

Captain's Spotlight

Soma Mukherjee



How did you get into tennis?

I grew up watching the greats, Steffi, Monica, Andre, Pete and the Williams sisters on television. I wanted to try it some day, but it was an expensive sport for me at that time. That "some day" arrived when I moved to Gainesville in 2012 for grad school. My good friend and lab mate Jessica found a local club offering tennis clinics at a discounted rate for UF students and asked me if I wanted to try with her. That's when I picked up a racquet for the first time and could never let go!

What's the most exciting tennis match you've ever played on or seen?

The most exciting matches for me were the ones in which I need to be creative to solve the problems thrown at me by my opponent and I had to work hard to earn a win. Watching my team's matches at the state championship were also exciting and fun!

How many years have you been a captain? How many teams have you captained?

I started captaining in 2017 (about a year after I started playing in USTA META leagues). I captained about 15 teams over the years. My biggest motivation for captaining has been to introduce the new players to competitive tennis, and provide them opportunities to play and find other players to practice with. This job also taught me a few things about myself.

What is your favorite memories as a tennis player?

I have met some of my dearest friends at the tennis court and sharing my time with them on and off the court were always one of my favorite moments. I have been very fortunate to learn from some of the best coaches in the Tri-Cities area. Some of my favorite memories were when I got to learn a new technique from them and understood the bio mechanics behind how that technique worked. That was simply fascination and inspired me to go back to them to learn more.

When I am not playing tennis I am...

I am either doing some fun experiments in a lab at Eastman (I work as a scientist there) or cooking a delightful meal to share with my friends or chatting virtually with my friends and family in India where I grew up, or practicing Indian (the country) classical music or enjoying music or a walk/hike at a nearby trail or reading a good book.