



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## Playbill for Guys and Dolls

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 08:39:48

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[[advertisement]]

[[image-black and white photo of a large numeral 1 and two boxes of Now cigarettes]]

Now. Only 1 mg 'tar'.  
This is more than just low 'tar'. This is ultra-low 'tar'. This is Now, a cigarette with only 1 mg. 'tar'. If you want to be sure you're getting ultra-low 'tar', count all the way down to Now's number 1.  
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FILTER, MENTHOL 1 mg "tar". 1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, by FTC method.  
[[/advertisement]]  
[[end page]]

[[start page]]  
Courting the Celebrities on Broadway  
[[image-black and white photo of a woman in tennis clothes, holding a tennis racquet]]

Before I go any further, a word of reassurance to those of you out there who, like me, could muddle through very nicely, thank you, without hearing so much as another syllable about celebrities who play tennis: this is not going to be another one of those articles. Elke Sommer is not going to materialize in a sexy pink tennis dress to rhapsodize about the gracefulness of Ilie Nastase. Lloyd Bridges is not going to surface and explain why he and a number of his tennis playing colleagues are now playing for prize money in pro-celebrity competition. And Charlton Heston is not going to come down from the mountain to talk about his forehand.

So stay with me. Yes, this is an article about celebrity tennis, but not the Hollywood brand of it. Our interest here is Broadway, and there is a difference.

The main difference is in scope. The last time I checked on it there were more movie and television actors and actresses playing tennis than extras in a C.B. DeMille spectacular, and there was a rumor going around that all 63,000 of them were set to make cameo appearances in a new disaster epic about a tennis elbow epidemic that starts innocently in a Newport Beach racquet club but quickly spreads its devastation from coast to coast. Lina Wertmuller is being talked up as the director.

The tennis playing community on Broadway isn't nearly that vast, neither is it as well known or as competitive as the West Coast tennis set. Most of the dedicated buffs are men and women whose names you are more likely to find in the credits section of your Playbill than on the main cast page: mostly they are producers, general managers, publicists, and other people on the business side of Broadway.

Typical, in many ways, is Philip Rose, a slightly-built, gentle mannered 55-year-old producer (Raisin in the Sun, Owl and the Pussycat, Shenandoah, and the new play The Trip Back Down), who plays a very solid game of doubles. Never mind that he didn't get into tennis until

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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

**Courting the Celebrities on Broadway**

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The tennis playing community on Broadway isn't nearly that vast, neither is it as well known or as competitive as the West Coast tennis set. Most of the dedicated buffs are men and women whose names you are more likely to find in the credits section of your Playbill than on the main cast page: mostly they are producers, general managers, publicists, and other

people on the business side of Broadway. Typical, in many ways, is Philip Rose, a slightly-built, gentle mannered 55-year-old producer (Raisin in the Sun, Owl and the Pussycat, Shenandoah, and the new play The Trip Back Down), who plays a very solid game of doubles. Never mind that he didn't get into tennis until five years ago.

And his wife Dora, who is an actress, travel agent. Wednesday night in a racquet club in Fort Lee, New Jersey, she is playing in a regular women's doubles game. Her to play in a regular men's doubles game. About half the people in each group work in the theatre, among them producer Mervyn Dymally, his wife, costume designer Paul Bonner, Lyman Frank Baum, and one of the six regulars. Last people spent two hours on one court couldn't make it in Fort Lee, Rose was able enough to bring me to fill in, even though he'd never seen me play. This would never happen on the West Coast. There, if anybody knows how to play, you had better have your Wimbledon credentials in order.

Anyway, it was a delightful night of tennis, competitive but congenial, with no speaking about line calls. You would have never known you were with better people. It is, however, the conversation in the locker room afterward, which I would repeat here but for the fact that two or three theatre critics might use for fuel.

Among the more recognizable names on the Broadway tennis circuit, the players are noticeably lazier than they are on the West Coast. But the fact, then, is that plenty of ideas. There is, for instance, John Cullum, who is currently starring in The Trip Back Down. John is one of the

by BARRY TANSLER

three years ago. Rose and his wife Doris, who is an actress, travel every Wednesday night to a racquet club in Fort Lee, New Jersey: she to play in a regular women's doubles game; he to play in a regular men's double game. About half the people in each group work in the theatre, among them publicist Merle Debuskey, his wife, costume designer Pearl Sommer, lyricist Peter Udell.

One night not long ago, when one of the six regulars (six people share two hours on one court) couldn't make it to Fort Lee, Rose was nice enough to invite me to fill in, even though he'd never seen me play. This would never happen on the West Coast. There, if nobody knows how you play, you had better have your Wimbledon credentials in order.

Anyway, it was a delightful night of tennis: competitive but congenial, with no squabbling about line calls. You would have never known you were with theatre people, if it weren't for the conversation in the locker room afterward, which I would repeat here but for the fear that two or three theatre critics might sue for libel.

Among the more recognizable names on the Broadway tennis circuit, the pickings are noticeably leaner than they are on the West Coast, but the field, slim as it is, has plenty of class. There is, for instance, John Cullum, who is currently starring in *The Trip Back Down*. John is one of the

by BARRY TARSHIS  
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