

GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

JANUARY - 2025

CIAO Maestro

Rino Tommasi dies aged 90

United Cup - USA Rule

Iga shares her progress

Sinner & Keys
Shine bright



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Taylor Fritz and Coco Gauff delivered clutch performances in singles to secure the United States' second United Cup title in three years.

Coco Gauff set the stage with a stunning 6-4, 6-4 victory over Iga Swiatek in front of an electrified Ken Rosewall Arena crowd. Fritz then sealed the triumph with a nail-biting 6-4, 5-7, 7-6(4) win over Hubert Hurkacz in a serve-heavy battle featuring 30 aces and just three break points.

The top-seeded Americans started their campaign strong in Perth, dominating Group A. Both Gauff and Fritz carried their exceptional form into the event, showcasing the prowess that defined their standout seasons. Gauff shone with a title run at the WTA Finals, including a victory over Swiatek, while Fritz capped his year as a finalist at the Nitto ATP Finals.

Gauff, ranked No. 3 in the WTA Rankings, went undefeated in her five singles matches, not dropping a single set. Fritz, ranked at a career-high No. 4, rebounded from an early loss to Felix Auger-Aliassime in Perth, winning four straight matches to anchor Team USA's success.

"It's amazing," Fritz shared after the victory. "It's almost more fun to win team events because you have people to celebrate with afterward. Coco made it easy for me as the MVP on the team; it definitely helped my job a lot, and it's great to get this title again."

Gauff added, "It's great to win a team event—this is the only one I've ever won, so I'm super excited."

In a marquee clash between two of the world's best, Gauff overcame No. 2 Swiatek for the second consecutive time, following her triumph at the WTA Finals. The victory highlighted Swiatek's runner-up finish at the United Cup for the second straight year.

Gauff has been closing the head-to-head gap with Swiatek, who previously dominated their meetings. Key improvements in Gauff's serve and forehand, following the addition of coach Matt Daly after the US Open, were pivotal to her success. These adjustments were on full display as Gauff repeated her powerful and precise play that had brought her success earlier in the season.

"I believe I'm one of the best players in the world, and when I play good tennis, I'm hard to beat," Gauff said. "Today, I think I played some great tennis. I'm glad I was able to get a point for Team USA. It wasn't easy out there, but I'm proud of how I handled it."

The Gauff-Swiatek showdown thrilled fans with a 1-hour, 52-minute display of high-intensity tennis. The American struck first with a forehand volley to break for a 2-0 lead, only for Swiatek to storm back with three straight games. However, Gauff's superior consistency, coupled with Swiatek's 19 unforced errors in the opening set, helped her claim four of the next five games to take the first set.

The second set was no less dramatic, with Gauff overcoming a double fault on break point and fighting through a tense 10-minute game to level at 4-4. Her relentless counter-punching forced another break, and she sealed the victory with a perfectly executed forehand pass.

Gauff's flawless United Cup debut included wins over Leylah Fernandez, Donna Vekic, Zhang Shuai, and Karolina Muchova. Swiatek, who finished the tournament with a 4-1 record, earned wins over Malena Helgø, Muchova, Katie Boulter, and Elena Rybakina.



Australian Team Culture - Aiava's View

Emerging tennis talent Destanee Aiava has spoken candidly about her challenging experience with Australia's United Cup team, revealing she felt disconnected while representing her nation in green and gold.

Although Aiava expressed her admiration for the tournament itself, her assessment of the team dynamic was starkly critical. Sharing her experience in a 28-minute YouTube video titled *"my honest experience and review of the week I had,"* the 24-year-old did not shy away from discussing what she described as a "weird and hostile" atmosphere within the Australian squad.

"So far, I've had a good time at the event itself," Aiava shared during Australia's campaign. "Regarding our team, yeah, it's not felt so welcoming." She punctuated the word "team" with finger quotes, underscoring her feeling that the event lacked the unity she had anticipated in a team competition.

Aiava, ranked World No. 194, rated her experience a disheartening "2 out of 10," comparing the team's culture unfavourably to that of other nations. "I understand that we're in a competitive environment, but I thought being in a team, playing a team event, it would feel a bit different," she explained.

She went on, "It's not team-based at all; we pretty much just do whatever we want, by ourselves. And then, when everyone has to play, that's when we all come together as a 'team.'" Despite joking about potential backlash, Aiava remained resolute in her decision to speak openly.

Reflecting on her interactions with teammates, which included Alex de Minaur, Matthew Ebden, and Ellen Perez, Aiava described the camaraderie as minimal. "There's been, at most, two people that I've actually properly conversed with on the team, maybe three," she admitted, highlighting her sense of isolation.

Adding to her frustrations, Aiava noted her lack of involvement in live matches during the tournament. "I'm just going to go train again today," she remarked before a pivotal tie against Great Britain. "Because that's all I'm good for this week."

Australia's campaign ended in disappointment after losing three of their first five matches, failing to secure a quarter-finals berth following a decisive defeat in mixed doubles.

Looking ahead to her next challenge, Aiava reflected on the week's impact on her preparation. "This week wasn't the best prep for AO," she said. "In fact, it could have been the worst prep I've ever had, match-wise. So it's fair to say I won't ever be entering United Cup again unless I'm the No. 1 player—at least that way, I'll be guaranteed a match. Though I suppose that's on me."

Despite her criticism of the team environment, Aiava acknowledged the positives of the tournament. "Everything else was good, besides the actual team camaraderie," she concluded. "Would I recommend it to others? If you're the No. 1 person on your team, go for it. If not, run for your life."

Iga Swiatek Shares the Effect of Working with Psychologist Daria

Iga Swiatek recently opened up about her month-long break from professional tennis, which came in the wake of a doping scandal. After an unexpected early exit at the US Open, the Polish star took a step back from competition, navigating a turbulent period with the help of her psychologist, Daria Abramowicz.

Swiatek faced scrutiny after testing positive for the banned substance trimetazidine. She accepted a one-month suspension from the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA), a decision that coincided with a major shift in her coaching team. Swiatek parted ways with Tomasz Wiktorowski and welcomed Wim Fissette as her new coach.

Rumours suggested that Daria Abramowicz influenced this coaching change, but Swiatek dismissed such claims during a candid discussion on the Tennis Insider Club podcast. Instead, she praised Abramowicz's pivotal role during this challenging time.

“Daria understood that she wanted me to figure things out myself,” Swiatek shared. “But I found myself stuck in a cycle of worrying about money and sponsorships. Eventually, she gently nudged me, saying, ‘This isn’t the right path for you, and there are greater successes yet to achieve in life.’”

Swiatek also described how Abramowicz supported her through the isolation of her suspension. “I managed to refocus my energy, which allowed me to get back to working on the court instead of being stuck behind a laptop,” she explained, emphasising the profound impact of her psychologist’s guidance.

This perspective counters allegations made by former Polish footballer Jan Tomaszewski, who had previously accused Abramowicz of orchestrating Wiktorowski’s dismissal.

Swiatek has since made an impressive return to competition, finishing as runner-up at the United Cup. She is now looking ahead to the next Grand Slam with optimism and a reinvigorated mindset.

Adding a personal touch to Swiatek’s journey, Abramowicz recently shared a heartfelt tribute on Instagram. Posting a collage of moments from the past year, she included a photo of a tattoo on her upper arm—a design featuring the Eiffel Tower and the date of Swiatek’s fourth triumph, symbolizing her pride in the player’s achievements. “What a year. So proud,” Abramowicz wrote in the caption.

With new coach Wim Fissette and the continued support of Abramowicz, Iga Swiatek is ready to take on the challenges ahead as she sets her sights on reclaiming Grand Slam glory.

A New Chapter: Andy Murray Joins Novak Djokovic's Coaching Team

Tennis icons Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray have joined forces, with Murray stepping into a coaching role for Djokovic ahead of the Australian Open. Having retired from competitive tennis last year, Murray is now channeling his expertise into mentoring Djokovic during the Australian leg of the 2025 tennis season.

Murray was notably absent from Djokovic's Brisbane International campaign but was spotted courtside in Melbourne, overseeing a high-energy training session at Margaret Court Arena. Djokovic, preparing for another Grand Slam push, was joined on the practice court by a special sparring partner, Carlos Alcaraz, in a rigorous session marked by intensity and precision.

The news of this unexpected collaboration first broke in November, leaving fans stunned. Djokovic's decision to bring one of his fiercest former rivals into his coaching team reflects his focus on revitalizing his game after a challenging season. The Serbian star is seeking to rebound following a year where he fell short of adding to his Grand Slam tally.

In a recent interview, Djokovic shed light on the process behind recruiting Murray. "I spent about six months thinking deeply about whether I needed a coach and, if so, who that coach should be," Djokovic revealed. "We considered various options, and I realized I needed someone who truly understands the pressures and challenges I'm facing. Andy's name came up during discussions, and it just felt right."

At 37, Djokovic is chasing a record-breaking 25th Grand Slam title in Melbourne. The competition promises to be fierce, with Carlos Alcaraz and other rising stars poised to challenge him after securing significant victories in 2024.



Djokovic's partnership with Murray follows the departure of long-time coach Goran Ivanisevic. The two have a storied rivalry, having faced off 36 times during their playing careers, with Djokovic leading their head-to-head 25-11. Their battles included four Grand Slam finals between 2011 and 2016, all of which Djokovic won.

Murray's retirement came after an emotional farewell at the Paris Olympics, where injuries finally brought his illustrious playing career to a close. Despite their on-court rivalries, Djokovic and Murray have maintained a strong mutual respect, making this partnership an exciting new chapter for both.

As Djokovic embarks on his quest for tennis history in Melbourne, the addition of Murray to his team brings a unique blend of experience and insight, igniting curiosity and excitement among tennis fans worldwide.

Rafael Nadal Pays Tribute to Legendary Tennis Journalist Rino Tommasi

The tennis world is in mourning following the passing of Rino Tommasi, the revered Italian tennis journalist and commentator, who died at the age of 90. Tommasi, a giant in the world of sports journalism, left an indelible mark on the sport and is remembered fondly by players and fans alike.



Rafael Nadal, the former World No. 1 and 22-time Grand Slam champion, shared his condolences shortly after the news broke. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Nadal penned a heartfelt message:

"Today my thoughts are with Rino Tommasi @Rino_Tommasi and his family. Today one of the greats of tennis journalism passed away. A big hug to all my Italian friends. Rest in peace Rino" (translated from Italian).

Tommasi's distinctive voice was an integral part of some of Nadal's most memorable matches, as reported by Ubitennis. These included the electrifying 2005 Miami Open final and the legendary 2008 Wimbledon Championships final, where Nadal defeated Roger Federer in what is widely regarded as one of the greatest matches in tennis history.

Born in Verona in 1934, Tommasi initially pursued a career in tennis before transitioning into journalism. His career began at Tuttosport and later flourished at Gazzetta dello Sport and Il Tempo. Over the years, Tommasi provided commentary for an extraordinary 140 Grand Slam tournaments, becoming a household name in tennis circles.

His contributions to the sport were widely recognised, earning him the title of 'Tennis Writer of the Year' in 1982 and 1991. Nadal, who shared a special bond with Tommasi, expressed his admiration for the journalist on multiple occasions. In 2018, Nadal marked Tommasi's 84th birthday with a touching Instagram post, saying, "Happy birthday to Mr. Tommasi. I wish you well" (translated from Italian).

As Nadal's own career nears its conclusion, his recent appearance at the 2024 Davis Cup Finals served as a poignant moment. Facing Botik van de Zandschulp of the Netherlands in what was his final singles match, Nadal received an emotional farewell, reflecting the immense respect he commands in the tennis world.

Rino Tommasi's legacy will endure as a pillar of tennis journalism, and his loss is deeply felt by the entire sporting community.

Emma Raducanu Reveals Significant Overhaul in Her Fitness Strategy Ahead of Australian Open

Emma Raducanu has shared insights into the substantial modifications she has made to her fitness strategy in a bid to elevate her on-court performance while minimizing injury risks as she prepared for the Australian Open. The former World No. 10 faced the 26th seed in her opening match.

A key change in Raducanu's approach has been the addition of renowned strength and conditioning coach Yutaka Nakamura, who recently joined her team.



Nakamura, a respected figure in the tennis community, has previously worked with elite players such as Jennifer Capriati and Maria Sharapova. Speaking at a press conference in Melbourne, Raducanu elaborated on the positive influence Nakamura has had on her regimen.

"I think having him in my camp has been a really good addition. He's helped me a lot just in terms of microdosing bits of fitness here and there throughout the day, tapering and managing my loads. I tend to be someone who's constantly pushing for more training, but having him there to adapt exercises or pull me back at times has been invaluable," she said.

The 2021 Grand Slam champion highlighted that Nakamura's extensive experience with top-tier players provides a significant advantage.

"He's also incredibly committed and reliable. Every day, I can expect stability in my training without any major surprises. His work with a lot of experienced players, along with his belief in me, has really made a difference," she added.

Having dealt with injuries in recent seasons, including back and wrist problems, Raducanu underwent surgeries on her ankle and wrists. After her recovery, she faced another setback with a foot injury, prompting her decision to bring Nakamura on board for long-term support.

Discussing the evolution of her fitness and warm-up routines, Raducanu explained:

"Building a robust body is an ongoing journey. It's not about setting a timeline to be a top athlete; even at the peak, there are always improvements to pursue. However, I can already sense a difference in how I feel upon stepping onto the court."

Expressing her trust in Nakamura to help unlock her full potential, Raducanu said:

"I believe I'm quite reactive and explosive, which stems from my warm-ups being more like intensive sessions rather than just routine warm-ups. When I step on the court, I feel prepared to compete. I have faith in his expertise and decisions."

First round defeat for Stefano



Greek tennis star Stefanos Tsitsipas has suffered a surprising early exit from the Australian Open, losing in the first round to American Alex Michelsen with scores of 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

Tsitsipas, who reached the final in Melbourne in 2023, had withdrawn from the doubles competition—where he was set to partner with his brother, Petros—to concentrate on his singles campaign. Reflecting on his decision, Tsitsipas remarked, "It's quite ironic. My whole idea was to try to go deep. I knew the first thing I had to consider was not playing doubles... I guess karma hit me."

The 26-year-old's recent Grand Slam performances have been underwhelming, with early exits in the past few tournaments. He acknowledged the frustration of having ample time before his next event, stating, "The most frustrating part about losing in the first round of a Grand Slam is that you have way too much time to recover."

Michelsen, ranked 42nd in the world, achieved a significant milestone with this victory, marking his first win over a top-20 player at a major tournament. He attributed his success to maintaining composure and executing his game plan effectively.

Tsitsipas's unexpected departure from the tournament has disappointed fans who had anticipated a deep run from the Greek player. He now faces a period of reflection and preparation before his next competition.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN: NICK KYRGIOS CRASHES OUT IN STRAIGHT SETS AGAINST JACOB FEARNLEY

Nick Kyrgios' Australian Open comeback ended abruptly as he fell in straight sets to Jacob Fearnley.

A rowdy crowd packed into John Cain Arena for the first-round clash, with Kyrgios—Wimbledon runner-up in a previous season—making his highly anticipated return to his home Grand Slam after an extended absence.



In just his third Tour-level singles match in over a year, Kyrgios lost 7-6 (7-3), 6-3, 7-6 (7-2) to Britain's Fearnley.

Kyrgios, who entered the tournament unranked, appeared to struggle with an abdominal issue early in the match and required a medical timeout. Despite pushing two sets to tie-breaks, he couldn't turn the tide against his opponent. Fearnley, who climbed significantly in the rankings over the past season to break into the top 100, claimed only the third ATP Tour-level victory of his career.

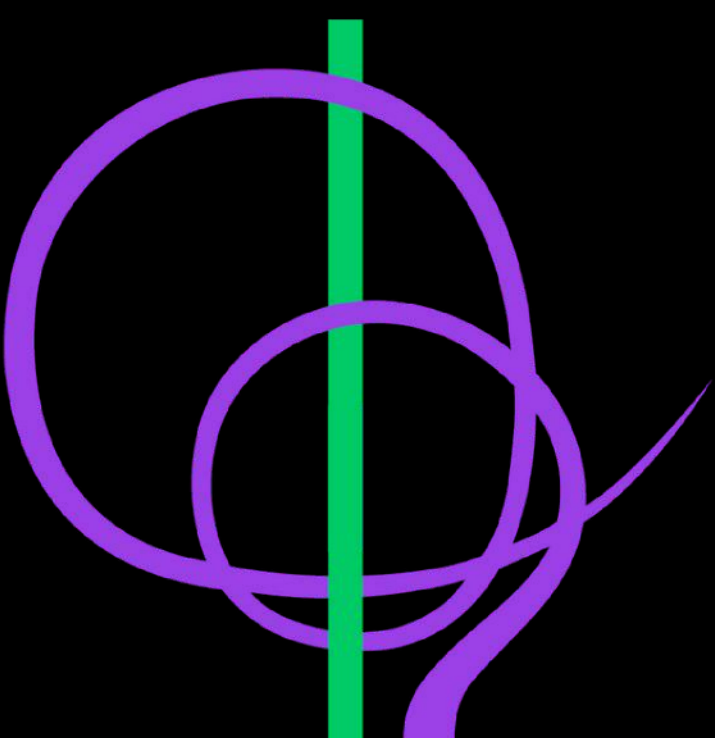
Kyrgios was not the only big name to suffer injury woes at Melbourne Park, as Grigor Dimitrov, the 10th seed, had to withdraw during his match against Francesco Passaro.

Data Debrief: No Luck for Nick

Kyrgios had the crowd firmly in his corner, but Fearnley handled the pressure superbly, controlling his side of the court and securing a rare opening-round defeat for Kyrgios.

This marked just Kyrgios' second first-round exit at the Australian Open in his career. His previous early exit came at the hands of Milos Raonic.

Facing British players has also proven challenging for Kyrgios, with this loss adding to his unfavourable record of 5-10 against them. It was, however, his first Grand Slam defeat to a British player outside of his meetings with Andy Murray.



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Jannik Sinner Defends Australian Open Title, Cementing His Place Among Tennis Greats

Arms raised in triumph, Jannik Sinner defended his Australian Open title in commanding fashion, defeating world No. 2 Alexander Zverev 6-3, 7-6(4), 6-3 in a near-flawless performance under the lights of Rod Laver Arena. With this victory, Sinner claimed his third Grand Slam title and extended his unbeaten streak on hard courts in major tournaments to 21 matches.

The 23-year-old world No. 1 showcased extraordinary consistency, anticipation, and mental fortitude to outplay Zverev in a high-stakes final. In doing so, Sinner became just the eighth man in the Open Era to win his first three Grand Slam finals, joining an elite group that includes Roger Federer, Bjorn Borg, and Rafael Nadal.

A Final of Precision and Composure

Sinner wasted no time asserting his dominance, breaking Zverev's serve early in the first set with incredible corner-to-corner defense and a deft forehand pass. Despite Zverev landing an impressive 81% of his first serves, the German was unable to gain a single break point opportunity—a testament to Sinner's clinical return game.

The second set offered glimpses of Zverev's fightback, with both players producing high-quality rallies, including a memorable 21-shot exchange that ended with Sinner's perfectly placed backhand pass. Ultimately, a tie-break decided the set, where Sinner's relentless pressure and a touch of luck—his forehand clipping the net for a decisive point—proved insurmountable.

The final set saw Sinner continue to outmaneuver Zverev, breaking serve once more and closing out the match with his signature inside-out forehand.





Sinner's Rising Legacy

Sinner's victory further solidifies his status as the most dominant player on hard courts today. He is the first man to defend his maiden Grand Slam title since Rafael Nadal achieved the feat at Roland Garros in 2005-06. He also tied the record for the most wins by a world No. 1 in their first 50 matches, matching legends Bjorn Borg and Jimmy Connors with 47 victories.

Despite his remarkable achievements, the Italian remains focused on improving his performance across all surfaces. While he's mastered the hard courts, his best results at Roland Garros and Wimbledon have been semi-final appearances. "You have to be a complete player," Sinner remarked post-match, expressing his determination to conquer clay and grass courts in the future.

Zverev's Heartbreak and Grace in Defeat

For Zverev, the loss marks his third defeat in a Grand Slam final, a bitter pill for the 27-year-old German. Reflecting on the match, Zverev praised Sinner, likening his dominance to Novak Djokovic in his prime. "He's better than me right now, especially on hard courts," Zverev admitted.

Despite the heartbreak, Zverev remains committed to breaking through for his first major title. "I don't want to end my career as the best player to never win a Grand Slam," he said, vowing to continue his quest for Grand Slam glory.

Looking Ahead

As Sinner celebrates another milestone in his meteoric rise, the question now is whether he can extend his dominance to other surfaces and further cement his legacy as a modern great. Meanwhile, Zverev will regroup and refocus, determined to finally achieve his long-awaited Grand Slam breakthrough.

One thing is certain: the Sinner era has arrived, and his rivals will have to bring their absolute best to keep pace with the Italian prodigy.

Madison Keys Wins First Grand Slam Title, Defeats Aryna Sabalenka in Australian Open 2025 Final

In a thrilling showdown under the lights of Rod Laver Arena, Madison Keys claimed her maiden Grand Slam title, defeating two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka 6-3, 2-6, 7-5. The victory marks a career-defining moment for the 29-year-old American, who first reached a Grand Slam semifinal at this very venue eight years ago.

“I’ve wanted this for so long,” an emotional Keys said, holding the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup. “To win my first Grand Slam here, where my journey to the top level began, means the absolute world to me. I cannot wait for more.”

The final, which lasted two hours and two minutes, showcased spectacular tennis from both competitors. Keys’ powerful baseline play produced 29 winners, including the decisive inside-out forehand on championship point. Meanwhile, Sabalenka fought valiantly, delivering moments of brilliance that kept the packed stadium on edge.

Historic Achievement for Keys

With this win, Keys became the first player since Serena Williams in 2005 to defeat the top two seeds at the Australian Open. She is also the fourth-oldest first-time Grand Slam champion in history, achieving her dream at her 46th major appearance.

“It’s been a long road,” Keys reflected. “There were times I didn’t think I’d get back here, but my team believed in me when I didn’t believe in myself. This trophy is for them too.”

The win propels Keys from world No. 14 to No. 7, matching her career-high ranking from 2016.

How the Match Unfolded

Keys dominated the opening set with aggressive play, breaking Sabalenka twice and using her slice backhand to disrupt the Belarusian’s rhythm. She sealed the set with a blistering backhand down the line, sending the American fans into a frenzy.

Sabalenka, however, showed her champion’s resolve in the second set. Using her trademark power and tactical drop shots, she broke Keys twice and stormed to a 6-2 set victory to force a decider.

The third set was a display of heart-stopping tennis, with both players raising their level. Keys delivered clutch serves and devastating returns in the key moments, and after a tense final game, she secured the match with a forehand winner that will be etched in her memory forever.

“You’re always so tough to play,” Keys said to Sabalenka during the trophy ceremony. “Congratulations to you and your team for another amazing Grand Slam run.”

Sabalenka's Grit and Grace

Sabalenka, the world No. 1, fought fiercely in her bid to win a third consecutive Australian Open title. Though she fell short, she remains at the pinnacle of the WTA rankings.

"I'll come back stronger," Sabalenka promised. "Madison, you played unbelievable tennis tonight. Next time, I'll bring my better game."

Sabalenka is the first player since Serena Williams in 2017 to reach three consecutive Australian Open finals, cementing her legacy as one of the most consistent performers in the sport.

Looking Ahead

Keys' triumph is not just a personal milestone but a statement to the tennis world. Her journey from a 14-year-old prodigy to a Grand Slam champion underscores her perseverance and resilience.

As for Sabalenka, her performance solidifies her place as a dominant force in women's tennis, and fans can expect her to come back hungrier than ever.

The Australian Open 2025 final will be remembered as a battle of determination, skill and heart, a true celebration of tennis at its finest.





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Daniil Medvedev Loses Cool: Racket Smash and Camera Incident During Australian Open.

In a gripping encounter at the Australian Open, three-time finalist Daniil Medvedev showed that even the best can crack under pressure. During his first-round match against Thailand's Kasidit Samrej, Medvedev's composure unraveled after he missed a crucial volley at the net, leading to an outburst of frustration that saw him smash his racket against the court and inadvertently damage a nearby camera.

The 5th seed found himself in a precarious position, dropping two of the first three sets to his unseeded opponent. Initially, Medvedev praised his 23-year-old rival, but as the match wore on, his frustration became increasingly evident as his game faltered.

After losing the third set 3-6, the Russian star regained his composure, responding emphatically to dominate the final two sets. Medvedev ultimately emerged victorious with a hard-fought score of 6-2, 4-6, 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, completing the match in just over three hours.

This isn't the first time Medvedev's temper has taken center stage. Despite widespread recognition for his exceptional skills, his career has been marked by moments of frustration and on-court outbursts, including arguments with umpires and frequent racket smashes.

One of his more infamous episodes occurred at a previous Grand Slam, where Medvedev incited backlash by flipping off the crowd following a heated match against a compatriot. The incident drew widespread criticism, although he later issued an apology. Confrontations with officials over contentious calls have also dotted his career.



In recent years, however, Medvedev has demonstrated significant growth in emotional management. He has spoken openly about the importance of maintaining composure and has made strides toward balancing his fiery personality with professionalism. While moments of frustration still surface, many note that this maturation has been crucial to his sustained success at the top level of tennis. Unfortunately he went out in the next round to Learner Tien, an unseeded American who surprised a lot of people who hadn't really heard of him, they didn't even have him on their radar.....they do now!

Fourth round Upset, Rybakina Exit After 3 Set Thriller.

In a stunning upset at the Australian Open, sixth seed Elena Rybakina suffered a disappointing exit following a hard-fought battle against 19th-seeded Madison Keys. The American triumphed 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 on Margaret Court Arena, extending her impressive winning streak to nine matches.

Rybakina, a former Wimbledon champion and Melbourne finalist, had been battling a back injury sustained earlier in the tournament. While she showcased her trademark power and composure in a dominant second set, the Kazakh star struggled to sustain her form against Keys' relentless aggression in the decider.



Reflecting on the match, Rybakina expressed her frustration:

“It’s never easy to play when you’re not at 100%, but that’s part of the sport. I gave everything I had, but today wasn’t my day. Madison played really well, especially in the key moments.”

Keys, who has been in scintillating form this season, praised her opponent while relishing her own success:

“Elena is an incredible player; she’s proven that time and again. I knew I had to bring my best game to compete with her. I’m really happy with how I managed to stay aggressive and take my chances when they came.”

Rybakina’s early exit marks a disappointing end to her campaign, particularly given her previous success at this tournament. The 25-year-old had reached the final in Melbourne two years ago and was widely regarded as one of the favorites this year.

Keys, now surging with confidence, advances to the quarter-finals, where she will face Ukraine’s Elina Svitolina. Svitolina booked her spot with a commanding victory over Veronika Kudermetova, winning 6-4, 6-1.



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FUN FACTS

“You’ve got to take off your shoes, climb the tree to its highest point and hang upside down on the highest branch for 33 minutes and three seconds and you’re going to win a Slam.”

Novak Djokovic, AO 24

1 Even though it's winter almost everywhere, Australia's weather is reciprocal. Since it is located on the southern hemisphere, it's currently summer down under. Australia welcomes winter around June and July. The summers in Australia are fierce, where temperatures during the day often manage to creep above the 40-degree centigrade mark.

Such conditions make it extremely difficult for players to remain hydrated and keep up their energy levels. A few years ago, a small change in the policy was made in regards to the scorching heat and unbearable temperatures. According to the new rule, if temperatures rise above 40-degree centigrade, the game pauses.

2 Martina Hingis holds the record for being the youngest ever Australian Open Championship winner. She began playing professionally at the age of 15 and managed to win herself the championship title just a year down the road.

3 Not only 50,000 balls are used every year at the AO, more than 300 boys and girls are selected to volunteer on the courts. More so, the attendance of spectators is usually so high, they end up consuming around 160,000 ice-creams and 75,000 hotdogs.

4 What makes tennis extremely interesting is the fact that, unlike football, it doesn't have a time limit. It all depends on how long it takes competing players to win. In 2012, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic put on a show that lasted around 5 hours and 53 mins. The match ended with Nadal losing to Djokovic by 7-5.

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Parnell Knot - 2012, Parnell Academy - 2016, Parnell Language Services - 2016



In 2022 GRSA was launched



In 2024



In 2025



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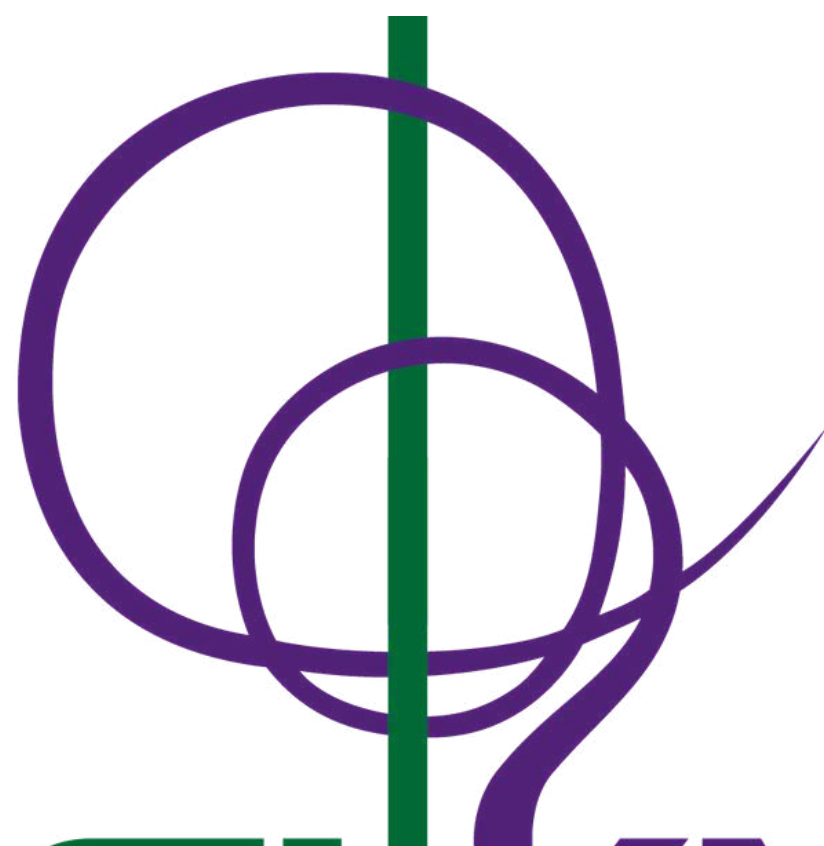
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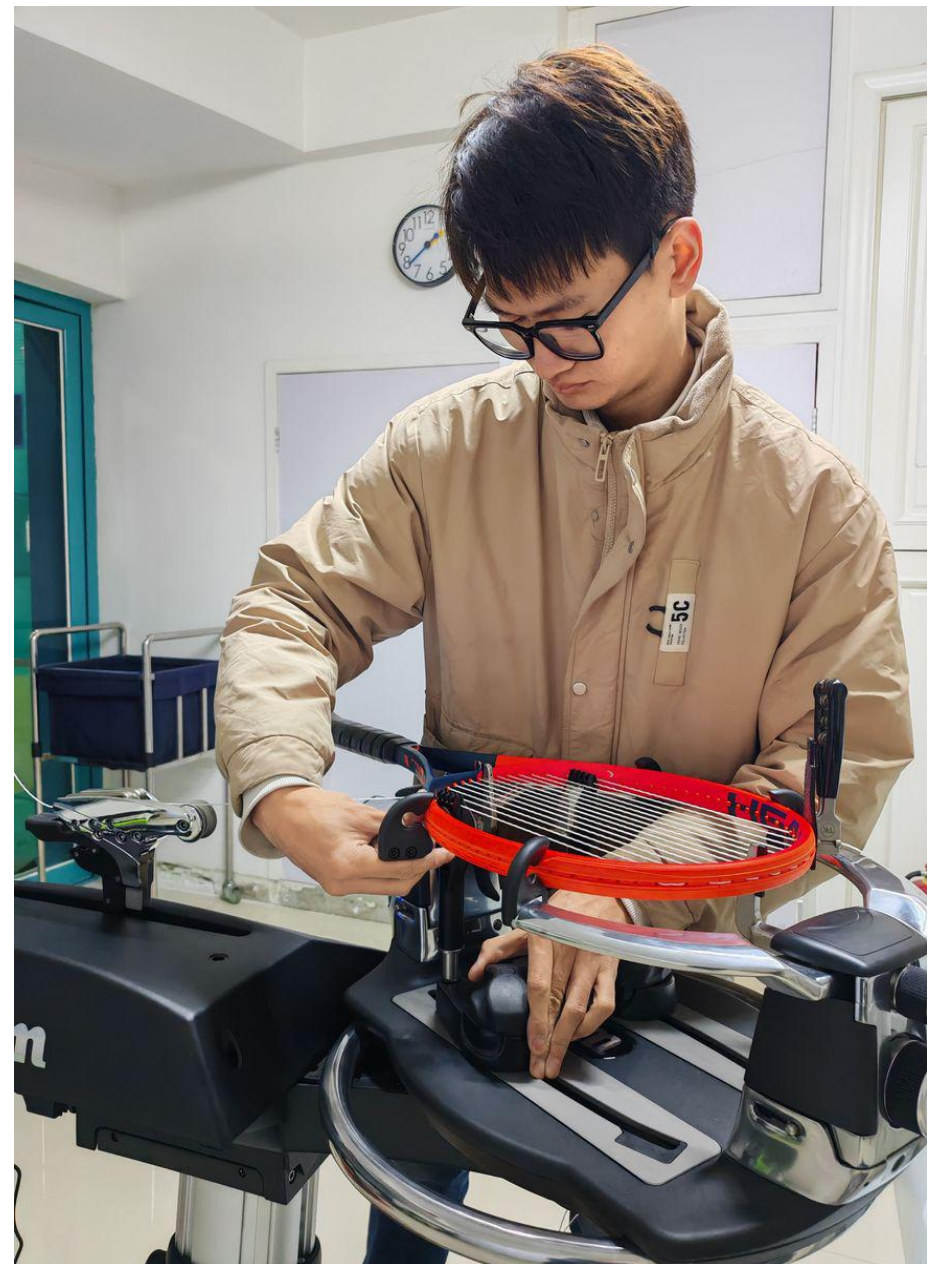
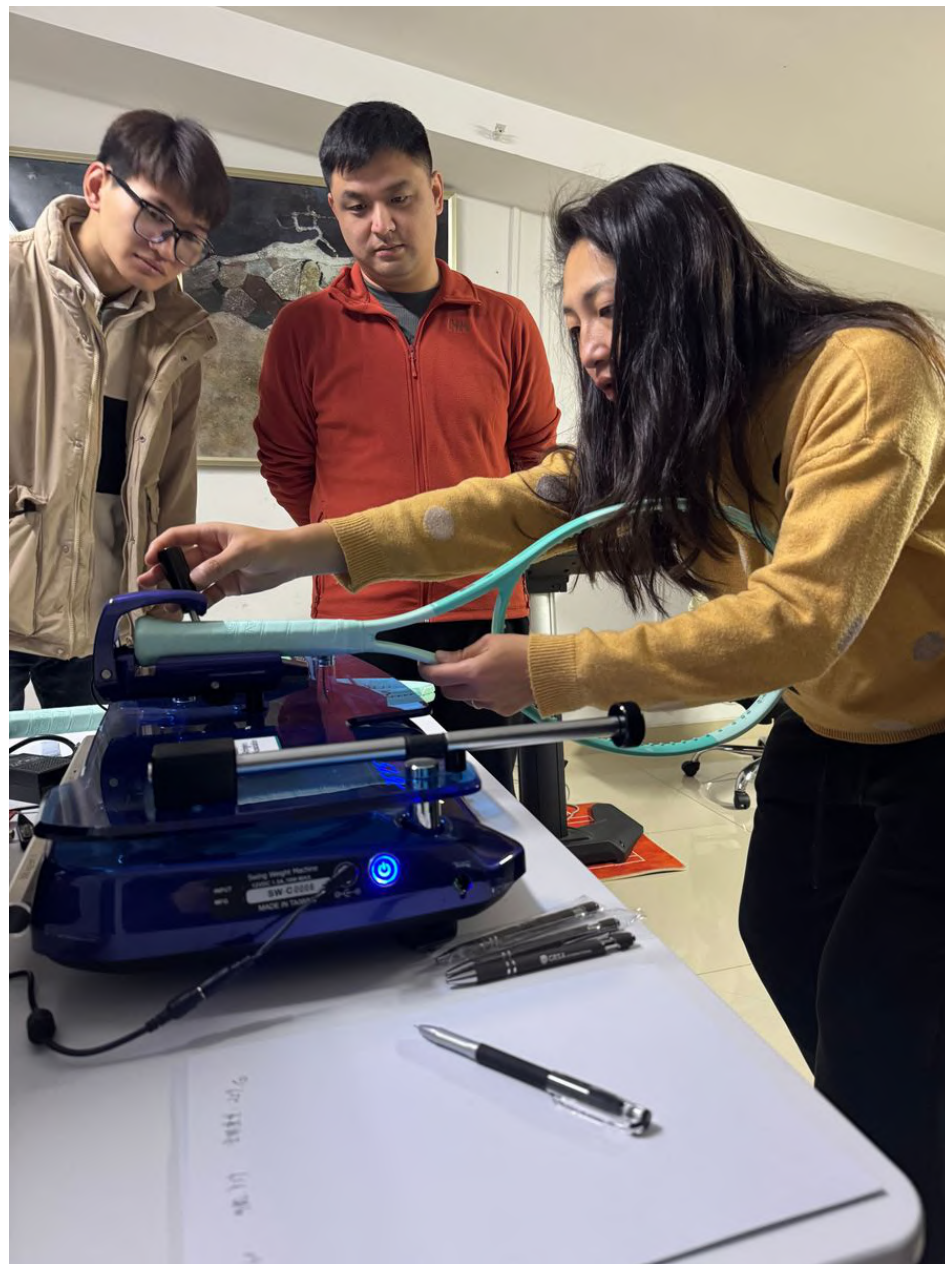
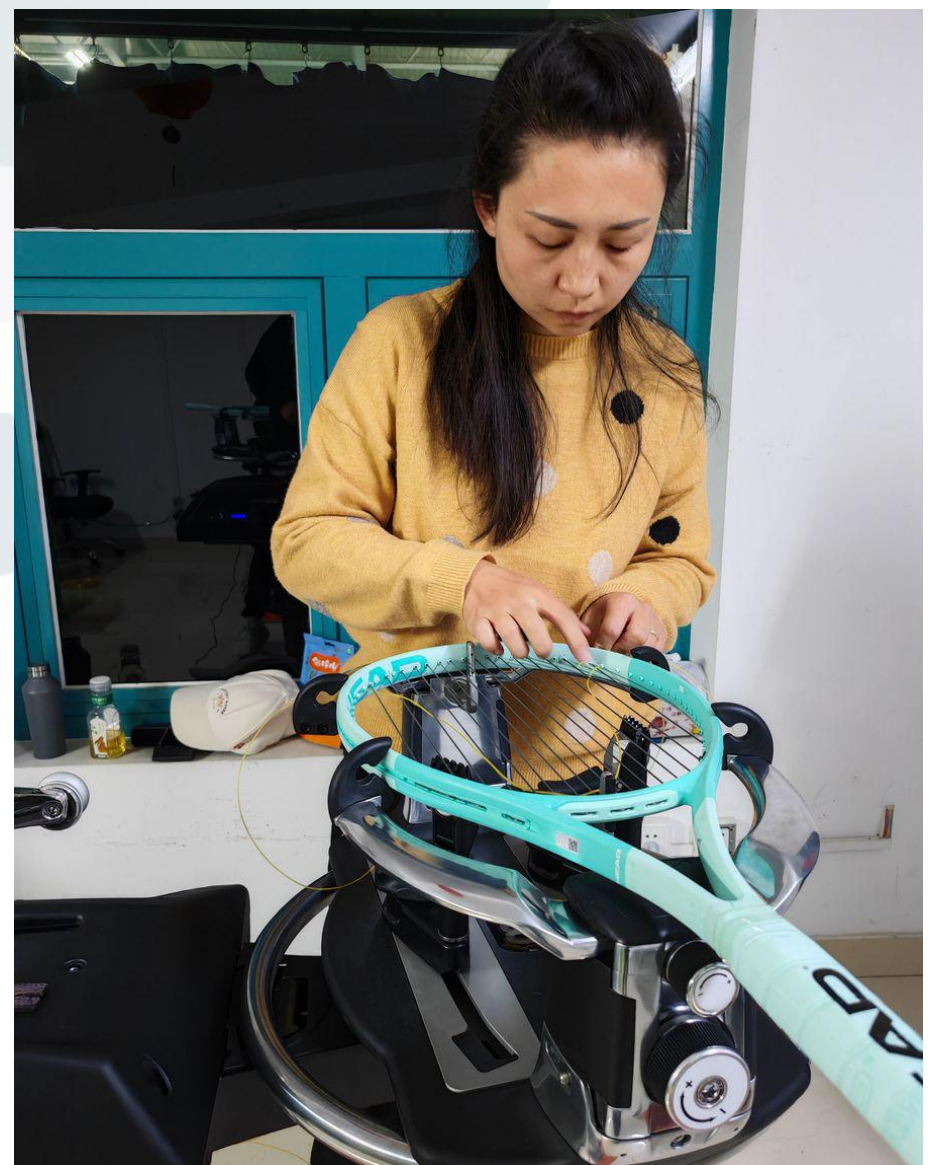
parnellknot.com

GRSA in Beijing - Workshop

GRSA held its first pro stringer and pro master stringer workshops of the year in Asia, in Beijing, China from 17 January to 19 January 2025. The workshop was given by our Asia Chief Instructor, Kenneth Leong from Singapore, assisted by our china liaison and Certified Pro Master Stringer, Ren Jia Chen.

Due to the upcoming Lunar New Year break, we were able to provide a more exclusive workshop with only seven participants, which made for a fantastic teacher to student ratio. We had an interesting profile of new members ranging from tennis club owners to retail store assistants who have a tremendous hunger for learning and upskilling. Topics covered during these workshops include the objectives of racket stringing, factors affecting string bed stiffness, racket customisation and all aspects of the certification examinations. Building on these few broad topics, we had very fruitful discussions and exchange of ideas over three days of intense learning.

At GRSA, we believe in maximising learning time and providing the best possible experience so that our participants have the confidence to string a racket independently and have the theoretical knowledge to guide them in racket service.



GRSA 于 2025 年 1 月 17 日至 1 月 19 日在中国北京举办了亚洲首届Pro Stringer 和Pro Master Stringer 的培训与认证考试。培训与认证考试由我们的亚洲首席讲师、来自新加坡的肯老师主持，并得到我们的中国区助理任家琛的鼎力协助。

由于即将到来的农历新年假期，我们有一个较短的时间来为培训班做宣传。我们一共有七名学员报名参加了这次的培训班。我们的新学员来自各行各业，从网球俱乐部主理人到零售店助理，他们都非常渴望学习和提升穿线技术。这次的培训班主要内容涵盖了球拍穿线的三大宗旨、影响线床网压的因素、球拍改装以及认证考试等项目。基于这几个广泛的项目，我们在三天的紧凑课程中进行了充分的交流和讨论。

在GRSA，我们相信最大化学习时间和最佳的学习体验，让学员们获得优秀的穿线和改装能力。









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As we plan the next edition of our annual conference this November, we're reaching out to you, our dedicated and vibrant community of professionals. Your insights and feedback are invaluable in helping us craft an event that's engaging, inspiring, and perfectly tailored to your interests. Let's work together to make this year's conference even better than the last.

Help Us Create the Ultimate Experience

We're committed to delivering an event that provides exceptional value to every attendee. From innovative workshops and expert-led presentations to the latest in tech and branding, we want to ensure that every aspect of the conference exceeds your expectations. What topics or trends would you like to see explored? Are there specific technologies, brands, or thought leaders you'd like us to include?

Accommodation and Travel Planning

Since the conference takes place in November, it's never too early to start planning your accommodations and travel. Availability at the resort will be limited, so we recommend booking your stay sooner rather than later to secure the best options. **Please contact us for discount codes and information.**

When it comes to flights, timing can make all the difference. Here are some tips to help you snag the best deals based on your location:

North America: Book domestic flights between 1-3 months in advance for the best prices. For international flights, aim for 2-8 months ahead.

Europe: Book flights within Europe 1-2 months in advance, while international flights are best booked 3-6 months prior.

Asia: For domestic flights, book 2-3 weeks in advance. For international routes, start looking at prices 4-8 months ahead.

Flight prices fluctuate based on demand, so set alerts on platforms like Google Flights or Skyscanner to track fare changes. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are often the best days to find deals, but it's always worth comparing across multiple sites.

We'd Love to Hear From You

This conference is for you, and your feedback is at the heart of its success. Please take a few moments to share your thoughts by clicking [here](#) to fill out our survey. Let us know what you loved about last year's event, what you'd like to see more of, and any fresh ideas you'd like to bring to the table.

Together, we can create an unforgettable experience that not only meets but exceeds expectations. Thank you for being an essential part of our community, and we can't wait to hear your ideas!

Let's make November's conference the best one yet!

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NICK DOWN
Talks

Standard Open-Throat Squash Racket

Having covered all the patterns on the non-standard list of squash rackets, this month I have turned to a typical open-throat racket that is standard.

Most, if not all, manufacturers have a standard open-throat racket. They normally have 14 mains that start at the throat and finish at the head. This type of racket is very common and makes up about 25 percent of the market.

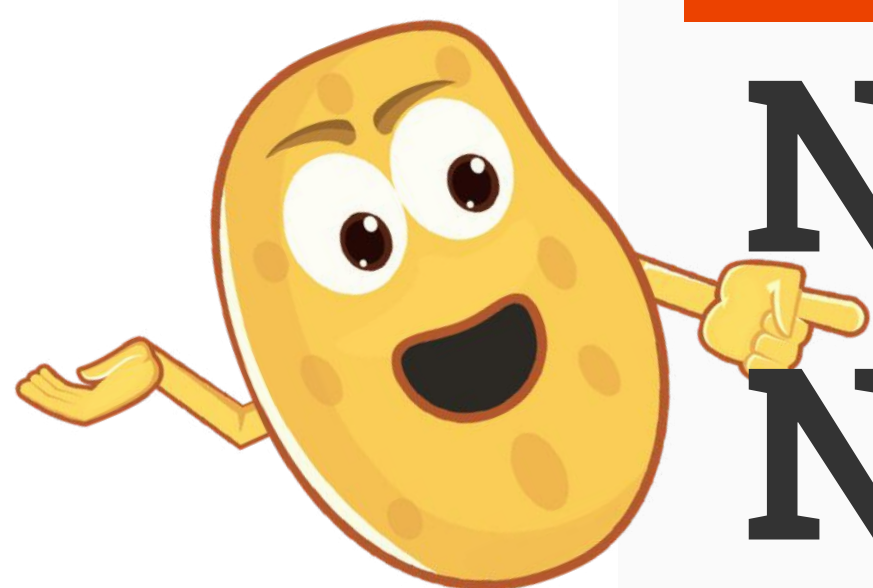
The one that will feature in this report is the Ashaway Venom X Flash. It has 14 mains and 18 cross strings.

It is normal to string this type of racket with one piece of string, therefore, with only two knots.

Normally, the stringer will designate the left side as the short side, as I usually do, but it will work out the other way too.

This type of racket is often incorrectly labelled as a closed-throat racket, this is frequently seen on many websites whereby less experienced people have inherited incorrect information. My view is that it can be quite simple, in a lot of cases. This type of racket has a shaft that splits in two and there is a bridge that holds the string, leaving a hole below the bridge, the size of the hole can vary and some of the open-throat rackets with smaller holes may require around the world (ATW) stringing if one-piece stringing is still to be used. If a racket has mains that finish at the throat, ATW should be used if stringing with 1 piece of string.

The standard open-throat racket, normally is typified by having a smaller head and greater control due to having two points where the head meets the shaft. This type of racket was sometimes called the pro shape, due to the level of control afforded to its user.



Nick's Nugget

Save time on the easy weave side, when stringing PowerRing, ArchPower, hinge and inverted bridge patterns. Pass the string through the mains at the throat.



This shape was, widely used by professional players. Some still use it, but it is seen less these days. With the wider use of mono-shafted rackets with long strings, the use of open-throat standard rackets has dropped to about 25 percent, which is still substantial.

Instructions:-

(Top 2 crosses on short side, long side starts from cross no.3 and then down).

LT1 to LH1, RT1 to RH1
RH1 to RH2, RH2 to RT2
RT2 to RT3, RT3 to RH3.
LH1 to LH2, LH2 to LT2, LT2 to LT3, LT3 to LH3, LH3 to LH4, LH4 to LT4, LT4 to LT5, LT5 to LH5, LH5 to LH6, LH6 to LT7, RH3 to RH4, RH4 to RT4, RT4 to RT5, RT5 to RH5, RH5 to RH6, RH6 to RT7, RT7 to RT9, RT9 to RH8, LT7 to LT9, LT9 to LH8.

(Crosses)

LH8 to LH9
LH9 to RH9
RH9 to RH7
RH7 to LH7
LH7 to LH5 and tie-off.
RH8 to RH10
RH10 to LH10
15 more crosses
Last cross is:-
LT6 to RT6
RT6 to RT7 and tie-off.



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What do you listen to when you're in the stringing room?

Click the logo to listen to my list

GRSA's Squash community mourns the loss of Lars Kvant, and from these pages we send our heartfelt condolences to his family following his passing at the age of 69 after a long illness.

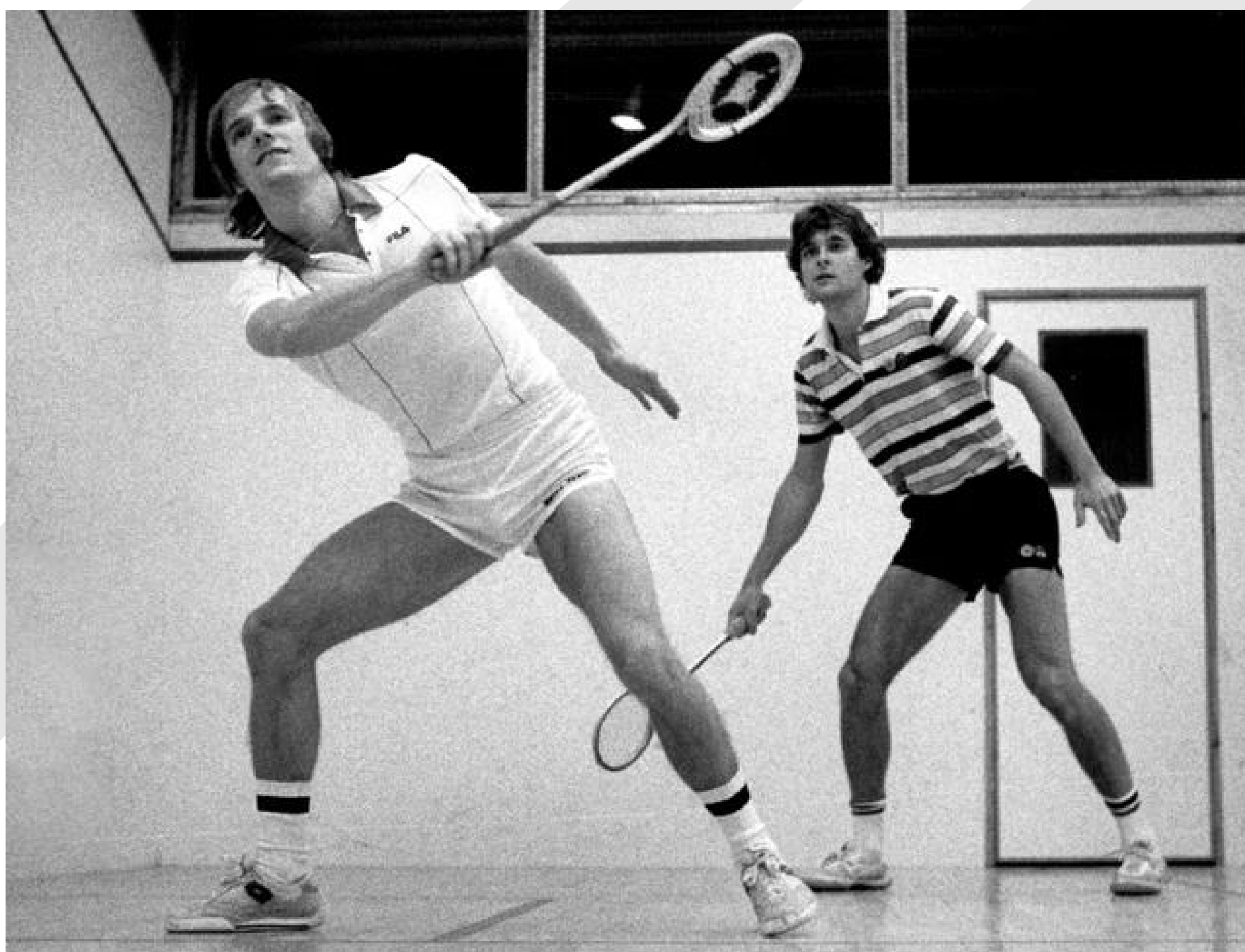
Lars was a prominent figure in squash, competing at the elite level from 1975 to 1985. During his career, he reached an impressive World No. 12 ranking, captured multiple Swedish national championships, and proudly represented Sweden at the European and World Team Championships. His remarkable achievements played a significant role in Sweden's golden era of squash.

Renowned for his tenacity, strategic brilliance, and a great sense of humor both on and off the court, Lars served as an inspiration to players in Sweden and beyond. His legacy as a fierce competitor and a cherished teammate endures.

Reflecting on Lars' remarkable journey, former teammate and rival Micke Hellström shared fond memories. "Not only was he lightning-fast and incredibly fit, but he also absolutely refused to give up, even when the situation seemed hopeless. I believe Lars' fearless confidence was one of the keys to his success," Hellström remarked.

He further reminisced about Lars' cheerful demeanor and playful nature, saying, "It was never dull with Lars in the team. Lars, we will never forget you and we miss you deeply."

Lars Kvant's contributions to squash and the lives he touched will be remembered fondly.



27 March 1955 – 14 January 2025

World No.1s Farag & Gohar Headline First Double Gold event in Houston at the Cotidie Texas Open 2025

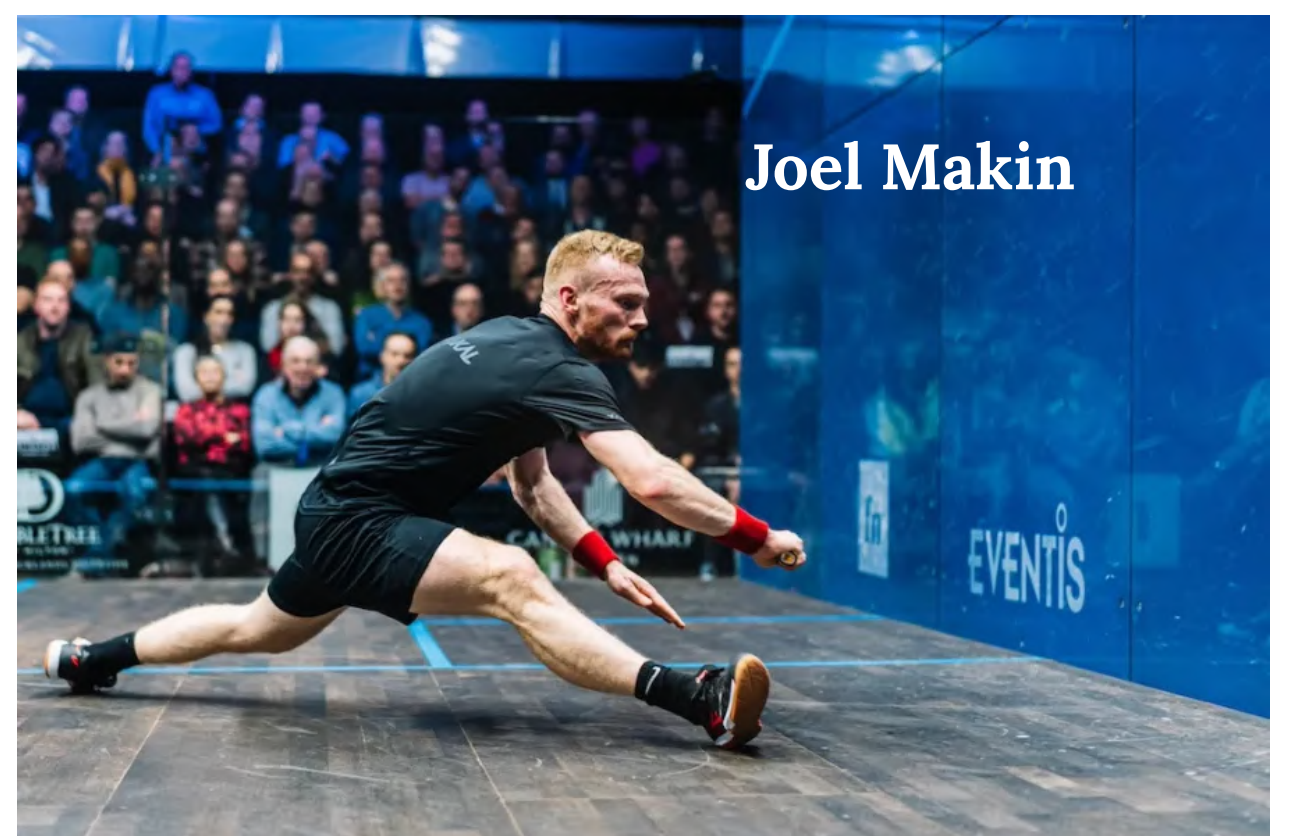
The stage is set for an electrifying start to the PSA Squash Tour Gold events in 2025 with the **Cotidie Texas Open**, taking place from **February 18–23** at the Houston Squash Club. The tournament will feature both men's and women's competitions for the first time, played across two state-of-the-art glass courts.

Top Seeds and Favourites

Men's Draw

World No. 1 **Ali Farag** leads the men's draw as the top seed. The two-time champion in Houston (2022 and 2024) aims to defend his unbeaten record in the Lone Star State while maintaining his grip on the world's top spot against a surging **Mostafa Asal**. Asal, the No. 2 seed, is eager to replicate his success from 2023, where his controversial semi-final win in Houston earned him his first World No. 1 ranking. With strong performances this season, he's closing in on Farag and has the chance to reclaim the coveted position in this event.

British standouts **Joel Makin** (No. 3) and **Mohamed Elshorbagy** (No. 4) are also strong contenders. Makin faces potential challenges from **Marwan Elshorbagy** in the quarterfinals and a likely semifinal clash with Asal. Meanwhile, **Mohamed Elshorbagy**, the 2023 finalist, is drawn in Farag's half and will aim to disrupt the defending champion's run.

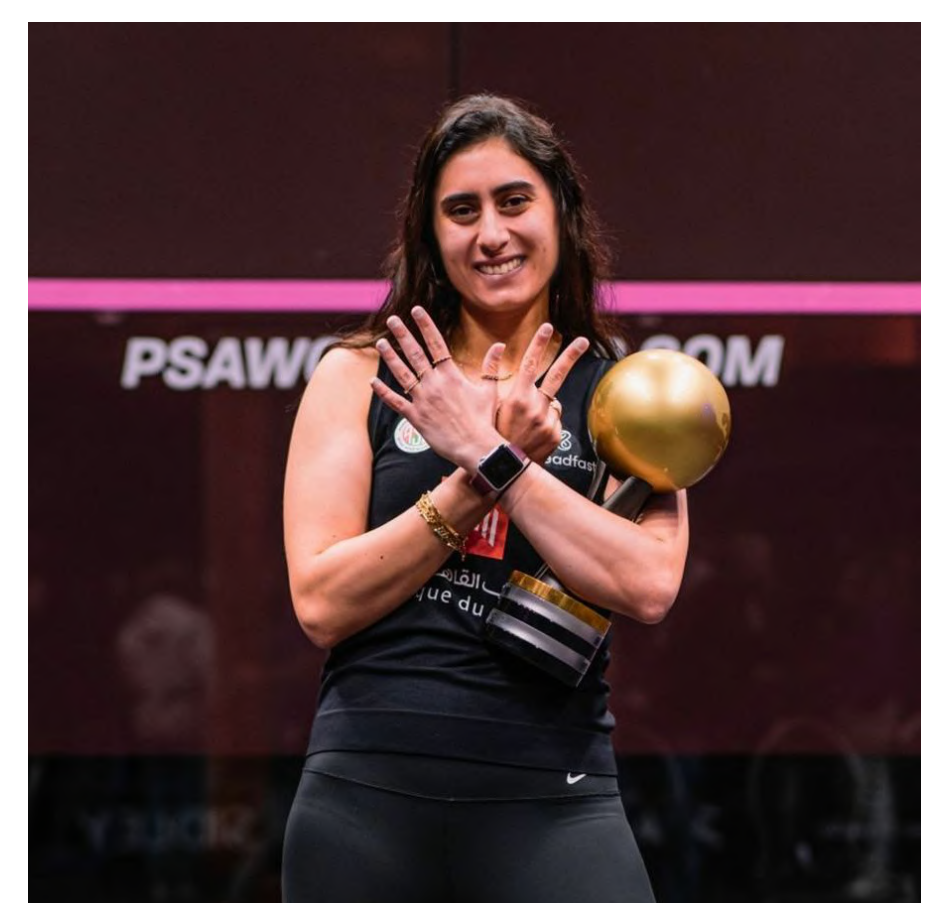


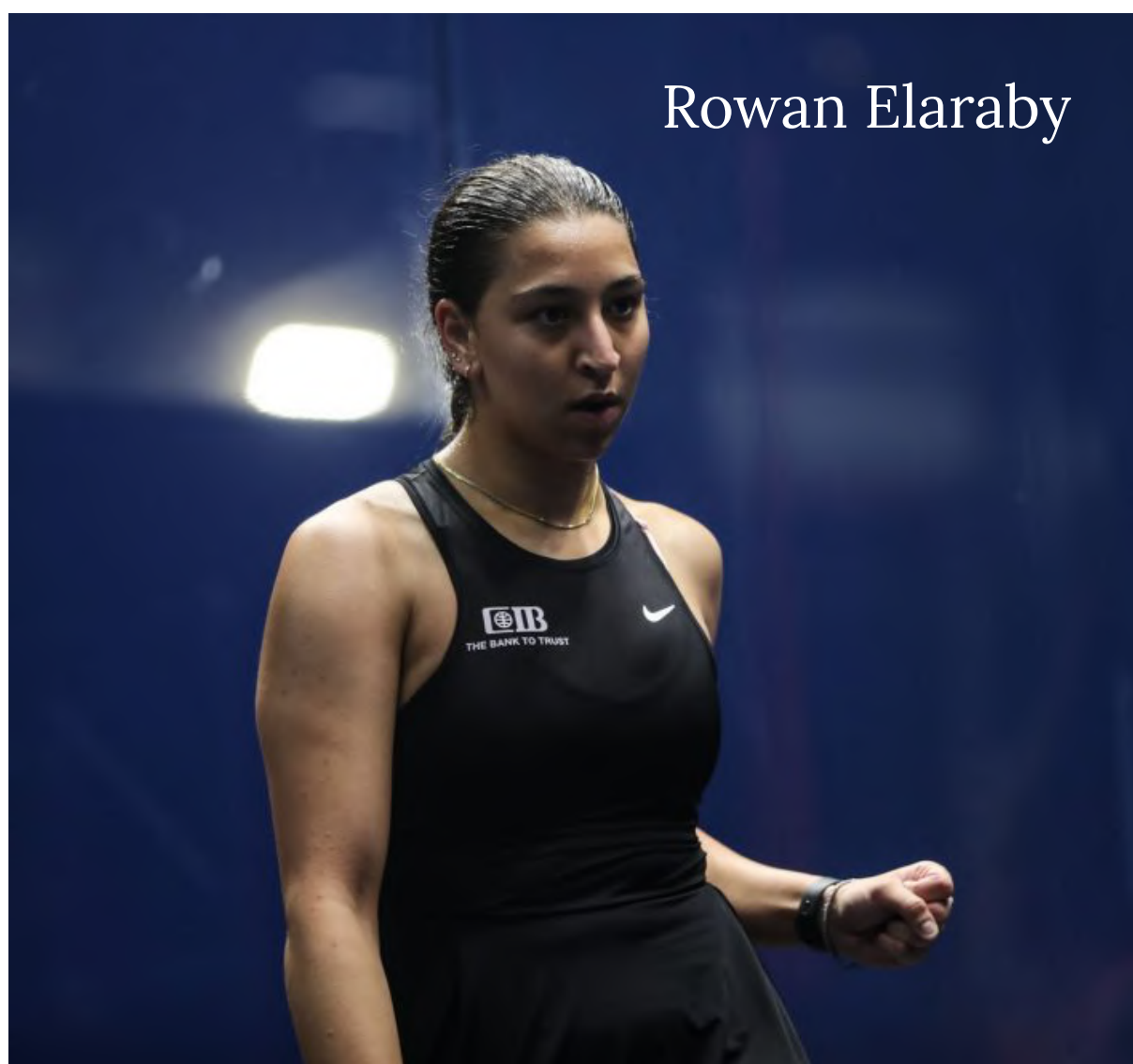
Other notable players include **Victor Crouin** and **Gregoire Marche**, who add depth to the competition and are poised to stage upsets.

Women's Draw

World No. 1 **Nouran Gohar** headlines the women's draw as the top seed. Gohar, who claimed the Houston crown in 2022, has had a strong finish to 2024 and will seek to start the new year with a title defense. Her likely semifinal opponent, Belgium's **Tinne Gilis** (No. 4 seed), has yet to take a game off Gohar in their three prior encounters.

World No. 2 **Nour El Sherbini**, making her Houston debut, is eyeing a return to the top ranking. El Sherbini's fierce rivalry with Gohar could set up yet another final showdown between the two Egyptian powerhouses. However, El Sherbini must navigate a challenging draw, potentially facing World No. 3 **Hania El Hammamy** in the semifinals. El Hammamy, eager to end her title drought since the 2023 Hong Kong Open, is determined to re-establish her presence at the top.





Rowan Elaraby



Farida Mohamed

Beyond the top seeds, rising stars such as **Rowan Elaraby** and **Farida Mohamed** will look to make their mark, while the likes of **Salma Hany** and **Nada Abbas** are positioned to create potential upsets.

Key First-Round Matchups

Men's Draw: Wildcard Muhammad Ashab Irfan takes on Egypt's Youssef Ibrahim, while India's Ramit Tandon faces England's Curtis Malik.

Women's Draw: England's Lucy Beecroft squares off against wildcard Zaina Zaidi, and Wales' Tesni Murphy meets England's Grace Gear.



Tesni Murphy



Ashab
Irfan



Grace Gear



Youssef
Ibrahim

Tournament Narrative

With World No. 1 rankings at stake for both men and women, the Cotidie Texas Open promises high-stakes drama. The rivalries between Gohar and El Sherbini, and Farag and Asal, could produce thrilling finals, while dark horses and rising stars in the draw add unpredictability to the event.

For the latest updates and match schedules, follow the PSA on their official channels.

Squash in Grand Central: A Unique Sporting Spectacle

Grand Central Terminal, known for its iconic architecture and bustling crowds, transforms into an unexpected sports venue as it hosted the J.P. Morgan Tournament of Champions (ToC). The world's top squash players competed inside a glass-enclosed court set up in Vanderbilt Hall, surrounded by stadium seating. This temporary court, constructed specifically for the event, was dismantled after the tournament concluded.

Since 1999, the ToC has been a highlight on the Professional Squash Association (PSA) calendar, offering a one-of-a-kind experience for players and spectators alike. Originally held at the Winter Garden Atrium in Lower Manhattan, the tournament moved to Vanderbilt Hall when former PSA Director John Nimick recognized its potential.

“When I walked into it, I knew immediately this would be the best place to run a pro squash tournament,” Nimick said in a 2020 interview. The historic hall, which once served as a waiting area for commuters, offers a grandeur that matches the event's prestige.

In the mid-1990s, while Vanderbilt Hall was undergoing renovations, the tournament temporarily relocated to Brooklyn's Heights Casino before being put on hiatus in 1997 and 1998. The return to Grand Central solidified the event's reputation, attracting top athletes and fans from around the globe.

Even if ticketed seats were sold out, passersby could still enjoy the action. One side of the glass court was open for public viewing, allowing commuters a rare chance to witness elite squash matches during their daily routines.

Whether you're a squash fan or just catching a train, seeing a championship match in the heart of Grand Central Terminal is a truly unique experience—proof that sports can surprise us in the most unexpected places.

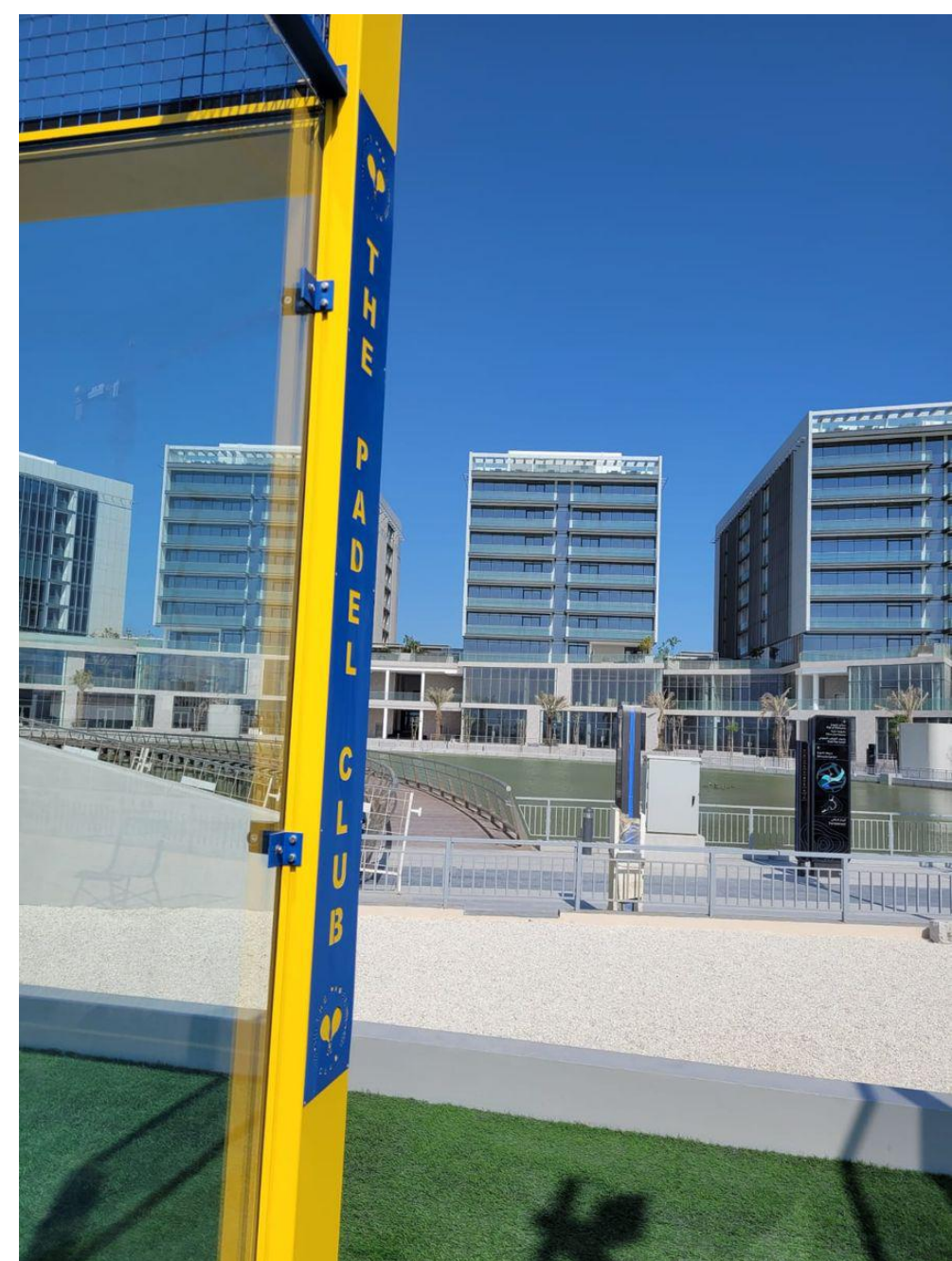




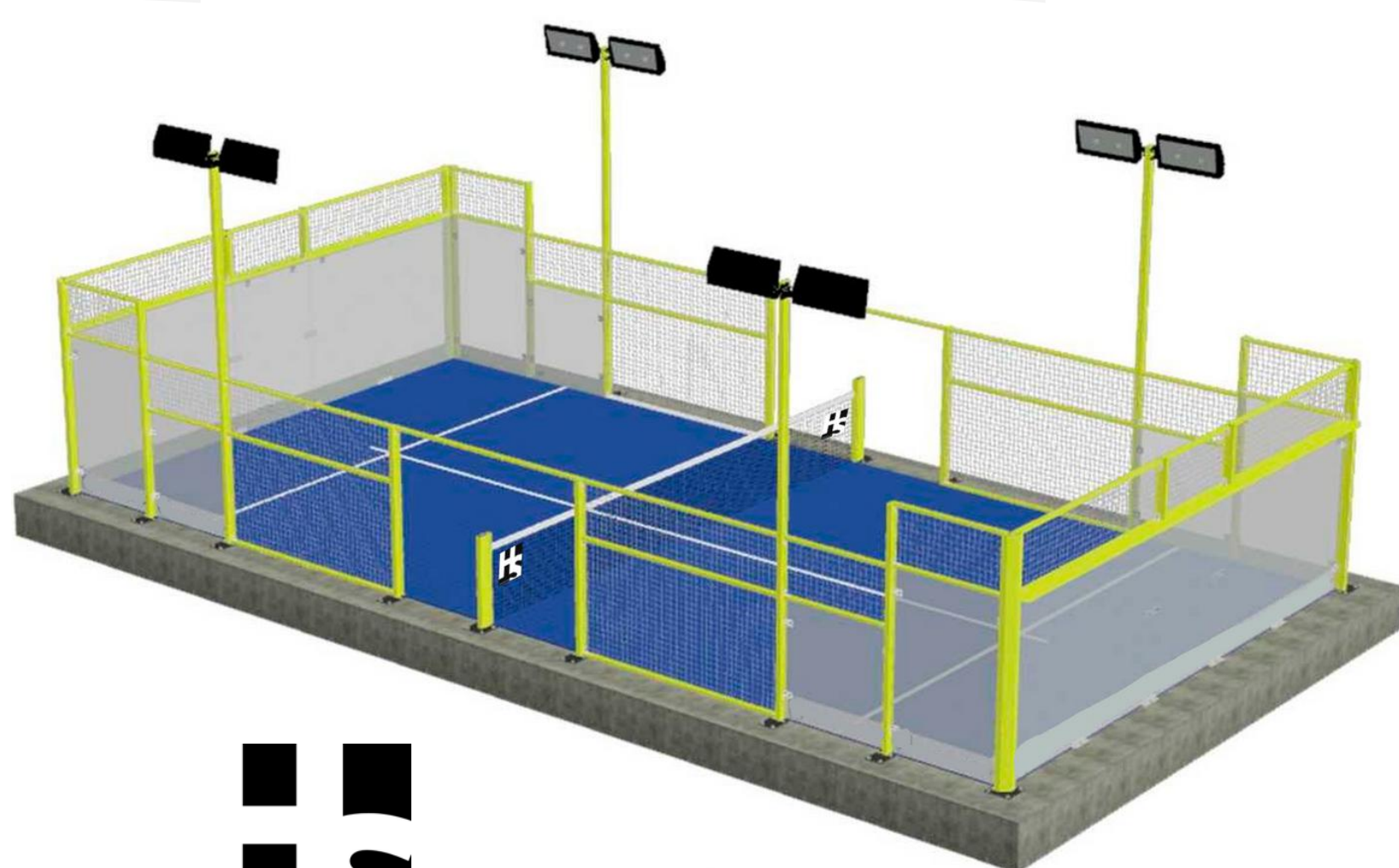
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The padel landscape is set for a shakeup as Delfi Brea and Bea Gonzalez, along with Gemma Triay and Claudia Fernandez, announce new partnerships for the upcoming season. The decision marks a significant shift in the women's padel circuit, bringing together fresh combinations of talent and experience.

Claudia Fernandez Reflects on the Change

Speaking to Spanish newspaper Marca, Fernandez opened up about her split with Gemma Triay. While surprised, she noted she had a sense it might happen.

“It surprised me, even though I somewhat expected it. I think we achieved very good results, but that's how it is. If she believes things will work out better with someone else, it's understandable this is a job. You have to be professional and look ahead. She'll follow her path, and I'll follow mine,” Fernandez shared.

Excitement for a New Partnership

Fernandez expressed optimism about her new partnership with Bea Gonzalez, with whom she previously played at the Hexagon Cup in 2024.

The team is already set, and everything feels perfect. I'm super excited. I already played with her at the Hexagon Cup in 2024. She's an amazing person, humble, and always gives her all... I think we can do very well. I'll give everything I have to make it happen,” Fernandez said.



Fernandez also mentioned that she has started training on the court in preparation for the season, with Gonzalez set to join soon for joint practice sessions.

New Dynamics in the Padel World

- Gemma Triay and Delfi Brea bring together two experienced players with complementary styles, aiming to challenge for the top spots in the rankings.
- Bea Gonzalez and Claudia Fernandez are an exciting young duo with plenty of potential to make waves in the competitive field.

With these changes, the upcoming padel season promises to deliver thrilling competition and the emergence of dynamic new rivalries. Fans will be watching closely to see how these partnerships develop and impact the tour.

The Premier Padel tour starts in February, so keep your eyes peeled for some memorable matches, new partnerships and amazing moments in the world of

FIP Promises Family SC, Here are the 8 Winning Pairs from the First Stage of 2025

From Valencia come the first results for the young promises of padel. The FIP Promises Family SC, the first stage of the 2025 circuit of the International Padel Federation dedicated to young players, concluded with over 100 participants.

In the U12 category, Lucas Ortega and Joel Martinez lived up to their top seed status by claiming the boys' title, while Vera Domínguez and Noah Ballestero triumphed in the girls' competition. In the U14s, Leo Gómez and Guillermo Romero defeated Aitor Parron and Adam Mouaddah in the final, 6-2 6-2, while Claudia Rubies and Ona Durban took home the girls' trophy. In the U16 category, Pelayo Sanchez and Iker Garcia began 2025 with a victory, redeeming themselves after losing the final at the FIP Promises Finals in Venice. On the girls' side, Marina Herrera and Noemi Vélez secured the title. Finally, in the U18s, Arnau Ortells and David Espósito came out on top in the boys' draw, while Yaiza Hualing and Laura Navarro clinched the girls' title.

The next stop of the FIP Promises circuit will be in Doha, from January 22 to 26. The 2025 season has just begun and is already in full swing.



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.

South Pacific Pickleball Doubles Tournament 2025

EID: 1807 **PRICE** NZD 50

Organizer: Tzer Yih Tan

EVENT - TOURNAMENT

Starting: March 22, 2025 to March 23, 2025

City: Rolleston, New Zealand

Tournament Venue: South Island Pickleball

Registration Deadline: March 01, 2025 (OPEN)

Tier Level: 1

Game Set Match Pickleball Doubles Weekend

EID: 1756 **PRICE** GBP 35

Organizer: Michal Cicvak

EVENT - TOURNAMENT

Starting: March 08, 2025 to March 09, 2025

City: Leeds, UK

Tournament Venue: Game Set Match Jccs Leeds

Registration Deadline: March 01, 2025 (OPEN)

Tier Level: 1

6ten Deutschen Pickleball Meisterschaften

EID: 1868 **PRICE** EUR 35

Organizer: Andreas Kopkau

EVENT - TOURNAMENT

Starting: April 25, 2025 to April 27, 2025

City: Adenauerallee 110, 45891 Gelsenkirchen, Deutschland

Tournament Venue: Deutscher Pickleball Bund E.v.

Registration Deadline: April 20, 2025 (OPEN)

Tier Level: 3

**MORE
INFO**

Will Howells, Megan Fudge, and Jill Braverman Shine with Double Golds on the APP Tour

It was a start of year to remember for the top tier of players on the APP Tour, as Will Howells, Megan Fudge, and Jill Braverman each claimed two gold medals, showcasing their dominance.

Howells began his winning streak by capturing gold in men's doubles alongside Jack Munro. The pair overcame Erik Lange and Purple Jesus in a thrilling three-game final, clinching the win 11-8, 6-11, 11-3. Throughout their journey from the Round of 32 to the semi-finals, Howells and Munro outclassed their opponents with a combined score of 60-31, underscoring their control of the competition.

In mixed doubles, Howells teamed up with Braverman to defeat Munro and Fudge in the final. The duo, dubbed "Will and Jill," never dropped a game throughout the tournament, sealing their victory with a commanding 11-6, 11-9 win in the championship match.

Fudge, determined to add another title to her impressive weekend, faced off against rising star Sofia Sewing in singles. After a grueling contest, Fudge emerged victorious, taking the gold with a 16-14, 15-11 win.

Capping off the weekend, Fudge and Braverman joined forces to secure gold in women's doubles. The duo triumphed over Allison Harris and Yana Newell in the final, delivering a solid 11-7, 11-8 performance to claim their first APP Tour victory of the year.

The weekend highlighted the exceptional talent and grit of Howells, Fudge, and Braverman, setting a high bar for the rest of the APP Tour in 2025.



Pickleball Controversy: Noise Complaints Spark Proposed Ban in Nantucket

In recent years, pickleball has exploded in popularity, becoming a favourite outdoor activity for many. Invented in 1965, this fast-paced paddle sport blends elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. It's particularly beloved by those over 50, thanks to its low-impact nature.

While pickleball's growth is undeniable, one issue has sparked contention—the noise. The constant thwacking of small plastic balls against paddles has transformed the once-tranquil atmosphere of many neighborhoods. Noise complaints have led to what some are calling “pickleball wars,” with lawsuits and local debates cropping up nationwide.

Despite its rising popularity, bans on pickleball are becoming more frequent. New York City recently prohibited the sport in a specific park, and communities in Florida have also raised concerns. While most restrictions have been localised and limited, a new proposal from Nantucket, Massachusetts, has stirred fresh controversy.

The idyllic island, known for its cobblestone streets and scenic charm, is now the epicentre of a pickleball debate. A proposed zoning bylaw amendment aims to prohibit pickleball courts in all zoning districts on the island, according to the Nantucket Current.

However, town officials remain divided. The proposed amendment must first be considered at Nantucket's annual Town Meeting. Dave Iverson, chair of the Planning Board, has expressed opposition to an outright ban. Instead, he advocates for regulating where courts can be placed, ensuring small, quiet neighbourhoods remain peaceful. Notably, the amendment wouldn't impact existing pickleball courts, only new ones.

The debate has sparked a mix of reactions online. Some dismissed the proposal as an overreach or even an early April Fool's joke, while others supported it as a necessary measure to address noise concerns.

For now, pickleball enthusiasts in Nantucket can continue playing, but the sport's future on the island remains uncertain. As discussions unfold, the pickleball community, and its detractors, will undoubtedly keep a close eye on what comes next.

After all, resolving this pickleball predicament may prove to be as challenging as the game itself, with such huge exposure from leading sports personalities, there will be a lot of noise of this goes ahead.



OK, IT'S NOT PICKLEBALL....BUT!

In the Ponmalai (Golden Rock) railway community of Trichy, a unique sport known as 'kattabat badminton' has been a cherished tradition for over 80 years. This game, developed by railway workers during the pre-Independence era, is a hybrid of tennis and table tennis, similar to the recently popularized pickleball. However, unlike pickleball, kattabat badminton utilises flat wooden paddles and woolen balls.

The origins of kattabat badminton date back to 1928, following the establishment of the Ponmalai railway workshop. At that time, ball badminton was favoured by British officers, but the high cost of rackets and woolen balls made it inaccessible to local railway workers. Demonstrating resourcefulness, these workers crafted flat paddles from discarded wooden planks and created balls by wrapping stones with used bicycle tubes or cotton vests. They set up makeshift courts using ropes tied to iron poles as nets, giving birth to kattabat badminton.



Today, the game remains an integral part of the community's daily life. Each evening, after the day's work concludes, workers gather to engage in matches. The game requires a modest space of about 3,100 square feet and involves ten players, five on each side. The distinctive sound produced when the flat wooden paddles strike the ball often piques the curiosity of passersby, drawing them to watch the game.

The community's dedication to kattabat badminton has led to the formation of over 40 teams in Ponmalai. There is now a collective aspiration to build proper courts and facilities to further support and promote this enduring tradition.



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"Competition Has Become Tougher": Kidambi Srikanth Prepares for Indonesia Masters

Former World No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth has expressed his determination to perform at his best as he prepares for the Indonesia Masters. Speaking about his goals, Srikanth emphasised the importance of focusing on playing well during the critical moments on court.



"I'm in Indonesia and have trained well. I feel it's important to play well during the one hour you get, and we'll see what the outcome is. But for me, the priority is to give my best," Srikanth shared during an interview.

Joining Srikanth at the prestigious tournament are fellow Indian stars PV Sindhu, Lakshya Sen, and the men's doubles pair Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, forming a strong contingent set to compete in Jakarta.

Reflecting on the evolving landscape of badminton, Srikanth acknowledged the growing intensity of the sport.

"The competition has become tougher. The level at which everyone is playing has gone higher. It's crucial to continuously improve; there's no pause in this journey. With three Olympic medals in badminton so far, expectations have increased, and I believe everyone is embracing this responsibility and performing well on the global stage," he remarked.

Srikanth also discussed his collaboration with the sports brand Hundred, describing it as an exciting opportunity to contribute to developing cutting-edge equipment for players.

"The partnership with Hundred is a new experience for me. Together, we aim to create equipment that benefits players. I'll provide my input on how a racket or shoe should feel, and together, we might develop products that truly make a difference," he explained.

This partnership, which makes its debut at the Indonesia Masters, signifies Hundred's commitment to inspiring and supporting the next generation of badminton talent while strengthening its presence in the Indian market.

Among other key participants, PV Sindhu, ranked 16th in the women's singles, is set to face Vietnam's Nguyen Thuy Linh in her opener. Meanwhile, World No. 12 Lakshya Sen, eager to recover from early exits at recent tournaments, is set to take on Japan's Takuma Obayashi.

With a mix of experience and promising young talent, the Indian contingent aims to leave a mark at the prestigious event, underlining the country's rising stature in global badminton.

PV Sindhu, Lakshya Sen to Lead Indian Team at Badminton Asia Mixed Championship

India has announced a formidable 14-member squad for the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championship, set to take place in Qingdao, China. The team will be spearheaded by double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu and World Championships bronze medalist Lakshya Sen. The tournament will run from February 11-16.

India will look to build on its success from the 2023 edition, where the team secured a bronze medal in Dubai. The Badminton Association of India (BAI) emphasized that the selection was based on world rankings and players' current form. The squad also includes HS Prannoy and Malvika Bansod as the second singles players in the men's and women's categories, respectively.

Joining the singles stars, doubles specialists Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will add strength to the Indian campaign. The women's doubles pairings could feature either Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly or Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto. In mixed doubles, Tanisha Crasto will team up with Dhruv Kapila, while Sathish Kumar K and Adya Variyath form the second combination.

BAI Secretary General Sanjay Mishra expressed confidence in the team, saying, "We did well by winning the bronze medal two years ago, but the target this year is to reach the finals. From there, anything is possible, and we will go all out."



Indian Squad:

- Men's Singles: Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy
- Women's Singles: PV Sindhu, Malvika Bansod
- Men's Doubles: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, Chirag Shetty, Dhruv Kapila, MR Arjun
- Women's Doubles: Gayatri Gopichand, Treesa Jolly, Ashwini Ponnappa, Tanisha Crasto
- Mixed Doubles: Tanisha Crasto/Dhruv Kapila, Sathish Kumar K/Adya Variyath

The championship provides a crucial platform for India to showcase its growing strength in badminton as they aim for a deeper run in the competition.



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