

actually "prize fighting." Even in the most gilded of cities, there were limits to the toleration of the courts. The golden age of the New Orleans ring had passed.

After mourning his death, little more was written about Andy Bowen, though one court record referred to him as a "mulatto." His was another "mulatto's tragic end," remembered today only as a footnote to the history of boxing.

CHAPTER FOUR

## In the Land of Dreamy Dreams

*Tennis and the Nexus of Class and Race  
in New Orleans, 1876–1976*

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Perhaps the most famous match played at the New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club (NOLTC) never actually happened. LaGrande McGruder only agreed to play a match against Roxanne Miller after continued prodding, not wanting to because Miller was, in her conception, "a cripple," and because Miller and her husband were new members, Jews, only admitted because the club had just moved to a new location and needed an infusion of cash. McGruder, whose father had once been president of the United States Lawn Tennis Association, had played at the club her entire life, and was confident that she could easily throttle the crippled, Jewish newcomer. But the newcomer was good. She surprised McGruder with shot after improbable shot, until finally a frustrated McGruder called a ball out that was clearly not out, hoping to gain an advantage. She did, and after that momentum swing, she was able to defeat the interloper, but it was a Rubicon of sorts for McGruder. She was so frustrated with herself that she drove to the Huey P. Long Bridge and dumped her tennis equipment into the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup>

The McGruder-Miller match occurred in Ellen Gilchrist's short story, "In the Land of Dreamy Dreams." McGruder's abandonment of tennis after failure in the face of moral crisis mirrored the crisis of faith in her mentor, Claiborne Redding, who lamented the infusion of new-money members, Jewish members, and their breach of protocol. Coffee was being served in styrofoam cups with powdered creamer, for example, whereas at the old club waiters had formerly



A group of late-nineteenth century tennis players in New Orleans. Photo courtesy of the New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club and the Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University, New Orleans.

brought café au lait in silver serving. Nailor, the black groundskeeper, was equally wistful about the bygone era. Gilchrist's story, published in 1981 but taking place in 1977, used the coffee cups and the violation of honor to symbolize the passing away of upper-class insulation that was part and parcel of the competitive tennis culture at the club. The old standards of class and culture that had dominated from 1876 to 1976 had seemingly dissolved in a styrofoam cup of stale coffee.

Tennis in New Orleans was, as it was in other urban areas, a vehicle of restrictive exclusivity, but that exclusivity worked in myriad ways across lines of class and race, beginning with the founding of Gilchrist's New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club in 1876 and moving through a century beset by racial and economic turmoil. Post-Reconstruction New Orleans tennis looked much like antebellum Louisiana writ large, with a small exclusive upper class, an also-small upper-middle class with slightly less exclusivity but seeking as much as they could muster, then the majority of white players below who were left to use playing ability rather than social or financial status to gain access. Then

there was the black population who was excluded from all of that competition, middle and upper-class players participating in a separate world until pioneers came along to push back against that closed system. Black tennis in New Orleans, then, democratized from the top down, those with access working to open doors for themselves, then lead the way for their social and economic inferiors who otherwise would not have access. White tennis, meanwhile, democratized from the bottom up, with players originally priced or classed out of the NOLTC making new opportunities to play the game and creating new access for a new group of players.

The modern version of tennis came about in England in 1873, and the following year, American Mary Ewing Outerbridge brought the game to Staten Island. In 1877, formal rules for the game would be established by the All-England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club, Wimbledon. Even before Wimbledon's rules, however, the United States had first developed its own club for the sport in December 1876, the New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club, still the nation's oldest.<sup>2</sup>

December 1876 was an inauspicious time to begin such an endeavor, after the contested presidential election of 1876 and before the Compromise of 1877 two months later that would eventually withdraw the remaining federal troops from New Orleans and restore home rule. The NOLTC was founded at the tail end of a violent Reconstruction process that began with a bloody race riot where mobs of angry whites murdered 44 black victims and wounded 150 more outside of the city's Mechanics Institute. As the NOLTC formed, the city was still reeling from a September 1874 coup known locally as the Battle of Liberty Place, wherein a band of roughly five thousand members of the White League, a paramilitary terrorist organization affiliated with the far-right wing of the Democratic Party, attacked the police and held the statehouse for three days before fleeing to escape the arrival of federal troops. If that wasn't enough, just a year after the club formed and home rule was restored, a yellow fever outbreak killed thousands in the city and even more throughout the lower Mississippi Valley in 1878. Despite political, social, and environmental turmoil, however, the NOLTC forged ahead.<sup>3</sup>

The development of an upper-class tennis culture in New Orleans also came at an inauspicious economic time in the city's history. The NOLTC was founded in between the Panic of 1873, which decimated the city's economy, and the yellow fever epidemic that decimated a portion of its population. Understandably, the city's economic growth rate was not as pronounced as it was in its antebellum heyday, but its economic growth in products traveling



by rail and products traveling from the Gulf both more than doubled over the course of the Gilded Age, keeping New Orleans the country's second largest port, though the economic distance between it and New York continued to grow. Throughout the late nineteenth century, according to historian Joy Jackson, both capital and labor "had organized and centralized their efforts," and despite the interracial cooperation of some of the city's trade unions, the rich continued to get richer.<sup>4</sup>

As Eric Arnesen has demonstrated, the 1880s were a legitimately successful decade for the labor movement in the city, as biracial unions and segregated black and white unions of waterfront workers acting in tandem helped cotton workers and stevedores earn more control over the conditions of their employment, aided by a "Democratic party machine" that helped unions "confront employers in an unfettered way." The 1890s saw that movement decline as racism rose in the wake of Jim Crow and the economy fell in the wake of the Panic of 1893. But it didn't disappear. Strikes littered the New Orleans waterfront in the first decade of the twentieth century, facilitated by interracial unionism that was blamed for all of the unrest. In the decades that followed, the employers, many of whom were members of the NOLTC, would consolidate their control, creating labor stability and less control for workers, which only further highlighted the differentiation between social and economic classes, even after the city's red-light district had largely disappeared.<sup>5</sup>

The club's first president was Gustaf Westfeldt, of the city's Westfeldt Brothers Coffee empire. He was joined by founding members like Atwood Violet, who was president of the Southern Mineral and Land Improvement Company, the Standard Fireless Engine Company, and the New Orleans Telephone Company, along with several other powerful city businesses. Gilbert Green was a prominent banker. N.D. Wallace was a powerful cotton factor who owned several other companies. They were joined by leaders like Henry Charnock, an import-export magnate who had come to New Orleans from England, bringing his passion for the new game with him, and several other English immigrants. It was an elite group, and their intent was to create an elite club, an organization that catered to those of similar breeding.<sup>6</sup>

The club's location bounced around in the late nineteenth century from the corner of Jackson and Prytania streets to another Prytania location to the corner of Dryades and Amelia until it finally settled in February 1898 on Saratoga Street, where it would stay until 1973. To secure its Saratoga Street location, members formed a private stock company. Selling stock in the new company

facilitated the land purchase and building of its first clubhouse, with a broad viewing gallery that overlooked the playing space. Because of the club's English influence, the gallery always featured afternoon tea. The club's groundskeeper, John Irwin, rolled and graded an area for twelve Bermuda grass courts. With many British immigrants among the membership, space was also set aside for a cricket crease. On its initial founding, women were only allowed to play on Wednesday afternoons, designated Ladies' Day, but upon the purchase of its new space formal ladies' memberships were opened to women (though full "stockholder" memberships would not be open to women until 1998).<sup>7</sup>

Tennis made sense as a southern entity, a region dominated by a wealthy oligarchy who had kept millions of its black citizens enslaved and recently carried the bulk of its poorer white citizens into a costly and devastating war to protect an investment in which those poor fighters would never participate. "The remarkable interest displayed in lawn tennis throughout the North, and the increasing popularity of the game, as shown each year by the multitude of new players and new clubs, have been fully equaled in the South during the past two seasons," one commentator concluded in 1889. "The Southern interest is an awakening one. The athletes of that section have become aware, only during the last few years, that lawn tennis is a game which fully develops every muscle, and at the same time possesses the elements of excitement and competition which render any athletic game more attractive."<sup>8</sup>

As Larry R. Youngs explains in his study of the intersection of sports and tourism in wintertime Florida in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, "Having acquired the necessary time and disposable wealth, certain affluent men and women put increasing value on the quality and meaning of their time away from work and home." Youngs is interested in those from northern cities spending winters in Florida and the broader Southeast, but his analysis is fitting for many in New Orleans as well. "Such people increasingly embraced the idea that participating in outdoor recreation, including certain competitive sports, helped to immunize against the unhealthy aspects—both mental and physical—of modern urban life, especially life in an industrial and capitalistic society."<sup>9</sup>

Steven Reiss agrees with Youngs. "As widening income levels, substantial differences in discretionary time, and diverse social values resulted in different leisure options for different social classes" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "sport came to mark social boundaries and to define status communities."<sup>10</sup> That was certainly true in New Orleans, but in a place where

"diverse social values" and "discretionary time" had always been part of the definition of the city itself; those boundary markers were going to be far more populous and far more intricate, particularly when a game like tennis, which already had its own social and economic boundary lines built into it, came to a city with its own pre-established boundaries.

As Alecia Long has noted in her study of post-Civil War New Orleans concert saloons, social class and respectability were deeply intertwined among the city's citizens. They bore a particular weight on African Americans and immigrants, most of whom appeared at the mouth of the Mississippi with far fewer privileges than the English immigrants who helped found the NOLTC. And respectability could easily be shaped by the places one chose to spend his time. Long evaluates an 1893 lawsuit brought against a local concert saloon by its neighboring businesses, each worried that the saloon was a nuisance to the neighborhood and that its presence would decrease property values. Lawyers emphasized that "people of the very lowest class and very lowest order" made up the bulk of the saloon's clientele. "Of course, there are occasions where gentlemen go there, but those are exceptions." One witness openly admitted not attending concert saloons because of the risk to his "good reputation." When one of the plaintiffs admitted that the shows at concert saloons were at least similar to the "ballet at the French Opera House," the lawyer questioning him asked, "One is the rich man's opera, and the other a poor man's opera, is that it?" The plaintiff rejected that comparison, but the implication was clear. Respectability was not alone built on ideology and bank account. It was also a creature of the buildings one frequented and the social codings for what went on inside them.<sup>11</sup>

Inherent in such endeavors was also a celebration of masculinity, as men frequented concert saloons to experience the hospitality of its female employees. While New Orleans was unique in some of its methods of excess, it was not unique in excess, as a working-class rejection of Victorian moral idealism in the postwar nineteenth century led to a new emphasis on toughness as a better biological standard on which to judge people, in lieu of more culturally constructed and unfair categories like social standing and wealth. Thus developed the saloon blood-sport culture across the country, which also dominated in New Orleans and fed the city's ever-expanding bar scene. Concert saloons themselves served a different purpose, but bar culture, animal bloodsports, and the working-class reaction against Victorianism would give way to a boxing culture that absolutely dominated in New Orleans, a reputation solidified at the

city's Olympic Club in September 1892, when Jim Corbett knocked out John L. Sullivan in twenty-one rounds to win the heavyweight championship. Boxing was the living embodiment of the social Darwinian ideal, as the strongest survived despite privilege of birth or breeding, and thus leveled the social playing field. It created, in what Elliott Gorn has described, explaining the draw of the *Police Gazette*, proud progenitor of such amusements, "a democracy of pleasure denied by Victorian culture."<sup>12</sup>

It was hard to argue biology, and so Victorians, in turn, sought to develop their own athletic ethic. Already shunning physical brutality as they had done prostitution and concert saloons, the middle and upper classes sought to cordon off a place for uplifting, beneficial sports. They celebrated amateurism as the ultimate sports experience to counter the pay and professionalization in boxing (and, increasingly, in team sports like baseball). In 1888, for example, the Amateur Athletic Union developed under the original auspices of the New York Athletic Club as an umbrella organization to organize amateur athletic contests—to celebrate pure competition devoid of the professionalism that brought ruin to players and fans.<sup>13</sup> Amateur sports like tennis, golf, and polo generally required a club membership of one kind or another. Thus, they solved every Victorian problem in one fell swoop. They taught amateur values, shunned the violence of lower class sports, and had a built-in system for ensuring that only those of a certain class and breeding would be able to participate. The NOLTC was far different than a concert saloon, but it worked the same way socially.

In the 1890s, YMCA leader Luther Halsey Gulick emphasized the organization's athletic offerings, arguing for what he called "muscular Christianity." Spiritual life rests on the equal development of the mind and the body, he argued, so not developing the body was against the will of God. Gulick became a leader in the Boy Scouts movement and the Playground Association of America, among other similar endeavors. He also teamed with sociologist G. Stanley Hall of Clark University to develop a pseudo-biological response to the "survival of the fittest" mantra of boxing enthusiasts. Their evolutionary theory of play became incredibly influential in the early twentieth century, arguing in a roundabout way that humans had developed an impulse to play during evolution and that everyone mimicked the broader stages of human evolution in every phase of their lives. With each person recapitulating the history of humanity through sports, those games were necessarily essential to proper physical, moral, and neural growth. Gulick and Hall used their paradigm



to argue for the benefit of team sports in particular, but it also provided a greater emphasis on physical activity for those not attending boxing matches and concert saloons.<sup>14</sup>

The bind in which upper class tennis enthusiasts found themselves, however, is that precisely because of its association with wealth and leisure, tennis was not placed on par with other, more democratic physical activities. At the national level, its reputation for effete dandyism even developed among the privileged at times. In 1878, several Harvard men deserted crew for tennis, and the school newspaper was indignant. "Is it not a pity that serious athletics should be set aside by able-bodied men for a game that is at best intended for a seaside pastime?" asked *The Crimson*. "The game is well enough for lazy or weak man, but men who have rowed or taken part in a nobler sport should blush to be seen playing Lawn Tennis."<sup>15</sup>

Still, it was a Harvard man who contributed to the game's rise in national popularity, when in 1900, Dwight F. Davis established the International Lawn Tennis Challenge Cup to foster international rivalries. A generation later, superstars like Big Bill Tilden and Suzanne Lenglen drove an even greater national obsession with the game.<sup>16</sup> What they were unable to do, particularly in places like New Orleans where class and respectability politics were so intertwined, and where the NOLTC was the symbol of both tennis and restrictive exclusivity, was to disassociate the game from its privileged image.

American tennis had always been a decidedly upper-class endeavor. The first United States tennis championship took place in August and early September 1881, in Newport, Rhode Island. Held at the Casino Club, an institution so exclusive that it denied membership to president Chester Arthur because he did not have what the club considered to be the proper social standing.<sup>17</sup>

That being the case, tennis clubs like NOLTC created social cues for those who wanted to identify themselves as having become part of the city's elite. In New Orleans, the game's upper-class status was cemented not just by club exclusivity, but by the corresponding disinterest of everyone not included in the club. "Why lawn tennis, one of the most fascinating of out door amusements open to both sexes, has not attained to a more extended popularity in this city, is a mystery," wondered the city's *Times-Picayune* newspaper in 1879. The game's required supplies were relatively inexpensive, costing less "than that of a cheap croquet set." And yet croquet was still more popular, though it was less skillful, athletic, and exciting.<sup>18</sup> What the paper failed to take into account was that in

those early days, tennis was associated almost solely with the NOLTC, with wealth, making it anathema to so many without such means.

As if to highlight that disconnect, the paper ran an anonymous piece of fiction in 1880 that told of an idle young wealthy man who still maintained some work at the city's cotton exchange. When asked why, he explained that "it helps me along wonderfully in society, when I talk about my 'June deliveries,' and all the other contracts I have on hand. Really, a fellow can't be playing lawn tennis all the time, you know—really he can't." Another editorial comment that year referred to lawn tennis mockingly as "Presbyterian base ball."<sup>19</sup>

Adding another hindrance and making the rise of New Orleans tennis all the more improbable, the tennis players of early New Orleans entered a climate that was relatively averse to sports. "Exercise for health reasons was not stressed or considered worth promoting," writes historian Joy Jackson. "Most men preferred to spend their hours after work or on Sunday afternoons at their social clubs, or at saloons and beer gardens." By the 1890s, however, that attitude had changed. Baseball and bicycling gained an incredible popularity, along with tennis, golf, crew, and yachting. And their popularity was growing, even among those not of advantageous breeding. In 1880, for example, Seebold's on Canal Street, a store typically dedicated to books, stationery, and art supplies, began advertising the sale of tennis equipment, along with supplies for archery and croquet.<sup>20</sup>

That democratizing trend would exist at the top of the social hierarchy as well. The NOLTC's club championship tournament began in 1890, won twice in its first seven years by plantation owner and sugar magnate C. C. Krumbhaar. In 1901, after substantial debate, the club began an annual interclub tournament. It was not the sort of event that aided restrictive exclusivity, but because of that exclusivity, in the words of the *Times-Picayune*, the club was "comparatively a stranger to the tennis world at large, and must necessarily win its own recognition by the excellence of its tournaments and the skill of its members." Much of the benefit of exclusivity, in other words, came from others knowing what they were missing. That first event included teams from the Tulane Tennis Club and Alameda Tennis Club, along with a delegation from Georgia's Atlanta Athletic Club. The Atlantans had only played on clay and came to the NOLTC to test their skills on grass. Still, the club had not become a democracy overnight. No spectators were admitted without a special card that certified them as worthy of watching the tournament.<sup>21</sup>

It was, however, a first step. The following year the club took a second step, aligning officially with the United States Lawn Tennis Association and hosting the Gulf States Championship, which the venue would continue to host annually from 1902 to 1914. The Gulf States awarded prizes in men's and ladies' singles and men's doubles. After winners were declared in the men's divisions, winners played the champions from the previous year for a challenge cup. All matches were decided by two of three sets, with the exception of the men's finals and challenge matches, which were best three of five. The club was also part of the Southern Lawn Tennis Association (SLTA), organized in 1887 and by the early 1900s comprised of clubs in Atlanta, Memphis, Knoxville, Macon, Montgomery, Mobile, and Greenville, South Carolina. The SLTA's founding document included the express dictum, "No club which is situated north of Wilmington, Delaware, should be admitted to membership in the Association."<sup>22</sup>

Beginning in 1914, the NOLTC graduated to hosting the Southern Championship, a larger event than the Gulf States with the same divisions and rules. To make the club more accommodating to visiting tournament players, in 1925 the NOLTC added four clay courts and a concrete court to complement its grass offerings.<sup>23</sup>

This emphasis on tournament play may at first seem to cut against the bent toward restrictive exclusivity, but within the cloister of class-restricted tennis, where everyone was white and everyone had basically equal pocketbooks, winning became the arbiter of prestige, a way to find the first among equals. Even the athletic contest itself, then, became part of the social contest outside of its fault lines.<sup>24</sup>

The club's place as a venue for the Southern Championship lasted into the 1950s, a tournament that would come to be dominated in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s by the diminutive Bryan "Bitsy" Grant, who won the championship eleven times. Grant was the South's best player, despite being 5'4" and only 120 pounds. The Atlantan had grown up playing on that city's clay courts and translated that experience into three National Clay Court Championships titles. He defeated Ellsworth Vines and Don Budge and played on three Davis Cup teams. Despite the lack of clay, New Orleans was a second home for the southerner, who demonstrated to his fellow players that southern tennis could be a vehicle to global renown in the game.<sup>25</sup>

The success of the club and its tournament would certainly redound to Grant, but it would also have more local beneficiaries, as Tulane's tennis team

became a dominant force, winning seventeen SEC championships in the 1940s and 1950s. One of its most prominent stars was two-time NCAA singles champion Hamilton "Ham" Richardson, who would supplant Grant as one of the dominant southern players in the 1950s and 60s.<sup>26</sup>

Tulane's success was orchestrated by a different kind of migrant. Emmet Paré was from Chicago, a professional who had toured with Bill Tilden before coming to New Orleans in 1934 to coach the Tulane tennis team and serve as the teaching pro for the NOLTC. Along with his team's SEC championships, he also led them to the 1959 NCAA national championship. Ham Richardson was not his only singles champion. Under Paré's watch, Tulane also produced Jack Tuero, Jose Aguero, and Ron Holmberg, all of whom won NCAA titles and became legends of New Orleans tennis at the NOLTC. The club and the university were near one another, and that proximity combined with the dual influence of Paré kept them in a symbiotic relationship.<sup>27</sup>

So too did the devotion of female players. Interest in tennis had been developing among the city's women since its inception. Though tennis had early been pilloried as a "ladies game," and men had pushed back against the accusation, others saw the game more positively as "a game in which the elements of exercise and competition are combined." For a woman, "lawn tennis seems to be her only refuge. It is the one athletic game which women may enjoy without being subjected to sundry insinuations of rompishness." Such sentiments drove female interest in tennis, leading, for example, to the NOLTC's "Ladies' Day" and other opportunities to play, the one cardinal rule for women being "no heeled shoes."<sup>28</sup>

With the game's popularity continuing to grow, the city's Audubon Park installed its own lawn tennis court in 1901, as did City Park, and the following year a group of players formed an early version of the City Park Tennis Club (CPTC). It didn't last, but the city's interest in tennis did begin growing, and in 1922 City Park expanded to include seventeen public tennis courts for white players. In March 1928, a group of thirteen players formed a new version of the CPTC. They were a group of far more modest means, including the park's tennis pro, William Macassin—a white middle-class coterie of tennis enthusiasts with no possibility of entering the NOLTC. That did not mean that the group was without means. In the heart of the Depression, the now-larger group offered the park \$1000 annual rent for the exclusive use of six courts, and for three additional courts if the city would agree to build more. The city did, building nine more courts at a cost of \$9,000 and reserving six of the new additions



for the CPTC.<sup>29</sup> There was in the endeavor a clear understanding that while the club could not be as restrictive as that of its betters, it was still seeking validation through exclusivity and was willing to pay a substantial amount of Depression-era money to create it. Unlike the NOLTC, which began as an upper-class endeavor, the CPTC evolved from play at a public park over the course of a generation, demonstrating that even when starting from a relatively democratic base, the arc of tennis bent toward class exclusivity.

To mimic its social betters, the club soon started its own championship tournament, dominated in the 1930s by Paul Goosman. Goosman was not a planter or a banking magnate. He was a lower-middle class man who rented a small house on Annunciation Street in the Fourteenth Ward, a factory clerk who had only completed his second year of high school. His place on the city's social arc was earned not through his accomplishments but through his play.<sup>30</sup>

The obsession with appearance can be seen in two separate debates in the fall of 1937. The first was the use of shorts, a utilitarian new style that had dominated among many of the city's players, allowing for easier movement and a break from New Orleans's stifling heat. Some, however, were resistant, desiring to preserve the game's respectability over and against ease of play.<sup>31</sup>

The second came in a scandal involving Anna Koll, the city's best female player throughout much of the 1930s. In May, she was ruled ineligible to play in the public parks tournament in June and the city open tournament in September after being charged with professionalism by the USLTA. It was a scandal among the city's tennis players, as amateurism was upheld as the ultimate value in the sport, and Koll was accused only after local testimony essentially outed her as charging for tennis lessons. The reality that Koll had been accused by some of her own only added to the scandal, and she vigorously fought the charges. Her lawyer produced receipts that demonstrated the costs she incurred for balls, court rentals, and trophies for her students exceeded the payments she received. Koll, a school teacher by trade, produced a litany of witnesses to testify on her behalf, including the superintendent of athletics for New Orleans public schools. Even after the legal push, Koll's reinstatement in November happened not because the city open tennis committee or the USLTA admitted mistakes in judgment, but instead because the national body ruled that her suspension through the full run of the summer season was a substantial enough punishment. It was the kind of ruling that ended the controversy but kept the scarlet letter upon Koll, who never regained her championship form. And so, whether through the more trivial collision between traditional fashion

and improved performance or the more substantive clash between amateurism and professionalization, New Orleans tennis courts became a discursive theater for the politics of respectability.<sup>32</sup>

Making the controversy even more illustrative of the evident crosscurrents in national tennis and New Orleans society, earlier that year the city's newfound passion for the game brought the biggest names in professional tennis to town. American Ellsworth Vines and Englishman Fred Perry played an exhibition at the Tulane gym. The two major champions played each other on both American and British tours, finally making it to New Orleans, where Vines defeated an ailing Perry in straight sets. It was a contest attended by all of the city's tennis fans, the two players celebrated on their professional tour, just months before Koll was barred from city play after a false reading of a technicality branded her a professional with much different connotations than those of Vines and Perry.<sup>33</sup>

In a February 1938 exhibition, Vines played Perry in a repeat of the pair's earlier contest at the Tulane gym, part of another national professional tour. A decade later, on March 22, 1948, Bobby Riggs, Jack Kramer, Pancho Segura, and Dinny Pails played exhibition matches at the Tulane gym. At the end of March, Charles E. Hart, former British Davis Cup captain, conducted a weekend clinic at City Park, Audubon Park, and the NOLTC. The event was a temporary postwar stay of the NOLTC's exclusivity, as the event was free and open to the public, putting many on the grounds who would not normally have a chance to do so.<sup>34</sup>

To provide a sense of ownership to those who were normally left out of such events, the city had created a public parks tournament—the same tournament from which Koll was originally barred—to build a measure of exclusivity going the other way. Established in 1923, the tournament, taking place at Audubon Park and City Park, barred those belonging to any club that had its own courts. It charged a twenty-five cent entry fee and required the loser of the match to pay for the balls. It was the people's tournament, and to demonstrate its popularity, the 1938 event had almost two hundred entrants.<sup>35</sup>

Over the first half of the twentieth century, there were plenty of other clubs that began their own tennis programs, all with varying degrees of exclusivity. After the NOLTC, the West End Tennis Club organized in 1890, then the New Orleans Country Club, the Aurora Country Club, the Timberlane Country Club, the Audubon Tennis Club, the Lakewood Country Club, the Orleans Women's Tennis Club, and the Metairie Country Club all fielded players in the city's various tournaments. The New Orleans Bicycle Club and

the Metropolitan Athletic Club drew court boundaries on croquet lawns to allow their members to play. Even more social organizations like the Elks and Linwood clubs began playing in the 1890s, all demonstrating that even those unable to join a club were interested in the game. Several wealthier citizens built their own private courts. One local commentator suggested approvingly that "the laying out of the 'garden district'" in the city "makes possible many more private courts than in most large cities." Some tennis clubs, like Timberlane and Audubon, maintained teams in a Metropolitan New Orleans League, pitting clubs against one another in the years following World War II. The rivalries between the groups were friendly ones. In 1930, for example, when rain slowed play at the New Orleans Country Club's annual men's invitational tournament, the NOLTC offered use of its courts to speed up play. In January 1967, when rain slowed the annual Sugar Bowl tournament, the championship match was moved to the NOLTC because the club had artificial light that facilitated nighttime play.<sup>36</sup>

City Park and Audubon Park remained the most influential early venues, though the grass of "lawn tennis" would prove too costly and labor-intensive to maintain. Audubon switched to clay and asphalt courts and City Park to clay, but clay too had its problems, particularly for an area as water-logged as New Orleans. Clay retained water, keeping players off the courts long after a rain. In 1937, Audubon resurfaced its asphalt courts with concrete and its clay courts with brickdust, followed shortly by City Park, as brickdust was just as easy as clay to maintain but drained water far more rapidly.<sup>37</sup>

The new courts were part of a democratizing trend for white tennis in New Orleans, with players passionate about playing creating opportunities for themselves. Those opportunities would then generate greater expansion. From the early 1930s until World War II, Howard Jacobs's "Men in White" column in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, the city's largest daily newspaper, became the public voice of New Orleans tennis, reporting on local tournaments and players and showing citizens otherwise barred from the city's various clubs how and where they could participate. From the 1940s to the 1960s, the *Times-Picayune*'s Jimmie Powers served much the same purpose with his long-running "Over the Net" column.<sup>38</sup> The opportunities of new courts and columns in white newspapers, however, were not available to the white players' black counterparts.

African American tennis was almost as old as American tennis itself. The first black tennis clubs on the East Coast began in the 1890s, the Chautauqua Club in Philadelphia in 1890, the Monumental City Tennis Club in Baltimore

in 1895, and others forming during the decade in New York and Washington. Black tennis in the South also had its beginnings in the 1890s when Tuskegee built faculty courts on campus. Such foundations occurred in the era of Jim Crow retrenchment. They were necessary because early private tennis clubs like the NOLTC "were not just for the elites," notes historian Sundiata Djata, "but for white elites." The black clubs that rose in response to that segregation began organizing tournaments as early as 1898, and at one such tournament in 1916, the idea for the American Tennis Association (ATA) was conceived. The ATA was founded later that year to be the chief organizing body of black tennis, led for its first twelve years by Dr. H. Stanton McCard of Baltimore's Monumental City club. The organization held national championships and supported the game throughout metropolitan areas, particularly on the East Coast.<sup>39</sup>

Of course, New Orleans had a prosperous black community even prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, and in the two decades after the conflict, that prosperity—or that prosperity's proximity to its white counterpart—continued to grow. Along with it grew the cultural life that accompanied privilege. "Negro social life in New Orleans was varied, rich, and in many ways a reflection of activities in the white community," explains John Blassingame. "This social life united the black community while at the same time accentuating class divisions." As the NOLTC was being formed, black New Orleans had its own symphony orchestra. It engaged in crew contests at the Saratoga Rowing Association and the Antoine Rowing Club. Upper-class endeavors like rifle matches or horse races also dominated, though tennis, as a game comparatively new compared to equestrian events, crew, and shooting, took longer to make an imprint.<sup>40</sup>

Such is not to say a nascent black interest did not exist. As early as 1881, five years after the founding of the NOLTC, the black *Weekly Louisianian* mentioned tennis as a distinctly British game. "*Nous connaissons déjà le cricket, le croquet, le lawn tennis, le polo et autres jeux d'importation anglaise*," the *Louisianian* explained, lumping it with other games that black New Orleans did not play, like polo and cricket. Still, while the paper grouped the games together as English imports, they were also games that served as signposts of social advancement and institutional wealth. They were foreign games, but they were also goals.<sup>41</sup>

In December 1886, the *Weekly Pelican*, a later Gilded Age New Orleans black newspaper, ran a *New York Tribune* advertisement for *The Tribune Book of Open Air Sports*, a volume "especially for the young men of the United States" that would include chapters on both "Court Tennis" and "Lawn Tennis." The



*Tribune* assured black New Orleans readers that “no book of this character has ever been put into print in America.”<sup>42</sup> The same edition of the *Pelican* featured a short story, “A Fir Pillow,” about a relationship on a summer retreat between a man in his twenties and a woman in her fifties. The man, Jack, was “an active young fellow so devoted to tennis and baseball,” which made the woman all the more curious as to why he would sit and sew with her, or as to “what tender, loving thoughts he was working into those great clumsy arms when I saw that peculiar far off look come into his beautiful brown eyes.”<sup>43</sup>

The *Pelican* was devoted to creating a cultured black middle class, reprinting articles from white papers throughout the country and world designed to aid such an end. Tennis was a symbol of social respectability, and so made it into the paper, despite a lack of any real play from black New Orleanians. In January 1887, for example, an article about the frustration of Parisians about the dress of Englishmen at French opera houses reported that one French newspaper suggested that “the unmannerly English will shortly look on at the play in their flannels ‘du lawn tennis,’ leaving their racquets in the cloak room.”<sup>44</sup> Later that year, the *Pelican* reproduced an *American Magazine* article about “care in taking exercise.” Mountain climbing “is to be avoided,” as was most rowing and swimming, which could be “dangerous to any one whose heart is weak.” It was, the article reasoned, an unnecessary risk. But “tennis is different. Although it requires agility and considerable exertion, there are intervals of rest that make it one of the safest of games. It is only necessary to slip on a light coat or shawl when a set is finished to avoid sudden chill.”<sup>45</sup>

An 1889 *Pelican* reprint, told in the voice of a rural upstate New York farmer who had seen his life transformed by cosmopolitans from the city vacationing on his farm, described experiencing the game for the first time. “Lucy’s feller and the college dudes was playin’ what they call lawn tennis out in the cow pastur one day,” explained the narrator. “The boys was waltzin’ around the pastur’ with their white coats and panties on.” He had never seen a game that “looked more thrillin’. Me and the hired man just stood there and watched.” Tennis, the article implied, was a cosmopolitan, elite game. Those who didn’t play it were rubes. Black New Orleans residents were not yet playing the game in any sustained way, but they were receiving messages equating the game with Victorian respectability standards from an aspirational newspaper devoted to touting those standards.<sup>46</sup>

The *Louisiana Weekly*, founded in September 1925, first mentioned tennis in an Associated Negro Press article about the American Tennis Association

1926 national tournament in St. Louis. While the president of the St. Louis Tennis Association’s statement that tennis fans in the city had “organized to secure the backing of the tournament by the entire Colored population” surely rankled the black upper class of New Orleans, forever in a rivalry with their Mississippi River neighbor to the north, tennis was only a developing interest of the city’s black social set in the early 1920s.<sup>47</sup> The African-American clubs of New Orleans focused their early attention on dinners, dancing, and whist, a seventeenth century trick-taking card game popular in New Orleans and throughout south Louisiana. The Phyllis Wheatley Club, the Twentieth Century Whist Club, the Entre Nous Club, the Autocrat Club, the Marble Heart Whist Club, the Marechal Neil Aid and Pleasure Club, the Young Men Twenty Club, the Housewives Industrial Sewing Club, and dozens of other organized secular groups held meetings, parties, dances, teas, suppers, and “whists,” but did not early entertain tennis as part of the social hierarchy.<sup>48</sup> Neither did the Iroquois Club, the oldest and most prominent black social club in the city.<sup>49</sup>

Though it wasn’t as accessible as dancing, dinners, and whist, however, there was a small but prominent early black tennis presence in New Orleans. The St. Katherine Tennis Club served as the early home of the game’s enthusiasts. Unlike the NOLTC, membership was not based on social exclusivity and instead on a passion to play. In August 1926, the club announced that Edna Cordier, a local school teacher, and William Mitchell, the executive director of the Dryades Street YMCA, would represent the club at the ATA’s St. Louis event. “Much interest is being manifested in tennis in New Orleans,” St. Katherine’s announced confidently, “with the result that there are several exceptional players.” So much so that the group was helping to organize a Gulf States’ Tennis Association that would have its headquarters in New Orleans.<sup>50</sup>

The Dryades Street YMCA was an important hub for such activity. In 1927, it sponsored the Colored Public School Athletic League to give boys and girls access to sports that school budgets couldn’t give them. The Y’s Young Men’s Division paid particular attention to developing male youth. Other programs targeted boys and girls of various ages and interests. Such programs were necessary in 1920s New Orleans, when the Jim Crow line was starker than ever. The Amateur Athletic Union had scheduled its annual track meet for New Orleans in July 1927, for example, but pulled the event in April of that year after city officials and local leadership refused to include black athletes in an integrated meet. A city willing to sacrifice that much revenue and reputation to uphold the racial line in athletics made the mission of the Y that much

more substantial. One of its chief projects was an annual summer camp in nearby Waveland, Mississippi at the Gulfside Chautauqua and Camp Meeting Grounds, a resort of more than six-hundred acres maintained entirely by black leaders for the recreation of the black population. The boys who made the trip camped in tents, they swam, hiked, did craft projects, and played tennis on the facility's new courts.<sup>51</sup>

In July 1927, Xavier University installed three tennis courts and began forming a tennis club. Xavier was a relatively new institution, founded in 1914, the same year that Southern University, originally a New Orleans school founded in 1880, moved to Scotlandville, just outside of Baton Rouge. Straight College was much older, established as Straight University in 1868 by the American Missionary Association. As such, it had already installed tennis courts and hosted an annual tournament in July for the city's black players. There were also courts for black players on the playground of the Thomy Lafon School, a public primary and secondary school associated with Straight, founded in honor of one of its principal donors, the Creole abolitionist and philanthropist Thomy Lafon. The school had been around since 1897, though the first iteration of the institution was destroyed in the New Orleans Race Riot of 1900. Its tennis courts did not appear until the 1920s. Additionally, black players could find a place to play on the Willow St. courts of the relatively new Lusher Elementary School, founded in 1917, where the YMCA would sometimes hold boys' tournaments, or the John W. Hoffman Junior High School on South Prieur Street, where tennis courts were also part of the playground facilities. There were also courts at Daniel Hand School, a black preparatory school funded by the American Missionary Association and aligned with Straight.<sup>52</sup> Finally, there were courts available to black players at Gaudet House on Gentilly Road, the former rehabilitation compound of black social worker Frances Joseph-Gaudet, who used the several buildings on what became a wide campus for a school and orphanage before donating it to the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. The tennis courts on the property, then, became open to interested black Episcopalians who wanted to play.<sup>53</sup>

Late in July, the city's black newspaper, the *Louisiana Weekly*, began publishing a tennis column. "Yes, sir, tennis is here to stay," began the column's opening effort, devoted to celebrating Xavier's new courts. They would "become among the finest in the city if the plans for developing and maintaining them do not miscarry." The courts were clay and would drain well. "There is one thing sure and that is organization can do things. Xavier is organized. Tennis

there will go." Everyone was invited, and yearly dues were one dollar. "This is a splendid opportunity for beginners to get a chance to play," the column encouraged. And they could even play on Sundays, "as tennis is considered as pure, wholesome recreation."<sup>54</sup>

The author of that and future efforts was E. Belfield Spriggins, a teacher at McDonogh #35 High and Normal School who also wrote for the *Weekly* about his other passion, jazz. In his second tennis column, Spriggins lamented that "tennis is a great game and deserves to be played and studied by more of our group, both young and old." To that end, the column began in the proceeding weeks explaining how to choose a racket, where to buy supplies, the rules and various methods for play.<sup>55</sup> It was a demonstration in microcosm of the differences between the sporting tendencies of white and black New Orleans. White players began immediately by coding the game with exclusivity, while black players pushed for democracy. Courts at the private Catholic college would be open to everyone with a small membership fee. Columns in the newspaper encouraged people to play and gave them advice for making that possible. Again, it was a democratization of the game from those in power, from the top down, those with access instinctively opening the door to those who otherwise would not have access. Meanwhile, though a measure of democracy came to white tennis in New Orleans, it developed from the bottom up, players seeking access outside the cloister of the NOLTC making new opportunities to play the game.

That year, 1927, the ATA held its annual national tournament in Hampton, Virginia, on the campus of Hampton Institute. Spriggins was disheartened to note that no one from New Orleans would be representing the city at the event but hoped that continued development of the game would grow national success and participation. At the national tournament, Ted Thompson of Washington defeated Everest Saitch of New York, Thompson avenging a finals loss to Saitch from the previous year. The women's final was also a return engagement, Lulu Ballard defeating Isadora Channels for the second year in a row. Thompson and Saitch, Ballard and Channels, along with Ora Washington, Edgar Brown, and Reginald Weir were the powerhouses of black tennis, the precipice of where columnists like Spriggins wanted New Orleans to be.<sup>56</sup>

In an effort to get there, Xavier held its now-annual tournament in September. Thirty-six entries marked a record for a black New Orleans event. The men's winner, Orlando Moss, "the diminutive but explosive tennis flash, finally settled all disputes as to his local tennis supremacy by blazing his way



from the first round to the undisputed local championship." The women's winner was Jeanne Victor, "little school girl southpaw from Xavier College," who "duplicated the feat of Mr. Moss and went him one better by winning all of her matches in straight sets."<sup>57</sup>

Tennis was growing steadily among black New Orleanians. The following June, the Xavier Athletic Club and the Dryades Street YMCA both held tournaments for their respective members, the Y staging its tournament at Hoffman School. At the same time, the Sylvania F. Williams Community Center, connected to the Thomy Lafon School, held its own junior tennis tournament at the Lafon School courts. At the end of the month, a dance and celebration was hosted for the city's tennis champions at Piron's House of Joy, a dance hall established in 1927 in the Pythian Temple at the corner of Loyola and Gravier Streets. Two local players even played an exhibition match during the party on a court marked off on Piron's dance floor.<sup>58</sup>

One of the city's premiere early black players was Woody I. McCann, an elementary school teacher who won several tournaments, most of them in the doubles division with his partner, Henry Jones. Spriggins himself was an accomplished player, as was Castro Haroldson, Carle E. Smith, and mail carrier Edward Dejoie Burbridge.<sup>59</sup> The best male singles player of the period was Moss, a local barber who dominated much of the early competition. His female counterpart was Victor, a young mulatto college student.<sup>60</sup> Jeanne Victor's sister Lydia was an accomplished player as well, as were Pearl Cahn, Maude Johnson, and Edna M. Cordier, all public-school teachers.<sup>61</sup>

Despite this apparent democracy of tennis access, however, historian Lee Sartain has produced a more problematic analysis. Thomy Lafon was "situated in one of the rougher neighborhoods of New Orleans." The Williams Community Center was incredibly active in creating outreach projects for youth and for adults, "yet such projects were often restricted within the confines of dominant middle-class gender expectations." Sartain noted handicraft clubs and calisthenics classes for girls, athletic clubs and the Boy Scouts for boys. That imposition of middle class values and expectations, however, was not limited to restrictive gendered norms. Tennis was open to both boys and girls in the community center's junior tournament, but the effort was clearly designed to expose black children of the working poor to a more upscale game as a paternalistic civilizing force. Tennis offered the juniors amazing competition and did valuable things for those playing, but such lessons could be taught with myriad sports. Tennis was different precisely because of its class-based reputation.<sup>62</sup>

Such efforts, whatever their intent, did grow the game. In the summer of 1928, a new club formed, the Northside Tennis Club, associated with the American Tennis Association, and built its own courts near Canal Street. Leaders promised that the club would be "one of the classiest and most up-to-date tennis clubs seen in this neck of the woods," a club that would "send representatives to the national tournament every year." Edward Dejoie Burbridge was president of the new group; Straight athlete James Cherault was vice president. Earl M. Wright, *Louisiana Weekly* sports editor, was named secretary, along with assistant secretary Agnes Adams and treasurer Ezell Farrell, also a student at Straight. Until their private courts were complete, the new club would play at Straight's Daniel Hand School. The new group quickly realized, however, the costs involved with building its own courts, and thus subsumed a ladies' club, the St. James AME Church Usherettes, in an effort to secure space on the church grounds to build and equip a court. Another group, the Optimo Tennis Club, which played at the Gaudet Home on Gentilly Road, had been languishing, leading many to assume they too would be combining with Northside. The Northside group was now a larger and wealthier aggregation, but in an effort to stay young, it capped membership to those 25 years old and younger, angering many who tried to join. This was a different kind of exclusivity, an ageist exclusivity, only adding to the nexus of cultural codes and limits associated with the game in New Orleans.<sup>63</sup>

A 1928 *Louisiana Weekly* editorial was pleased with the growth of new clubs and interest in tennis, but lamented the various restrictive exclusivities that placed a ceiling on that growth. In particular, the paper argued that "many more people would be converted into the various clubs if the officials and learned players would devote more time to the novice." It was the kind of exclusivity that was inherent in all sports, but had particularly dire repercussions for those playing a game that measured respectability. "Most of our clubs fail to exercise the slogan 'Join and Learn.' If they did, their membership would be much larger, the number of class 'A' performers greater." The respectability that redounded to the race, the paper seemed to argue, was not measured by a handful of quality players, but instead by the broad spread of competence and interest in exclusive sports like tennis. Experience restrictions only diminished the broader communal benefits of the game.<sup>64</sup>

Another substantial hindrance to tennis's growth among the black population was the Great Depression, followed by the upheaval of World War II. After those conflagrations, however, black tennis in New Orleans was led into the civil rights era by one man, Nehemiah Atkinson.

In 1945, Atkinson founded the Crescent City Hard Court Tennis Club to teach tennis and garner interest in the sport among black students in New Orleans. He and the club used the two courts at the Dryades Street YMCA and the two cement courts at Xavier, charging eight dollars an hour for lessons. "We helped to develop many young black tennis players when there was little interest in the schools," he later remembered, adding that "many went on and won scholarships at Southern and Grambling Universities." While in the city, the Crescent City club held its annual tournament at Xavier and the Dryades Y. Atkinson was originally from Biloxi, but had moved to New Orleans as a child, growing up on Saratoga Street in the neighborhood of the New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club. He later described himself as the only one of his friends who followed tennis, which was not popular among black residents of the city. When he returned to the city in 1945 after service in World War II and created the Crescent City Club, however, he attempted to change that with the help of the NOLTC, which, while clearly observing the restrictions of the racial line, did sell Atkinson tennis balls three for a dollar. "They always tried to look out for me there," remembered Atkinson, contextualizing "looking out" through the prism of the restrictive Jim Crow standard of the day. (Still, while such talk seems to romanticize a wholly unequal situation, his access was legitimately rare, and it is hard to imagine leadership of the NOLTC opening its doors to sell balls to poor white players without the contacts Atkinson had at the club.)<sup>65</sup>

The Crescent City Hard Court Tennis Club, like its forerunners, was affiliated with the American Tennis Association. The group would organize tournaments and national championships every year. Because of the South's Jim Crow restrictions, the ATA held its national events at HBCUs, which provided not only the courts but also residential space to accommodate players who would not be welcomed at most southern hotels. School administrators, for their parts, welcomed the events, hungry to make the acquaintance of the black upper class, who they saw as potential donors to their schools. The group would also be a part of ending the segregated state of tennis. In 1940, grand slam champion Don Budge played at the ATA-affiliated Cosmopolitan Tennis Club in New York. Eight years later, Dr. Reginald Weir played in the formerly all-white US Indoor Lawn Tennis Championship, also in New York. Two years after that, in 1950, Althea Gibson became the first black athlete to compete at the United States Lawn Tennis Association's national championship at Forest Hills, beginning what would become her dominance of women's tennis through

much of the 1950s. In 1952, Weir would become the first black male to compete at Forest Hills.<sup>66</sup>

The one thing such milestones had in common was that they all came in New York, far from the Gulf Coast and Atkinson's Crescent City club. For years after Gibson's pioneering efforts, New Orleans tennis kept its race bar as sternly fixed as its class bar. From 1956 to 1958, however, Gibson won five major titles, demonstrating that quality tennis required the best players, not the wealthiest or most socially acceptable. And so in 1960, Atkinson played in the state closed tennis tournament, an annual event held only for residents of the state. He was only the second black player to participate in the event, ultimately losing to Paul DeCamp, a surgeon at Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans and a member of the NOLTC. Again, the restricted club was on the fringe of positive racial contact. The tournament was held at the City Park courts, not at the NOLTC, but members played against those in their draw.<sup>67</sup>

That year, however, was known less for bridging the color line in local tennis and more for bridging it in New Orleans public schools, and the resulting desegregation crisis would become international news, cripple the city, and provide a new intensity for seemingly smaller acts like participating in a formerly white tennis tournament. New Orleans's public-school desegregation was more controversial. The case had been instigated by the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund and headed by Louisiana lawyer and civil rights activist Alexander Pierre Tureaud. Largely because of his effort, the US District Court ordered the Orleans Parish School Board to come up with a desegregation plan, but they stalled, leading to controversy that enveloped the population throughout much of 1960.<sup>68</sup>

In November 1960, two New Orleans public schools desegregated. By the end of the week, white parents had pulled their children from the schools and enrolled them in private schools (or kept them out all together). On November 15, the White Citizens Council held a massive rally, with infamous Plaquemines Parish race-baiter Leander Perez and others whipping the crowd into such a frenzy that the next day a white mob began marching to the school board. The police turned the water hoses on the protesters, which kept them from the school board, but only made them angrier. They turned their attention to black bystanders, injuring almost twenty. After New Orleans mayor DeLesseps Morrison tried to calm the white rebels by assuring them that the police department was not going to enforce the integration order, an angry black population took to the streets, too. Though no one died in the protests,



there were more than one hundred casualties and more than 250 arrests, and almost all of those arrested were black. Two years later, the Archdiocese of New Orleans desegregated the city's 153 Catholic elementary and high schools to much less violence and national fanfare.<sup>69</sup>

Just like the efforts of the city's black children attempting to desegregate local public education, Atkinson's early endeavors in integrated tennis were not easy, despite his success, winning tournaments in Baton Rouge, Lafayette, and elsewhere. He suffered indignities at tournaments outside of New Orleans that ran the gamut from urine-filled tennis balls from a taunting crowd to racist umpires calling rogue foot faults against him. As the 1960s progressed, however, relations—particularly in the city—began to improve. "Although there are savage segregationists who have caused trouble from time to time, many New Orleans whites seem to live amicably alongside New Orleans Negroes, in closer proximity than in any other southern or northern city," explained *Sports Illustrated* in 1966. "Golf courses, tennis courts and baseball fields are fully integrated with no resulting difficulty." The magazine explained that the New Orleans Recreation Department had integrated programs for boys and girls in a variety of sports, save swimming, and the organization was hopeful that even its swimming pools would soon be open and integrated. As if to validate the optimism of *Sports Illustrated* and NORD, one of Atkinson's students, Sharon Pettis, became the first black competitor at the national junior Sugar Bowl tournament, originally founded in 1934, at Tulane. Atkinson became a member of the formerly all-white City Park Tennis Club. He was sponsored for membership by a Jewish geologist for Esso, Harry Anisgard, who was temporarily expelled for his effort. When he returned in a few months, Atkinson actually sponsored his membership. He also wrote a column, "Hard Court Tennis Notes," for the *Louisiana Weekly*, doing for the city's black population of the 1950s and 1960s what Spriggins had done in the 1920s.<sup>70</sup>

The standard for New Orleans tennis, however, would always be the New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club, which did not integrate its membership until approximately 1986. The NOLTC was the oldest tennis club in the nation. The New Orleans Fair Grounds, founded in 1872, was the nation's third oldest racetrack, and the Southern Yacht Club, founded in 1849, was the country's second oldest yacht club. Such milestones were celebrated by the city's white elite, as they not only demonstrated wealth and prestige, but a currency even more valuable in southern social standing—longevity.<sup>71</sup>

And social standing was the thing. Tennis in New Orleans used restrictive exclusivity to define the contours of race and class in the Crescent City. White players went first, beginning with the most exclusive NOLTC. Then other players had to draw new boundaries and create new clubs to carve a place for themselves in that hierarchy from the bottom up to create the landscape of white tennis. Black players began differently, developing early exclusivity as markers of class distinction within the community, but, partially because there was a racial ceiling on the heights such markers could reach, the black tennis community shared its knowledge and access to generate a more democratic game from the top-down. When the sport's standard-bearer would not desegregate until the mid-1980s, there was little other opportunity.

In December 1970, Vice President Spiro Agnew, in town for a fundraising dinner at the Jung Hotel, managed to make time to venture over to the NOLTC to play a private game of tennis. But reporters seeking a glimpse of the vice president's play soon discovered that the club's exclusivity applied to the press, as well. His visit, however, was not celebrated by club members who were incredulous and visibly frustrated when Secret Service agents, for example, forced them to park in different spaces because of Agnew's pending arrival. It was a frustration borne of the class intersections tied to tennis since its American birth. If Rhode Island's Casino Club was not good enough for Chester Arthur in the 1880s, members of the NOLTC felt that their club was not good enough for the sitting vice president if it meant disrupting their normal routine.<sup>72</sup>

One can only imagine that LaGrande McGruder from Gilchrist's land of dreamy dreams would have been one of those most perturbed by Agnew's imposition on the pace of club life. For those who loved it, tennis was a passion, an outlet, an obsession. But it was also a symbol—a signpost of social, economic, or athletic achievement that built its meaning depending on where a given player found himself or herself in the nexus of those forces. For those like McGruder, sitting comfortably at the top of each of tennis's myriad semiotic hierarchies, Agnew would have been just another new money interloper who probably didn't belong in tennis, and certainly didn't belong in New Orleans.

88. "Gossip of the Racetrack," *New York Sun*, 23 May 1908, 5.
89. "Black Star Shines," *Louisville Times*, 6 June 1907, 16.
90. Perreault, "Jockeying for Position," 47–50.
91. "Stake-winning Jockeys of This Year," *Daily Racing Form*, 30 Dec 1908, 3.
92. Ed McNamara, *Cajun Racing* (New York: DRF Press, 2008), 137–8; and Joe Drape, "It's a Long Uphill Ride to Racing's Big Leagues; But St. Julien, a Black Jockey, Is on His Way," *New York Times*, 21 July 1998.
93. Marcus Hersh, "Fair Grounds apprentice McMahon already riding like a pro," *Daily Racing Form*, 8 December 2011, <http://www.drform.com/news/fair-grounds-apprentice-mcmahon-already-riding-pro>, accessed 28 Jan 2017; and "Great Minds Outwits Shotgun Cowboy For the Victory in G3 Texas Mile," <http://www.paulickreport.com/news/thoroughbred-racing/great-minds-outwits-shotgun-cowboy-victory-g3-texas-mile/>, accessed 7 February 2017.
94. Mark Singelais, "Saratoga's 1st black jockey in decades tries to make name for himself," *Albany Times Union*, 12 Aug 2015, <http://www.timesunion.com/tuplus-sports/article/New-York-racing-s-1st-black-jockey-in-decades-6438291.php>, accessed 28 January 2017.

### Chapter 3

1. Originally published in *The Ring* (November 2015): 54–61. *The Ring* is a magazine that does not utilize footnotes, and their absence here reflects the long-form journalistic style with which the article was originally intended.

### Chapter 4

1. Ellen Gilchrist, "In the Land of Dreamy Dreams," in *In the Land of Dreamy Dreams: Short Fiction* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1981), 60–71.
2. Carolyn Kolb, "For the Love of Tennis," *New Orleans Magazine* 44 (December 2009): 54–55; *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 25 February 1898, 14; and Elizabeth Wilson, *Love Game: A History of Tennis, from Victorian Pastime to Global Phenomenon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 9–27.
3. See James G. Hollandsworth, *An Absolute Massacre: The New Orleans Race Riot of July 30, 1866* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Justin Nystrom, *New Orleans After the Civil War: Race, Politics, and a New Birth of Freedom* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010); and Khaled J. Bloom, *The Mississippi Valley's Great Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).
4. Joy J. Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age: Politics and Urban Progress, 1880–1896* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 204–231. Quote from 231.
5. Eric Arnesen, *Waterfront Workers of New Orleans: Race, Class, and Politics, 1863–1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 74, 119–121, 160–1161, 204; and Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840–1875* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939), 197–233, 274–314.
6. Kolb, "For the Love of Tennis," 54–55; "About Us," Westfieldt Brothers, Inc., Coffee Importers, <http://www.westfeldtcoffee.com/about.html>, accessed 13 January 2018; Andrew Morrison, *New Orleans and the New South* (New Orleans: Metropolitan Publishing Co., 1888),

- 10, 114; T.P. Thompson, "Early Financing in New Orleans, Being the Story of Canal Bank, 1831–1915," in *Publications of the Louisiana Historical Society*, vol. 7, 1913–1914 (New Orleans: Louisiana Historical Society, 1915), 57; *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana*, vol. 2 (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1892), 441; and Missouri Pacific Railroad Co. v. International Marine Insurance Co., 84 Texas 149, in *The American and English Railroad Cases*, vol. 55, ed. William M. McKinney (Northport, Long Island: Edward Thompson Co., 1893), 549.
7. Kolb, "For the Love of Tennis," 54–55; Stephen Tignor, "The Survivor," *Tennis* 42 (September 2006): 86–89; and *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 25 February 1898, 14. See also Ann Maden, "Popular Sports in New Orleans, 1890–1900" (MA thesis: Tulane University, 1956): 63–64, 80.
8. H.W. Slocum, "Lawn Tennis in the South," *Outing* 13 (March 1889): 496.
9. Larry R. Youngs, "The Sporting Set Winters in Florida: Fertile Ground for the Leisure Revolution, 1870–1930," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 84 (Summer 2005): 59. Pre-revolutionary Cuba was a similar kind of destination for Americans of wealth. A similar argument is made, for example, in Rosalie Schwartz, *Pleasure Island: Tourism and Temptation in Cuba* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), and, to a lesser extent, in Louis A. Perez, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).
10. Steven A. Reiss, *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 53.
11. Alecia P. Long, *The Great Southern Babylon: Sex, Race, and Respectability in New Orleans, 1865–1920* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 66–69, 95–97. The case from which Long's analysis derives, and from which the quotes appear, is Koehl, et al. v. Schoenhausen, 47 La. An. 1316, 17 So. 809 (1895).
12. Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 83.
13. Eric Danhoff, "The Struggle for Control of Amateur Track and Field in the United States," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport and physical Education* 6 (No. 1 1975): 43–85; and Richard Wettan and J.D. Willis, "Effect of New York Athletic Clubs on Amateur Athletic Governance, 1870–1915," *Research Quarterly. American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation* 47 (No. 3 1976): 499–505.
14. See Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
15. *Harvard Crimson*, 5 April 1878, 2.
16. Wilson, *Love Game*, 19, 56–69, 74–79, 113–122. See also Marshall Jon Fisher, *A Terrible Splendor: Three Extraordinary Men, a World Poised for War, and the Greatest Tennis Match Ever Played* (New York: Broadway Books, 2010); Frank Deford, *Big Bill Tilden: The Triumphs and the Tragedy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976); and Larry Engelmann, *The Goddess and the American Girl: The Story of Suzanne Lenglen and Helen Wills* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
17. Benjamin G. Rader, *American Sports, from the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Televised Sports*, Fifth ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2004), 67.
18. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 26 July 1879, 4.
19. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 2 May 1880, 2, 7 September 1880, 4.
20. Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age*, 261–268. Quote from 261. The advertisements continued through much of the year. For an example, see *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 28 March 1880, 8.



21. New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, 23 May 1897, 8, 24 June 1901, 8; and "Stenographic Report of the Discussion at the Meeting of the Louisiana Sugar Planters' Association," *Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* 56 (17 June 1916): 394–395.

22. The SLTA's first championships, in the 1880s and 1890s, took place on the east coast, rotating between Wilmington, Washington, DC, and Baltimore. Slocum, "Lawn Tennis in the South," 496; and "Lawn Tennis," *Sporting Life* 11 (11 July 1888): 11.

23. *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 April 1902, 7, 15 February 1903, 2, 20 March 1904, B8, 26 May 1904, A3, 20 March 1908, 13, 8 April 1909, 11, 8 July 1909, 4, 28 April 1912, 16, 22 June 1913, 13, 24 March 1914, 9; *New York Tribune*, 10 March 1905, 6; *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 June 1912, 3, 22 June 1920, 10; *New York Herald Tribune*, 13 June 1947, 27; *Chicago Tribune*, 12 March 1905, A2; *New York Times*, 16 March 1901, 10, 15 March 1903, 10, 10 March 1905, 7, 11 March 1906, 11, 2 May 1920, 21; *Boston Globe*, 15 February 1903, 2; and *Los Angeles Times*, 5 June 1925, B1.

24. Reiss makes this case for both early northern, urban athletic clubs and northern, suburban country clubs. See Reiss, *City Games*, 57–59.

25. *Atlanta Constitution*, 28 May 1920, 9, 21 June 1920, 7, 22 June 1920, 11, 13 June 1947, 14, 7 June 1953, 4D, 12 June 1953, 30, 24 June 1956, 7D; *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 10 September 2005, A8; and *New York Times*, 10 June 1953, 40.

26. *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 May 1959, 48; and *Atlanta Daily World*, 12 June 1953, 3.

27. Tignor, "The Survivor," 86–89.

28. Henry W. Slocum, Jr., "Lawn Tennis as a Game for Women," *Outing* 14 (July 1889): 289; and Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans*, 212.

29. The original 1902 City Park Tennis Club grew quickly in popularity, open to whomever wanted to play. Forty-five had joined within the first month of its existence. Two courts were reserved for the members. *New Orleans Picayune*, 9 June 1902, 3; and "City Park Tennis Club: A Brief History," <http://cityparktennisclub.com/>, accessed 13 January 2018.

30. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 23 September 1935, 12; and Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population Schedule, New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 8A.

31. It is no coincidence that the city's *Picayune* newspaper's first mention of lawn tennis in 1879 was in a fashion column suggesting outfits for the outing. *New Orleans Picayune*, 13 July 1879, 11; and *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 7 November 1937, 4–3.

32. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 7 November 1937, 4–3, 14 November 1937, 4–6.

33. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 20 February 1938, 4–6.

34. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 13 February 1938, 4–3, 10 March 1948, 18.

35. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 15 June 1923, 18, 22 May 1938, 4–2.

36. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 1 July 1901, 11, 9 December 1901, 7, 18 July 1937, 4–6, 10 September 1964, 2–14; *New York Herald Tribune*, 3 April 1930, 28; Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age*, 266; Dale Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans, 1850–1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), 211; *Spirit of the South*, 2 February 1889, 1; and *New York Times*, 2 January 1967, 27. Further, when major national conferences like the American Legion's annual gathering in 1922 occurred in New Orleans, the NOLTC allowed the conventioners to hold their tennis tournament on the property. *New York Tribune*, 10 September 1922, B10.

37. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 18 July 1937, 4–6.

38. See, for example, *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 28 June 1934, 16, 22 May 1938, 49, 3 December 1944, 28, 30 October 1949, 88, 2 September 1956, 58.

39. Sundiata Djata, *Blacks at the Net: Black Achievement in the History of Tennis*, vol. 1 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 2–4; Gerald F. Norman, "National American Tennis Association Championships," *Opportunity* 6 (October 1928): 306–307; and Bertram

Barker, "A Black Tennis Association: Active since 1916," in *American Tennis Association National Rankings, 1983–1984* (Philadelphia: American Tennis Association, 1984), 60.

40. John W. Blassingame, *Black New Orleans: 1860–1880* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 139–143.

41. *Weekly Louisianian*, 22 October 1881, 1.

42. *Weekly Pelican*, 25 December 1886, 3, 8 January 1887, 3.

43. Another such upper-middle class genteel tale used tennis as another respectability signpost in 1889. *Weekly Pelican*, 25 December 1886, 4, 15 January 1887, 4, 19 October 1889, 1.

44. *Weekly Pelican*, 8 January 1887, 1.

45. *Weekly Pelican*, 22 October 1887, 4.

46. *Weekly Pelican*, 26 October 1889, 3. There were other black weeklies in the city during this period, but what issues of those papers survive do not mention tennis. One of them, the *Southern Republican*, did, in 1900, demonstrate an interest in bicycling, but never expanded its coverage to any ball games. *Southern Republican*, 14 April 1900, 1, 3; *The Crusader*, 19 July 1890; *Black Republican*, 15 April 1865, 22 April 1865, 29 April 1865, 13 May 1865, 20 May 1865; and *Republican Courier*, 2 December 1899, 20 January 1900.

47. *Louisiana Weekly*, 9 January 1926, 7.

48. For further examples of some of these clubs, see the society page of the *Louisiana Weekly*. The listed entities, some of the most popular and continuous, appear in several of many mentions on 16 January 1926, 8; 9 October 1926, 5.

49. Such is not to say that black New Orleans did not participate in the athletic fads of the era. Bicycling was popular. One black student even planned a bicycling excursion from New Orleans to New York. *Louisiana Weekly*, 29 May 1926, 1.

50. *Louisiana Weekly*, 26 August 1929, 1.

51. *Louisiana Weekly*, 2 April 1927, 1, 14 April 1927, 1, 23 April 1927, 2, 30 April 1927, 8, 28 May 1927, 8, 13 August 1927, 1, 27 August 1927, 1, 3 September 1927, 1.

52. *Louisiana Weekly*, 23 July 1927, 1, 8, 20 August 1927, 8, 16 June 1928, 8, 7 July 1928, 8; and William Ivy Hair, *Carnival of Fury: Robert Charles and the New Orleans Race Riot of 1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 177–178. For more on the influence of Thomy Lafon, see Frederick D. Smith, "Thomy Lafon," in *Encyclopedia of African American Business*, vol. 2, ed. Jessie Carney Smith (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2006), 447–449.

53. The growth in availability of such courts benefited from a national boom in the production of places to play, particularly in urban areas. Between 1924 and 1931, the number of tennis courts in the United States increased by 81 percent. Reiss, *City Games*, 141–142; and *Louisiana Weekly*, 11 August 1828, 8. For more on Frances Joseph-Gaudet, see her autobiography, *He Leadeth Me* (New Orleans: Louisiana Printing Co., 1913).

54. *Louisiana Weekly*, 30 July 1927, 5.

55. *Louisiana Weekly*, 6 August 1927, 5, 20 August 1927, 5, 27 August 1927, 5, 10 September 1927, 5, 16 June 1928, 5; Vic Hobson, *Creating Jazz Counterpoint: New Orleans, Barbershop Harmony, and the Blues* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 7–31; and Donald M. Marquis, *In Search of Buddy Bolden: First Man of Jazz* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 2, 109.

56. *Louisiana Weekly*, 13 August 1927, 5; and Sundiata A. Djata, *Blacks at the Net: Black Achievement in the History of Tennis*, vol. 1 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 221.

57. *Louisiana Weekly*, 17 September 1927, 8.

58. *Louisiana Weekly*, 23 June 1928, 5, 14 July 1928, 8.

59. Burbridge would go on to become a sportswriter at the *Louisiana Weekly*, owned as it was by the Dejoie family. Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population Schedule,

New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 3A, 11A; Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population Schedule, New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 16B; and *Louisiana Weekly*, 16 July 1927, 5, 23 July 1927, 8.

60. Victor would not finish school, leaving after meeting and marrying her husband, Victor Hayes Labat, in 1931. *Soards' New Orleans City Directory, 1929* (New Orleans: Soards Directory Co., 1929), 1034; Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Population Schedule, New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 13A; Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population Schedule, New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 7B; and *Louisiana Weekly*, 23 July 1927, 8, 3 September 1927, 8.

61. Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population Schedule, New Orleans City, Louisiana, Sheet No. 14B; 16B, 4A; and *Louisiana Weekly*, 23 July 1927, 1, 3 September 1927, 8, 7 July 1928, 8.

62. Lee Sartain, *Invisible Activists: Women of the Louisiana NAACP and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1915–1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 85–88; and Harriet Elsa Weidman, "The Sylvania F. Williams Community Center (MA thesis: Tulane University, 1933), 2–10.

63. *Louisiana Weekly*, 30 June 1928, 8, 7 July 1928, 8, 21 July 1928, 8, 28 July 1928, 8, 11 August 1928, 8.

64. *Louisiana Weekly*, 18 August 1928, 8.

65. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 20 January 1974, 6–7.

66. Djata, *Blacks at the Net*, 2–4; and Barker, "A Black Tennis Association," 60.

67. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 13 August 1960, 22, 2 September 1960, 3–2, 20 January 1974, 6–7, 7 August 2012, B2.

68. Alan Wieder, "The New Orleans School Crisis of 1960: Causes and Consequences," *Phylon* 48 (2nd Qtr. 1987): 122–131; and Adam Fairclough, *Race & Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 234–264.

69. Wieder, "The New Orleans School Crisis of 1960," 122–131; Juliette Landphair, "Sewerage, Sidewalks, and Schools: The New Orleans Ninth Ward and Public School Desegregation," *Louisiana History* 40 (Winter 1999): 35–62; Diane T. Manning and Perry Rogers, "Desegregation of the New Orleans Parochial Schools," *Journal of Negro Education* 71 (Winter-Spring 2002): 31–42; and *Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board*, 138 F. Supp. 337 (1956).

70. Tim Lyman, "Jumping the Net," *Gambit*, 10 December 2002, n.p. (article available online at <https://www.bestofneworleans.com/gambit/jumping-the-net/Content?oid=1240979>, accessed 13 January 2018); and M.R. Werner, "Footloose: New Orleans—A Mixture Of the Old and the New and All That Dixie Jazz," *Sports Illustrated*, 21 March 1966, E1–E2.

71. Lee Stall, General Manager of the NOLTC, said that the club desegregated "sometime before 1987" but was unable to recall an exact date for the first black membership. Interview with Lee Stall, conducted by Kelley Clark, 15 February 2018; and *Atlanta Constitution*, 22 October 1968, 40. Boston's Longwood Cricket Club began playing tennis in 1878. Merion Cricket Club outside of Philadelphia, founded in 1873, began playing tennis in 1879. *Boston Globe*, 21 August 1977, K8.

72. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 3 December 1970, 1–22.

## Chapter 5

1. Parts of this material were presented orally at conferences of the Popular Culture Association (1993), North American Society for Sport History (1994), and Louisiana Studies

(2015), and published in R.V. McGehee, "The New Orleans Athletic Club (Young Men's Gymnastic Club): A Crescent City Tradition," *Louisiana Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Journal* 65 (No. 1 2001): 3–8.

2. Dale Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans, 1850–1900* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1972); Ann Maden, "Popular Sports in New Orleans, 1890–1900," (MA thesis: Tulane University, 1956); and Flora K. Scheib, *History of the Southern Yacht Club* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Pub. Co., 1986).

3. J. Calvin Williams, "YMCA New Orleans 1982: 130 Years of History on the Mississippi Crescent" (New Orleans: Metro YMCA, 1982). For more on Turnvereins, see Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans*, 69–71.

4. *The Punch*, 1972, 12. Other sources, such as Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans*, 240, give the initial club membership as thirteen.

5. *The Punch*, 1972, 12.

6. Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans*, 240. Somers cites an 1880 *Daily Picayune* entreaty to the YMGC to expand its gymnastics activities to track and field events, as in northern athletic associations, a direction finally taken by the club in 1886, when they staged a two-day meet that included track and field, boxing, wrestling, cycling, and gymnastics.

7. *The Punch*, 1972, 12–13. In *The Punch* of January, 1935, W.H. Heyl described his memories of the early installations and finances of the YMGC, including discrepancies with the account given in the 1972 anniversary issue. Heyl reported that in 1884 the stable owner demanded a rent increase from \$40 to \$50 per month and a five-year lease. The membership voted unanimously against accepting their landlord's demands, and they moved their belongings successively to two temporary locations before buying the high school for \$6600. To cover the loan they needed, they issued certificates to members and moved into their new home in January of 1885. In 1888 the club organized itself into a stock corporation of 1500 shares at \$50 each and began construction of a new gym and baths at a cost of \$85,000. After purchase of the mansion on North Rampart for \$18,000 and a little more for remodeling, "we celebrated the occasion by a grand musicale and dance. The singing and music were furnished by the artists of the French Opera Company. . . ." Heyl wrote that this opening event was so successful that membership soon rose to 1500 and that dues were raised from \$6 to \$15 per year. The street address of the mansion site was changed at some time from 44 to 224, and later to 222.

8. *The Punch*, 1972, 13. Beginning in 1911 swimming trunks were banned in the NOAC natatorium for purposes of hygiene. In 1930 the procedures for keeping the pool clean were described: every night the pool was drained and refilled from the club's salt water well. Swimmers took a hot soap bath before entering the pool, and being naked, no one could "enter the water with ring worms or other contagious disease but that he will be seen by someone." Also, "the possibilities of infected garments throwing off germs in the water is impossible" (*The Punch*, 1930). In an article in *The Punch* for September, 1935, W.H. Heyl described the circumstances of the drilling of the 1898 well and gave an analysis of its water compared to ocean water.

9. Baseball was a popular club activity, and in 1895 YMGC representatives joined others from the American AC, Southern AC, and Catholic Club to plan an amateur baseball league and schedule games for a tournament (*Daily Picayune*, 29 March 1895). A week later the paper called the new organization the "Southern Amateur Baseball League." In preparation for their first league game, the YMGC team traveled to Baton Rouge to play the Baton Rouge Baseball Club (*Daily Picayune*, 20 April 1895). Games were to be played at Sportsman's Park and on the Southern AC field. Competition among the city's athletic clubs seems to have been fierce, as