

Robinson Tournament returns for its 59th year

TENNIS

JOSEPH HAYES

TIMES HERALD

The summer just wouldn't be the same without the Francis J. Robinson Memorial Tennis Tournament.

The tournament will return for its 59th year beginning Tuesday at Sanborn Park. The actual competition won't ensue until Wednesday morning. But Tuesday will feature a tournament warm-up from 5-6:30 p.m with a one-point tournament to follow.

"It's hectic right now," tournament director Steve Pillon said. "We just released the depth draws and I'm waiting to hear if I messed up on anything."

The tournament was originally established to honor former local tennis player Lt. Francis J. Robinson, who died during military flight training in July 1958. Robinson's friends started the tournament that year and it has become one of the top local sports events in the time since. This year, 247 players will compete for local bragging rights. Singles play will begin Wednesday. Doubles teams will take over the courts on Thursday. Mixed doubles play is set for Friday with the semifinals beginning Saturday and everything wrapping up on Sunday.

In addition to the normal activities of the tournament, organizers have planned a kids day on Friday for the second consecutive year.

"Our goal was to the kids involved in the tournament and spread the joy of tennis that way," Pillon said. "The one point tournament is another fun way for everyone to have fun. "I think a lot of people that we try to get to play in the tournament have a mindset that it's too serious and too competitive and we are trying to show its not. It's a fun, community event. It's more about having fun and friendships and enjoying the game than it is about winning at all cost."

Contact Joseph Hayes at (810) 9896268 or at jahayes@gannett.com. Listen to him every weekday from 4-8 p.m. on 88.3 FM.



Franklin Brozovich eyes the ball before hitting a return during a previous Francis J. Robinson Memorial tennis tournament.

/FILE