

USPTA

Travel With Your Members!

Hans Römer, USPTA Master Professional

(Left to right) USPTA Master Professional Hans Römer with Elite Professionals Kie Foreman and Sam Garcia.

Don't you love hearing this? "Please stow your carry-on luggage underneath the seat in front of you or in an overhead bin, and please fasten your seat belt for takeoff." Some people do not like flying, but I do. Flying means arriving somewhere else, which means exploring new cultures, tasting different foods, experiencing different environments and meeting new people. Flying means receiving the traditional small bag of peanuts! Basically, it comes down to

stepping out of your comfort zone. Isn't that exactly what we teach our students/members as well? By actually traveling with your members, you create the ultimate win-win situation by talking the talk, and walking the walk!

As a Director of Tennis for several years at clubs in California, Florida and New England, I have been fortunate to serve memberships that have supported me tremendously in events, fundraisers and trips. Or does my dedicated staff deserve

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USPTA members can enjoy so much more than just tennis on a trip with Tennis Ventures.

a little credit for promoting and executing all these initiatives...

Providing your membership with creative programming that includes exciting events, tournaments, mixers, ladders and round robins is a fundamental part of your job description. And if you meet, and hopefully exceed, the expectations of your membership and management, you have established your own job security. Is that it? Or is there room for a little more icing on the cake?

Yes, there is, by traveling with your members! Allow me to categorize that into three levels. Of course, that starts at the local level by attending the away games of your USTA teams and watching your juniors and/or adults compete at tournaments. Another local or regional event could be setting up “interclubs” for men and women. Organizing and engaging at the local level is the first sign that you care. One benefit that stands out from a tennis development point of view is that you get to see how your students perform in real matches, away matches. During these short trips, by sharing a cup of coffee, or even a ride, you realize that

there’s more to talk about than just tennis, and that is exactly what creates and strengthens your connection with your membership.

The next step would be taking a group of juniors and/or adults, to a professional ATP or WTA tournament, or Davis Cup/Fed Cup tie – assuming that you are fortunate enough that your facility is within a reasonable distance to the venue. Many tournaments offer great packages for larger groups and even the USPTA now offers its members free entry to early rounds of many of the ATP and WTA US Open series! Make it day! Include lunch, perhaps a clinic, and arrange a meeting for one or more professionals, a short Q&A. One of the major basic needs of any human being is inclusion. These trips offer exactly that!

The third level is truly going above and beyond by taking your

members abroad to a Grand Slam. Flying, dining, playing tennis and watching the top players compete is the ultimate bonding experience. I have been on three of these trips with Tennis Ventures. Owners Chadwick and Camilla Byrd have been doing this successfully for 10 years and have taken hundreds of people to Australia, England, France and Italy. These trips include watching Grand Slam tennis matches with splendid five-star hotels, fine dining and instructional tennis clinics and play.

Going on three of these trips (Aussie twice, RG once), it really opened my eyes that the trip in itself is awesome, but the connections and relationships you create and strengthen with your members cannot happen, and will not happen, just at the club. Aussie Aussie Aussie, Oi Oi Oi! 🌟

Hans Römer is a USPTA Master Professional and is the seasonal Director of Tennis at Edgcomb Tennis Club in Kennebunk, Maine. In the winter months, he teaches tennis at Cedar Hammock Golf & Country Club in Naples, Fla. In addition to Maine and Florida, Römer has taught in California, Amsterdam and England. He has traveled with Tennis Ventures on three occasions, but also co-organizes his annual Pebble Beach East Coast-West Coast Tennis Camp in California. Römer can be reached at hansromer@icloud.com.