

July 25, 2010

#### Photos

1. Rodney Ross presenting plaque to Mitchelle Lake for his fifteen years service to the Anguilla Tennis Academy
2. Parents, children and friends at the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary event.

Anguilla Tennis Academy celebrates fifteen years of Summer Camp.

ANGUILLA—One hundred and twenty five children have just completed a three week tennis camp at the Anguilla Tennis Academy (ATA). Founder and President of the ATA, Mitchelle Lake says he is very proud of the Academy's achievements and thanked the coaches and in particular Elijah Armstrong, Executive Director, and Rodney Ross, Programme Director.

Lake was particularly pleased to be able to introduce Anthony Jeremiah of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) who spent five days in Anguilla assessing the ATA and meeting with Government and tourism officials. He said that one of the primary goals of the ATA is to become a member of the ITF and with the visit of Jeremiah that goal is closer.

Jeremiah who travels around the Caribbean to identify talent for the ITF, described the ATA facility as the best in the Caribbean and Central America. He said that he hopes in the future when Anguilla becomes a member that ITF events can be held here. The island would also benefit through the ITF junior programmes, training camps and travel grants.

Minister of Infrastructure, Evan Gumbs spoke at the celebration of fifteen years attended by many of the students who attended the camp, and their parents. He commented that he is proud of Mitch and his team for establishing the tennis centre in Anguilla and for the completion of fifteen years of summer camps. He suggested that sports is a great discipline and many Anguillians have already benefitted with scholarships to university through their talent in tennis and other sports. He urged the coaches to continue the good work and establish the ATA as a centre of excellence. He pledged full support from the Government and hopes that the private sector will also continue their support.

Lake recalled how the Summer Programme had started on two courts at Webster Park and with 35 children and ten tennis rackets. He thanked the many businesses and people who helped him to fulfil his dream of creating the ATA for the children of Anguilla whose primary goals are "to expose children to the joys, discipline and rigor of the life-long sport of tennis where they can acquire technical skills, experience ideal sportsmanship and develop a strong sense of community." He referred to the after school programme that started in 2007 and continues year round and urged parents to sign up their children for this.

The Stadium Court is the final phase of the ATA and Lake said that he is encouraging support for this 2000 seat court that will showcase local talent and allow for international matches to take place. He closed by thanking Rodney Ross and his team for this year's Summer Camp, the Board of Directors, Greg Travis who is making a DVD to cover the ATA's history, and all the many people who have assisted over the years.