

# *Member of the Class of 2011*

## *John Antonas*



John Antonas ~ Born: 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1951 in Nassau, Bahamas.

The name, John Antonas, has been synonymous with tennis in the Bahamas for more than forty-five years. He has proudly represented his country throughout his life as a junior, adult and senior player.

Often referred to by local sports reporters as John 'The Greek' Antonas, being of Greek heritage, many followed his career, not only as a regular tournament player but also as he represented both the Bahamas and the Commonwealth Caribbean. Under the umbrella of the Commonwealth Caribbean Lawn Tennis Association, the CCLTA, John was regarded as one of the top players in the region and also served as Davis Cup Player & Captain.

In 1989, The Bahamas attained independent Davis Cup status, at which point John captained for The Bahamas. He traveled extensively throughout North and South America with the Bahamian Davis Cup Team between 1989 & 2000. John served on The Bahamas Lawn Tennis Association Council for more than twenty-five years, for many of those as its Vice Chairman.

Attaining the Bahamas Men's Singles & Doubles National Championship titles multiple times during the mid '70's & throughout the 80's, John became well known locally and in the Caribbean as a strong competitor, champion and leader in the sport.

John's passion for the game began at around twelve years of age, when he lived in town and would walk or run to the courts. Highly motivated to succeed, he developed his skills by playing between The Lucayan Tennis Club, the Montague Beach Hotel or the Ocean Club, with whomever was there, practicing at every opportunity. He attended St Andrew's when it occupied Collins House on Shirley Street and excelled in sports. After graduation he moved on to Miami Dade Junior College in Florida, where he played on the Varsity Tennis Team. This won him an excellent reputation and aided him in being awarded a full scholarship to attend the University of Alabama, USA. There he earned his Bachelors' Degree in Business Administration and was also the Assistant Tennis Coach. In 1977 he traveled the US & European Tennis Circuits, competing in weekly tournaments against the best in the world. Through this, he achieved a Men's Singles World Ranking of #248.

Upon his return to Nassau, John joined Resorts International as the Head Professional at the Ocean Club on Paradise Island, where he remained for six years. It was during this time that he met and married his wife Pavia and together they have raised three sons. In 1984, Lyford Cay Club hired John as its Director of Tennis to develop programs and raise the level of tennis service at their prestigious facility. He held this position for the next twenty-two years.

In 1976 John had become one of the Charter Members of the Professional Tennis Registry, (PTR) located in Hilton Head Island in South Carolina, USA. This organization was set up to unify tennis professionals around the world to use recognized and proven teaching methods, to standardize the game. John watched its growth to the more than 13,000 members in a 123 countries. The PTR is now the largest global tennis teaching organization in the world.

In 1995, the PTR awarded John the title 'Bahamas Pro of the Year', then in 1997 he was bestowed the coveted title of 'International Pro of the Year'. In 2001, John was selected and awarded the prestigious title of 'Master Professional', an honor held by a very small group within the PTR. The Master Pro's are those who have reached the highest standards in the game in their country and elsewhere, shown a dedication to development and improvement of the game within and outside his/her country, has represented their country consistently and shown outstanding sportsmanship. In 2010, John was elected Chairman of the Master Professional's Committee for three years, previously serving as Vice Chairman.

Having just celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday, John still teaches tennis daily and competes in events throughout the year in his age category, both in the Bahamas as well as overseas. He is currently the Property Manager at the gated community of Port New Providence in Nassau.