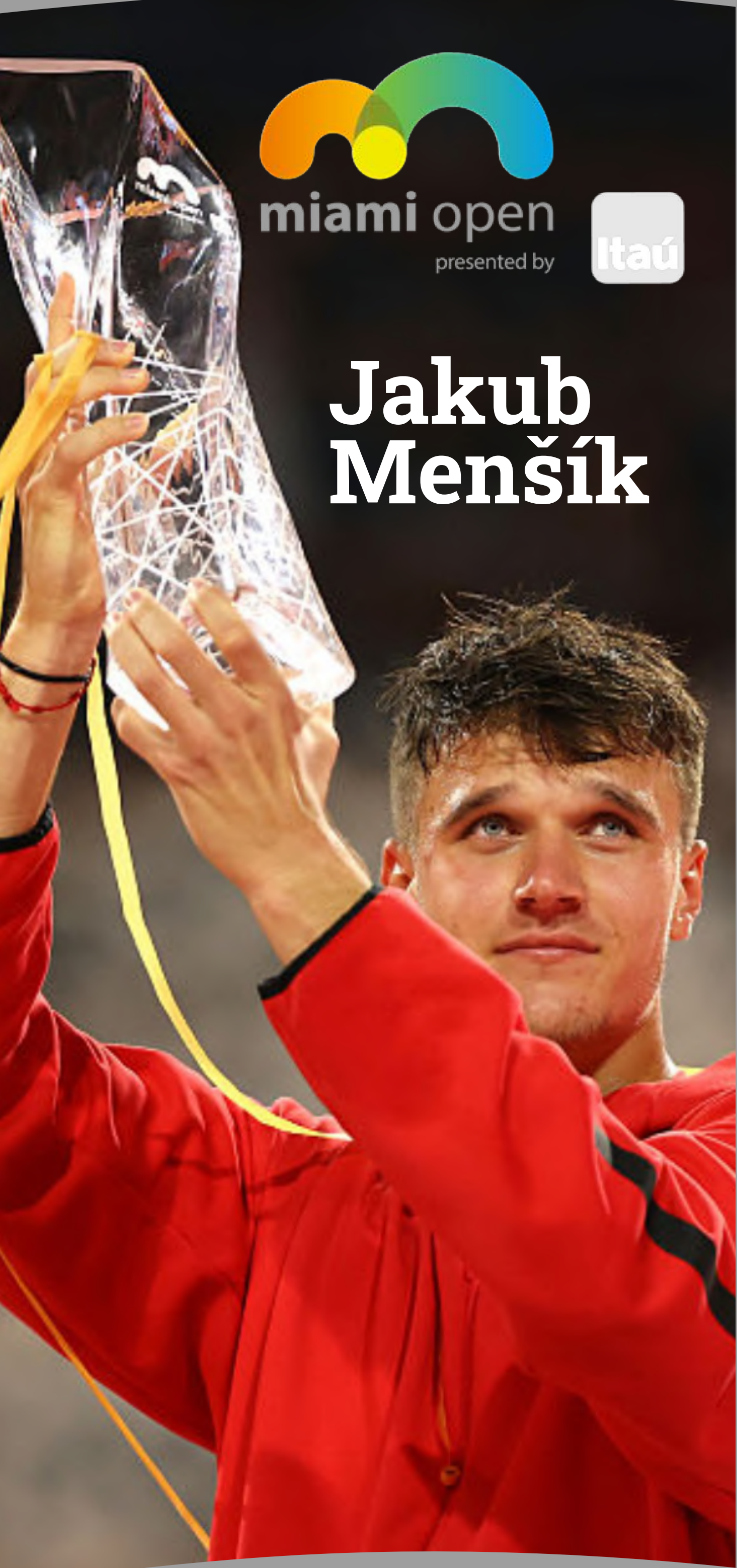


GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

APRIL - 2025



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ALCARAZ STORMS TO MAIDEN MONTE CARLO CROWN WITH COMEBACK WIN OVER MUSETTI

Carlos Alcaraz added yet another milestone to his glittering young career by claiming his first Monte Carlo Masters 1000 title, overcoming Italy's Lorenzo Musetti 3-6, 6-1, 6-0 in a dramatic final on the clay courts of the Principality.

The Spaniard's victory marks the 18th title of his career and propels him back to world number two, overtaking Alexander Zverev, who made an early exit in his opening match on the Monegasque clay.

Despite the dominant scoreline in the final two sets, it was far from a straightforward triumph for Alcaraz. Musetti capitalised on a string of early errors to snatch the opening set, but once Alcaraz found his rhythm, there was little the Italian could do to stem the tide — especially as physical issues began to take their toll.

A rocky start

It all began brightly for Alcaraz, who broke serve in the opening game with authority. But the early momentum quickly fizzled out. Four unforced errors in the next game handed Musetti an immediate break back, and from there, the Italian began to carve out a lead — aided more by Alcaraz's inconsistency than his own brilliance.

Musetti went on a four-game tear, racing ahead 4-1 before Alcaraz managed to stem the bleeding. Although the Spaniard clawed one break back for 4-2, Musetti responded with composed play to close out the set 6-3.



Turning the tide

With his back against the wall, Alcaraz came out swinging in the second. He held his opening service game and immediately broke Musetti once more — this time consolidating the break for a 3-0 lead that brought a smile back to his face and confidence to his game.

What followed was vintage Alcaraz. With his trademark drop shots on point and his returning sharp, he broke again for 4-0 and held for 5-0. Although Musetti managed to get on the board, the Spaniard served out the set 6-1 at the second time of asking, having saved four break points along the way.

Physical issues end Musetti's challenge

The decider began with another break for Alcaraz, and by the third game, the contest had shifted firmly in his favour. Musetti called for the trainer due to discomfort in his right leg, and although he returned to court out of respect for the occasion, he was clearly compromised.

Alcaraz, focused and ruthless, dropped just four points in the entire final set, wrapping up the match with a 6-0 bagel in just over an hour and a half.

“It's been a tough month after Miami”

Speaking on court after lifting the trophy, Alcaraz couldn't hide his emotion.

“I'm super happy with this win,” he said. “I've enjoyed this week more than I have in a long time. What's going through my mind right now is my family and my people.”

“It's been quite a difficult month for me after Miami — a lot to process, trying to stay focused on what matters. Coming here to Monte Carlo and overcoming those struggles makes this moment really special,” he added on Court Rainier III.

More history in the making

The Monte Carlo crown adds yet another chapter to Alcaraz's fast-developing legacy on the ATP Tour. With clay season in full swing, the Spaniard has sent a clear message: he's ready to chase more silverware—and write more history—on the red dirt.



TEENAGE SENSATION JAKUB MENŠÍK STUNS DJOKOVIC TO CLINCH MAIDEN ATP TITLE IN MIAMI

Jakub Menšík has announced himself on the biggest stage in sensational style, toppling his boyhood idol Novak Djokovic to win his first ATP title at the Miami Open.

The 19-year-old Czech, ranked 54th in the world, showed remarkable maturity and fearlessness to defeat the world No. 1 in straight sets, 7-6(4), 7-6(4), denying Djokovic a landmark 100th career title and writing his own name into the history books.

“I started playing tennis because of you,” Menšík told Djokovic during the trophy presentation. “You’re the one I idolised when I was young.”

The teenager blasted 14 aces and withstood everything the 24-time Grand Slam champion threw at him across two fiercely contested sets. Djokovic, though far from his sharpest and visibly hindered by swelling near his right eye, still pushed the youngster to the limits in both tiebreaks. But Menšík held his nerve, breaking serve only once and producing ice-cold composure at the business end of each set.

Incredibly, Menšík had considered pulling out before his first-round match due to knee pain. He even went to inform tournament organisers of his decision, only to find them away on a lunch break. That pause gave him just enough time to rethink. With guidance from his physio, he opted to push through the discomfort—a decision that ultimately changed the course of his season, and perhaps his career.

I can’t believe what just happened,” Menšík said, visibly emotional. “I was thinking about going home before I even stepped on court here. To now be standing here with the trophy, beating Novak in the final—it’s unbelievable.”

Djokovic, gracious in defeat, praised the teenager’s performance. “You were better today, and it’s painful for me to admit that,” he said. “But I enjoyed this tournament more than I have in the past two years, and the crowd support meant a lot.”

For the Serbian, the elusive 100th title will have to wait. Only Jimmy Connors and Roger Federer have previously reached the century mark, and Djokovic will now shift his focus to the European clay swing in pursuit of that milestone.

As for Menšík, this win marks a significant breakthrough. He becomes the first Czech to win in Miami since Ivan Lendl in 1986 and is now firmly on the radar as one of the sport’s rising stars.

Did you know that...Menšík is the youngest player to defeat Djokovic in a final since Andy Murray beat him in Cincinnati back in 2008?

With his power-packed game, fearless attitude, and now a Masters 1000 title to his name, the teenager from Prostějov has arrived—and he’s already left a mark on tennis history.



SABALENKA OVERPOWERS PEGULA TO CLAIM MAIDEN MIAMI OPEN TITLE

Aryna Sabalenka cemented her status as the world's premier player with a commanding 7-5, 6-2 victory over Jessica Pegula in the Miami Open final, securing her first title in South Florida and her 19th career crown.

The Belarusian world No. 1 showcased her trademark power and precision, delivering 31 winners, including 22 off the forehand wing, to dominate the fourth-seeded American. Despite being broken three times in the opening set, Sabalenka maintained composure, securing a crucial break at 5-6 to take the set and then cruising through the second.

This triumph marks Sabalenka's eighth WTA 1000 title and her third consecutive final victory over Pegula, following wins at the 2024 US Open and Cincinnati. Notably, she didn't drop a set throughout the tournament, underscoring her dominance on hard courts.

"I'm speechless," Sabalenka said post-match. "I was super-focused, playing point by point. Now it feels super-special. I'm just speechless right now and super-happy with the title, first one in Miami."

Pegula, gracious in defeat, acknowledged Sabalenka's prowess, humorously noting their competitive finals history during her runner-up speech.

Sabalenka's victory also places her among elite company, becoming the third WTA No. 1 to reach the finals of the Australian Open, Indian Wells, and Miami Open in the same year.

With this win, Sabalenka continues to solidify her legacy, demonstrating not only her physical dominance but also her mental fortitude and strategic acumen on the court.



ZVEREV CLAIMS THIRD MUNICH OPEN TITLE AFTER DEMOLISHING SHELTON

Alexander Zverev celebrated his 28th birthday in style, clinching his third Munich Open title with a commanding 6-2, 6-4 victory over American Ben Shelton in the final. This triumph not only marked his 24th career ATP Tour title but also his first of the 2025 season.

Playing in front of a supportive home crowd, the world No. 3 delivered a dominant performance, breaking Shelton early in both sets and maintaining control throughout the match. Zverev's victory was particularly significant as it came during the tournament's debut as an ATP 500 event, making him the first German to win the upgraded trophy.



"I definitely knew I had to play my best tennis today; Ben has been playing extremely well this week," Zverev said post-match. "The conditions suit him extremely well—it's very hot and very fast. They suit me as well, to be fair. I enjoyed my birthday so far."

This victory also propelled Zverev back to the No. 2 spot in the ATP rankings, overtaking Carlos Alcaraz, who suffered a loss in the Barcelona Open final. The win signifies a resurgence for Zverev, who had faced challenges advancing past the quarter-finals in his previous six tournaments.

With his sights set on the upcoming French Open, Zverev's performance in Munich indicates a promising trajectory as he aims to challenge reigning champion Alcaraz and secure his first Grand Slam title.

Ostapenko is still swinging freely and winning titles, Eight years on.

Eight years after her stunning 2017 French Open triumph, Jelena Ostapenko has once again captured the tennis world's attention with a remarkable performance at the 2025 Porsche Tennis Grand Prix in Stuttgart. Unseeded and undeterred, the Latvian powerhouse defeated World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka 6-4, 6-1 in the final, marking her first victory over Sabalenka in four encounters. Earlier in the tournament, she also bested World No. 2 Iga Swiatek in the quarterfinals, making her the first woman since Serena Williams in 2012 to defeat the top two players in a single clay-court event.

This victory in Stuttgart is Ostapenko's ninth WTA title and only her second on clay, propelling her back into the Top 20 of the PIF WTA Rankings. Reflecting on her journey, Ostapenko noted the growth in her mental game since her early days on the tour. "At that time I was probably fearless, but I didn't have that much experience," she said, recalling her 2017 breakthrough. "I think honestly now I'm a better player, and mentally as well. Getting a bit older and more mature I think is going to help me."

Ostapenko's resurgence is attributed to her renewed confidence and a fearless approach reminiscent of her earlier career. "I felt very confident since the first day," she shared about her mindset entering the Stuttgart tournament. "I had, like, strange—not strange but in a good way, strange feeling. When I came here, I felt like something is going to happen this week."

As she prepares for upcoming tournaments in Madrid and Paris, Ostapenko's recent performance positions her as a formidable contender on the clay courts. Her blend of experience, maturity, and unrelenting aggression signals a potential return to the pinnacle of women's tennis.



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Jenson Brooksby Captures First ATP Title in Houston After Remarkable Comeback

American tennis player Jenson Brooksby achieved a significant milestone in his career by winning his first ATP Tour title at the 2025 U.S. Men's Clay Court Championship in Houston. Entering the tournament as a qualifying wild card, Brooksby showcased resilience and determination throughout the event.

In the final, Brooksby faced compatriot and defending champion Frances Tiafoe. Demonstrating exceptional form, Brooksby secured a straight-sets victory with a scoreline of 6-4, 6-2, clinching his maiden ATP title.

Brooksby's path to the title was marked by notable victories over top-seeded players. He defeated each of the tournament's top three seeds, including a semifinal win against world No. 1 Tommy Paul, where he saved a match point before prevailing in a tight three-set battle.

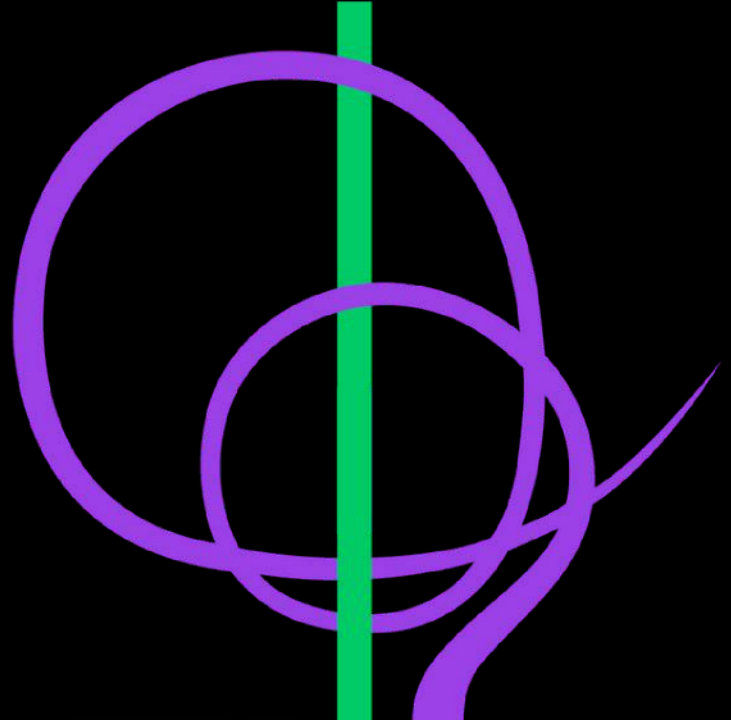


This triumph is particularly significant considering Brooksby's challenges in the preceding year. He faced a 13-month suspension due to missed doping tests and underwent two wrist surgeries, causing his ATP ranking to plummet to 507. His victory in Houston makes him the third-lowest-ranked player to win an ATP title since 1990.

Reflecting on his achievement, Brooksby expressed profound gratitude:

“It means the world. It was one of my biggest goals ever since I have been a professional tennis player. It means a lot to have my first one. It's probably the best week of my life.”

Brooksby's victory in Houston not only marks a personal comeback but also signals his potential resurgence in the ATP rankings. With this win, he is poised to re-enter the top tiers of professional tennis, aiming to build on this momentum in upcoming tournaments.

A stylized graphic of a knot, possibly a reef knot, rendered in a vibrant green color. It features a vertical line passing through the center of the knot's loops.

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Power Shift: Inside the PTPA's Legal War with Tennis's Old Guard

How Novak Djokovic's player-led movement is taking on the sport's ruling powers with the courts as its battleground

The Professional Tennis Players Association (PTPA), co-founded by 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic and Canadian pro Vasek Pospisil, is at the heart of a historic push for reform in professional tennis. Born out of a desire to give players greater representation and control over their careers, the PTPA is no longer just a talking point—it's now the face of a legal rebellion shaking the sport's foundations.

What started as a call for fairer prize money and better player welfare has evolved into an all-out challenge to the governing bodies of tennis: the ATP, WTA, ITF and ITIA. In March 2025, the PTPA, backed by a coalition of 12 players including outspoken American Reilly Opelka and Australian Nick Kyrgios, filed a wide-ranging lawsuit accusing these institutions of acting as a "cartel" that restricts competition and stifles player independence.

While Djokovic is not personally named in the case, his influence looms large. He has made clear his full support of the legal action, saying it represents a crucial opportunity to rewrite how tennis is governed and to empower younger generations of athletes. "It's time for players to take charge of their future," Djokovic stated, urging more professionals to add their voices to the movement.

A Growing Chorus for Reform

The PTPA's campaign is not limited to the courtroom. Off-court, the movement has inspired high-profile players like Coco Gauff to publicly advocate for a more equitable slice of tennis's enormous revenues. In an open letter to Grand Slam organisers earlier this month, Gauff called out the financial disparities in the sport, arguing that top-tier athletes often prosper while those ranked lower struggle to make ends meet.

PTPA Executive Director Ahmad Nassar hailed the moment as a breakthrough. "This is exactly what we've been working toward—getting the players to speak up, to demand their share, and to take ownership of the sport they sustain," he said.

Beyond financials, the PTPA recently introduced its Athlete Counsel & Equity Program—an initiative offering free legal assistance to players facing anti-doping or corruption allegations. It's one of several steps the group is taking to build infrastructure that serves athletes first, rather than tournament organisers or commercial partners.



The ATP Fires Back

But as the PTPA steps forward, the backlash has been swift. The ATP, one of the lawsuit's primary targets, has fiercely denied allegations of misconduct. The most heated exchange to date centres on the testimony of Reilly Opelka, who told the court that ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi had threatened him with the loss of his pension and the burden of legal costs if he continued supporting the suit.

The ATP has rejected Opelka's claims outright, suggesting his version of events was based on hearsay and noting that he failed to appear in person during the hearing. In a formal response, the ATP accused Opelka of spreading misinformation and sought to undermine his credibility. However, they did confirm that the Players Council had been informed of a bylaw stating that players involved in unsuccessful legal action could be liable for fees—a detail the PTPA says was used as a scare tactic to silence dissent.

In court filings, PTPA legal representatives allege that pressure tactics were applied to multiple players behind the scenes, with attempts to block others from signing on to the lawsuit altogether. The underlying message: challenging the system comes at a cost.

What's Next?

With a key decision from Judge Margaret Garnett expected soon, the next chapter of this legal battle could define not just the PTPA's future, but the structure of men's and women's tennis for years to come. If the lawsuit proceeds, it will likely expose the inner workings of a sport that's long operated with limited transparency—and potentially force a reckoning in how players are treated by the institutions meant to serve them.

As for Djokovic, his role as a player advocate may prove to be as influential as anything he's achieved on court. Whether this legal push ends in victory or stalemate, the PTPA has already done something monumental: it's made the world of tennis listen.

MADRID OPEN BROUGHT TO A HALT BY WIDESPREAD POWER CUT

A nationwide power outage across Spain forced play to be suspended for the day at the Madrid Open, with organisers citing the need to “guarantee general safety” as the reason for the stoppage.

At the time this article was written, electricity had yet to be fully restored across the country, with major disruptions also reported in Portugal. Public transport, mobile networks and even card payments were affected, while Madrid’s underground railway system was temporarily evacuated.

Portuguese energy operator REN attributed the blackout to a rare atmospheric phenomenon linked to rapid temperature changes. Spain’s Red Eléctrica confirmed that restoration efforts were ongoing.

The outage brought a dramatic halt to several third-round matches. Britain’s Jacob Fearnley was deep in a tense encounter against Grigor Dimitrov on the main court. Having saved a match point, Fearnley was preparing to serve to stay in the match at 6-4, 5-4 down when play was paused.

With the electronic line-calling system and scoreboards knocked out, the umpire attempted to resume the match by calling the lines manually. However, the stadium’s overhead spider cam had become stuck in a low-hanging position and was obstructing the players’ view. After further consultation, both players were taken back to the locker room.

Fearnley is one of three Britons scheduled to compete in the third round. Cameron Norrie is set to face Canada’s Gabriel Diallo, while Jack Draper is due to meet Italy’s Matteo Berrettini.

Play resumed on Tuesday and seemed to be back to normal, although throughout the country there are still places feeling the aftermath of this very serious situation, but when play resumed, Grigor won the last set 7-6.



DID YOU KNOW?

Listening to what people say about your abilities is not a bad thing, but remember that not everyone is on your side, some are there to see you fail.. Trust those who share wisdom and expect nothing in return.

Unknown

Here are the 3 youngest tennis world champions throughout history, with the tournament they won, their opponent, and notable achievements that followed:

1

Cori "Coco" Gauff - Age at First Win: 15 years, 3 months

Tournament: 2019 Wimbledon (Girls' Singles) - **Opponent Beaten:** Greet Minnen (Belgium)

Notable Achievements: Gauff made her breakthrough by defeating Venus Williams in the first round of Wimbledon 2019 at age 15. As of 2025, she has been a consistent presence in the top 10 and continues to be a rising star with multiple WTA titles. Known for her maturity on the court and potential to dominate the game in the years to come.

2

Monica Seles - Age at First Win: 16 years, 6 months

Tournament: 1990 French Open - **Opponent Beaten:** Steffi Graf (Germany)

Notable Achievements: Won 9 Grand Slam singles titles, including 4 Australian Open titles. Dominated the tennis world in the early 1990s before an unfortunate stabbing incident interrupted her career. Held the World No. 1 ranking for 178 weeks.

3

Martina Hingis - Age at First Win: 16 years, 6 months

Tournament: 1997 Australian Open - **Opponent Beaten:** Mary Pierce (France)

Notable Achievements: Won 5 Grand Slam singles titles, including 3 Australian Open titles. Held the World No. 1 singles ranking for a total of 209 weeks. Known for being one of the best tennis minds on the court, her play was marked by her precise serve and excellent net play.



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In 2024



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ADVOCATING FOR ATHLETES IN THE BRANDING ARENA

In a candid TikTok video, Saville voiced her frustration over the increasing trend of brands favouring social media influencers and WAGs (wives and girlfriends of athletes) over professional female tennis players for sponsorship deals. She highlighted the irony of athletes, who are the ones competing and training rigorously, being overlooked in favour of those who may not be directly involved in the sport. Saville questioned whether the "sweaty" image of athletes is less appealing to brands compared to the polished aesthetics presented by influencers.



While she acknowledged the engaging content produced by influencers like Morgan Riddle, the girlfriend of American tennis star Taylor Fritz, Saville emphasized the need for a more balanced representation in brand campaigns. She argued that there should be space for both athletes and influencers, but currently, athletes are often sidelined. Her sentiments were echoed by fellow tennis player Eva Lys, who also pointed out the challenges faced by players outside the top rankings in securing endorsements.

Recent Performances on the Court

Despite the off-court controversies, Saville has continued to demonstrate her prowess in tennis. At the 2025 Mérida Open Akron, she advanced to the semifinals, marking her first WTA-level semifinal appearance in over a year. Her journey included a notable victory over Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk, the No. 6 seed, with a straight-sets win of 6-4, 7-6(6). In the quarterfinals, she progressed after her opponent, Paula Badosa, retired due to injury.

Earlier, in December 2024, Saville clinched the title at the Gold Coast Tennis International, defeating Lizette Cabrera in the final with a score of 7-5, 7-6(7-3). This victory added to her career achievements and showcased her resilience and determination on the court.

Balancing Personal Life and Professional Commitments

Beyond her tennis career, Saville has been open about her personal life decisions. In January 2025, she shared her decision to undergo egg freezing, aiming to preserve her fertility while continuing her professional tennis journey. This move reflects the challenges female athletes often face in balancing career aspirations with personal life choices.

Looking Ahead

As of April 2025, Saville holds a singles ranking of No. 108. Her recent performances indicate a positive trajectory, and her advocacy for athletes' recognition in brand partnerships adds another dimension to her profile. By speaking out, she has sparked important conversations about the representation and valuation of female athletes in the commercial sphere.

Daria Saville's journey underscores the multifaceted challenges and triumphs of professional athletes today. Her commitment to excellence on the court, coupled with her willingness to address systemic issues off the court, positions her as a significant figure in contemporary tennis.



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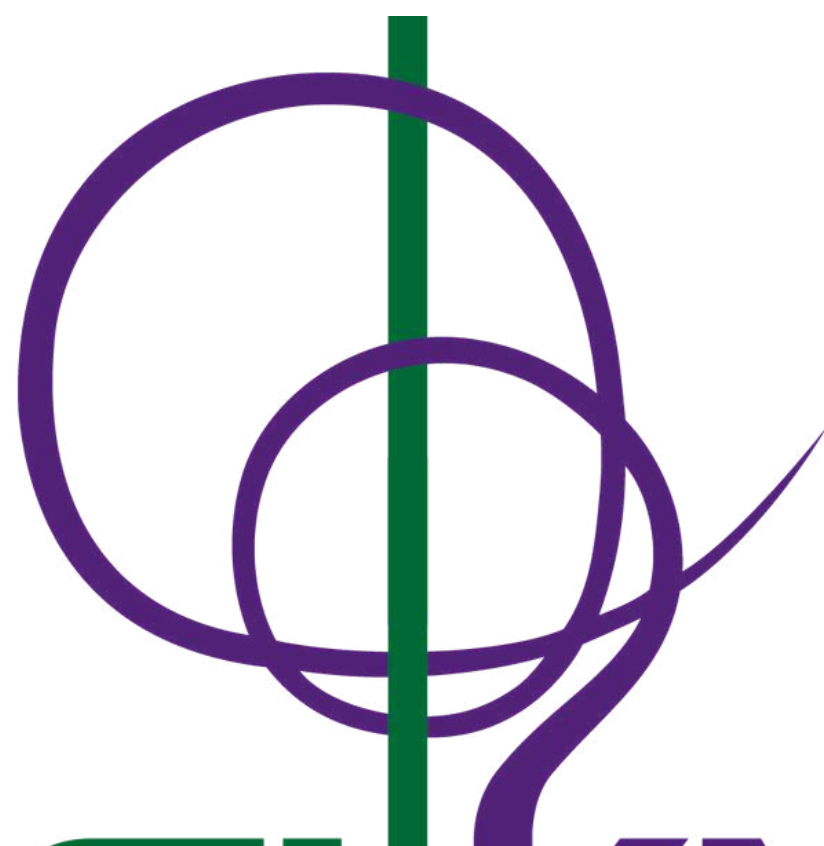
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4TH GRSA WORKSHOP IN BEIJING

On April 18 and 19, the 4th edition of the GRSA Pro stringer certification workshop kicked off in Beijing, China. There were a total of 12 participants and similar to the previous workshops, half of our students are not engaged in tennis-related jobs but are tennis enthusiasts. There were also two of the youngest participants from Wilson. We are delighted to see more young people joining the GRSA family and racket service industry.

Since the first workshop in 2024, we have found a significant number of students being parents of professional youth players. For a long time, they have not been able to learn about stringing and racket knowledge systematically. In class, there is often robust discussion on the challenges they face in the journey of selecting appropriate equipment for their children and what are the considerations moving forward, as their children are growing and the demands of the modern game.

We have also realised that there are many tennis enthusiasts who have a high enthusiasm for learning about racket stringing, equipment knowledge and what it takes to string at professional tournaments. We, at GRSA, have shared openly and candidly with these students from the experiences of our instructors. The biggest advantage that we have is our ability to share very current experiences from working in high level professional tournaments, entry level junior tournaments and in retail settings.





In the teaching domain, GRSA teaches students the relevant knowledge of stringing and equipment. More importantly, we teach students the principles of stringing and the understanding of the three golden principles of stringing. We strongly believe that the only way to improve is to immerse yourself in a community of stringers where experiences and skills are constantly shared and updated.

Stringer Solutions



An easy tip on how to keep the main strings straighter when installing the crosses

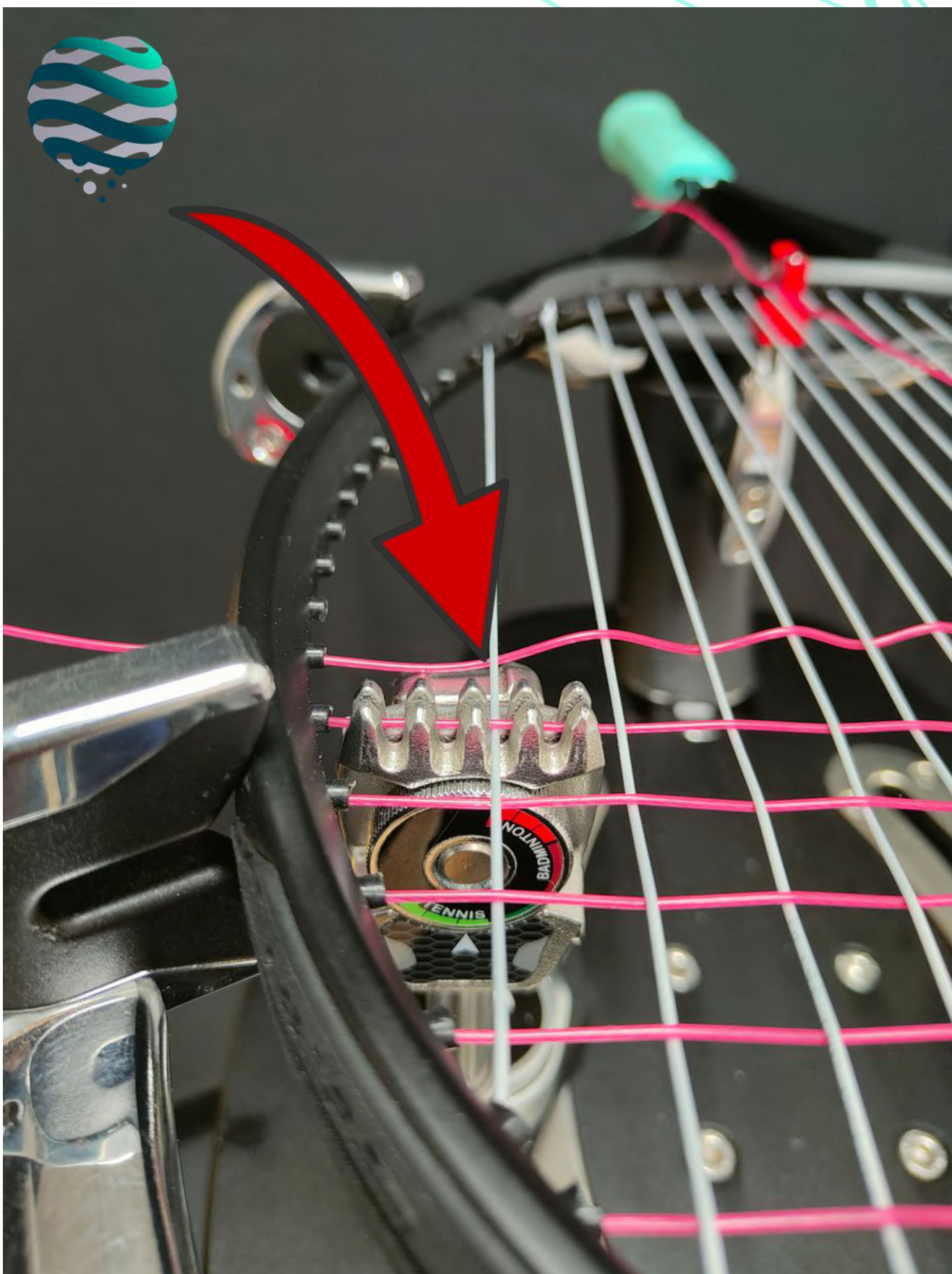
One of the most common mistakes I see when helping stringers is them not straightening the mains and only concentrating on the crosses. Here is some helpful advice to address this.

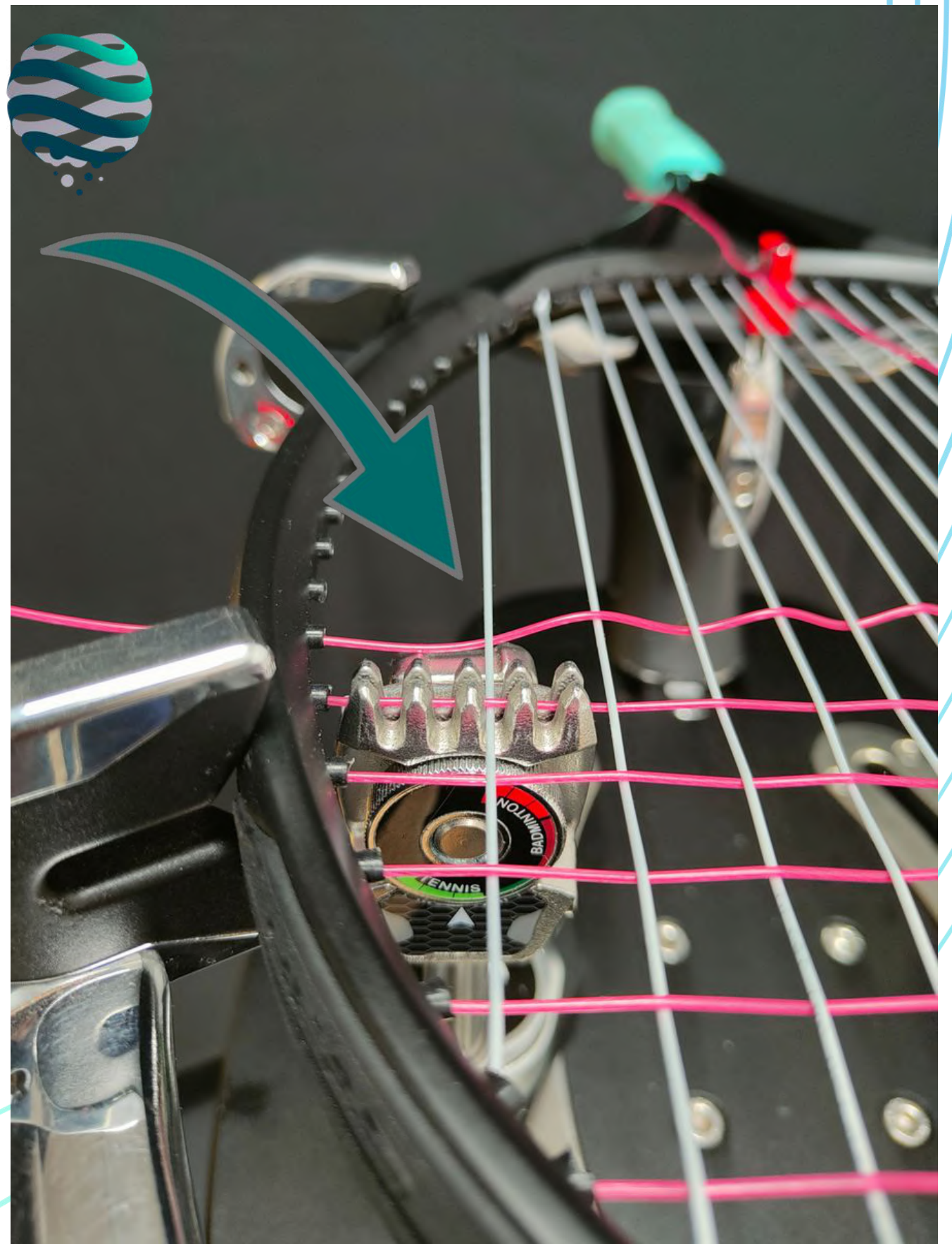
Once the mains have been installed, whether it is a 2 or 4 knot method being used, you start installing the crosses working from the head towards the throat (to guarantee the frame's integrity).

While installing the crosses, the two outside mains tend to be pulled out of place by the clamps, which means that the mains need straightening once the crosses are finished. This obviously adds time to the total stringing time, when time is something a stringer doesn't usually have a lot of.

There is an easy way to counteract the movement of the mains.

In the first pictures you can see the clamp placement and the main string movement.





In this second set of pictures you can see the slight difference in the clamp placement & clearly see that the mains are now straighter.

By “placing” the clamp in a particular chosen spot on the string, you are going to achieve two benefits from this:

- 1) You will be more precise and gentler by “placing” the clamp as opposed to just “putting” the clamp on the string. By being gentler, there is less risk of the cross string in the clamp twisting and ending up not straight.
- 2) The outer main strings will remain straighter and hardly need any touching at the end of the restring.

Straight strings are a sign of a professional restring. The aesthetic value can help with the perceived value of your work.

Any personal tips to help your fellow stringers? Let us know and get them published in the Stringer Solutions part of the GRSA ATW Magazine

J500 OFFENBACH

The week was dominated by extreme weather changes of periods of sun and heavy rain showers but due to good organization of the supervisors and the big help of volunteers and the groundsman team the clay courts were in good conditions even though the weather was really challenging.

We saw a lot of matches of extremely high professional quality and we are sure to see some of the players in the top 100 in active pros soon again.

Boys

Singles qualifying: 32, Singles main draw: 64
Doubles main draw: 32

Girls

Singles qualifying: 32, Singles main draw: 64
Doubles main draw: 32

Winner boys: SANTAMARTA ROIG

Winner girls: STUSEK Julia

Winners boys doubles: DEREPAKO/ VASILEV

Winner girls doubles: DILEK/ ZELTINA



Team members: Stefan Müller, Gianluca Coloma Heck, Cristian Ungureanu, Dominik Baumann, Michael Sagert and Martin Mann.
Front desk: Karina Turzer



Rackets strung: 355
Lowest tension: 18/18
Highest tension: 26/26



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GRSA International Returns to Málaga for a Bigger and Bolder Conference in 2025

After the roaring success of last year's inaugural gathering, GRSA International is thrilled to announce that its second annual conference will once again grace the sun-drenched shores of Málaga, Costa del Sol. Set for Thursday, November 13th through Sunday, November 16th, 2025, this year's event promises to be larger, more dynamic, and more memorable than ever before.

Building on the momentum of 2024, the GRSA International conference has expanded its program with an extra day of events, offering attendees even greater opportunities to network, learn, and celebrate. The agenda is packed with an exciting lineup of new presentations and hands-on workshops that will delve deeper into the industry's future. Attendees can look forward to unparalleled access to some of the brightest minds and biggest influencers in global racket sports.

Among this year's highly anticipated highlights are our VIP star speakers: Ron Rocchi of Wilson, whose innovations have shaped the game at the highest levels, and Dennis Fabian of HEAD, a visionary force behind some of the most celebrated advancements in racket technology. Their insights will offer an exclusive look behind the curtain of the industry's leading brands — **an opportunity not to be missed.**

In a special nod to loyalty, returning GRSA members will be treated to an exclusive surprise that celebrates their continued commitment and community spirit. This added touch ensures that those who helped build the foundation of this annual tradition feel especially valued. Keep your eyes peeled for updates....we've got your back, you know who you are!

Evenings in Málaga will be just as inspiring as the days, with sumptuous dinners each night, capped off by a spectacular gala dinner, this year again sponsored by Wilson, that will outshine even last year's unforgettable affair. Plus, attendees and their families can look forward to a range of engaging activities specially curated for plus-ones and children, ensuring that the GRSA experience is one the whole family can enjoy.

Adding to the excitement, a team-building sports day will bring members together on the courts for tennis, paddle, and pickleball, fostering not just competition but camaraderie.

You asked, and we listened! It will be a day to remember for all!



As tradition demands, the coveted GRSA goodie bag will return, bigger and better, loaded with exclusive gifts and surprises that will keep spirits high throughout the event.

Ticket prices and the stunning venue details will be announced shortly, but one thing is certain: the second annual GRSA International Conference will be the must-attend event of 2025.

Prepare to rub shoulders with industry titans, absorb world-class insights, and make memories under the Mediterranean sun. Málaga awaits!

HEAD®

Dennis Fabian (HEAD)

Dennis Fabian serves as HEAD's Global Business Manager for Racquets, Bags & Accessories (Strings, Grips & Machines). He has been part of the tennis industry for decades, drawing on experience as a professional stringer and a player relations manager working closely with athletes. Dennis has played a leading role in product innovation at HEAD – he was instrumental in developing several of the company's best-selling strings (such as the Hawk Power & Lynx Tour polyester string) and helped engineer advanced tools like HEAD's 3-in-1 & 4-in-1 racket diagnostics machine and the company's state-of-the-art stringing machines, notably and most recently the HEAD x Parnell Knot machine. Through these achievements, Dennis has established himself as a key figure in racket technology development, and he frequently shares his expertise with the wider industry at events and conferences like GRSA International's conference.



Wilson®

Ron Rocchi (Wilson)

Ron Rocchi is Wilson Sporting Goods' longtime racket technology guru, currently serving as the Advanced Innovation and Player Insight Manager for Wilson's tennis division. With a career at Wilson spanning nearly three decades, Ron has been at the forefront of customizing and designing rackets for many of the sport's top players. Notably, he has designed Serena Williams's Wilson performance rackets since she turned professional in 1995, Federer since juniors and numerous greats such as Del Potro, tailoring equipment to meet the exacting needs of one of the game's greatest champions. Rocchi's hands-on innovation extends to countless touring professionals' rackets, and his contributions have helped shape some of Wilson's most iconic tennis frames. Widely regarded as an all-around equipment expert, he is known for sharing invaluable insights into racket customisation and technology at major industry gatherings.



Having both Dennis and Ron at the Conference this year is an honour and privilege as key GRSA partners through HEAD and Wilson.

NICK DOWN Talks

Karakal Core Bridge

KARAKAL
 EVOLUTION BY DESIGN


One of the newest additions to the list of non standard squash rackets is Karakal's Next Gen Core Bridge. This type of pattern is in wide use in the Karakal current range.

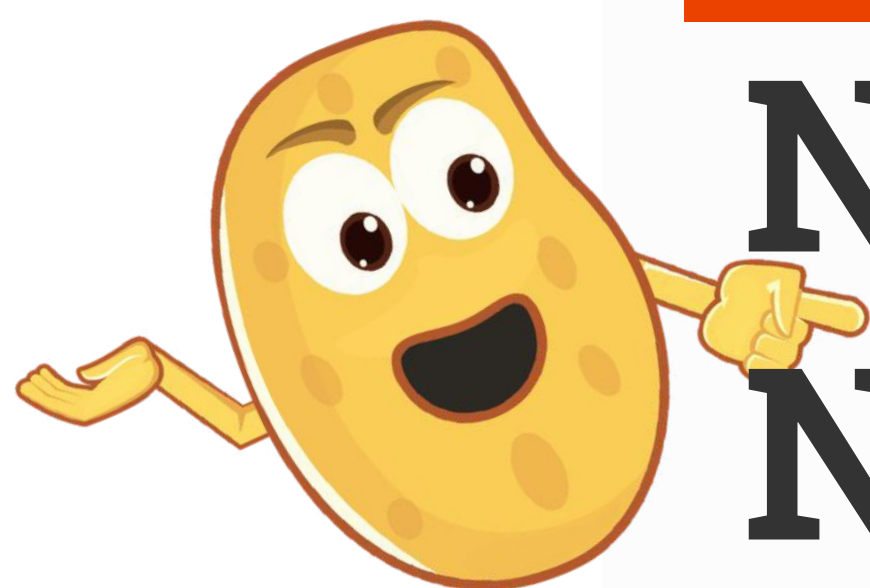
I have used the Core 110 in this example, but there are others that share this pattern.

There are 14 mains that wrap around a bridge in the shape of part of a ring. The mains must only be pulled at the head, which means two at a time. It also means starting at the throat, in order to finish the mains at the head.

This pattern is similar to the Prince Powerbite range in that it starts at the throat in order to finish at the head. It is also similar, but not identical, to any of Wilson's Powerhinge models for the same reason.

The similarities end there, because there are no shared holes on this pattern unlike the Powerbite models from Prince or the Wilson models.

EMAIL ME AT:

nick@grsa-international.com


Nick's Nugget

Don't weave unnecessary string through the mains, it can create extra wear on string, leading to early breaks.

There are 18 cross strings

My example has used a two piece (4 knot) method. This avoids a long run of string along the outside of the frame, that is better to look at and I've mentioned this before a few times, it's not unusual.

According to Karakal the position of main strings on the bridge will make a difference between power or control by utilising 'click bridge' technology; I've used a picture to explain this from the Karakal website.

Mains

Start at the throat ring in the centre:-

Above ring to LH1

Below ring to RH1

LH1 to LH2

LH2 to below ring

Above ring to LH3

RH1 to RH2

RH2 to above ring

Below ring to RH3

RH3 to RH4

RH4 to above ring

Below ring to RH6

LH3 to LH4

LH4 to below ring

Above ring to LH6

LH6 to LH8

LH8 to below ring

Above ring to LH11

RH6 to RH8

RH8 to above ring

Below ring to RH11

Tie off both sides at H8.



Crosses:-

1st cross is at H5 (either side, if starting on L, go over 1st main. If starting on R, go under 1st main)

Skip H6 H8 and H11 on both sides.

Last cross is T1 (both sides- must be a hard-weave).

Tie off H at H4 (either side)

Tie off T at T2 (either side).

NEXT MONTH:- Unsquashable DSP
(Dual String Pattern)

Listen to my playlist on Spotify



El Gouna International 2025 (April 12–18, El Gouna, Egypt)

The 13th edition of the El Gouna International Squash Open concluded with thrilling finals in both the men's and women's draws.

Men's Final: Mostafa Asal vs. Ali Farag

In a dramatic five-game battle, second seed Mostafa Asal overcame top seed and defending champion Ali Farag with scores of 6–11, 7–11, 11–9, 11–9, 11–5. After dropping the first two games, Asal showcased resilience and tactical prowess to mount a comeback, securing his second El Gouna title. This victory also marked a shift in their rivalry, as Farag had previously bested Asal in the 2023 and 2024 finals.

Women's Final: Nouran Gohar vs. Amina Orfi

Top seed Nouran Gohar clinched her third consecutive El Gouna title by defeating 17-year-old rising star Amina Orfi 9–11, 11–7, 11–6, 11–7. Despite losing the first game, Gohar's experience and consistency prevailed. Orfi's performance, however, signals a promising future for the young Egyptian talent.

Both champions earned 2,800 PSA ranking points and \$36,159 in prize money, solidifying their positions at the top of the squash world.



Manchester Open 2025 (April 2–6, Manchester, UK)

The Manchester Open 2025 witnessed unexpected outcomes, with both finals featuring underdog victories.

Men's Final: Leonel Cárdenas vs. Aly Abou Eleinen

Unseeded Mexican player Leonel Cárdenas stunned top seed Aly Abou Eleinen in a gripping final, showcasing his agility and shot-making skills. This victory marks Cárdenas's first PSA World Tour title, highlighting his rapid ascent in the rankings.

Women's Final: Salma Hany vs. Jasmine Hutton

Egypt's Salma Hany triumphed over England's Jasmine Hutton in a closely contested match. Hany's strategic play and composure under pressure earned her the title, adding a significant achievement to her career.

The tournament featured 24-player draws and a prize pool of \$66,500, providing valuable exposure and ranking points for emerging talents.



Optasia Championships 2025 (March 25–30, London, UK)

The Optasia Championships 2025 concluded with top seeds asserting their dominance in both finals.

Men's Final: Mostafa Asal vs. Paul Coll

World No. 2 Mostafa Asal delivered a commanding performance against defending champion Paul Coll, winning 11–4, 11–4, 11–8. Asal's victory not only secured the title but also propelled him to the World No. 1 ranking as of April 1, 2025.

Women's Final: Hania El Hammamy vs. Georgina Kennedy

Top seed Hania El Hammamy showcased her dominance by defeating England's Georgina Kennedy 11–9, 11–2, 11–3. El Hammamy's tactical superiority and consistency were evident throughout the match, reaffirming her position among the elite in women's squash.

Both champions earned 1,800 PSA ranking points and \$21,299 in prize money, reinforcing their standings at the pinnacle of the sport.



KARACHI OPEN 2025

HOMEGROWN HEROES SHINE IN FINALS



The fifth edition of the Karachi Open Squash Championship drew to a dramatic close at the Roshan Khan Jahangir Khan Squash Complex, with local talent rising to the occasion in front of a lively home crowd.

In the women's final, Dammia Khan delivered a composed and clinical performance to claim the title. Facing fellow Pakistani Anam Aziz, Khan dominated the opening two games 11-5, 11-8, before Aziz was forced to retire due to injury. While the contest ended prematurely, Khan had clearly set the tone with her aggressive shot selection and court coverage, underlining her status as one of the brightest talents in the national circuit.

The men's final proved to be a pulsating affair, as Anas Khan and Naveed Rehman battled through five fiercely contested games. Anas started strong, edging the first two games 11-8, 11-9. Rehman responded superbly, taking the third 11-4 and saving multiple match balls in the fourth to level the tie 12-10. But Anas regrouped in the decider, clinching it 11-7 after 45 minutes of high-octane action. It was a showcase of grit, skill and sheer willpower, with both players earning admiration from the packed stands.

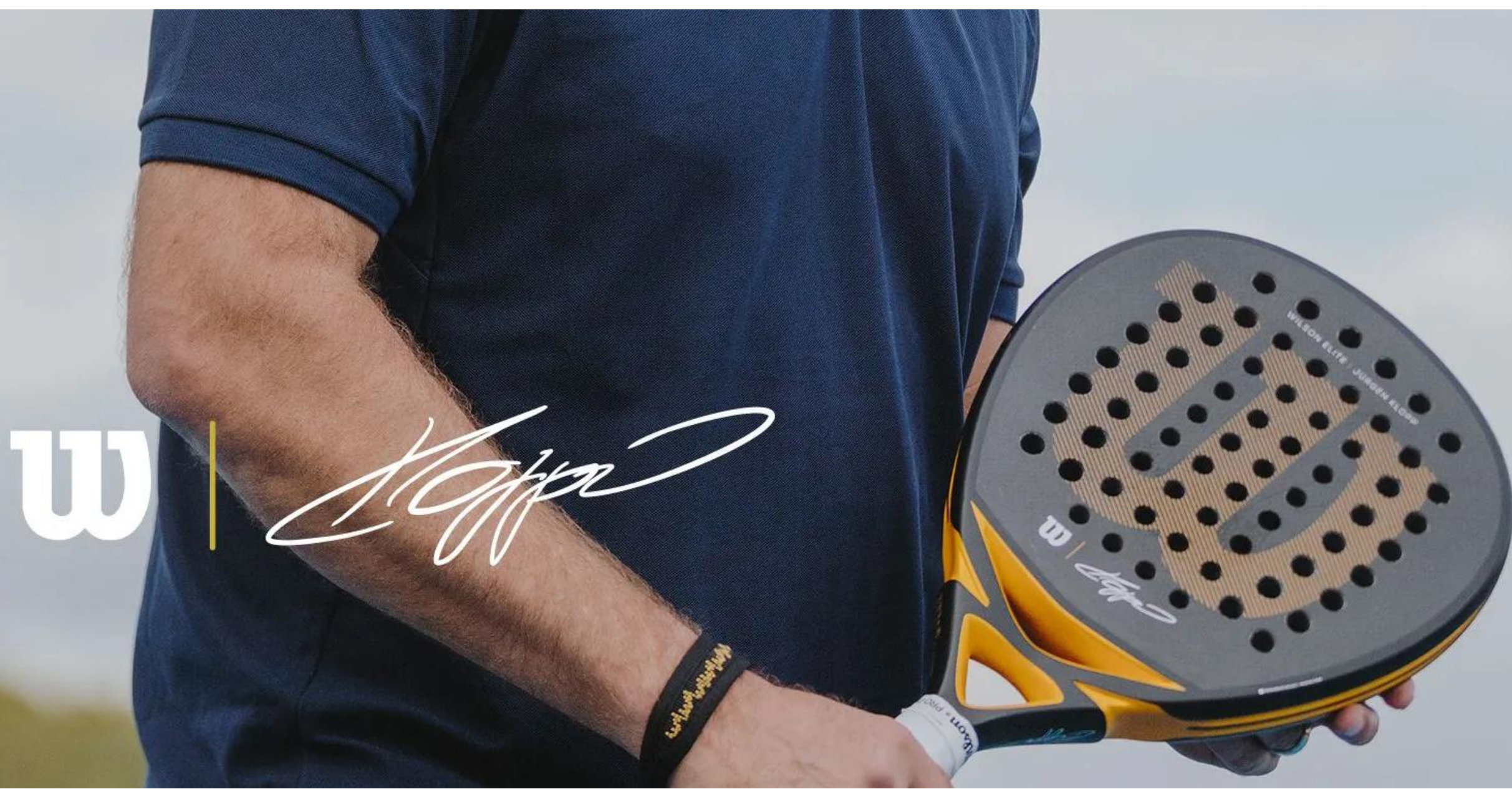
This year's tournament featured a 64-player men's draw and a 24-player women's draw, reflecting growing interest and participation in the sport within Pakistan. The event was supported by a number of institutions, and the closing ceremony saw appearances from key figures including Shakeel M Paracha of the State Bank of Pakistan and Abdul Basit Shaikh of Mashreq Bank Pakistan.

As the dust settles, the Karachi Open continues to serve as a crucial platform for nurturing domestic talent and celebrating the legacy of squash in Pakistan — a country with a rich heritage in the sport.

GERRARD JOINING IN ON THE PADEL BOOM



"A match of titans" LFC legend **Steven Gerrard** and Redbull Managing Director **Oliver Mintzlaff** enjoyed a match with Premier Padel Chairman **Nasser Al-Khelaifi** and @padelfip President **Luigi Carraro**. Fun for all and there will obviously be more coming from the Liverpool legend in the future as he follows more famous names into the world of padel. Max Verstappen, Peter Crouch, Cristiano Ronaldo and another Liverpool great, Jurgen Klopp, have all been caught by the padel bug.





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London to Host Historic Inaugural FIP Intercontinental Cup in July 2025

Elite men's and women's players to face off in Europe vs Americas format at landmark event

Professional padel is set for a landmark moment as the first-ever FIP Intercontinental Cup lands in London from 25–27 July 2025. Modelled on the iconic Ryder and Laver Cups, this unique team competition will pitch Europe against the Americas, bringing some of the sport's top male and female talents to the UK for the first time in a tournament of this scale.

The event will form part of a newly adjusted Qatar Airways Premier Padel Tour calendar and marks a major step in the sport's international expansion. It is being spearheaded by the combined efforts of FIP, Premier Padel, and the Hexagon Cup—three leading organisations now joined in strategic partnership.

A new chapter for padel in the UK

The UK's growing appetite for padel makes London a natural choice for this prestigious competition. With over 200,000 amateur players now playing monthly and more than 750 courts across 300 clubs, the nation's padel scene is thriving. Hosting a major international team event reinforces London's emerging role as a key market in the global growth of the sport.

Full details on the venue, competition name and local promoter will be revealed shortly, alongside more on the tournament's innovative format.

Calendar shake-up to accommodate London showcase

To make room for the FIP Intercontinental Cup, the Premier Padel calendar has been slightly reshuffled:

The Spain Premier Padel P1 will now take place from 28 July to 3 August in Barcelona, directly after the London event.

The Scandinavia Premier Padel P2 moves to Q3 2025, with final dates and location still to be confirmed.





A bold vision for padel's global future

Luigi Carraro, President of the International Padel Federation, said:

“Hosting the FIP Intercontinental Cup in London is a landmark moment for the international expansion of professional padel. Bringing the world’s very best professional players to the UK for the first time – one of padel’s fastest-growing markets – reinforces our vision to bring new experiences of our sport to new fans and partners all around the world.

London has hosted some of the most iconic moments in sporting history – and now, professional padel will become part of that legacy as we expand globally and drive toward Olympic inclusion. We’re thrilled to combine the teams from FIP, Premier Padel and the Hexagon Cup for this standout new competition in the calendar.”

Nasser Al-Khelaïfi, Chairman of Premier Padel, added:

“As the official professional padel tour worldwide, we are delighted to see elite women’s and men’s professional padel players compete in the UK, one of most significant international sports markets in the world, this summer.

London is a natural next step and international stage for professional padel, being one of the leading capital cities of world sport – with fantastic infrastructure and facilities, commercial opportunities and brand exposure, and brilliant fan appetite for the fastest growing sport in the world. This competition is another great step forward for the continued development of padel worldwide.”

It doesn't matter if you're an experienced player or just starting out, knowing where you can go to take part in open competitions is part of the fun of this forever growing sport, so here are some of the dates, visit the Pickleball Global website for more info.

DUPR ROME OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP 5TH ED.**EID:** 1856 **PRICE** EUR 40**Organizer:** Marco Maurizi**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** October 17, 2025 to October 19, 2025**City:** Via Castore Durante, Roma RM, Italia**Tournament Venue:** Standout Pickleball Arena**Registration Deadline:** October 11, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**1. Mittelhessen International Open Solms****EID:** 1910 **PRICE** EUR 30**Organizer:** Sascha Sandermann**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** September 20, 2025 to September 21, 2025**City:** Stadionstraße 10, 35606 Solms-Burgsolms, Deutschland**Tournament Venue:** Tv 1906 Burgsolms**Registration Deadline:** September 08, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 1**WPC ASIA GRAND SLAM 2025 : MALAYSIA (TIER 4)****EID:** 2003 **PRICE** MYR 211**Organizer:** WPC Malaysia**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** July 17, 2025 to July 20, 2025**City:** Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia**Tournament Venue:** The Pickle Grounds**Registration Deadline:** July 10, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 4**MORE
INFO**



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AGASSI SWAPS BASELINE FOR KITCHEN LINE AS HE JOINS PRO PICKLEBALL RANKS

Eight-time Grand Slam champion Andre Agassi is set to trade the tennis court for the pickleball court as he makes his professional debut in the sport alongside world No.1 Anna Leigh Waters at the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships.

Agassi, once the world's top-ranked tennis player and one of the sport's most charismatic figures, confirmed he'll make his pickleball bow in Naples, Florida. His first appearance is scheduled for midday on 30 April, teaming up with 18-year-old phenom Waters in the mixed doubles draw.

"She's probably sick of winning so much, and that's why she called me and asked me to play," Agassi quipped, ever the entertainer.

The invitation came from Waters herself—arguably the face of pickleball—who turned to YouTube footage of Agassi in action before reaching out. "We both tend to err on the aggressive side, and I think that works," she said. "Andre's goals are to grow the sport of pickleball, and that's a huge goal of mine. I thought if we partnered together, this would be a really awesome way to grow the sport."

Waters, who earned over \$3 million last year alone, has helped spearhead pickleball's meteoric rise. Since the pandemic, the sport has surged in popularity, with participation up 311% over the past three years. Backed by heavyweight sponsors and broadcast deals, pickleball now offers greater earning potential than the WNBA or NWSL.





Agassi's interest in the sport stems from more than just a curiosity. He's fallen for its social, inclusive vibe and has been championing pickleball globally through his work with equipment brand Joola. He also serves as the inaugural chair of Life Time's pickleball and tennis board, driving its grassroots growth.

But those hoping to see him week in, week out on the pickleball circuit might need to temper their expectations. "If I had the luxury of bandwidth to focus all my energy on just playing and body recovery and all that stuff, that would be a joy. But I don't," Agassi admitted. "I'm in a different season now."

Agassi, who won his first Grand Slam title at Wimbledon in 1992 and completed the career Grand Slam with a French Open crown in 1999, was known for his fierce return game, unmatched charisma and a career that spanned two decades. He also captured titles at the Australian Open (four), the US Open (two), and was crowned Olympic champion in 1996.

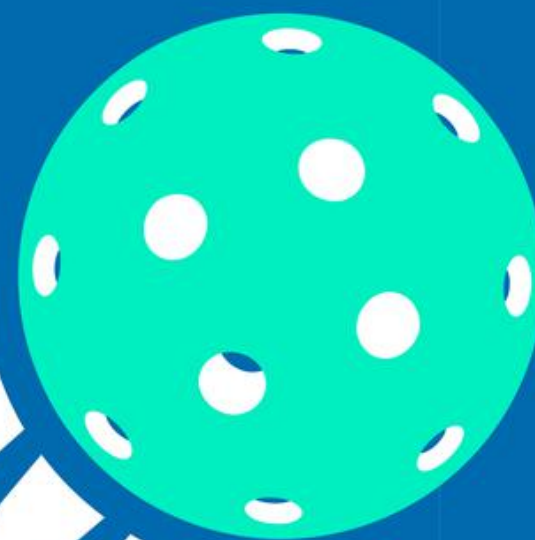
Now, he's stepping into a new arena, one where doubles strategy and kitchen-line finesse take centre stage.

The U.S. Open Pickleball Championships, founded in 2016, has grown into one of the sport's flagship events, drawing up to 50,000 fans. This year, it might just get a little more star-studded and a whole lot more entertaining with Agassi in the draw.



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RAF'S KATIE WITTING AIMS FOR INTERNATIONAL GLORY AT 34TH MAGNUM TOURNAMENT



Fresh off her sixth Inter Services badminton title, RAF Corporal Katie Witting is set to represent the UK Armed Forces at the prestigious 34th Magnum Tournament in Putte, Belgium. The event, hosted by the Klein Boom Badminton Club, features top teams from Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain, with UKAF competing in both doubles and mixed doubles categories.

Witting's recent victory at RAF Halton was particularly hard-fought, as she faced a new wave of Army challengers. Reflecting on the competition, she remarked, "This year was a lot harder than previous years. The Army had some new females that were a lot fitter than I am. An absolutely incredible tournament. I played out of my skin and was super happy with how it went".

Beyond military competitions, Witting has also made her mark on the national circuit. She clinched the women's doubles title at the Norfolk Restricted in September and secured the women's singles title at the Herefordshire Senior Bronze in March 2024.

Balancing her athletic pursuits with her duties in the Royal Air Force, Witting has found ways to maintain her training regimen. "I don't work night shifts now so I get a lot of free time in the evenings and it's obviously my choice to play in the civilian leagues," she explained, "I run the club here [at RAF Odiham] on a Wednesday so now I get a lot of opportunity to play".

As she prepares to compete on the international stage, Witting's dedication and experience position her as a formidable contender. Her journey from service-level competitions to international arenas exemplifies the spirit and talent within the UK Armed Forces' sporting community.



India's preparations for the 2025 Sudirman Cup have encountered a significant setback with the withdrawal of their top men's doubles pair, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, due to illness. The duo, currently ranked world No. 11, were anticipated to be key contributors to India's campaign in the mixed team championship that commenced on April 27 in Xiamen, China.

Their absence leaves India with only one men's doubles pair: the relatively inexperienced duo of Hariharan Amsakarunan and Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi. Originally slated to play initial matches before the seasoned pair took over, Hariharan and Ruban now find themselves thrust into the spotlight. Despite their limited experience on the international stage, the pair remains optimistic. Hariharan commented, "We do not have any pressure and have to just play the way we have been playing."

Compounding India's challenges, the women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand have also withdrawn due to injuries. Their replacements, Shruti Mishra and Priya Konjengbam, will need to step up against formidable opponents.

India's Group D in the Sudirman Cup is particularly challenging, featuring strong teams from Indonesia, Denmark, and England. With only the top two teams advancing to the quarter-finals, India's path forward is arduous. The team will rely heavily on singles players like Lakshya Sen, H. S. Prannoy, and P. V. Sindhu to secure crucial points.

The Sudirman Cup, held biennially, is a prestigious mixed team badminton championship that tests the depth and versatility of national squads. India's best performance in recent editions was reaching the quarter-finals in 2017. The current roster changes underscore the unpredictable nature of sports and the importance of adaptability in team competitions.

As the tournament unfolds, all eyes will be on how the Indian team navigates these challenges and whether the emerging players can rise to the occasion.

Eniola Bolaji: A Trailblazer in African Para-Badminton

Nigerian para-badminton star Eniola Bolaji has been honoured with the 2024 African Women in Badminton award, becoming the second Nigerian to receive this accolade after Obiageli Solaja in 2019.

At just 19, Bolaji's achievements are remarkable. In 2024, she made history by securing a bronze medal in the women's SL3 category at the Paris Paralympics, marking the first time an African athlete, male or female, has medaled in badminton at the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

Her momentum continued into 2025, clinching three international gold medals within the year's first quarter. She triumphed at the Egypt Para Badminton International in January, followed by consecutive victories at the Spanish Para Badminton International tournaments in March.

Bolaji's journey began in 2018 when she transitioned from para-table tennis to para-badminton under the guidance of her late coach, Bello Rafiu Oyebanji. His mentorship laid the foundation for her rapid ascent in the sport.

With an unbroken streak of 12 international championship victories over the past two years, Bolaji stands as a beacon of inspiration, not just in Nigeria but across the African continent.





QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q - Why is a GRSA certification good for me?

A - When a stringer shows a GRSA certification, this is a clear sign that they have received the best training currently available and will provide a professionally balanced service.

Q - What makes GRSA stand out from the rest?

A - GRSA is a globally recognised association that includes some of the best and most knowledgeable Professionals, Master Stringers and Grand Master Stringers in the industry, this means the knowledge base is incomparable.

Q - What does GRSA teach its certified stringers?

A - GRSA teaches the importance of looking after the player, from the basics to the most intricate of details. How to provide accurate information, how to help improve and guide each individual.

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