

ontario tennis

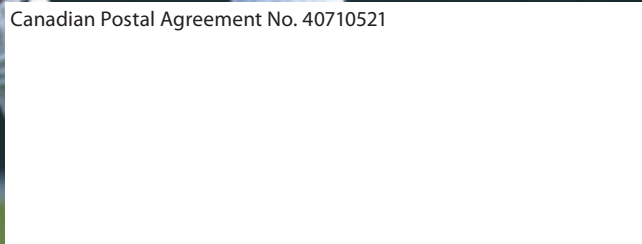


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Frank Dancevic winning at Wimbledon 2008
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Winners

You don't have to be a tennis champion to be a winner – you just have to have a winning attitude.

When I was looking at the list of characteristics of winners and losers printed on page 8, it seemed to me that one quality that distinguishes winners from losers is gumption.

Anyone who has gumption knows what it is, and anyone who hasn't can never know what it is. So there is no need of defining it. L.M.Montgomery

But, for those of you who aren't familiar with this old Scottish word, I'll try to define it. The dictionary gives three distinct meanings for this noun – resourcefulness, courage and common sense. To me gumption reflects a combination of all three of these meanings with thoughtfulness, humility, persistence and a sense of focus thrown in.

A person filled with gumption doesn't sit around dissipating and stewing about things. He's at the front of the train of his own awareness, watching to see what's up the track and meeting it when it comes. That's gumption. Robert Persig

In his book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, Persig describes gumption as the "psychic gasoline, that fills our motivation tank" and refers to "anything that causes one to lose sight of quality, and thus lose one's enthusiasm for what one is doing" as gumption traps.

Of course the concept of gumption applies to any field of endeavour – so why not tennis? In fact anyone who has played a lot of tennis realises that a winning tennis game is not so much about technique but about intellect, attitude and determination, one might even refer to this as gumption.

If tennis is to thrive and grow in Ontario (and Canada) we need to encourage and engage more people, who have gumption and a passion for tennis, to be involved in the organization and delivery of tennis at the court, club or association level. If we are to encourage participation and excellence in the sport, we need winners involved in every aspect of the game. We need organizers, officials, team captains, instructors, coaches, promoters, reporters, managers, leaders and players with gumption, whether they are volunteers, staff or contract workers. In other words we need winners in leadership positions throughout the system, winners who will seek out and encourage and engage other winners.

Winners do not impose their will, do not seek to control. They lead in the spirit of these words.

Go to the people. Live with them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what they know. Build with what they have. But with the best leaders, when the work is done, the task accomplished, the people will say 'We have done this ourselves'.

Lao Tzu

Be a winner on and off the court!

