

I became acquainted with Dr. Fenella Cooper in 1977 on the Sub -Base Tennis Courts. Soon, I realized that she was rock steady in practice or match play. In the 1980's, she advanced to be an outstanding female player in the Virgin Islands. For the next 30 years, Fenella was a major contender in local championships. She threatened every opponent in tennis tournaments: singles, ladies doubles and mixed doubles.

Her tennis success was not confined locally to the Virgin Islands, but she expanded her scope of tournament play to the U.S. mainland where she competed and won in many States. Occasionally, she was the only female entry from the U.S. Virgin Islands to compete in the National championships. Because of her poise, conduct and deportment, she represented her homeland well. Unofficially, she showcased St. Thomas (by extension the U. S. Virgin Islands) and served as a sports "ambassador" for the Virgin Islands. Actually, many players with whom she competed on the mainland U.S.A have visited St. Thomas (as tourists) because of her tennis involvement.

I interviewed a few of her U.V.I. tennis students. What stood out for many of them was Coach Cooper's emphasis on court discipline and tennis courtesies. One example in point: The first point in a tennis match is 15 - love, but as young people are prone to short cuts, the student may announce the score to be 5 - love instead 15 - love. Immediately, Coach Cooper intervenes, she stops the game for the player to report the proper score. She had a standard to uphold, and her integrity was at stake.

I highly complement this Legislative body of Senators for naming the U.V.I. St. Thomas tennis courts in honor of Dr. Fenella Cooper. It is well deserved.

Sincerely,

Dr. George H Newton