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Last updated at 7:42 AM on 10/03/08

## Dark (tennis) hero

**DEAN LISK**  
Metronews - Halifax

You don't see a lot of fiction based in the world of tennis, but Charles Crosby thought it would serve as the perfect setting for his second novel.

"It's a world I have always been interested in," said the writer, whose book, Backspin, is being launched in Halifax this week.

The novel is about Olie Wood, a one-time tennis prodigy who has experienced a string of bad luck that spins him from the professional to the Futures tennis circuit. It was published by Vancouver's Now or Never Publishing and is available in local stores.

"Olie developed in my mind as this combination of The Dude from The Big Lebowski, with this laissezfaire attitude to the world, but with a little more bite to him, a little more meanspiritedness and some darker qualities," Crosby said.

The author said he was partly inspired to write this story after he read an article about the Futures circuit.



Charles Crosby

### details

- » What: Charles Crosby book launch
- » Where: Keshen Goodman Public Library
- » When: Wednesday, 7 p.m.



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"The article just startled me at how sparse the conditions are, with four or five people to a room and no money for food, but they have to do it," he said. "The other thing I wanted to tackle was this idea of a guy at the end of his career having to slum it and do that again."

Crosby said this book is widely different from his last novel, *Italics*, Mine. The story about an obsessivecompulsive received rave reviews and was shortlisted for the Margaret and John Savage First Book Award.

"To look at the two books, you would be hard-pressed to think the same person wrote the two of them," Crosby said.

10/03/08

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