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Pearson Automotive Tennis Club Announces Inaugural Staff

ZIONSVILLE – Rick Witsken, Director of the new Pearson Automotive Tennis Club, is proud to announce his staff of professional instructors for central Indiana’s newest tennis facility.

The Pearson Automotive Tennis Club (PATC), located at 4560 South County Road 875 East in Zionsville, is scheduled to open in early 2017.

The club’s inaugural staff of instructors, staffed by Team Witsken, has tallied more than 100 years of playing and teaching experience, mostly in the central Indiana area.

“Rick has put together an impressive coaching team to offer clinics to all levels and all ages at the PATC,” said Heather Blood, business manager for Team Witsken. “He did a wonderful job of finding a coach for every type of player. Some are very high-profile and some are not as well-known, but each coach has an impressive skill set that will put PATC on the map in the tennis community. This truly is a dream team.”

A look at the new instructors:



Rick Witsken (Director) – Rick is the proud founder and owner of Team Witsken, which has run tennis programming indoors at The Retreat and summer programs in Zionsville, Carmel, Fishers, Mount Vernon, Westfield and other surrounding Indianapolis-area communities for the past 16 years. In addition to his work with Team Witsken, which also offers pickleball programs for all ages and levels, Rick is the head coach of the Zionsville girls and Carmel boys and girls middle school teams. Rick, the seventh of eight children of Bud and Marilyn Witsken, was a two-time Indiana state champion in singles and was one of four siblings to earn full tennis scholarships to a Division I school. At the University of Alabama, Rick was a two-time All-American, reaching the No. 1 doubles ranking in the country. Rick was world-ranked on the ATP Tour in both singles and doubles. He began his post-playing career working with his brother, Todd Witsken, at the Indianapolis Tennis Center, serving as tennis director and coach of the IUPUI men’s tennis team. He also was director of tennis at Woodstock Country Club for seven years. Rick still loves to compete – he’s ranked No. 1 in the U.S. in 40-and-over singles and doubles and has competed multiple times for Team USA. He’s also a Top 10 player in the U.S. in pickleball singles and doubles. Rick is the proud father of his multi-talented 12-year-old daughter, Brittany.

P.A. Nilhagen – P.A. Nilhagen is well known in international and national tennis circles as a master technician, motivator, and a man of personal integrity. In more than 40 years of teaching, he has developed a system (www.thepasystem.com) of training the whole player based on accountability, responsibility and independence. He has developed more Indiana high school state champions than any other coach, and is perhaps most proud of the fact that more than 500 of his students have gone on to play college tennis. A number of his players have also moved into the professional playing ranks, including Todd Witsken, Ginny Purdy and Stephanie Reece Hunn. P.A. has been recognized as the Midwest Coach of the Year, won the CITA Stan Malless Award, served on the USTA National Coaches Commission and has traveled to all the grand slams as a coach. He is certified by the United States Professional Tennis Association.

Kurt Ehrhardt – Originally from Brownsburg, Kurt returned to the Indianapolis tennis scene in 2008 after 28 years of teaching tennis abroad. Kurt was the Head Pro for Vic Braden’s tennis camps in West Germany. He was the technical editor for German Tennis



Magazine and also produced, edited and directed a teaching film, "Turbo Tennis." Kurt speaks fluent French, German and Spanish. He has been affiliated with the USPTA, USPTR and the German teaching pro organizations. Kurt served as the Director of Men's Tennis at Five Seasons from 2008-2016, as well as working in junior development at Five Seasons and Washington Township. Kurt's current projects include writing a comprehensive teaching manual with PA Nilhagen, "The PA System: The Ultimate Guidebook to Learning High Definition Tennis." He is also using video analysis to compare and contrast the stroke production of the top ATP players.

Stephanie Hunn – Stephanie returned to Indianapolis in 2009 after nine years of teaching tennis at the East Hampton Indoor Tennis Club in New York. Stephanie was coached by PA Nilhagen, and was a five-time All-American at Indiana University, where she was inducted into the university's athletic hall of fame in 2002. At North Central she was a member of three IHSAA state team champions, a two-time singles state champion and an IHSAA Mental attitude award winner before being inducted into the Indiana High School Hall of Fame in 2007. Stephanie competed on the professional tour from 1992-1996, with a doubles career high world ranking of 79 and singles career high world ranking of 219. She played Wimbledon, the U.S. Open, French Open and Australian Open. She is currently the Guerin Catholic girls tennis coach. She and her husband, Michael, have two outstanding children, Harrison and Shelby.

Tyler Witsken – Tyler, the oldest of five kids and the son of former ATP pro Todd Witsken, played four years on the No. 1-ranked Carmel High tennis team. He's the head coach of the girls team and an assistant with the boys team at Zionsville West Middle School. Tyler played tennis under P.A. Nilhagen and Rick Witsken and has worked with Team Witsken for the past seven years.

Jeff Johnston – Jeff is originally from Canton, Ohio, where he played football and tennis at Walsh University. Before arriving in Indianapolis, he taught on Hilton Head Island, S.C., at the Sea Pines and Port Royal Racquet Clubs. Jeff's accolades include working with former world No. 1 Stan Smith and the legendary coach Dennis Van Der Meer. Jeff is certified by the Professional Tennis Registry (PTR). Jeff and his wife, Lani, have a



young son, Jack, whom they look forward to seeing out on the tennis court in the near future.

Nelson Nguyen – Nelson played three years at Arsenal Technical High School and was a volunteer coach there after graduating. He has worked at several area schools, including Ben Davis High (freshman boys coach), the International School of Indiana (assistant boys and middle school coach), Zionsville Middle (boys coach) and Zionsville West Middle (boys coach). He is currently the freshman boys and assistant girls coach at Zionsville Community High School. Nelson joined Team Witsken in 2001 at the start of the company and is the only person still with Team Witsken from its inception. Nelson started as an assistant pro at River Glen Country Club, where he started his coaching career. Nelson likes watching pro football and tennis; spending time with his wife, Rachel, and two kids, Lucy and Tim; and keeping up with the latest in technology and tennis.

Part-time instructors

John Krzyston – John has an extensive background, which includes playing and coaching at many levels. He played at Purdue University and was a graduate assistant coach for the Indiana University men's team. He's also been a head coach at Bishop Noll High and an assistant head coach at Noblesville High, and was the director of tennis programs for the City of Hammond. He reached No. 20 in men's open singles in Indiana. John, who taught at Ivy Tech Community College as part of the Health Sciences faculty for 12 years, loves fitness and nutrition and is an American College of Sports Medicine certified trainer.

Kristi Kroker – Kristi graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., where she played varsity tennis and received conference awards in singles all four years. As a senior, Kristi enjoyed leading the team as a captain and helped players develop on and off the court. Throughout college, she also coached at various tennis camps in Minnesota where she worked with athletes of varying ages and abilities. Upon graduation, Kristi spent the summer coaching at IMG academy in Bradenton, Fla., where she coached developing and advanced juniors. Currently, Kristi coaches for Team Witsken Tennis and



gives cardio, junior and pee-wee lessons. Additionally, Kristi helps instruct Team Witsken's afterschool program, via Eagle Rec, in the Zionsville school district.

Henry Armstrong – Henry grew up in Westfield and first picked up a racquet at age 3. Since then he has been a passionate tennis player and competed at No. 1 singles all four years at Westfield High School. In 2014 he earned a B.A. from IUPUI, where he studied sociology and psychology. Henry joined Team Witsken in 2015, and in 2016 he became boys and girls tennis coach at Lebanon High School. In addition to tennis, Henry loves playing and teaching pickleball at Team Witsken.

Matt Moore – Matt began coaching at Zionsville High School in 2009, where he has been the head coach for both the boys and girls tennis teams. He has led his programs to nearly 150 varsity victories and a dominant junior varsity and freshman record. Matt was the HCC Coach of the Year for the girls 2011 season and the boys 2013 season. He has led both teams to multiple sectional championship victories, and the girls team was the regional champion in 2011 and 2012, which was the same year the girls No. 1 doubles team finished third in the state. Prior to his time with Zionsville, Matt was a four-year player at Carmel High School and Hanover College. He also spent time coaching at the North Ridge Racquet Club. Outside of tennis, Matt is an assistant professor for the Ball State University Department of Social Work. He earned his B.A. in philosophy and psychology from Hanover College and his master's in social work and his PhD from Indiana University. Matt's research focuses on the psychosocial needs of athletes and the development of training models for social work practice. He is the co-founder of the National Alliance of Social Workers in Sports. Matt also loves spending time with his wife and three kids.

Jim Middleton – Jim, the father of two varsity Zionsville High players, is a student of the game and a 4.5-level player. His daughter Andrea was coached by Team Witsken and played No. 1 singles at ZHS. Jim is the Chief Technology Officer for Optiform.

The PATC will have the following amenities:

- Eight USTA regulation-sized and climate-controlled tennis courts



- A viewing platform
- State-of-the-art lighting
- Men's and women's locker rooms
- Online registration and court reservation
- Team Witsken professional instructors who will offer lessons, clinics, as well as leagues and tournaments
- Free wifi

The PATC is offering founding memberships and corporate sponsorships, as well as annual and three-year memberships. Those interested should contact Brent Claymon at (317) 727-1818 or Dave Hunt at (317) 446-5749.

Find out more about the Pearson Automotive Tennis Club at www.pearsontennis.com.

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