# Keowee Key gears up for tennis tourney

By ERIC SPROTT
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SALEM — With seven top-flight players from across the globe descending on Keowee Key this weekend to join him, Andy Lake is going to have his hands full trying to defend a pair of championships he earned a year ago.

This weekend, the 4th Annual Keowee Key Pro Tennis Invitational will be rolling into town at the Keowee Key Racquet and Fitness Center across Friday and Saturday, as the eight contenders will be playing for titles in both singles and doubles play.

Lake, the Keowee Key tennis pro, memorably captured championships in both events last year thanks to some dramatic play, as he teamed with nephew Bobby Lake, who plays collegiately at Appalachian State, for the doubles crown.

In addition to simply taking the court this year, Lake has taken on some added responsibilities in terms of running the event, as Gene Madill has turned over the organizational reins after running the event since its inception three years ago.

Lake said he and the other players will be competing for about $4,000 worth of prize money, as every player will receive some amount of money for making the trek to the Golden Corner, though that's not necessarily the focal point of the weekend.

"We're looking forward to it," Lake said. "We lost a few sponsors and got a couple of new ones, and it's been a little more difficult with the economy, but we're going to roll it out and we've got a good crowd coming up."

Fans returning to the event will recognize plenty of faces from last year's tournament, with five members of that eight-man field back in contention this time around.

In addition to the Lakes returning, Gerrit Disbergen of South Africa will be back in the mix, as well as Arthur Novoseletsky of Russia and Matt Lucas, who is the head men's tennis coach at the University of Pacific in San Francisco, Calif.

Players new to the field include former South Carolina All-American Seth Rose, former Furman standout Chris Henderson and Australian native Trent Constance, who currently plays with Bobby Lake at Appalachian State.

With that wide range of talent in town, Lake said it could be the toughest draw the tournament has seen yet.

"We have a little bit of a tougher field this year, especially with the new guys that we added," Andy Lake said.

The weekend will be kicked off on Friday at 1:30 p.m. with the pro-am doubles tournament, followed by the pro doubles tournament at 4 p.m.

Unlike last year, the playing partners for doubles won't be predetermined, meaning the Lakes may not have the opportunity to defend their crown as a duo.

"Doubles is going to be tough," Andy Lake said. "No one knows who they're playing with, so that should make it interesting."

Following an adult tennis clinic on Saturday morning, the pro singles tournament will get under way at 1:30 p.m. to close out the event.

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## KEOWEE KEY PRO TENNIS INVITATIONAL

**Schedule of events**

**Friday**
Noon — Parking shuttle and gates open
1:30 p.m. — Pro-am doubles event
4 p.m. — Pro doubles tournament
7 p.m. — Pro doubles award ceremony

**Saturday**
9:30 a.m. — Parking shuttle and gates open
10-11:30 a.m. — Adult tennis clinic
1:30 p.m. — Pro singles tournament
4:30 p.m. — Pro singles award ceremony

* Admission, parking, snacks and drinks are all free
* Admission is open to the public and not limited to Keowee Key members




Courtesy of George Davenport

**Keowee Key tennis** pro Andy Lake captured championships in the doubles and singles tournaments of the Keowee Key Pro Tennis Invitational last summer. This year's tourney begins Friday at the Keowee Key Fitness and Racquet Center in Salem.

## TOURNEY

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