

# LA CROSSE Tribune

July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008

## Cardio tennis offers fast-paced, fun workout

By TERRY RINDFLEISCH / La Crosse Tribune

Cherry Lommen doesn't rest much when she plays tennis in a class at the La Crosse Country Club.

The 62-year-old woman, who has played tennis for 30 years, is walking, jogging and running after a ball in between her hitting tennis shots. She is always on the move. Lommen participates in a new cardiovascular workout on the tennis courts called cardio tennis.

The La Crosse Country Club was chosen by the Tennis Industry Association and the United States Tennis Association as one of the sites to promote cardio tennis. Ian Griffin, the club's head tennis professional, has classes three times a week.

"I like it as physical exercise, and the camaraderie is fantastic," Lommen said after a recent class.

"It's a good workout. It's shower time."

What makes the activity cardio is the constant movement and the fast-paced, high-energy workout, Griffin said.

"As a person who loves fitness, I like cardio tennis because you mix the fitness craze and cardiovascular workout with the fun of tennis," Griffin said.

"We're playing the game, but the game is fitness," he said.

Griffin leads the workout, which includes a warm-up of jogging around the court, loosening up by hitting balls and then constantly hitting balls to participants to work on various tennis skills and drills.

At times, participants jog to pick up balls after shots.

Griffin said he makes sure participants check their pulse from time to time to keep them in the cardio zone at 65 percent to 85 percent of their maximum heart rate for a good cardiovascular workout.

Carol Fortney, 36, of La Crosse, started playing tennis only four weeks ago and joined the class to stay in shape. Fortney has triplets who are 20 months old as well as a 6-year-old.

"It's a great workout, and I'm flat-out tired after the workout," she said. "I love it."

Her mother-in-law, Pat Fortney, also is in the class, and they try to play tennis another

time during the week. “I like everything about the workout and it’s fun,” she said.

Kim Bronston, 32, of Onalaska, Wis., who has been playing tennis for six years, said cardio tennis adds variety to her exercise regimen, which includes running and spinning.

“You’re constantly moving and mixing things up,” Bronston said. “I feel I had a good workout when I’m done.”

Jennifer and John Burelbach, a La Crosse couple in their early 40s, said tennis and cardio tennis is something fun they can do together to add physical activity to their lives.

“Cardio tennis gives me a chance to practice hitting the ball while getting the benefits of an aerobics class and a good workout,” Jennifer said. John added, “It’s fun, it’s low pressure and a nice workout.”

The Burelbachs also participate in cardio tennis with their 10- and 12-year-old children during a family class.

“It’s something we can do as a family,” John said.

The two tennis associations claim a person can burn up to 600 calories in the class, which runs from 40 to 60 minutes.

“It’s important to have an expert who can feed the balls to participants at the right pace for a cardiovascular workout,” Griffin said.

As he was hitting balls to the class, Griffin spotted a woman walking by and talking on her cell phone. He has been trying to recruit her for his class.

“It’s more fun than walking and talking,” he yelled to the woman.