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USTA: More Americans play tennis

Story Highlights

A USTA survey says Hispanics and blacks showing a marked increase
The survey shows participation grew in all age groups under 50, within all races

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- More Americans are playing tennis, with Hispanics and blacks showing a marked increase.

The U.S. Tennis Association said in a survey released Tuesday that 30.1 million people hit the courts this year. That's a 12 percent increase from 2008 and up 25 percent from six years ago.

The survey showed participation grew in all age groups under 50 and within all ethnic groups. The biggest increases were among Hispanics, with 32 percent more playing the game. Blacks had a 19 percent increase.

There were 7.1 million newcomers to the sport, a 19.5 percent increase from last year. Regular players, those playing between four and 20 times a year, increased 26 percent this year to 14.8 million.

"Over the past several years, we've strived to make the game more accessible, particularly at parks and schools around the country," said Kurt Kamperman, the USTA's chief executive of community tennis. "Combine this with the health benefits of tennis, and you get surging interest in the sport."

Among age groups, the biggest percentage of players are 12-17 years old at 20.5 percent, followed by 18-24 at 18.4 percent, and 6-11 years old at 16.25 percent.


The survey showed the sport is doing better at retaining players, with a 6.3 percent increase from the year before. Former players are returning to the game for the third year in a row, with nearly 7 million coming back this year.

The annual survey of 6,000 Americans was done by Taylor Research Group on behalf of the USTA and the Tennis Industry Association.

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