



GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

IGA & NOVAK YEAR END N°1



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CONTENT

Section 1 - Tennis

The champions of both the Billy Jean King Cup, Nitto Finals and Davis Cup Finals are all in and wow, what a finale to the season. There are some great interviews with some big names from the industry and they share their invaluable knowledge of the Davis Cup. But it doesn't end there!

Section 2 - GRSA INTERNATIONAL

Team US is getting bigger and for 2024 you can expect more opportunities to improve your skills with a series of workshops. Martin Mann shares some photos from his workshop in Germany, and Davis Cup action

Section 3 - Squash

Nick takes a look at one of the more intricate rackets, plus we look at some of the latest squash news, rivalries that really raise an eyebrow, plus some background on the modern day transparent squash courts.

Section 4 - Padel

Records broken, epic matches and amazing teammates, it's all go in the padel world.

Section 5 - Pickleball

The noise of padel courts seems to be a thing of the past now that pickleball is here, but it's not just the noise that's in the news, there are more things happening that you might have missed.

GRSA *members have a number of benefits, some appear here in the magazine and online, check out our community.*

Champions Crowned at 2023 GNP Seguros WTA Finals Cancun

In a spectacular finale at the GNP Seguros WTA Finals in Cancun, Mexico, tennis enthusiasts witnessed a historic moment as Iga Swiatek and the formidable doubles duo, Laura Siegemund and Vera Zvonareva, claimed the championship titles in their respective categories.

For Swiatek, the victory was nothing short of a dream come true. The Polish sensation displayed unmatched prowess, securing the WTA Finals Billie Jean King Trophy with a resounding 6-1, 6-0 triumph over Jessica Pegula. This win not only marked Swiatek's first WTA Finals title but also guaranteed her the prestigious WTA year-end No.1 singles ranking for the second consecutive season. She joins the ranks of Agnieszka Radwanska as the second Polish woman to clinch the WTA Finals title.

Reflecting on her remarkable achievement, Swiatek expressed gratitude for the growing support, stating, "Every year, I feel like I have more and more support, and it really keeps me pushing for more, so thank you."



In the doubles category, Siegemund and Zvonareva showcased exceptional teamwork, emerging victorious against Nicole Melichar-Martinez and Ellen Perez with a 6-4, 6-4 scoreline. This triumph not only secured the WTA Finals Martina Navratilova doubles trophy for the pair but also added another milestone to their illustrious careers.

"We worked well as a team, and to win this title at the end, it means a lot. It's an incredible achievement," remarked Zvonareva, capturing the essence of their success.

Siegemund echoed the sentiment, emphasizing their journey to the title, "We had a lot of pressure even to make it here, and I think we've shown something—that we can improve."



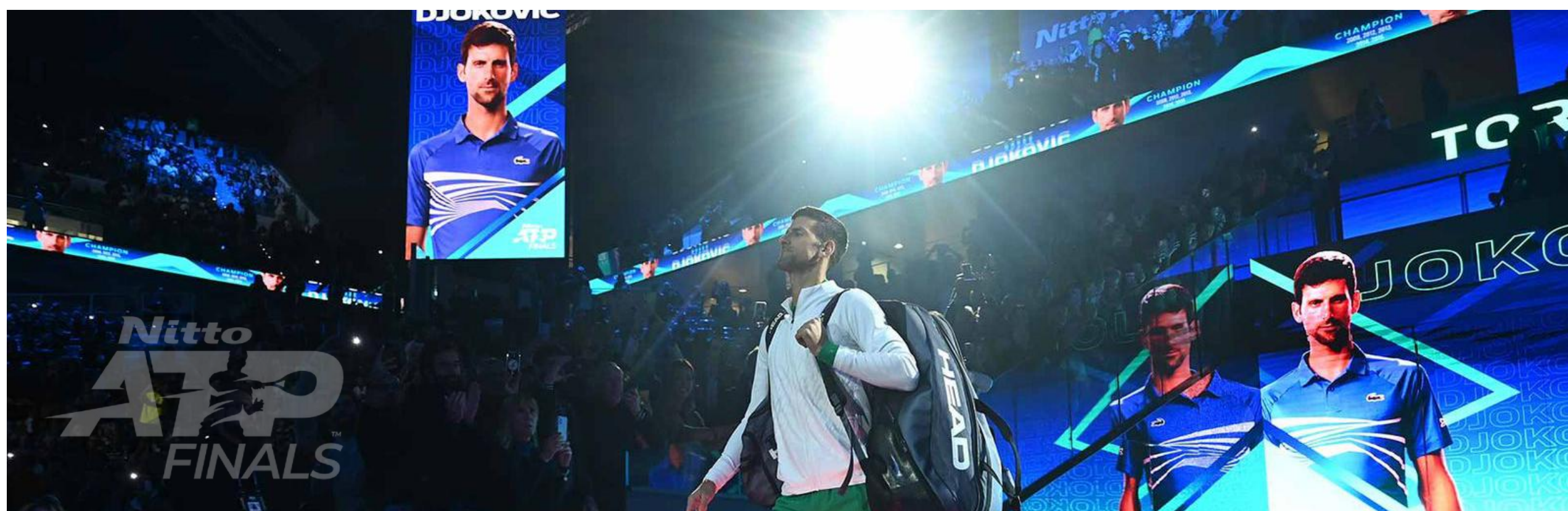
This victory caps off an extraordinary second half of the season for Siegemund and Zvonareva, who have now claimed four titles in the past four months, including the WTA Finals.

As the curtain falls on the 2023 GNP Seguros WTA Finals in Cancun, the champions Swiatek, Siegemund, and Zvonareva etch their names in the annals of tennis history, leaving fans eagerly anticipating their future exploits on the court.





Djokovic Dominates to Secure Seventh Nitto ATP Finals Title in Turin



In a commanding display of skill and determination, Novak Djokovic clinched a historic seventh Nitto ATP Finals title in Turin, adding another milestone to his illustrious career. The Serbian maestro avenged his group-stage defeat to Jannik Sinner with a peerless performance in the title match, solidifying his status as the season's ultimate champion.

Djokovic delivered a masterclass to defeat the home favorite, Jannik Sinner, with a resounding 6-3, 6-3 victory. The Serbian's performance was nothing short of exceptional, losing just two points in his first seven service games and expertly navigating a tense close to the one-hour, 43-minute match.

"It's one of the best seasons I've had in my life, no doubt," Djokovic remarked after the match. "To crown it with a win against a hometown hero in Jannik, who has played amazing tennis this week, is phenomenal."



Djokovic, who was beaten by Sinner in the group stage, emphatically turned the tables in the final, breaking the tie with Roger Federer for the most titles at the Nitto ATP Finals. The Serbian strategically altered his tactics, winning 20 of 22 service points in the opening set and needing just 38 minutes to claim a decisive set.

The match's intensity peaked when Sinner fought back to 15/40 in the second set, attempting to level the score.

However, Djokovic responded with three big serves, securing a 4-2 lead. Despite Sinner's efforts, Djokovic closed out the championship with his 13th ace, highlighting his dominance throughout the tournament.

Reflecting on his stellar performance, Djokovic expressed pride in his back-to-back victories against Alcaraz and Sinner, acknowledging them as the best two players in the world alongside him and Medvedev. The Serbian's triumph is not only a testament to his on-court prowess but also his strategic adaptability.



This victory secures Djokovic's record-extending 400th week atop the Pepperstone ATP Rankings, marking another achievement in his remarkable career. Additionally, Djokovic now owns 71 'Big Titles,' a combination of Grand Slam championships, Nitto ATP Finals trophies, ATP Masters 1000 tournaments, and Olympic singles gold medals.



With this historic win, Djokovic continues his quest to surpass the 100-titles mark, joining the elite company of Jimmy Connors and Roger Federer. As the tennis world applauds Djokovic's extraordinary year, fans eagerly anticipate the next chapter in the career of this tennis legend.



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Avda. de la Peña 10, 29650, Mijas Pueblo, Málaga, Spain

Mexican-French Pair Clinches Another ATP Masters 1000 Victory



In a stunning display of skill and teamwork, Santiago Gonzalez and Edouard Roger-Vasselin secured their second ATP Masters 1000 title together, capping off an impressive late-season winning streak of eight victories at the Rolex Paris Masters. The dynamic duo, seeded seventh, overcame a formidable challenge from Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden in a thrilling final, winning 6-2, 5-7, 10-7.

Gonzalez and Roger-Vasselin's victory in Paris not only marked their second Masters 1000 crown of the year but also showcased their resilience. Despite dropping their first set of the week in the championship match, the pair stayed focused and converted crucial break points to claim the trophy. Reflecting on the match, Roger-Vasselin admitted his responsibility for the set they lost, stating, "I did a pretty bad game in the second set, but Santi helped a lot at the changeover. [He said], 'It's OK, we're just going to fight every point and enjoy the crowd.'" The home favourite expressed his gratitude to Gonzalez for playing exceptionally throughout the week, making the victory in Paris particularly special.



This triumph comes on the heels of their Basel win just a week ago, where they displayed their prowess by defeating the second, third, and fourth-seeded pairs. With this momentum, Gonzalez and Roger-Vasselin have successfully secured a spot in the Nitto ATP Finals in Turin, entering the prestigious season finale with confidence.

Speaking about their recent success, Gonzalez shared, "The last two weeks were amazing, ending the year like this and now going to Turin with confidence. We are happy to win our second Masters title of this year, so we are very pleased about it and hopefully we can keep it going."

The Mexican-French pair's journey this season has been nothing short of remarkable. With a record of 51-21 in their first full season together on the ATP Tour, they previously clinched titles in Marseille, Miami, and Los Cabos. As they enter Turin, they find themselves in the fourth position in the Pepperstone ATP Live Doubles Teams Rankings, solidifying their status as a formidable force in doubles tennis.

Gonzalez and Roger-Vasselin's latest triumph not only adds another prestigious title to their collection but also sets the stage for an exciting showdown in the upcoming Nitto ATP Finals in Turin. The duo's remarkable teamwork and consistent success make them a pair to watch in the world of doubles tennis.

Djokovic Secures Historic Eighth Year-End No. 1 Title at Nitto ATP Finals

In a momentous ceremony at Pala Alpitour, Novak Djokovic was officially crowned the ATP Year-End No. 1 presented by Pepperstone, marking an unprecedented eighth time for the Serbian maestro. The trophy, presented by ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi, symbolizes Djokovic's outstanding accomplishment in the tennis realm.

With a record-breaking eight year-end No. 1 finishes, Djokovic expressed his gratitude and pride, acknowledging the challenges that come with maintaining this elite status. "It's a dream of every tennis player," said Djokovic. "Winning Grand Slams and being No. 1 in the world are probably the pinnacles of the sport."

The 36-year-old secured this historic achievement with a remarkable display at the Nitto ATP Finals, defeating Holger Rune in a thrilling match that spanned over three hours. Djokovic's victory in the opener solidified his grasp on the No. 1 ranking for the year, further emphasizing his dominance in the sport.

Djokovic's journey to this year-end milestone is a testament to his resilience and prowess on the court. With a stellar performance throughout the year, including three Grand Slam victories, Djokovic has once again etched his name in the annals of tennis history.

During the ceremony, Djokovic took a moment to thank his team, recognizing the collective effort that contributes to his individual success. "It's a team effort, even though I'm standing by myself here on the court," he acknowledged, expressing eagerness to celebrate this achievement with his support network.

Two years ago, Djokovic set the record as the oldest ATP Year-End No. 1, and this year, at the age of 36, he has surpassed his own milestone. The presentation ceremony was marked by an embrace between Djokovic and ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi, capturing the significance of this achievement for the Serbian tennis legend.



Rising Star: Alex Michelsen Breaks Into Top 100 and Aims Higher



In a meteoric rise reminiscent of tennis legends, Alex Michelsen has broken into the Top 100 of the Pepperstone ATP Rankings, marking a significant milestone in his burgeoning career. The 19-year-old American's journey to the Top 100 has been nothing short of remarkable, filled with breakthrough victories and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

Michelsen's climb gained momentum when he clinched his maiden ATP Challenger Tour title in Chicago this July, an achievement that set the stage for his remarkable ascent. However, it was his performance at the ATP Tour event in Newport that truly turned heads. Defeating his countryman and former World No. 8 John Isner, who is 19 years his senior, Michelsen demonstrated a level of skill and confidence beyond his years.

Reflecting on the Newport victory, Michelsen described it as a surreal moment, a 'pinch-me' experience that fueled his belief in reaching greater heights. The win over Isner, combined with a consistent string of impressive performances, propelled Michelsen into the Top 200 for the first time.

In a recent triumph at the Knoxville Challenger, Michelsen secured his second ATP Challenger Tour title, a feat that catapulted him into the Top 100 at World No. 99. The California native, who turned pro in August, expressed his excitement at achieving this milestone but emphasized that his journey is far from over.





Michelsen's official entry into the Top 100 positions him favorably in the race for a coveted spot at the Next Gen ATP Finals, an event that showcases the most promising talents aged 21 and under. Currently ranked ninth in the Pepperstone ATP Live Race to Jeddah, Michelsen is eager to be part of a tournament that has previously featured rising stars like Carlos Alcaraz, Jannik Sinner, and Stefanos Tsitsipas.

The young American's rapid progress throughout the year highlights his adaptability and mental resilience. Starting the year at World No. 600, Michelsen navigated the challenges of the ITF World Tennis Tour before making his mark in ATP Challenger events. His journey included reaching the final in Rome, Georgia, and securing the title in Chicago.

Michelsen's success at the ATP Challenger Tour has been pivotal in shaping his game and testing his mettle against high-caliber opponents. The experience gained in Challenger events has been crucial for his physical and mental development, providing a solid foundation for his transition to higher levels of competition.

A standout moment for Michelsen came at his home Grand Slam, where he received a wild card and secured his first main-draw victory in a major tournament. Now, as the youngest player in the Top 100, Michelsen reflects on the rapid trajectory of his career, acknowledging that even he would have considered such a rise improbable at the beginning of the year.



ATP Unveils Groundbreaking \$12.2M Bonus Pool Boost in Tennis Profit-Sharing Revolution

In a monumental shift for the business of tennis, the ATP has announced a groundbreaking move towards greater profit-sharing, marking a pivotal moment in the sport's landscape. The latest initiative, a result of the ATP's OneVision strategy, introduces an unprecedented \$12.2 million Bonus Pool distribution to players, ushering in a new era of financial collaboration between players and tournaments.

The innovative profit-sharing formula, a core element of the OneVision strategy conceptualized in 2020 with the election of ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi, is set to raise the total ATP Bonus Pool to an all-time high of \$33.5 million for the year 2023. The \$12.2 million distribution represents the players' share of profits generated across the ATP Masters 1000 events in 2022, offering a significant boost to player compensation.

Under this revolutionary formula, the nine ATP Masters 1000 tournaments undergo meticulous financial audits three times each season, providing player auditors with unprecedented visibility into the economics of these major events. This move not only enhances trust and transparency but also signifies a major step towards aligning the interests of players and tournaments. Profits generated by the tournaments beyond on-site prize money will be equally shared on a 50-50 basis, creating a shared stake in the success of the sport.

Andrea Gaudenzi, expressing the magnitude of this shift, stated, "It's hard to overstate what a seismic shift this represents for the business of tennis. It means greater trust and transparency between players and tournaments, and aligned incentives, for the first time ever."

The \$12.2 million distribution is set to be allocated to players who participated in the ATP Masters 1000s based on their performance, in addition to the on-site prize money already earned. This move follows a record increase of \$37.5 million in player compensation from 2022 to 2023, bringing the total uplift in player compensation to approximately \$50 million this year under the OneVision strategy.

The financial growth and introduction of the profit-sharing formula are intricately tied to the expansion of the ATP Tour's premium event calendar, particularly the extension of seven of the nine ATP Masters 1000 events to 12-day formats starting from 2025. The OneVision strategy, which encompasses reforms in governance, rights aggregation, and category terms, is reshaping the tennis landscape with a focus on sustained growth.

In a final note, Gaudenzi emphasized, "This is just the start, and we aim to continue expanding this figure as we grow the economics of the sport in parallel with the expansion of our top-tier events."

The introduction of the profit-sharing formula is not limited to the elite level, as steps have been taken to extend this innovative approach to ATP 500 events, with financial auditing requirements introduced in 2023, anticipating the formula's implementation as the events' financial performance allows. The ATP's commitment to transparency, trust, and shared success is poised to reshape the future of tennis, creating a model that benefits all stakeholders in the sport.

Anett Kontaveit Bids Adieu to Tennis in Emotional Tallinn Exhibition with Ons Jabeur

Tennis enthusiasts filled the Tondiraba Ice Hall in Tallinn to bid farewell to Anett Kontaveit, their national tennis icon. The former World No. 2, who officially retired from professional tennis after Wimbledon due to a degenerative back injury, orchestrated a poignant exit in the form of an exhibition match against her friend, Ons Jabeur.

The sold-out exhibition match, officiated by WTA chair umpire Kader Nouni, ended with Jabeur securing victory 6-4, 4-6, [10-7]. Kontaveit, who trailed 6-4, 4-2 at one point, displayed resilience, rallying to force a match tiebreak in front of the enthusiastic crowd.

In a heartfelt post-match address, Kontaveit expressed her gratitude, saying, "It is an honour to be here in front of such a large crowd and to compete against Ons, who is a terrific tennis player and a fantastic person, and to have Kader, one of my favourite referees, with us today."



The Estonian tennis sensation, who peaked at World No. 2 last summer, concluded her career as the highest-ranking Estonian player in history. With 17 career WTA singles finals and six titles, Kontaveit left an indelible mark on the Hologic WTA Tour.

Kontaveit's decision to schedule the exhibition against Jabeur was a thoughtful one. Jabeur, visiting Estonia for the first time, expressed her gratitude, stating, "I want to thank Anett for picking me as her leave competitor, but I am still trying to encourage her to return to the professionals."

While the crowd overwhelmingly supported Kontaveit, Jabeur acknowledged the fantastic atmosphere in Tallinn, teasing a return by saying, "If you ever host a competition here, maybe I'll come back and Anett will coach me!"

The retirement of Kontaveit marks the end of an era in Estonian tennis. Her journey, from reaching World No. 2 to her battles with a back injury, has left an indelible impact on the sport. In a pre-tournament interview, Kontaveit reflected on her decision, stating, "I went through all sorts of different emotions while this processing was happening."

As Kontaveit transitions into the next chapter of her life, studying psychology at Indiana University, she leaves behind a legacy that will be remembered by tennis fans worldwide. While her singles career concludes, the tennis community eagerly awaits to see how Kontaveit stays connected with the sport, leveraging the experience gained during her remarkable career.

Dynamic Czech Doubles Team of Krejčíková and Siniaková

Part Ways for 2024

The formidable Czech doubles partnership of Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniakova, renowned for their prowess on the tennis court, is set to take a hiatus for the upcoming 2024 season. Despite their incredible journey that began in their teenage years, winning three junior Slam titles in 2013, the duo has decided to pursue individual paths for the next season.

Having translated their early success to the professional stage on the Hologic WTA Tour, Krejčíková and Siniakova ascended to the summit of women's doubles, capturing major titles at Roland Garros and Wimbledon in 2018 and attaining the coveted No.1 ranking. The pinnacle of their career came with back-to-back seasons in 2021 and 2022, where they completed a career Grand Slam, clinched Olympic gold, and triumphed at the WTA Finals.

The 2023 season, however, brought its share of challenges as injuries interrupted their momentum. Despite a promising start with an 11-match win streak and victories at the Australian Open and Indian Wells, both players grappled with injuries during the clay and grass seasons. The year concluded with a mix of highs and lows, from a decisive victory against the United States in the Billie Jean King Cup semifinals to a straight-set defeat to Canada in the same competition.



The decision to pause their doubles partnership is not without consideration for the future. While a reunion remains a possibility, the break allows Krejčíková and Siniakova greater flexibility in their scheduling for the upcoming season. Despite their extraordinary success in doubles, both players continue to prioritize their singles careers. Krejčíková, notably reaching a career-high No.2 in singles, showcased her skills with a WTA 1000 title in Dubai and a Top 10 finish for the third consecutive season. Siniakova, too, notched significant singles achievements, including wins over Naomi Osaka and Serena Williams, concluding the season at No.45.

The announcement of their split came just days after their participation in the Billie Jean King Cup, where they were defeated by Team Canada's Gabriela Dabrowski and Leylah Fernandez. Reflecting on the decision, Krejčíková acknowledged it was Siniakova's choice, emphasizing respect for her partner's decision. Siniakova, in turn, expressed belief in the benefits of a break and hinted at the possibility of a stronger reunion in the future.

The news has sparked a range of reactions on social media, with fans expressing both dismay and understanding. While some wished them the best and hoped for a future reunion, others recognized the potential positive impact of change. As the tennis world absorbs the news of this split, the anticipation for the individual journeys of Krejčíková and Siniakova in the 2024 season builds, with fans left wondering about the possibility of their reunion down the line.

Pre Finals Interview with the Davis Cup Director, Feliciano López: A Passion for the Game



THE WORLD CUP
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As the Tournament Director of the Davis Cup Finals, a competition he holds close to his heart as a former player, our exclusive interview delves into the insights and aspirations of a man deeply committed to elevating this revered team competition.

From reminiscing about his fondest Davis Cup memories to discussing the favourites for this year's title, he shares his thoughts on the unique qualities that make the Davis Cup so special.

How does it feel to be the Tournament Director of the Davis Cup Finals, a competition that was so close to your heart as a player?

The Davis Cup has meant so much to me during my professional career. This competition brought out the best of me and provided me with some incredible moments. I am very honoured to be the tournament director and feel it's time for me to give back to the competition.

What are your main aims as Tournament Director?

My goal is trying to add value and sharing my experience for the benefit of the competition. No doubt we have challenges ahead but together with the ITF we are working hard to make it as good as possible. Listening to players/captains/ teams is key for us and with everyone's support I am positive we can elevate the Davis Cup to what it is, the best team competition in our sport.

How special is it to be back in Malaga for the Davis Cup Final 8?

Malaga and Andalucia have been very supportive of the Davis Cup and are great hosts for the Davis Cup. I am sure the amazing facilities and excitement from the fans will provide a great experience to the teams, fans and all the stakeholders.

Tell us your thoughts about the eight teams in action in the Davis Cup Final 8?

One could say that there have been a few surprises during the Group Stage with some nations perhaps that were not favourites on paper qualifying to Malaga. This is great news to me as it brings extra excitement for the fans. We will have great quality teams and players fighting to lift the cup.

Which nations are favourites for the Davis Cup title, in your view?

Canada as defending champion will have a big challenge ahead but they showed their quality last year. Italy, Serbia and Australia are also hot favourites with amazing depth that goes beyond their individual top players. But as we know, the beauty of the competition and this format is that any team has a real chance to win it.

What makes the Davis Cup so special?

Team effort and crowd support are two unique and essential factors of the Davis Cup. We have seen over the years that rankings are just numbers because the motivation, the pride of playing for your own country and how you deal with the pressure, transforms the players for good and for bad. That's the beauty of it and what makes it so special.

**You represented Spain in Davis Cup for 15 years, more than any other Spanish player, and were part of four winning teams. What is your strongest memory from the competition?**

Every time I played for Spain meant the world to me, but if I had to pick one moment, it would probably be the Davis Cup final we played in Mar del Plata against Argentina. The crowd was so loud and partisan and we went in as the underdogs but somehow managed to play our best tennis and pull out a huge upset. I have incredible memories of my singles match against Juan Martin Del Potro and the doubles too that in the end was the key to bring the competition home.

Who do you think is the best Davis Cup competitor of all time?

It would not be fair to single out just one player because the competition has seen the best of every generation with Lacoste, Rosewell, Laver, Borg, McEnroe, Becker etc to most recently Hewitt, Nadal, Djokovic. All the players contributed to make the Davis Cup what it is today, the best team sport competition!

Q&A WITH DAVID HAGGERTY, ITF PRESIDENT



PRE DAVIS CUP FINALS

Tell us what makes the Davis Cup Final 8 so special?

Over the next six days, we're going to see this year's best eight nations in men's tennis battle to become Davis Cup champions. It's a pretty rare honour - in the 123-year history of Davis Cup, only 16 nations have lifted the trophy.

That said, Canada were first-time champions last year, proving that it is possible for new nations to break through. I'm sure that achievement will be on the minds of many of the players here and provide extra motivation and belief to succeed.

For men's elite tennis, this event is the final act of the 2023 season, and it's a real test of character for all the players involved. There is an extra pressure that goes with representing your country, but there are big rewards for those that thrive on that pressure.

What are you most looking forward to?

This is the men's World Cup of Tennis, and the Final 8 promises to be extremely competitive. It won't be easy for any team, but it will be exciting for all of us watching, either in the stadium, on TV, or following on social media.

After the round robin action of the Davis Cup Group Stage, we've reached the knock-out rounds and the teams get just one shot to advance. Both fans and players are going to see some hard-fought matches over the next few days. It's going to be very special.

It's also great to be back in Malaga for this event. I know that as well as superb on-court action, players and fans will enjoy fantastic Spanish hospitality here.

What happens in the rest of the Davis Cup competition?

Immediately below the top level are Davis Cup World Group I and World Group II, where many great nations compete every year. World Group I teams are knocking at the door of the elite, because they have the chance to advance to the Qualifiers, where a place in the Davis Cup Finals is at stake.

Beyond World Groups I and II are Groups III and IV, in which nations play regionally all around the world.

What's in it for nations in the lower tiers?

Davis Cup is a vital tool for the international development of our sport and is central to the ITF's mission to deliver tennis for future generations.

For the less developed tennis nations, Davis Cup provides an opportunity for them to be involved in international competition, giving valuable experience to players in those countries. Through payments to competing nations, the ITF also provides valuable funds for nations to grow and develop tennis further.

Ram and Salisbury Secure Back-To-Back Triumph at Nitto ATP Finals in Turin

In a spectacular display of skill and determination, Rajeev Ram and Joe Salisbury clinched victory at the Nitto ATP Finals in Turin, successfully defending their title against Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos. The American-British duo delivered a rock-solid performance, downing their opponents 6-3, 6-4 in a 69-minute triumph, extending their winning streak to an impressive 10 matches inside the Pala Alpitour.



Ram and Salisbury's late-season surge culminated in a remarkable achievement, with the duo expressing their joy and pride in the post-match interviews. "This is the biggest tournament we play on the ATP calendar all year, and to win it twice in a row is something I never would have thought of, and I'm so proud of," remarked Ram. Salisbury added, "I think we've got better throughout the week. I think that was our best match."

The sixth seeds' victory came as a testament to their improved form in the latter part of the season. Prior to the US Open, they had faced a modest season, holding a 20-16 record and ranking 16th in the Pepperstone ATP Live Doubles Teams Rankings. However, their resurgence began in New York, where they secured their third consecutive title at Flushing Meadows. Since then, Ram and Salisbury have been on an impressive streak, winning 17 of the 19 tour-level matches, claiming titles in Vienna, reaching the semi-finals in Paris, and culminating in their back-to-back triumph in Turin. This remarkable turnaround will see them finish the year in third place in the Pepperstone ATP Live Doubles Teams Rankings.

Reflecting on their journey, Salisbury shared, "We definitely didn't have a great first half of the year, and sometimes you need a bit of a shock, some tough times, to kind of kick you into gear and get you back to knowing what you were doing well." The pair's ability to rebound and maintain their winning momentum showcased their resilience and determination.

With Granollers and Zeballos unable to secure victory, Ivan Dodig and Austin Krajicek were confirmed as the Year-End ATP Doubles No. 1 presented by Pepperstone winning team. Despite the defeat, Granollers and Zeballos played valiantly, with their journey highlighting the intensity and competitiveness of the doubles competition at the Nitto ATP Finals.



In the Room

With Richard Parnell

How Good is Good Enough?

This month's thoughts, in the room, are to do with quality and one's desire to be the best one can be.

It is not uncommon for stringers to say that there is no need to go over basic techniques or basic string knowledge, they already know it.

Is this shortsighted and doing them a disservice? I believe it is.

There are always gaps in our knowledge and we often don't know what we don't know. If we take this thought and develop it, we could really say that we never stop learning as there will always be new products and technologies that will interact with the hands-on stringing part.

The hands on part of the art of stringing is also constantly evolving and for this reason when I hear a stringer say that they haven't got anything to learn, I know that that stringer might be a GOOD stringer but he or she will never be a GREAT stringer.

By accepting the fact that there is always something to learn, we open ourselves up to constantly striving to be better.

The day we stop looking to improve, we start going backwards down a slippery slope.

Be part of the change.

Please send any thoughts to: online@grsa-international.com

Promote positivity and your expertise will shine brighter.

FUN FACTS



Being number one is something you have to earn every day



NICOL DAVID

FORMER WORLD CHAMPION

1

1954 & 1956

To add to squash's backwall balcony viewing, small windows are added just above the backwall out-of-court line in courts in Invercargill & Palmerston North respectively, in New Zealand. This adds two lower rows of spectators to the balcony capacity.

2

February 1974

Television agrees to cover the final of the British Open at Abbeydale making use of the opportunities presented by the glass backwall.

3

1979

German court company ASB introduces courts with movable side walls so that they can be pushed across an adjoining court and enable side-wall spectator seating to be used on the adjoined court.

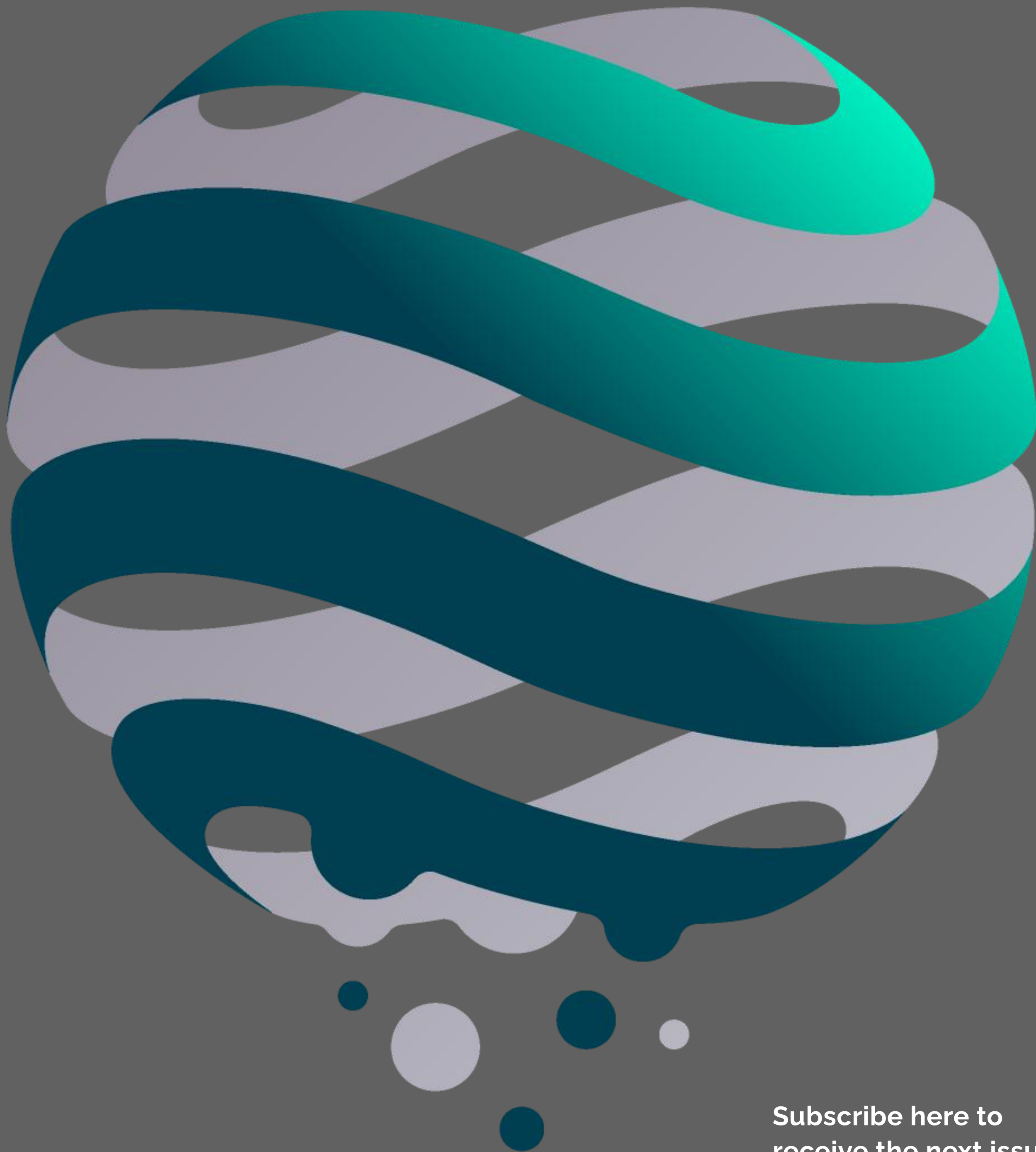
An alternative also introduced by ASB is a rotary wall that can swing back and provide seating in a court opposite the match court. Other court companies e.g. Courtwall, enter this market so that availability is widespread.

4

March 1983

The floor changes colour, as does the ball. The French Open paints the showcourt floor blue and balls are now white instead of black.

Some court markings are now yellow and overall a more colourful presentation is achieved for television. Spectator viewing is enhanced too. Also in this month the Patrick International Festival event tries a probably unique situation of the master camera filming being through the front wall is tried. There was no backwall viewing for the event.



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ADOPTAS.ORG

by Alejandro Davidovich Fokina

In a world where countless cats and dogs are abandoned and left to fend for themselves, the tireless efforts of organizations dedicated to their rescue, nurture, and re-homing are invaluable. **Adoptas.org** is one such organization, working diligently in Spain to provide a second chance for these vulnerable animals. We aim to shed light on the remarkable work carried out by **Adoptas.org**, with the involvement and support of renowned tennis player **Alejandro Davidovich Fokina**. Furthermore, it emphasizes the urgent need for public support and donations to help save the lives of these deserving animals.

Alejandro Davidovich Fokina: A Champion for Animal Welfare

Beyond his accomplishments on the tennis court, Alejandro Davidovich Fokina demonstrates a profound compassion for animals. His partnership with Adoptas.org exemplifies his commitment to making a difference in the lives of abandoned cats and dogs in Spain. Fokina's involvement serves as a powerful reminder that individuals, regardless of their field, can contribute to animal welfare and promote a more compassionate society.

Adoptas.org: Rescuing, Nurturing, and Re-homing Abandoned Animals

Adoptas.org is an organization at the forefront of animal rescue in Spain, tirelessly working to provide a lifeline to abandoned cats and dogs. Their dedicated team goes to great lengths to rescue animals from precarious situations, providing them with much-needed care, nourishment, and medical attention. Once rescued, the cats and dogs are placed into foster homes or shelters, where they receive nurturing and rehabilitation. Working diligently to find suitable forever homes, matching the animals with caring adoptive families who can provide them with the love, care, and security they deserve. **Adoptas.org**, through their efforts, have saved countless lives.

By supporting **Adoptas.org**, you become an integral part of the rescue mission. Your donations can help fund medical treatments, provide food and shelter, and support the ongoing efforts to find permanent homes for these animals. Together, we can create a compassionate community that values and protects the well-being of all living creatures.



Check out their new-look website, but more importantly, see the animals they are looking after and helping re-home, you might find the one!

GRSA – USA

Nov 11th, 2nd Meeting

GRSA International held a second meeting in Chattanooga, Tennessee to carry on with the kick start of GRSA – USA by welcoming two new area managers to GRSA International.

The meeting was organized and lead by GRSA president Richard Parnell and GRSA USA manager Mike Stephens. Chattanooga was chosen again because of the family atmosphere of the first meeting, and we wanted the same again.

This time we had the pleasure of the company of Ron Rocchi, industry expert and Wilson International Stringing team leader, among other titles he currently holds within the Wilson corporate structure. His on court testing in the area meant that business could be mixed with pleasure.



Joe Heydt joined the team as Area manager for the Nebraska, Omaha area, plus the surrounding areas, and passed his Tour Master Certification.

Mark Gonzalez had to cancel at the last minute due to other work commitments that couldn't survive without his presence. Anyone who knows Mark, realizes that he is central to many projects and as such is in high demand. GRSA is lucky to have him on board.

Tug Leyrer arrived for a quick flying visit from Pennsylvania, took his Competition, Competition Master and Tour Stringer certifications and passed with flying colours. After the certification exams we had a meeting to organize the structure of the GRSA workshops in his area of the US. One of the missions championed by GRSA is that the same workshop structure and exams are given wherever you take them, whether that is in Germany, the United Kingdom, Greece or USA. This global approach and structure is one of the things that sets GRSA apart.

A short but successful trip for Tug before he flew out to carry on with his everyday job.

Watch this space for more Area Managers that are in the process of joining the US team, which will raise the bar even higher - if that's even possible!!

The team in the US is second to none, with some seriously experienced stringers spreading the GRSA word.





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TOP TIP

Compression Socks & Stringer Comfort

Last month we looked at compression mats and their importance as a part of the stringers hardware that shouldn't be overlooked and often is.

This month let's look at another often overlooked product, the compression sock.

The hardest part of tournament stringing is being on your feet for anywhere up to 17 hours a day. In a GS stringing room, this is almost a guaranteed occurrence with numbers now topping 7000 rackets for a single GS event. Swollen ankles and feet, are no one's friend.

By looking after your feet and using compression socks from the start of the event, your feet, ankles and legs will thank you.

Why is it so important? Because it has a direct effect on stringer fatigue. Unless the stringer is a seasoned veteran from many Grand Slam events and has reached the point where even with extreme fatigue, the rackets still come out perfectly strung, fatigue can affect the outcome 99% of the time.

If you don't have compression socks, look into purchasing them, they are not expensive and well worth investing in.

Remember – The difference is in the small details.

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

BORDER RACKETS

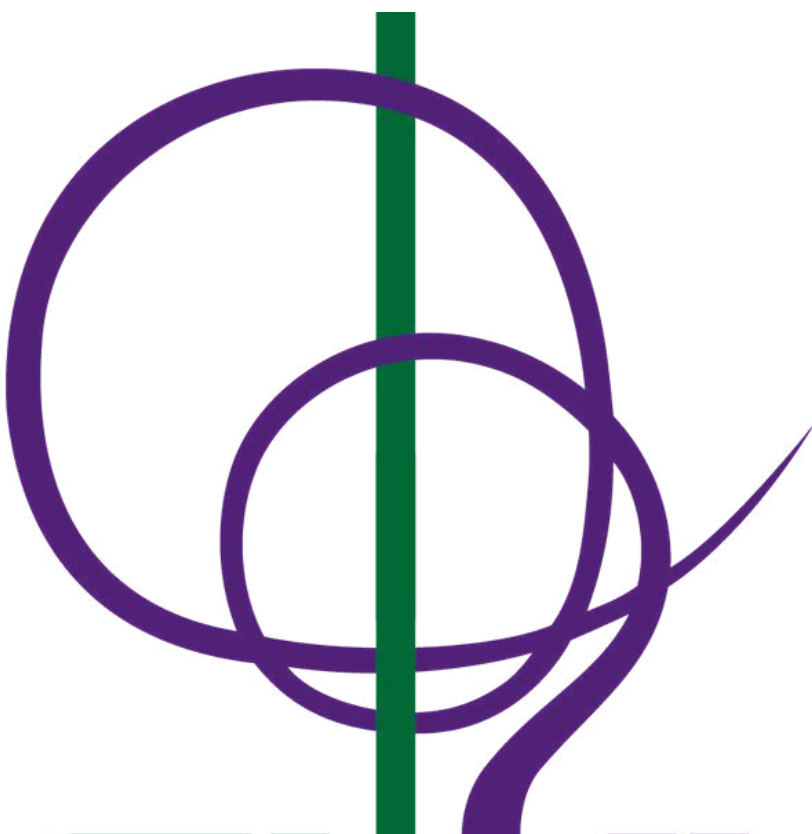


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GRSA AROUND THE WORLD



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MD Single 32

MD Double 16

Winner Singles: Antoine Bellier

Winner Doubles: Begemann/Balaji

Rackets strung: 186

Lowest tension: 16/16

Highest tension: 26/25

Stringers : Martin Mann &
Marco Schoeppers



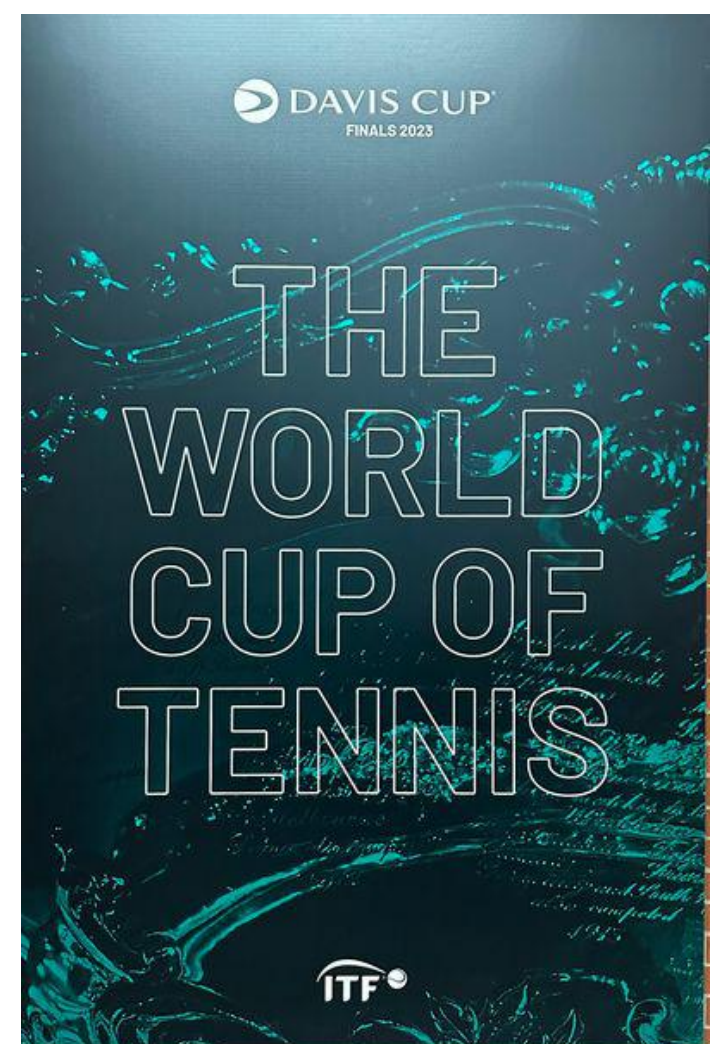
GRSA AROUND THE WORLD

Davis Cup Finals, Málaga

GRSA were present at the World Cup of Tennis, the Davis Cup Finals in Málaga, it's the 2nd year the tournament has been held here and the 3rd year has already been confirmed.

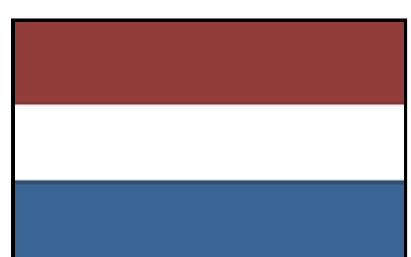
Martin Mann had the privilege of stringing for Finland, and a great tournament for the Finns this year reaching the Finals, beating Canada but losing to Australia.

The Netherlands were looked after by GRSA member Mark Jan Greebe, GRSA Certified Tour Stringer and GRSA advocate. His commitment and dedication in sharing the GRSA word is second to none, and his inclusion in this event is yet another reason why being a GRSA member and investing in your future is so important and can lead to amazing opportunities.



STATS
FINLAND

Rackets strung: 47
Lowest Tension: 21/20kg
Highest Tension: 25/25kg



STATS
NETHERLANDS

Rackets strung: 44
Lowest Tension: 17.5/17.5kg
Highest Tension: 24/23kg



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KARAKAL WRAP AROUND BRIDGE

This month's racket from the list of non-standard squash rackets is from Karakal; I have used the F-135 as an example.

It has a wrap around bridge which is shared by the F-125 and the F-PRO 130, and was quickly discontinued by Karakal, but they are all still for sale, new, by many retailers.

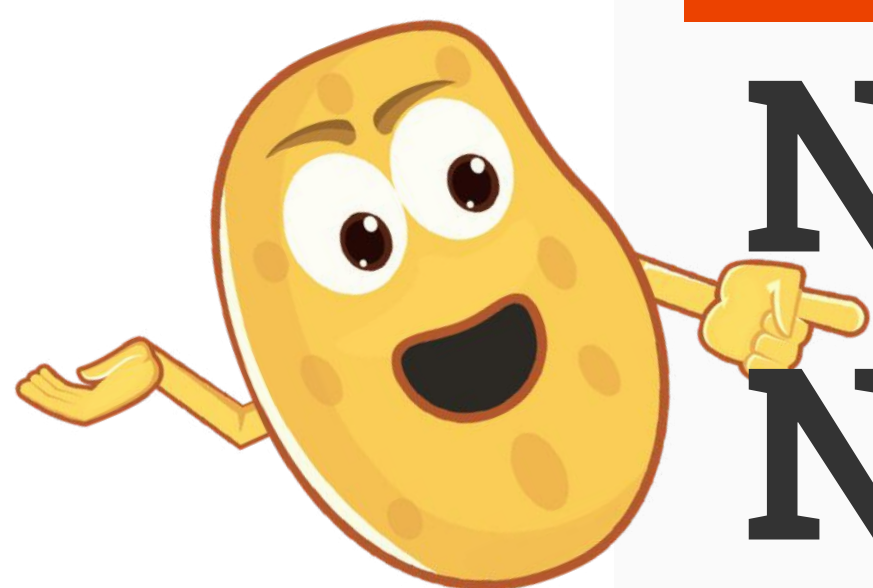
One of the reasons that it may have been discontinued, is the possibility that some main strings may slip off the central part of the bridge and lose tension. This is only likely during the stringing process.

Instead of individual places for each main string, there is one area, in the centre of the bridge, for all the mains. That area is thinner than the rest of the bridge.

Mains should only be pulled at the head, usually meaning two at a time, care must be taken, knots can be tied on the next to last main and there are enough tie-off points to string in 2 pieces (4 knots).

In fact by stringing in two pieces you can avoid long runs of string along the outside of the frame making the finished product much more pleasing to the eye. This reason has been covered before on a few of the rackets that I've written about previously.

There is quite a bit of information about the frame on the inside of the (open) throat, such as the string pattern, tension, balance point and overall weight.



Nick's Nugget

Starting clamps instead of starting knots mean that if you discover a mis-weave, you can deal with it, with the least impact on your finished string job.

There are 16 mains and 17 crosses. It is very important that there is a hard weave at the last cross/first cross at the throat. As previously stated, I've used 2 pieces of string.

Instructions

LH1 to below bridge

RH1 to above bridge

(Remember that the first main that comes down the racket from Head to Throat on the Left side always goes low/under/below the ring or bridge or hinge etc. The right side will do the opposite).

Below bridge to RH2

Above bridge to LH2

LH2 to LH3

LH3 to below bridge

Above bridge to LH4

RH2 to RH3

RH3 to above bridge

Below bridge to RH4

RH4 to RH5

RH5 to above bridge

Below bridge to RH7

LH4 to LH5

LH5 to below bridge

Above bridge to LH7

LH7 to LH9

LH9 to below bridge

Above bridge to LH13

RH7 to RH9

RH9 to above bridge

Below bridge to RH13

Tie-off both sides at H9

Crosses

Start at H6 (either side)

If starting at LH6 weave goes under LM5

If starting at RH6

weave goes over RM5

Tie-off is at H4 either side.

Last cross is T1

Tie-off is T2 either side.

Next month:- the Karakal F series with a wrap-around throat.



Gohar vs. El Hammamy: A Grueling Triumph Marred by Uncharacteristic Conduct

In a historic and record-breaking culmination of the 2022-23 PSA World Tour Finals, Nouran Gohar emerged victorious against her fierce rival, Hania El Hammamy, in a mesmerizing 130-minute contest that has etched its name into the annals of women's squash history. However, the euphoria of victory was not without its share of controversy, as Gohar's conduct during the match marred an otherwise spectacular triumph.

A Clash of Titans: Gohar's Triumph Marred by Poor Conduct

World No.1 Nouran Gohar secured her second consecutive CIB PSA World Tour Finals title in a match that surpassed all expectations, setting a new record for the longest-ever women's match on the PSA World Tour. The intense rivalry between Gohar and El Hammamy reached its zenith in the World Tour Finals, concluding a season filled with drama and nail-biting encounters.

A Season-Defining Rivalry

The battle between Gohar and El Hammamy has become synonymous with endurance and intensity, claiming three spots in the top 10 of the longest matches in women's squash. The World Tour Finals served as the pinnacle of their clashes, marking their seventh encounter of the season. The victory for Gohar leveled the score at three wins apiece in their head-to-head battles, adding an extra layer of intrigue to their future meetings.





The Drama Unfolds: A Point-by-Point Battle with Controversy

The match's opening game set the tone, reaching sudden death as El Hammamy claimed an early 11-10 advantage. Both players showcased extraordinary resilience, trading blows and victories. However, the fourth game saw Gohar assert dominance, leading to a climactic fifth game lasting nearly 45 minutes.

Record-Breaking Moments with Uncharacteristic Conduct

The tension escalated as Gohar celebrated prematurely on several occasions, only for the video referee to intervene. The drama unfolded until the final moments, with Gohar securing victory with a 12-10 win in the fifth game. However, a stain on her performance came in the form of poor conduct when, in frustration, she lashed out, kicking the door in anger after a video referee decision.

Insights from the Players: Controversy and Reflection

In an exclusive interview, El Hammamy reflected on the physicality of their matches, emphasizing the toll it takes on players. She highlighted the need for improvements to make the game less physically demanding. The post-match interviews shed light on the challenges faced by both athletes, emphasizing the importance of fair play and the referees' role in maintaining a level playing field.

The Future Beckons Amidst Controversy: Anticipation for the Next Chapter

As the 2022-23 PSA World Tour season concludes, the Gohar vs. El Hammamy rivalry remains a defining narrative in women's squash. Fans worldwide are eagerly anticipating the next chapter in this enthralling saga, wondering if these two titans will push the limits even further in the seasons to come.

In a post-match interview, Gohar acknowledged the monumental challenge presented by El Hammamy and thanked her family, team, and the enthusiastic crowd for their unwavering support. However, the incident involving the door kick serves as a reminder that even in victory, sportsmanship remains a crucial aspect of the game.

The historic clash between Gohar and El Hammamy has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the world of women's squash, yet Gohar's conduct during the match will undoubtedly spark conversations about fair play and the responsibilities of athletes on the court.

The Evolution of Squash Courts: A Journey Through Transparent Innovation



The world of squash underwent a transformative revolution nearly 50 years ago when the first glass backwalls were introduced, forever changing the way enthusiasts and spectators experienced the game. From humble beginnings at the Albert Park Squash Centre in Melbourne to the cutting-edge designs of today, the evolution of squash courts has been a fascinating journey marked by breakthroughs in construction, colour, presentation, and broadcast.

In December 1966, the Birkenhead Squash Rackets Club in Merseyside, UK, unveiled the world's first squash court with a glass backwall. Pioneered by Pilkington Glass, this groundbreaking design featured a 1-inch thick, 5ft by 16ft glass panel integrated into the backwall. However, the initial attempts still faced challenges, with limited viewing opportunities as the wall opened onto a passageway.

Fast forward to October 1971, and a major milestone was achieved at the Abbeydale Park Sports Club in Sheffield, England. This venue saw the installation of the first all-glass backwall, utilizing base-supported toughened glass with etched vertical lines to resolve reflection issues. The British Open in January 1972 became the first major championship to embrace this innovation, allowing spectators unprecedented visibility into the back corners of the court.

The quest for optimal spectator experience continued, and in November 1974, Wembley Squash Centre in London introduced a glass backwall court with purpose-built features for broadcasting. Seating for 240, removable seats for TV cameras, ducts for TV cabling, and even glass panels in the tin allowed for action photos from unique perspectives, elevating the squash viewing experience.

In September 1978, Stockholm, Sweden witnessed the assembly of a prefabricated court with a glass backwall, demonstrating the first instance of a demountable court built to enhance spectator capacity. The evolution continued in September 1979 when the Men's World Open in Toronto, Canada, marked the first world title played on a portable glass backwall court.

The innovation extended beyond backwalls in July 1981 when Walton Hall entertainment and sports club in Yorkshire, England, introduced the world's first transparent squash court side wall. This paved the way for alternative materials like plexiglass, commonly known as the 'plastic court,' which emerged in October 1981.



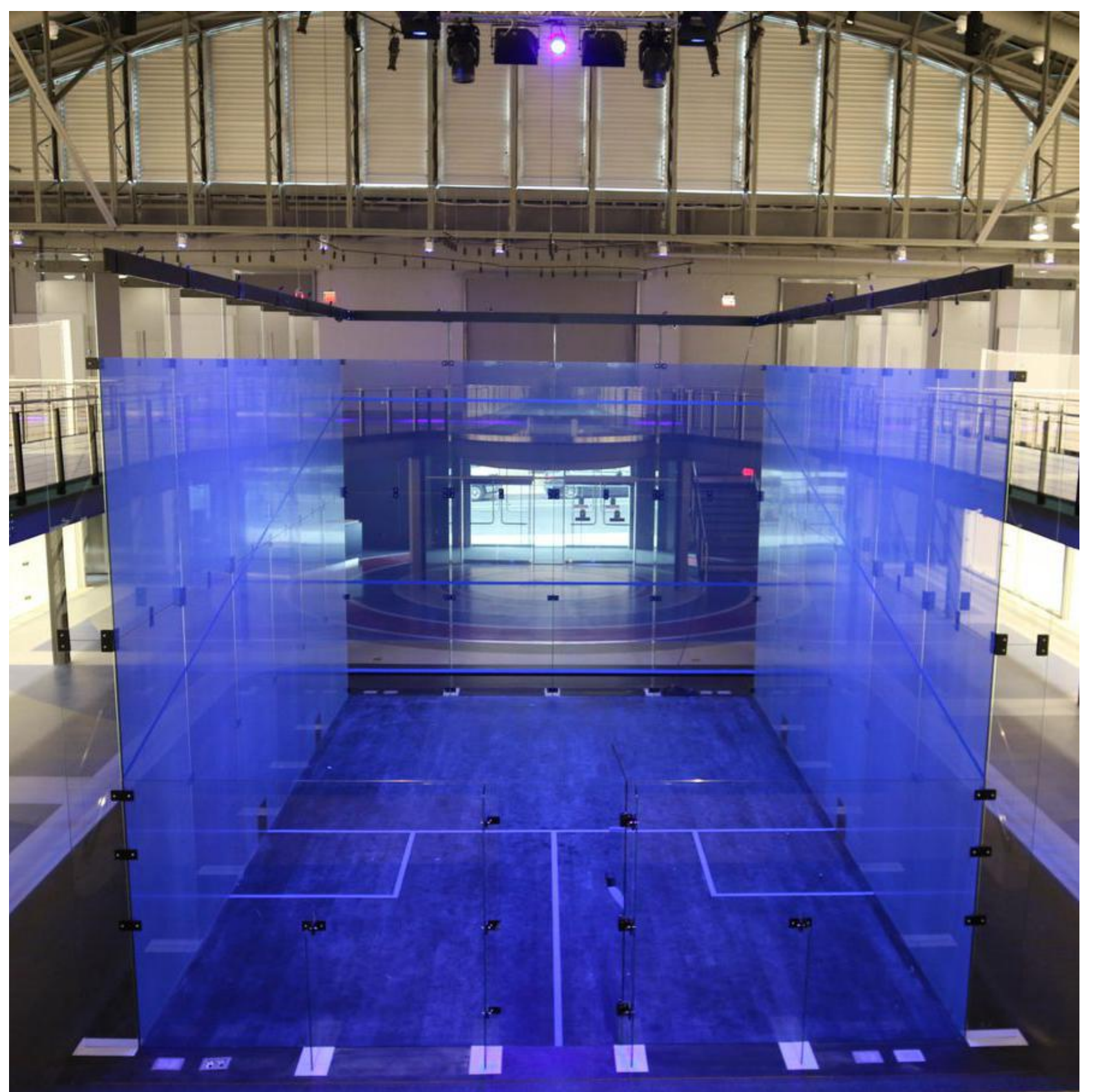
November 1981 witnessed another leap as the World Open in Toronto unveiled the first glass front wall, setting the stage for a new era in court design. The all-glass story progressed with Twin-View's introduction of a court with one solid side wall and glass for the other three walls in August 1982.

The journey reached a pivotal moment in May 1988 when all-glass courts, lighter than their predecessors, were introduced. Despite concerns about scratching affecting visibility, these courts became a standard, offering a colourful touch with light green Contra Vision film on transparent walls.

Over the years, squash courts evolved in terms of functionality and flexibility. In September 1998, ASB developed the first glass showcourt expandable to a doubles configuration, demonstrating adaptability to changing game dynamics. The Commonwealth Games in Manchester in July 2002 showcased a permanent all-glass court with hydraulics, allowing movement for events and seating built around it.

July 2006 marked a dazzling innovation with the introduction of a glass-panel floor with LED lighting underneath, giving rise to the first 5-glass surface court in Hyderabad, India. This inventive concept, however, faced challenges in the following year due to intense humidity in Bermuda, highlighting the ongoing pursuit of perfection in squash court design.

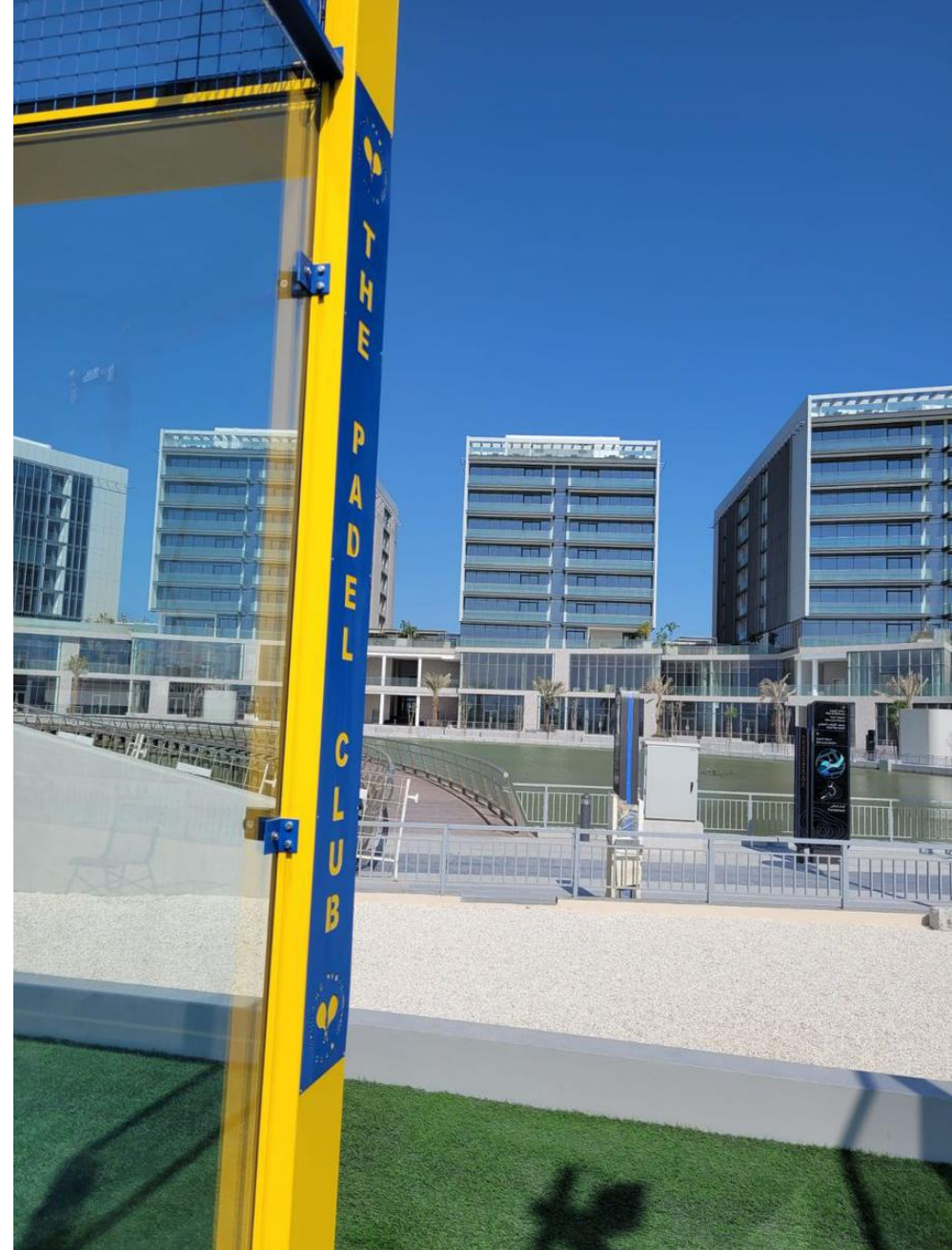
From the humble glass window in Melbourne to the high-tech glass courts of today, the evolution of squash court design stands as a testament to the sport's commitment to innovation and a thrilling spectator experience.



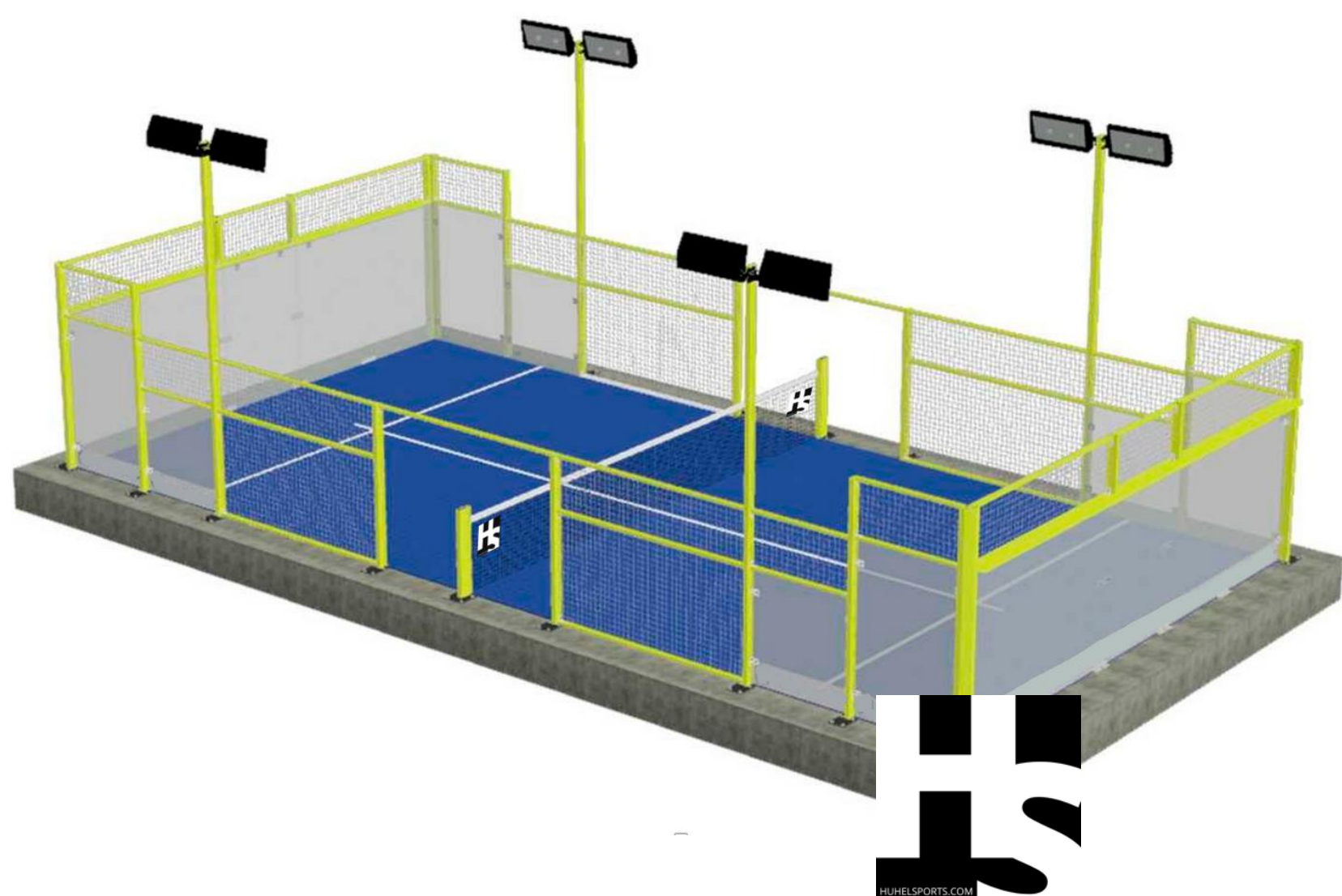
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Anchor plates in galvanized steel for then fastening of the structure and glass, measurements of 250x200x15 (8 units), 495x250x15 (4 units) 150x120x15 (8 units)

Structural system of aluminum profiles, dimensions of the pillars 150x45x1.7 (8 units), 106x232x3 (4 units), 90x45x1.7 (8 units)

Top horizontal beam on 281x91 glass bottoms (2 units) Welded mesh 50x50x4mm

Lighting rods integrated into the structure

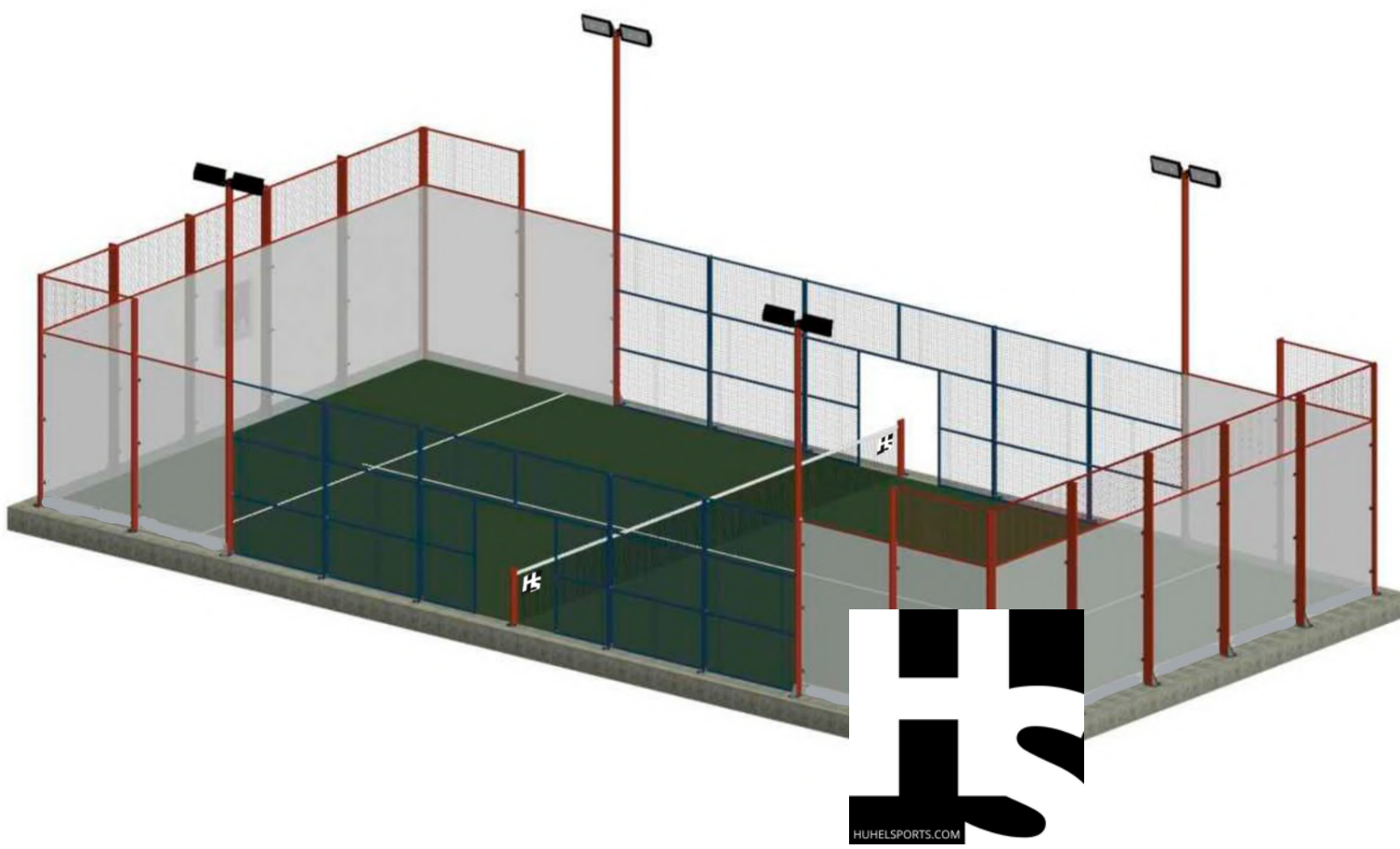


EUROPE COURT

Structural system of aluminum profiles, dimensions of the pillars 1920x45x2 (8 units), 150x45x1.7 (8 units), 115x115x1.7 (4 units), 150x45x1.7 (8 units)

Galvanized steel mounting plates for the securing of the structure and glass, measurements of 300x250x12(8 units), 250x200x12 (8 units), 200x200x12 (4 units) 200x200x12 (8 units)

Structure designed and constructed in accordance with local technical code of building standards



COLISEUM COURT

Anchor plates in galvanized steel for the fastening of the structure and glass, measurements of 450x250x25 (4 units), 200x200x12 (8 units)

Structural system of aluminum profiles, dimensions of the pillars 221x117x3 (4 units) and 150x45x1.7 (8 units)

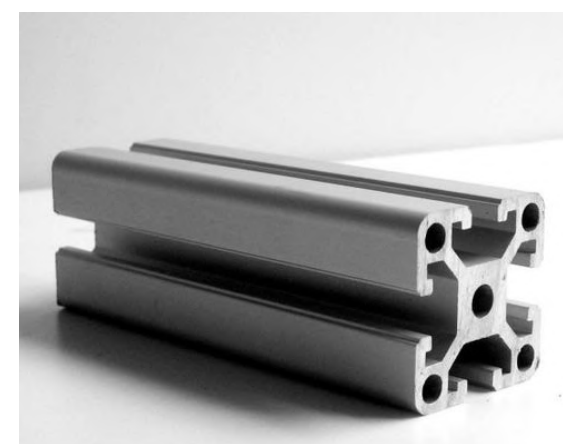
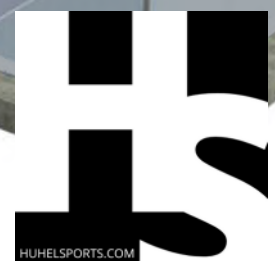
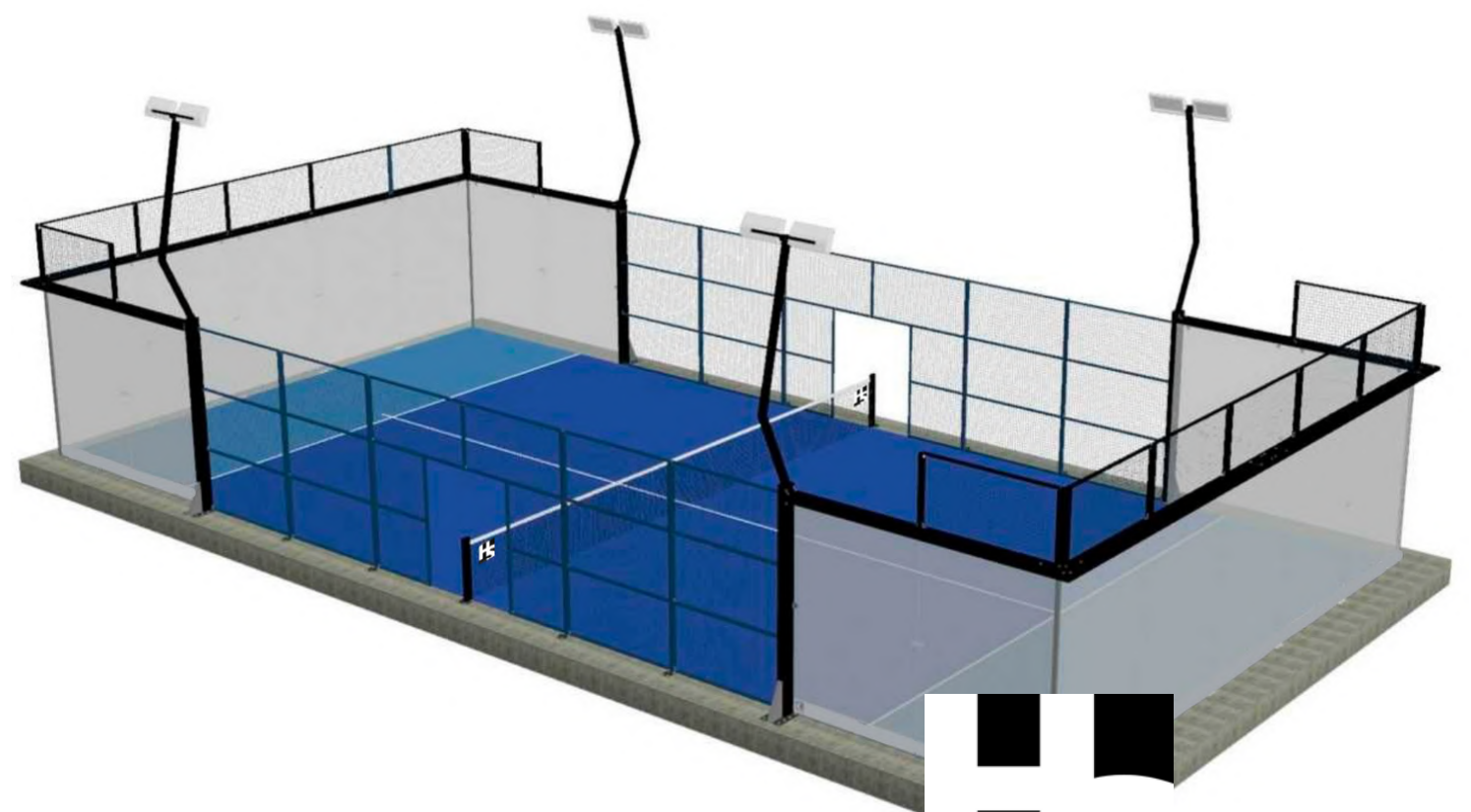
Top horizontal beam in 281x91 glass bottoms (2 units)

Welded mesh 50x50x4mm

M8 stainless steel screws of type A2 for the fastening of glass panels and meshes

Lighting rods integrated into the structure

Structure designed and constructed in accordance with local technical code of building standards



HIGH QUALITY - PERSONALISED ALUMINIUM

Mari Carmen Villalba Bids Farewell to WPT in a Touching Final Match

In a poignant moment for the world of padel, Mari Carmen Villalba, following in the footsteps of Eli Amatriain and preceding the Alayeto twins, has officially announced her retirement from the professional circuit.

The 36-year-old, as previously communicated on her Instagram account, expressed that the time had come to conclude her illustrious career. Notably absent from the roster for the upcoming Mexico Open, Villalba played her final match on the World Padel Tour alongside Ana Fernandez de Osso, resulting in a 6/3 6/0 defeat against the formidable pair of Ari Sanchez and Paula Josemaria.

While the match's outcome may fade into the background of Villalba's extensive career, the resonance of the moment was underscored by the heartfelt applause and congratulations she received from the spectators in Malmö. With one tournament left on her schedule, the Premier Padel Milano P1, slated for December 4 to 10, Villalba will have the opportunity to bid her official farewell to the sport. Once a member of the Top 16 in the world, her legacy is sure to be celebrated during this final appearance.

Following the Milano event, the Malaga native will definitively retire her racket, marking the end of her competitive playing days. However, Villalba hints at a continued presence in the world of padel, as indicated in her Instagram message. While she may be stepping off the court, her enduring commitment to the sport suggests that Mari Carmen Villalba's influence on padel is far from over.



Breaking Records: Young Trailblazers Shine in World Padel Tour

As the 2023 World Padel Tour season unfolds, a new era is dawning with the emergence of exceptionally young talents who are rewriting the history books. In both the men's and women's tours, records have been shattered, showcasing the depth of talent in the next generation.

In the women's category, the spotlight is on the three youngest quarter-finalists in World Padel Tour history:

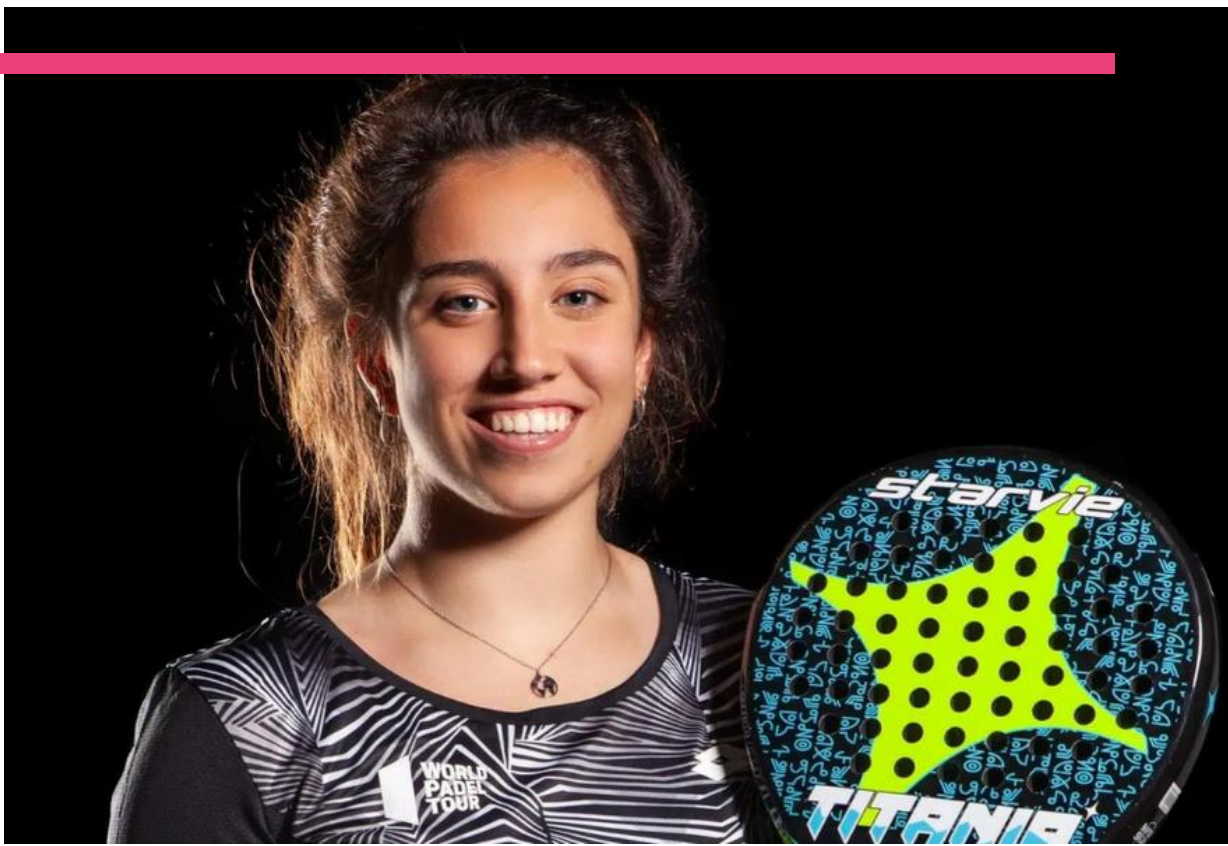
Marta Ortega

16 years, seven months, 13 days old
A familiar face in discussions of young talents, Marta Ortega showcased her prowess at just 16 years old, reaching the quarter-finals in 2013 alongside Lucia Sainz. Despite not clinching a title that year, Ortega's early success marked the beginning of a remarkable career.



Bea González

16 years, four months old
A name synonymous with youth achievements, Bea González made waves by becoming the youngest-ever quarter-finalist at 16 years and four months old. Still only 21, she continues to impress in the 2023 season, securing two titles alongside Delfi Brea.



Andrea Ustero

16 years, one month, 11 days old
A rising star, Andrea Ustero, at just 16 years old, broke Bea González's five-year record. Partnered with 17-year-old Alejandra Alonso, Ustero's quarter-final feat at the Barcelo Valladolid Master announced her arrival on the grand stage, hinting at a promising future.



In the men's arena, a similar tale of youthful brilliance unfolds:

Javi Garrido

18 years, six months old

Javier, (Javi for short), the youngest 16-year-old to escape qualifying in the men's tour, made history with a surprising semi-final appearance in the 2019 Alicante Open. Now 22, Garrido eyes a spot in the prestigious Master Final to solidify his ascent.



Javi Leal

17 years, nine months, 16 days old

Javi (another Javier) Leal's exceptional journey to the quarter-finals in 2021, starting from pre-qualifying with Miguel Semmler, set a unique precedent with eight consecutive victories. With six quarter-final appearances to his name, the 20-year-old aims for the next step - the semi-finals.



Valentino Libaak

17 years, seven months, one day old

The La Rioja Open 2023 will be eternally etched in memory as Valentino Libaak and Leandro Augsburger, wild card entries, created history by reaching the final. Libaak, the youngest male quarter-finalist, semi-finalist, and finalist, announced his arrival in spectacular fashion, leaving an indelible mark in his debut World Padel Tour season.



As these prodigious talents continue to make waves, the World Padel Tour eagerly anticipates the unfolding chapters of their promising careers. The youth movement is in full swing, and the future of padel tennis looks brighter than ever.

Rising Stars and Historic Feats Mark World Padel Tour's Unforgettable Season

In a season that can only be described as historic, the World Padel Tour has witnessed the emergence of young talents who have shattered age-related records. Arturo Coello and Agustin Tapia, at ages 20 and 23, etched their names into the annals of history by becoming the youngest male pair to clinch a World Padel Tour tournament. This milestone follows a trend set by earlier prodigies, including Valentino Libaak and Claudia Jensen, who broke records for the youngest finalists in consecutive tournaments.

Libaak, along with partner Leandro Augsburger, further elevated the youth movement by becoming the youngest couple to reach a final, adding another layer to the narrative of the kids dominating the tour. Adding to this youth revolution, Spanish sensation Andrea Ustero, at just 16 years and one month, made headlines as the youngest quarter-finalist ever, demonstrating a level of prowess that belies her age.



As the younger generation leaves an indelible mark, established players are not to be outdone. Alejandra Salazar and Gemma Triay, riding high from a record-breaking 2022, extended their dominance by reaching an astonishing 14 consecutive finals, surpassing the previous record set by Pablo Lima and Fernando Belasteguín. The rivalry between 'Ale y Gemma' and Paula Josemaría and Ariana Sánchez has also etched its name in history as the most-played final in WPT history, with 24 meetings since 2021.

The duo of Coello and Tapia continued their record-breaking spree, achieving the best start to a season in WPT history. While falling just shy of the all-time winning streak, their nine consecutive victories at the start of the season set a benchmark that may stand the test of time. Meanwhile, Martín Di Nenno and Franco Stupaczuk added another layer to the record books with their eight-year gap between titles, securing the Cupra Danish Padel Open. Delfi Brea and Bea González followed suit, clinching the same tournament almost four years after their last title together.

As the World Padel Tour season unfolds with unprecedented achievements and rising stars, the stage is set for an exciting future in the world of paddle tennis. The records broken in 2023 may prove not only remarkable but also challenging to surpass in the years to come.



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If you're a pickleball fan, here's a list of some of the competitions you might be interested in, you never know, one might be near you!

Burgholzhausen International Open 2024 (Frankfurt)**EID:** 1337 **PRICE** EUR 40**Organizer:** Norbert Möhring**EVENT** - TOURNAMENT**Starting:** March 16, 2024 to March 17, 2024**City:** Friedrichsdorf, Deutschland**Home Club:** Tv 1893 E.v. Burgholzhausen**Registration Deadline:** February 25, 2024 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**2024 RANDERS OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS****EID:** 1322 **PRICE** EUR 30**Organizer:** Kenneth Pedersen**EVENT** - TOURNAMENT**Starting:** May 10, 2024 to May 12, 2024**City:** Randers, Denmark**Home Club:** Arena Rander**Registration Deadline:** April 20, 2024 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**Malaga Open****EID:** 1349 **PRICE** EUR 20**Organizer:** Daniel Eneman**EVENT** - TOURNAMENT**Starting:** February 24, 2024 to February 24, 2024**City:** Fuengirola, Malaga, Spain**Home Club:** Daryl Collins Tennis Academy**Registration Deadline:** January 31, 2024 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 1**MORE
INFO**

Pickleball Goes Digital with Upcoming PPA Tour Video Game



Prepare your paddles and get ready to step onto the virtual pickleball court – the official PPA Tour video game is on the horizon! Teased after a year and a half of development in collaboration with game developer Farsight, this gaming experience promises to take pickleball to new heights.

While the official title and release date are yet to be unveiled, PPA Tour enthusiasts can anticipate the game's arrival this winter. The demo version, showcased by Jay Devilliers at Nationals, is just a taste of what's to come. Farsight, employing motion-captured data from pros like ALW and Ben Johns, ensures an immersive and realistic gaming encounter.

The PPA Tour video game marks a significant leap forward for pickleball. Jeff Watson, PPA's VP of Communications, notes that it brings a unique form of legitimacy to the sport. "It will expand the image and names of some of our players to people who haven't heard of them," Watson explains. Recognizing familiar faces like Jay Devillier, players can connect the virtual experience with real-life court performances.

While not the inaugural venture into virtual pickleball, the PPA Tour game distinguishes itself with a full-scale, realistic approach, aiming for authenticity. Customizable players, tournament competitions, local multiplayer modes, and motion-captured realism set the stage for an unparalleled pickleball gaming adventure.

The game is set to launch on popular gaming platforms such as Steam, Nintendo Switch, Playstation, and Xbox, ensuring accessibility for a wide audience. Whether you're a seasoned pickleball player or a newcomer to the court, the PPA Tour video game promises an exciting addition to the digital gaming landscape. So, gear up, practice your shots, and get ready to experience pickleball like never before – both in the virtual and real worlds. Stay tuned for updates, and let the games begin!



USA Pickleball Takes Steps to Muffle the Racket: Introducing the "Quiet Category"

Pickleball, America's fastest-growing sport, is making strides to address the rising chorus of noise complaints echoing across communities. USA Pickleball, the sport's governing body, recently unveiled a groundbreaking initiative aimed at promoting a quieter playing experience by investing in acoustical modifications to the game.

Known for its distinctive "pop-pop-pop" sound, which some liken to popcorn in a microwave, pickleball has become a source of contention in neighborhoods nationwide. Despite its surge in popularity, with an estimated 36 million players and a remarkable 158% growth over the past three years, the sport has faced challenges due to its noise levels, approximately twice as loud as tennis.

In response to the growing cacophony and the disputes it has fueled, USA Pickleball is introducing a new "quiet category" for pickleball equipment. This initiative signals a commitment to collaborating with manufacturers and facilities to develop solutions that will allow the sport to thrive while minimizing its auditory footprint. The small town of Haworth in northern New Jersey recently experienced the impact of pickleball noise, prompting officials to relocate the courts to an area surrounded by woods to alleviate residents' concerns. This move highlights the tension between pickleball enthusiasts and those seeking a quieter environment.

USA Pickleball's initiative not only seeks to address noise concerns but also aims to foster positive relationships between residential communities and facility operators. With an estimated 130 new pickleball locations added each month in 2022 and projections indicating a need for an additional 25,000 courts, finding a balance between the sport's growth and community harmony is crucial. The organization has spent the past 15 months researching and studying the acoustic output of pickleball, working closely with acoustic experts to explore ways to dampen the sound. The "quiet category" will encourage the development of equipment that delivers 50% or less of the current acoustic footprint.

Bob Unetich, a sound engineer and pickleball player, has been studying the issue for eight years and founded Pickleball Sound Mitigation to help communities find solutions. He emphasizes that the vibrations created by the paddles contribute to the annoyance, and finding innovative ways to mitigate this is a key focus.

As the nationwide debate over pickleball noise continues, USA Pickleball's initiative aims to provide support for municipalities and homeowners associations grappling with the issue. By investing in quieter equipment and fostering innovation, the organization strives to ensure that the sport can coexist harmoniously with the communities it has become a part of.

As pickleball's popularity continues to soar, USA Pickleball's proactive steps to address noise concerns demonstrate a commitment to balancing the sport's growth with the peace of residential communities. The introduction of the "quiet category" signals a promising path toward a more harmonious coexistence between pickleball enthusiasts and their neighbors.

"Pickleball Extravaganza: GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS Smashed at Nationals Kick-Off"

Farmers Branch, TX - In a groundbreaking display of skill, camaraderie, and sheer enthusiasm, history was rewritten at the Brookhaven Country Club during the 2023 Biofreeze USA Pickleball National Championships kick-off. A spirited attempt to secure a GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title for the most participants in a continuous pickleball match not only succeeded but surpassed all expectations.

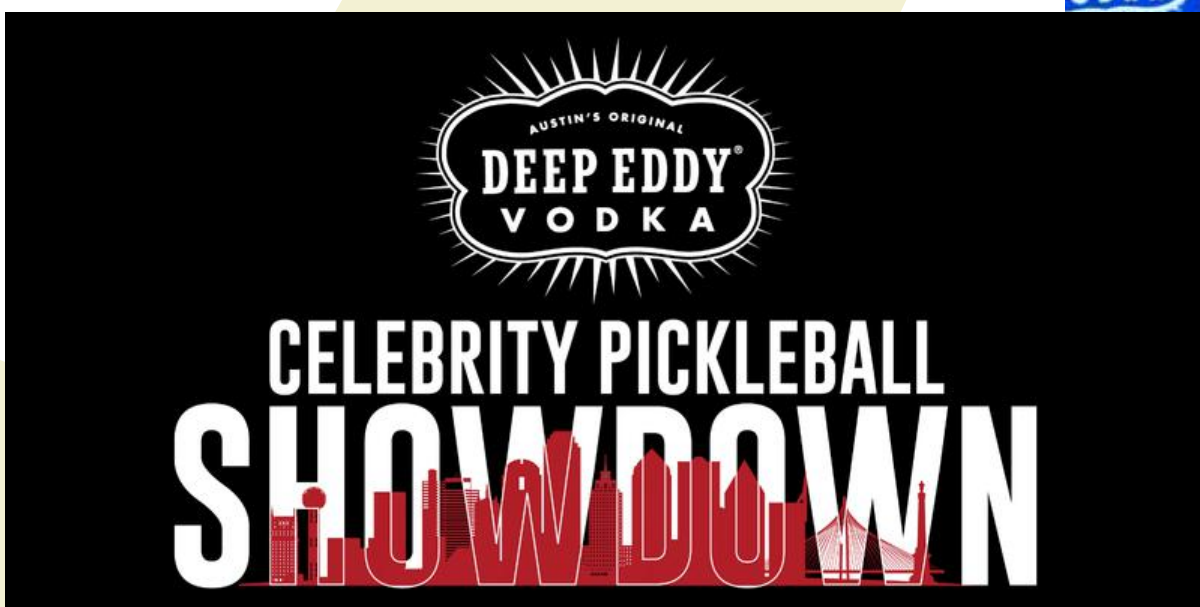
The 12-hour exhibition match unfolded along the aptly named "Pickleball Boulevard," where 288 players took to the court from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT. World-renowned players, including the reigning World No. 1s Ben Johns and Anna Leigh Waters, showcased their talents in 10-minute intervals, leaving an indelible mark on the record books.

This extraordinary effort shattered the previous record of 250 players, and all 288 participants will receive an official GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS certificate as a testament to their historic involvement. The official authentication process by GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS is underway, involving a meticulous review of 12 hours of video footage and other supporting materials.

Brook Thygerson, the mastermind behind this ambitious GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS attempt and PPA Tour event planner, expressed her exhilaration at the overwhelming response. "Technically,

Nationals didn't start until Monday, so I was worried that nobody was going to show up. However, we had a waitlist upon waitlist to participate. If we had more time and bandwidth, I bet we could've played for a whole 24 hours with the number of people that wanted to jump in for this event."





Deep Eddy Vodka, the headline sponsor, added a touch of flair to the event by distributing vibrant "Drink Vodka. Break Records" t-shirts to all participants. The competition on the courts was just as spirited, with Team Ruby Red vodka narrowly edging out Team Lemon vodka by a margin of 657 points to 636 points.

Anna Leigh Waters encapsulated the collective sentiment, stating, "Setting world records, I like to be a part of that." Ben Johns echoed the excitement, emphasizing, "Setting pickleball records [is awesome] for sure, but now a world record, that's a step up."

As the curtain fell on this unprecedented pickleball extravaganza, it marked a perfect beginning to the Nationals festivities for all involved. The record-breaking event not only showcased the passion for the sport but also demonstrated the community's ability to come together for a shared goal.

With smiles, camaraderie, and a new GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title in hand, the participants and spectators alike celebrated a momentous achievement that will be remembered for years to come.

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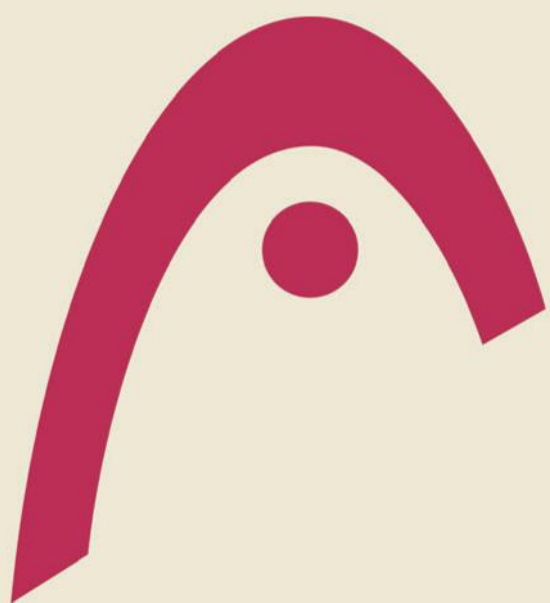
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