

# Hogs Teach Tennis

## RAZORBACKS WORK WITH YOUTH

By Derek Oxford

SPECIAL TO NORTHWEST ARKANSAS NEWSPAPERS

**FAYETTEVILLE** — Working with kids was one of the things that made David R. Johnson II proud.

Last Sunday, the sixth annual Kids Tennis Day, sponsored by drj2.com, Pagnozzi Charities and Razorbacks tennis, took place at the Dill Indoor Tennis Complex on the University of Arkansas campus.

With assistance from UA men's tennis coach Robert Cox and his team, about 30 children ranged from ages 7-13 came and took part in a two-hour clinic that introduced them to tennis and allowed any who had prior experience with the sport to hone their skills.

Dave Johnson, who helped coordinate the event that honors his late son David, talked about the impact that tennis had on David's life.

"He was a good tennis player, a state champion," Johnson said. "He used to give kids tennis lessons in the summers. So we felt like he would like to get kids involved with learning the game of tennis."

Johnson II was killed in a single-car accident on Jan. 29, 2004. He was 21.



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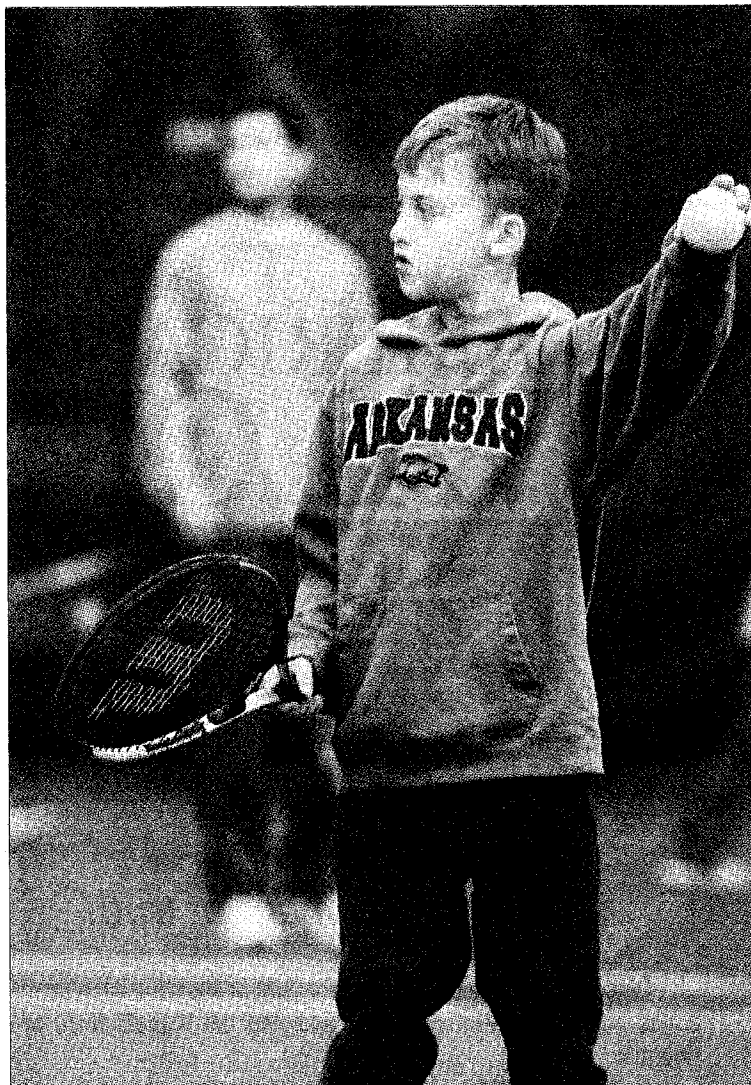
DRJ2 Memorial Inc. is a charitable organization that was created to not only honor David but to shed light on the life he lived and what was important to him.

The Web site — drj2.com — talks about the other things that DRJ2 is involved in, such as putting on a tennis tournament and advocating the Safe Ride program at the UA that promotes safe driving habits.

The final thing they help sponsor and contribute to is Kids Tennis Day, which has grown almost every year and continues to be a valuable asset to the organization.

Colby Salazar, who is president of the organization, said that the event helps promote tennis in the community.

SEE **TEACH** PAGE 10A



**Slade McDowell**, 10, of Farmington prepares to hit a tennis ball during Kid's Tennis Day.

## TEACH: Razorbacks Volunteer To Help Youth With Tennis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A

"A lot of kids are picking up a racket for the first time," Salazar said. "We're excited that we're able to expose kids to tennis and at the same time let them have fun."

The kids started out with a pep talk from Cox and then

went to separate stations where they learned basic skills and went through drills that helped reinforce what they had learned.

None of the Razorbacks players were forced to come out and be a part of the clinic but the entire team showed up and offered their insight.

All of the kids were encouraged by the coaching, and it could be seen with happy faces and wide smiles when they hit the ball over the net.

A couple of times, some kids sent balls whizzing over the safety nets that guard spectators from the

playing surfaces.

At the end of the clinic, the kids enjoyed cookies prepared by DRJ2 and got a free bag courtesy of the organization.

The organization also has a Facebook page that can be reached through their Web site at drj2.com.

## GIVING BACK



STAFF PHOTOS J.S. WEDGEWORTH

**Bradwin Williams**, an Arkansas tennis player, works with children Dec. 6 during Kid's Tennis Day at the University of Arkansas' Dill Indoor Tennis Complex in Fayetteville.