

## A Wizard Metaphor!

The colourful characters in *The Wizard of Oz* can be used as effective metaphors for playing better tennis. - here are a few Oz-some tips to improve your game.

### SCARECROW (Brains)

You should really understand just how important it is to play smart tennis. First and foremost this means playing within yourself and not hitting high-risk shots that are beyond your capability. This requires you to choose a strategy that's suitable to your style and takes advantage of your strengths. Using your head will also make you an on-court problem-solver. Be aware of what's working and what's not and make adjustments accordingly. Warning: Watch out if your brain starts telling you how to hit the ball or fantasizing about the trophy you're going to win. That's like fire to the Scarecrow; it can get you burned.



### TIN MAN (Heart)

The will to win is extremely important for performing at your highest level. Without it you're just going through the motions. You can't control the outcome of a match, but you're always in command of your effort and attitude. You should never leave a court with a feeling that you didn't give it your best. **Playing hard, staying focused, and not giving up in the face of adversity** are three things at the heart of every champion. (Pause to think of some players who NEVER give up.)

### COWARDLY LION (Courage)

Many players want to get better but don't make progress because they're afraid of changing long-held habits. There's security in playing it safe. Stepping out of your comfort zone and trying new things takes courage. Whether you want to learn how to poach or nail down a topspin serve, mastering something new or trying a different approach can be exciting and add spice to your tennis life. Courage allows you to ask, "**What if . . . ?**" instead of "**Why can't I . . . ?**"

### DOROTHY (Home)

We all have those days when we see the ball well, we're completely focused and confident, and our shots go exactly where we want them to. In these moments we're not afraid of taking chances and there are no critical voices inside telling us how to hit the ball or judging our mistakes. Tim Gallwey, the author of *The Inner Game of Tennis*, called this "home" and said that the key to opening the front door is trust— trust in our natural instincts, trust in our innate ability to learn, and most important, trust in ourselves. Next time you play, try to remember that you are not your backhand or your win-loss record. Your self-worth cannot change with a better serve. When you let go and trust, there truly is no place like home.