis team she reminisced:

"I have so many great memories of being a member of the RCC Tennis Team it is difficult to pick just one. The teammates I made have become lifelong friends; one of them even introduced me to my husband. One day that stands out in my head as a very fond memory was when Coach (Wicken) set us all up to play a set or two against this counselor here at RCC. She told us his name was Fran Bushman (Associate Professor, Counseling 1966-91). I had heard of him, knew he was good but also knew he was quite a bit older than me so I, along with my other teammates, thought we could give him a run for his money. He just wiped the court with every last one of us... and we had a championship team that year. This almost 70 year old man was amazing. He could hit the ball to anywhere in the court that he wanted and he didn't even hit the ball that hard. It was like he was 'toying' with us the entire time. I learned a lot that day about the game of tennis."

On her teaching career at RCC she states:

"I love my job... ask anybody who knows me! I love all the different people I'm able to meet and work with, I love that I get to play outside and be inside too on occasion teaching students in the classroom. I like figuring how my student/athletes tick – what are their goals? What stopping them from getting to them? And then what can I do to help them be successful?"

Nikki Carpenter: a lady in class, a Tiger on the tennis courts

By Bill Mulligan
Staff Assistant

Nikki Carpenter looks like a carefree 19-year-old with an unorthodox tennis stroke. But once she steps on the tennis court, she's murder on her opponents.

Carpenter helped Riverside Community College women's tennis team take the Orange Empire Conference championship by going undefeated at 20-0 in singles action. Her doubles record with teammate Nicole Talaba wasn't bad either, with a 15-5 mark.

After she went unbeaten in conference, Carpenter's parents rewarded her with a day-long shopping spree.

Two weeks ago, Carpenter and Talaba advanced to the third round at the Ojai Tournament before losing to Kim Ammon and Lisa Lisack of Saddleback College.

Carpenter, a freshman, was rated 27th in the state among singles players at the beginning of the year and played the number four spot for RCC. Before Ojai, Carpenter every triumphed over her challengers in every set.

"In singles, all my matches have been pretty easy leading up to post-season tournaments. But

I realize, being the team's fourth singles player, my competition isn't as good," said Carpenter. "Nicole and I played the hardest doubles match against Long Beach City College because they gave us a sound beating."

Talaba and Carpenter could meet the doubles pair from LBCC again at the Southern California Regionals this weekend. The host school is Southwestern College in San Diego County.

"Nikki is a real competitor. Nerves of steel in tight situations", said RCC's tennis Coach Ingrid Wicken. "She's always upbeat. That makes her a treat to coach."

Carpenter feels that playing alongside Talaba has helped her game a lot — especially her groundstroke.

Carpenter feels that real team unity is an important factor in team success, said Carpenter, along with Wicken's easy-going coaching style.

"That makes us work harder because our team really enjoys being around Coach Wicken," said Carpenter. "Under Wicken's guidance, my volley has improved a lot."

Carpenter is a La Sierra High School graduate. After playing three seasons of varsity tennis, her prep career was highlighted

by capturing the singles title in the Mountain View League.

As a La Sierra Eagle, Carpenter's team never won a league championship. That's why winning the Orange Empire felt so good for her.

Carpenter comes from a tennis environment. Her brother Matt plays varsity tennis at La Sierra High School, and her father, Tom, played tennis during college.

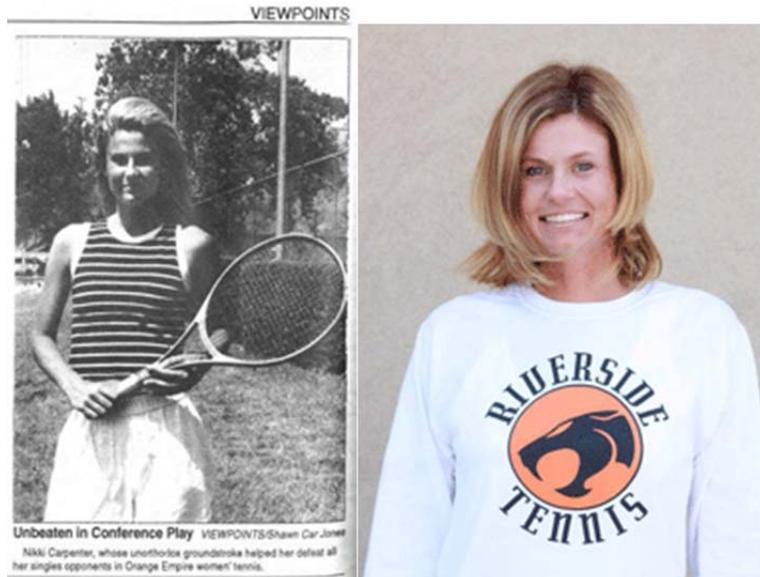
Carpenter's mother is a big supporter of RCC's Lady Tigers. She attends every home match with food in her hands for everyone.

"I knew Nikki was a good player coming from La Sierra, but I'm a little surprised how well she plays after seeing her... using her unorthodox tennis swing," said Wicken. "I think two main reasons for Nikki's success are that she has a great velocity on her serves and loves to win."

Carpenter plans on returning to the Lady Tigers in 1992. Until next season, Carpenter will work on improving her forehand, the weakest part of her game. That could allow her to move up on the team ranking.

Carpenter then hopes to transfer to Long Beach State and major in business.

The photo below (on the left) also appeared in the May, 8, 1991 "Viewpoints" newspaper. On the right is a recent photo of Coach Bonzoumet.



It is 4 years and 2 weeks until RCC's 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC's 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District's Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections.

Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote "the book" about RCC's history. "Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History" is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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