



GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

ATP
MASTERS 1000

SHANGHAI

The Penultimate ATP 1000 of 2023

Hubert
Hurkacz



HEAD & GRSA BEIJING '23



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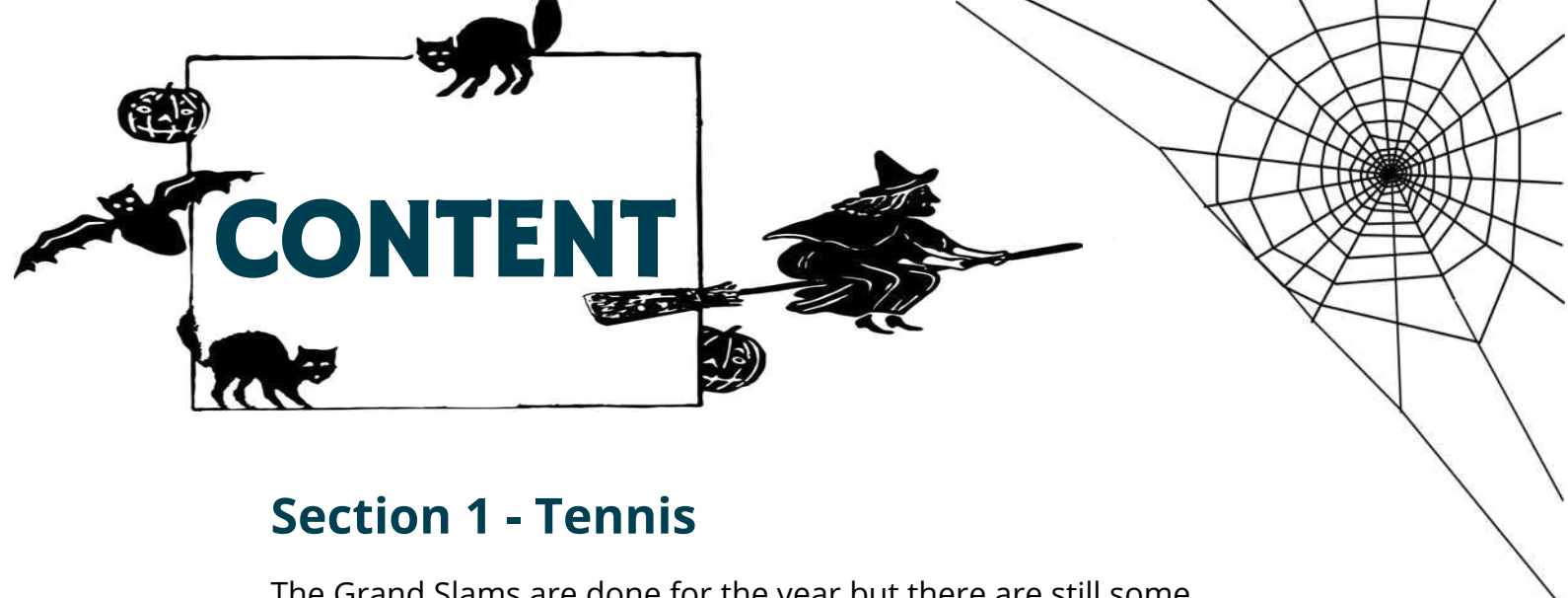
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CONTENT

Section 1 - Tennis

The Grand Slams are done for the year but there are still some brilliant tournaments to come, we look at the ones that stood out as September came to an end and October kicked in, but as always there's more!

Section 2 - GRSA INTERNATIONAL

The Asia tour was in full flow with Shanghai, Zhuhai and Beijing all hosting great tournaments, HEAD China were present and with them GRSA was enlisted to help man the official stringing teams with some very memorable moments.

Section 3 - Squash

Nick takes on the Archpower, we look at some of the recent squash news and both Nick and Jon talk about the inclusion of Squash into the 2028 Olympics.

Section 4 - Padel

We always like seeing what's happening in the world of padel and there are some interesting snippets in this month's issue with Babolat upping the game and a guest appearance from a rather well-known footballer!

Section 5 - Pickleball

The attraction of pickleball is no secret, it's fascinating to see who is really settling in with their transition from tennis, plus, who's been there for some time and really is a force to be reckoned with.

We also look at the PPA finals... what an event!



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

Jannik - BEIJING

Jannik Sinner achieved a remarkable turnaround in style at the beginning of the month at the China Open, Sinner secured a hard-fought victory against Daniil Medvedev for the first time in seven attempts, clinching his third title of the season.

The Italian sensation entered his fifth championship match of the year with an intimidating 0-6 deficit in the pair's Lexus ATP Head2Head series against the 27-year-old Russian. However, Sinner, appeared unfazed by his previous record against the World No. 3. He unleashed his signature powerful groundstrokes to outlast Medvedev in two tightly contested sets, with scores of 7-6(2), 7-6(2).

Sinner's triumph was not only a testament to his skill, but also to the exceptional stringing expertise provided by the HEAD team. In addition to his powerful game, Sinner demonstrated strength on his serve, winning an impressive 71 percent (17/24) of his second-serve points, contributing to his victory after two hours of intense competition at the ATP 500 event.

During the trophy ceremony, Sinner humorously quipped, "Daniil, thanks for letting me win at least one match. We have had some very tough battles, especially this year. Thanks for making me a much better player. I have been training a lot to beat you. My team are working a lot. Thank you very much, and it is special to share this moment with you."

With his 49th tour-level win of the season, Sinner has ascended to the No. 4 spot in the Pepperstone ATP Live Rankings. The 22-year-old now joins the elite company of just the second Italian player to crack the Top 5, following in the footsteps of Adriano Panatta, who achieved a career-high No. 4 ranking in August 1976.

In a final characterised by exceptional quality, Sinner demonstrated unwavering belief from the very first ball. His aggressive playing style allowed him to penetrate Medvedev's defenses, winning an impressive 19 out of 29 net approaches. Additionally, Sinner's prowess behind his second serve proved pivotal as he out-maneuvered his 27-year-old counterpart in baseline duels. Sinner showcased his peak form during both tie-breaks, exhibiting exceptional skill on both wings and improving his tour-level finals record to an impressive 9-3.

Did You Know?

Sinner joins the ranks of players who have claimed tour-level titles this season by defeating the top two seeds. His remarkable journey included a win against World No. 2 and top seed Carlos Alcaraz in the semi-finals. Notably, Dusan Lajovic (Banja Luka) and Medvedev (Dubai) have also achieved this remarkable feat during the season. HEAD's stringing team, in collaboration with GRSA International, played a crucial role in fine-tuning all the players' equipment, including that of Sinner.



Karen Khachanov celebrated a triumphant return to the winner's circle on Tuesday, marking his first title victory since 2018 at the Huafa Properties Zhuhai Championships.

As the top seed, Khachanov faced off against Japanese star Yoshihito Nishioka in the final of the Chinese ATP 250 hard-court event. In a tightly contested battle, he overcame Nishioka with a scoreline of 7-6(2), 6-1, securing his fifth tour-level title and his first since his victory in Paris nearly five years ago.

Throughout the one-hour and 43-minute clash, Khachanov showcased 'big-man' tennis, demonstrating his power and precision on the court. Despite a momentary setback when he squandered a break advantage in the first set, the 27-year-old rebounded to claim the tight opener. In the second set, Khachanov unleashed his formidable forehand, overpowering Nishioka and sealing the victory.



Khachanov's impressive performance included 34 winners, including nine aces, as he extended his strong record to 4-1 in his Lexus ATP Head2Head series against the eighth seed. Notably, this triumph in Zhuhai marked a remarkable comeback for Khachanov, who had faced adversity since his quarter-final appearance at Roland Garros in May, where he suffered a stress fracture in his back. His victory in Zhuhai served as a testament to his resilience and determination.

Following an early exit at the US Open upon his return in August, Khachanov showcased his return to form in Zhuhai, losing just one set en route to clinching the title. Notably, this victory added to his previous success on Chinese soil, having triumphed in Chengdu in 2016. As a result of this remarkable comeback, Khachanov has climbed to the No. 14 position in the Pepperstone ATP Live Rankings.

On the other side of the court, Nishioka, competing in his fifth tour-level final, was vying for his third title. His most recent tour-level crown came in Seoul in 2022.





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WESTERN & SOUTHERN OPEN

CINCINNATI

In a video featuring reigning champions Novak Djokovic and Coco Gauff, the Western & Southern Open announced its continued presence in Cincinnati. The tournament, according to a press release, has secured its home at the Lindner Family Tennis Centre in Mason for an additional 25 years. Notably, the 2024 edition will mark the tournament's 125th year of existence.

Established in 1899, this event holds the distinction of being the United States' longest-running professional tennis tournament played in its city of origin. The announcement was made by Beemok Capital, the family office of Benjamin Navarro, a philanthropist and businessman based in Charleston.

Benjamin Navarro expressed his appreciation for the unwavering support shown by the community, stating, "The passion and commitment of this community to keep the tournament here was an undeniable factor in our decision to stay. The city of Mason, Warren County, the state of Ohio, and multiple corporate entities demonstrated their unwavering support for the tennis tournament. This tournament and its history are special. We're excited to add to its legacy and create a world-class tennis experience for players and fans."

Novak Djokovic also revealed a substantial investment of \$200 million for stadium improvements aimed at enhancing the tournament's prestige on a global scale. This commitment reflects the tournament's dedication to delivering an even more exceptional experience for players and fans.



Taylor Fritz and Alex de Minaur were treated to a taste of Shanghai's allure as they prepared for the Rolex Shanghai Masters at the beginning of the month. The duo embarked on a journey through the city's rich culture and sights.

Fritz and De Minaur had the privilege of touring The Bund aboard the 'City News Service' themed sightseeing bus, delving into traditional Chinese calligraphy, and sharing their tennis expertise with two young Chinese enthusiasts along the banks of the Huangpu River on the North Bund.

Reflecting on their experience, the American and Australian players expressed their delight. "Today's experience was an unforgettable memory," they remarked. "It is a very good cultural experience to understand and appreciate the charm of the city of Shanghai."

For Fritz and De Minaur, playing tennis against the stunning backdrop of the Huangpu River was a special treat. With the assistance of the young players, they even created their own calligraphic works, inscribing 'Shanghai' and 'Dashi,' which translates to 'master' in Chinese.



THE TROUBLE WITH... BALLS

Tennis players are raising their voices against the constant ball changes on the ATP and WTA Tours, with many of them expressing frustration at these alterations. One notable figure, Gastão Elias, a former world No. 57 on the ATP Tour, has taken his discontent a step further by demanding compensation for physiotherapy due to the effects of the current balls in use.

Elias, who recently lost a qualifying match at the ATP Challenger tournament in Buenos Aires, voiced his frustration on social media, stating, "I demand ATP to pay for all the physiotherapy I will need after playing with these balls they are making us play with. I've been on tour for many years, and I've never seen anything like this. THIS IS INHUMANE!"

His complaint received support from fellow players. Tennys Sandgren concurred, stating, "I agree. Never seen anything like it," and Paula Badosa emphasized that the issue extends to both the ATP and WTA Tours, saying, "Agree! The issue is not only ATP unfortunately... With the WTA, we are having the same problems for years as well. We need a change from both sides."

This discontent follows similar complaints from players like Taylor Fritz, Daniil Medvedev, and Carlos Alcaraz, who have all expressed their dissatisfaction with the constant ball changes on the tour. Some have gone further to claim that these balls are causing injuries, leading to growing concerns among professional tennis players.



The frustration surrounding the tennis balls in use appears to be a persistent issue, with players demanding more consistency and suitability to avoid potential injuries and improve their overall performance on the court. The future of tennis balls in professional play might be up for discussion, as players continue to voice their concerns, seeking a resolution that benefits both their performance and physical well-being. As the tennis world grapples with this issue, the push for change grows stronger with each player's cry for reform.

SOUSA-LONG, FAREWELL

Former world No. 99 Pedro Sousa bid farewell to his professional tennis career on earlier in the month at the Del Monte Lisboa Belém Open in Portugal. This significant moment took place at the Club Internacional de Foot-Ball, which has been Sousa's home club, adding a memorable touch to his final tournament.



Reflecting on this transition, the 35-year-old shared his thoughts in a press conference in Lisbon, saying, "The hardest part is long gone; it was when I had to make the decision. It seemed like this day would never come, but suddenly it was here." He continued, "Before the match, I was okay, but then that pressure came. Playing here is always special. I had friends, family, and club members that I see daily, which gave me extra strength to perform well."

Pedro Sousa, who turned professional in 2007, leaves behind a legacy that includes eight ATP Challenger Tour titles and the distinction of being one of only four Portuguese men to break into the Top 100 of the Pepperstone ATP Rankings in the last decade.

During the event in Lisbon, Sousa secured his 201st career Challenger-match victory. In a poignant moment, he faced his fellow countryman and former world No. 28, Joao Sousa, who reached the highest ranking in Portuguese tennis history in 2016.

Playing in front of a full crowd, Pedro Sousa savoured the final moments of his career. He expressed his feelings by saying, "I feel relief, finally. It is what it is. I was more or less prepared. I also had some time to prepare. It was special because it happened in my club, like I wanted, during a national holiday, in front of a full stadium against the best Portuguese player ever."



Sousa's career highlights include representing Portugal at the 2021 Tokyo Olympic Games and an unexpected runner-up finish as a lucky loser at the ATP 250 event in Buenos Aires the previous year. All eight of his Challenger titles were captured on clay courts, with two of them achieved on home soil. When looking back on his journey, one match stood out as particularly special to him.

"The best match ever has to be the final against [Jan-Lennard] Struff in the Pullach Challenger in 2018," Sousa reflected. "Winning 6-3, 6-1 in the final of a Challenger 125 was even better than when I beat him the year before [in Davis Cup], because in that one, I had to suffer a bit at the end. I'm happy and proud of my career and have no regrets. Most people don't know the struggles we go through; it's a very tough career. I've made some mistakes, of course, but I'm content with my achievements."

Iga Swiatek Continues Dominance with China Open Victory

Iga Swiatek's remarkable 2023 season continues to gather momentum as she secured her fifth title of the year at the China Open in Beijing. The 2023 French Open champion has been on an extraordinary winning streak and shows no signs of slowing down, which is making her a formidable contender in the race to end the year as the world No. 1.



Swiatek's latest triumph came in the final of the China Open, where she faced off against Liudmila Samsonova. The match, played in Beijing, was a showcase of Swiatek's tennis prowess as she secured victory in straight sets with a score of 6-2, 6-2.

This victory in Beijing not only marked Swiatek's fifth title of the year but also set a new record. She now holds the most tour trophies on the WTA tour for the 2023 season. Swiatek's ability to win multiple titles in consecutive seasons hasn't been seen since Serena Williams accomplished the feat in 2014 and 2015.

Swiatek's impressive 2023 haul includes her French Open victory, as well as wins in Doha, Stuttgart, and Warsaw. With each victory, she has been inching closer to reclaiming the world No. 1 ranking, a position she held for an extended period. Currently, she trails Aryna Sabalenka in the world rankings by 465 points.

Iga Swiatek's remarkable consistency and impeccable performance in the final have left her in a strong position as the year-end WTA Finals approach. The season finale, which features the top eight singles players and doubles teams in the world, is set to commence on October 29. This presents a golden opportunity for Swiatek to overtake Sabalenka and reclaim the top spot.

Swiatek's win in Beijing was marked by her exceptional serving and near-flawless performance. She didn't face a single break point throughout the match, highlighting her dominance. Her unforced error count remained at zero during the opening set, a testament to her precise and error-free play.

Following her victory, an emotional Swiatek expressed her gratitude for the support she received from her team and acknowledged the challenges she had overcome during the tournament. She highlighted the significance of her China Open win, a title she hadn't initially expected.

This year, Swiatek not only made history with her consistent performance but has also surpassed Caroline Wozniacki's record by winning the most WTA 1000 titles before turning 23, with a total of six. The 22-year-old is a force to be reckoned with in women's tennis.

The China Open victory now places Swiatek within striking distance of the world No. 1 ranking. However, it will all come down to the results at the WTA Finals in Cancun, where the race for the year-end top spot is expected to be intense and thrilling.



Iga Swiatek's incredible journey through the 2023 season has been nothing short of awe-inspiring. Her recent win in Beijing is just another chapter in her remarkable story, and tennis enthusiasts worldwide will eagerly watch her bid to regain the top ranking in women's tennis.



MENTAL CONTROL

In the high-stakes world of tennis, where every point counts, players often find themselves grappling with the mental challenge of letting go of past mistakes. Whether it's an unforced error, a missed opportunity, or a bad line call, dwelling on these setbacks can hinder a player's performance and affect the outcome of a match. Learning to release the past and stay focused on the present moment is a key skill for any tennis athlete, and it can make a significant difference in their overall performance.

Letting go of mistakes is not just a strategy; it's a mental discipline that allows players to regain their focus and composure for the current point. When a player can't release the last point and remains fixated on their errors, it can lead to a downward spiral in their performance.

Fortunately, there are techniques and mental strategies that can help tennis players bounce back from bad calls and mistakes, ultimately enhancing their mental toughness for future matches. Here are some essential tips to help players get back on track during a match after a frustrating error:

Recognise and Let Go: The first step is to acknowledge the mistake or bad call and then consciously let it go. By shifting your focus to the present moment and the upcoming point, you free your mind from the grip of the past.

Relax and Reset: Managing your emotions is crucial. Taking a deep breath, adjusting your strings, or simply shrugging your shoulders can serve as physical cues to reset your mindset for the current point. It's about finding your calm and focus amid the chaos.

Re-Focus with Routine: Develop a pre-serve routine that prepares you both mentally and physically for the upcoming point. An effective routine not only helps you concentrate on the current point but also instils confidence.



How tennis players react to their mistakes and how quickly they can refocus play a significant role in determining their ability to bounce back from errors and increase their chances of success on the court. Mistakes and missed shots are part and parcel of the game, but your ability to handle them mentally can make all the difference.



Many players tend to dwell on their mistakes, unforced errors, or double faults, which can become a heavy burden affecting their overall performance. The inability to let go of a bad shot can lead to frustration and often spirals into a string of errors, ultimately influencing the outcome of the match.

Being unable to move on from mistakes is one of the most common distractions in tennis. External distractions, such as outbursts from an opponent, are easier to cope with. However, internal distractions caused by dwelling on errors can be far more challenging to overcome. The best players in the world understand that mistakes are opportunities to learn and improve, not reasons to dwell on the past.

Tennis legends like Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, and Novak Djokovic have all made their fair share of mistakes on the court, but they don't let those errors define their performances. Instead, they focus on how to recover quickly from mistakes and minimise them in the future. It's the ability to learn from mistakes and let them go that sets the best apart from the rest.

Dwelling on past errors not only distracts you from playing your best game but also consumes valuable mental resources that could be better utilized for the present moment. By recognizing the importance of letting go of mistakes, relaxing, refocusing, and developing mental resilience, tennis players can enhance their performance and find success in even the most challenging matches. Remember, mistakes are part of the game, but your response to them can make all the difference.



Hubert Hurkacz is setting his sights on the Nitto ATP Finals in Turin

The Polish tennis player secured his second ATP Masters 1000 title at the Rolex Shanghai Masters and has risen to the 11th position in the Pepperstone ATP Live Race To Turin. He currently trails Holger Rune, who occupies the crucial eighth spot by 335 points.

Speaking about his aspirations for Turin, Hurkacz stated, “Coming to these few weeks starting here in Shanghai, I knew I had to give myself a chance. I need to be winning tournaments, so that's a pretty good start. I mean, it's been an amazing week here in Shanghai. I really enjoyed it here with the team. But ultimately, we just want to get better every single day, improve, enjoy those moments. We're going to try our best, keep fighting, and keep competing.”



The 26-year-old, who participated in the prestigious year-end event in 2021, faced a tough battle in the final against Andrey Rublev. He saved a match point on his way to his seventh tour-level title. Hurkacz now boasts a 7-1 record in tour-level finals.

“Andrey was playing some excellent tennis, and I knew I had to produce the shots, so I was just trying to stay out there and compete as hard as I could, maintaining positive self-talk and belief until the end,” Hurkacz said. “At the end of the day, it's a final, and you want to give it your all out there.”

Two-time champion Roger Federer watched the final from the stands, and Hurkacz was delighted to share the title with the Swiss legend.

“There are so many champions who won it in the past and so many amazing players. In my speech, I tried to thank everyone. I forgot to mention Roger – thanks for coming. Hopefully, he won't take it personally,” Hurkacz said with a smile. “But it was definitely fun to play in front of him. Hopefully, he enjoyed it a little bit.”

Hurkacz has now accumulated a 39-20 record for the season. He previously claimed his first Masters 1000 title in Miami in 2021.

Zheng Qinwen's star shone brightly both on and off the court at the Bank of Communications Zhengzhou Open.

In her debut on the Asian circuit, Zheng impressed by defeating Barbora Krejčíková in a thrilling contest to secure the Zhengzhou Open title. However, it wasn't just her tennis prowess that caught the spotlight. Zheng, an ardent karaoke enthusiast, grabbed the microphone during the trophy ceremony, belting out a melodious performance.

"To sing in front of the crowd feels just like being at a concert," Zheng expressed to the WTA after her semifinal win when the idea was first suggested.

"I probably will go to karaoke with my team. I really want to sing, and it's not enough on the court. I'm not done yet. I forgot some lyrics, but I was having fun and enjoying myself out there. I want to thank the tournament for preparing this surprise; I really love it."

Zheng faced challenges during the Asian swing but ultimately solidified her status as the leading figure in Chinese tennis and an up-and-coming talent who has unlocked her true potential. Her journey on the Hologic WTA Tour began last season when she started outside the Top 100, finished at No. 25, and was honoured as the Newcomer of the Year. Expectations were high for her this season.

Reflecting on the first half of the year, Zheng said, "I did not play as well as I expected. So, I reflected a lot, questioning whether I was too impatient. I always knew I had the ability, but why hadn't it been realized?"

Her solution was to find calmness. She parted ways with coach Pere Riba and enlisted the guidance of Wim Fissette during the grass season, leading to an almost immediate improvement. Zheng claimed her first title in Palermo and reached her first major quarterfinal at the US Open.

Despite a challenging period involving a sudden split with Fissette, Zheng remained composed. Her ability to perform in front of home crowds stood out, highlighting why she has been hailed as a promising talent, Zheng said, "The most important victory in the second half of the year is winning the gold medal at the Asian Games because I represent my country for glory. Also, my first WTA500 title in Zhengzhou is very special because I won it on home soil, in front of my own people."

Zheng's journey took a more mature turn this year. She emphasised the importance of self-focus, daily improvement, and perseverance on and off the court. Her ultimate desire remains to win a Grand Slam, and Zheng continuously reminds herself of this goal, even in the face of temptations like delicious Chinese cuisine.



CLASSIC vs MODERN

HEAD is launching the upgraded PRESTIGE 2023 while also bringing back one of the first racquets in the series with the PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0

Ever been on court with an icon?

It's not just players that can become tennis icons. One of the most successful racquet series of all time, with a rich heritage dating back to the 1980s, HEAD's PRESTIGE has truly achieved iconic status in the sport, up there with the most celebrated athletes.

From Marat Safin to Goran Ivanisevic to Emilio Sanchez, some of the greatest players in history have won big titles with the PRESTIGE over the years. Now endorsed by Marin Cilic on the ATP Tour and adored by club-level players around the world for its precision and astonishing feel, the PRESTIGE continues to add to its story.

For the next chapter, beginning in October 2023, HEAD is taking the PRESTIGE series to new heights of performance by introducing state-of-the-art Auxetic 2.0 technology. Everything that players love about the PRESTIGE just got even better with this 2023 update, with enhanced feel and feedback at ball impact for the ultimate connection between player and racquet.

But HEAD felt as though true fans of the PRESTIGE needed more. That's why HEAD is also bringing back one of the first racquets in this series with the launch of the PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0. Perhaps you have always wondered how some of the most legendary players felt back in the day when winning titles with the PRESTIGE? Now you can experience that for yourself with this limited-edition, one-time-only production.

It's the moment to ask: what type of PRESTIGE player are you? Classic or modern?

Adding to its appeal, the modern PRESTIGE has a fresh, premium and distinctive look. See-through carbon elements at the throat and tip are different each time, giving your racquet its own unique look, and there is also a special red flip lacquer in the central colour block.

If you prefer the classic PRESTIGE, you might be among the many players who have been asking HEAD to relaunch the racquet. The release of the PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0 will illustrate, with its timeless precision and control, why this astonishing racquet is still in a class of its own. There's still no racquet that handles like it and plays like it; the legend remains unbeaten.



Modern: PRESTIGE 2023 series

PRESTIGE PRO 2023

Made for advanced players who are seeking absolute control and precision. Balance: 310mm; Beam: 20mm; Head size: 630cm²-98in²; String pattern: 18/20; Weight: 320g-11.3oz.

PRESTIGE TOUR 2023

Technical tour players can compete with modern precision with the PRESTIGE TOUR 2023. Balance: 315mm; Beam: 22mm; Head size: 615cm²-95in²; String pattern: 16/19; Weight: 315g-11.1oz.

PRESTIGE MP 2023

With its larger head and sweetspot, the PRESTIGE MP 2023 racquet lets you play attacking tennis while still enjoying precision and control. Perfect for aggressive players. Balance: 320mm; Beam: 21,5mm; Head size: 640cm²-99in²; String pattern: 18/19; Weight: 310g-10.9oz.

PRESTIGE MP L 2023

The lightest frame in the PRESTIGE 2023 series. This racquet is ideal for ambitious players who want a lighter frame while still benefitting from the PRESTIGE attributes, with the PRESTIGE MP L 2023 offering a mix of precision and power. Balance: 315mm; Beam: 21,5mm; Head size: 640cm²-99in²; String pattern: 16/19; Weight: 300g-10.6oz.

Classic: PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0

Designed for highly advanced players, the PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0 offers outstanding flex, feel, precision and control. The racquet still has the same 19mm straight beam and the same dense string pattern (18/20), which is combined with a 93 square-inch (600cm²) head size for a comfortable and consistent feel. An ideal racquet for players with long, fast swings, the PRESTIGE CLASSIC 2.0 weighs 330g with a balance point of 310mm.



HEAD®

50 Years On: The Historic Battle of the Sexes Tennis Match

It was 1973, an era of change, a time when voices demanding equality and empowerment began to grow louder. The stage was set for a match that would transcend the world of sports and become a catalyst for social change. In the heart of the Houston Astrodome, tennis legend Billie Jean King faced off against the self-proclaimed male chauvinist and former number 1-ranked player, Bobby Riggs. What unfolded on September 20, 1973, in that colossal dome, was the historic "Battle of the Sexes."

The Challenge that Started it All

The roots of this historic event trace back to Bobby Riggs, a tennis maverick of the past. At 55 years old, Riggs took on Margaret Court, another tennis legend, and defeated her 6-2, 6-1, earning himself the moniker of male chauvinist. Riggs claimed that even in his advanced years, he could beat the top female players. This challenge was more than just a tennis match; it was a confrontation of baseless assertions about the women's game.

Billie Jean King's Courageous Acceptance

Billie Jean King, a staunch advocate for gender equality, had previously rejected Riggs' challenges. However, as the Battle of the Sexes gained momentum, she realised that it was an opportunity to disprove these stereotypes and push for parity in the world of tennis. The match was an electrifying spectacle that captured the world's attention.



The Battle of the Sexes Unleashed

Promoters aptly dubbed the match the "Battle of the Sexes," and it was given a primetime television audience. A staggering 50 million people in the United States and an estimated 90 million people worldwide tuned in to watch King versus Riggs. It became one of the most-watched televised sporting events in history, shattering records that stand to this day.

A Resounding Victory

Billie Jean King displayed incredible skill, determination, and courage as she defeated Bobby Riggs, with a scoreline of 6-4, 6-3, 6-3. Her victory was more than a personal triumph; it was a victory for women's tennis and a giant leap forward for gender equality in sports.



More Than Just a Tennis Match

Billie Jean King encapsulated the significance of the Battle of the Sexes when she stated, "I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win that match. It would ruin the women's [tennis] tour and affect all women's self-esteem." Her victory not only legitimised women's professional tennis but also ignited a boom in women's sports participation.



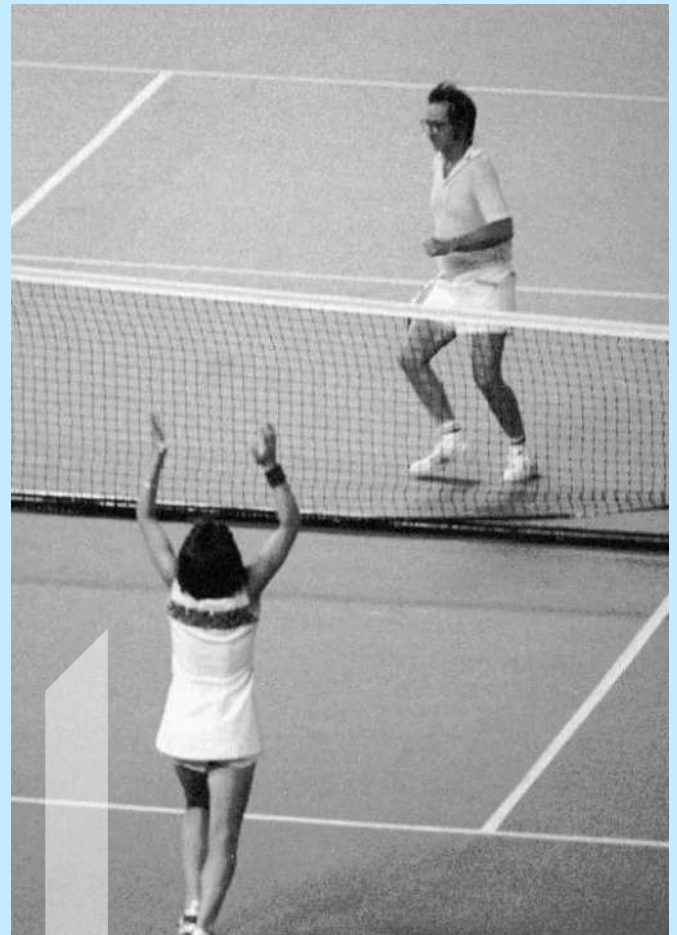
A Lasting Legacy

The Battle of the Sexes was a pivotal moment that, together with the passage of Title IX, empowered women to advocate for equal pay in all sectors of the workforce. It paved the way for greater respect and recognition for women athletes and set the stage for more inclusive sporting events. The impact of this historic match continues to be felt, even 50 years later.

Looking Forward

Today, women's sports have made significant strides towards equality, but the battle is not over. Billie Jean King's legacy lives on as her advocacy for equal pay and opportunities in tennis and beyond continues to inspire. As we reflect on this momentous event from 50 years ago, let it remind us that every victory for equality is a step towards a fairer and more inclusive world. There's still work to be done, but with determination and a commitment to equality, we can continue to break down barriers and create a better future for all.

Let us carry forward the spirit of the Battle of the Sexes, a reminder that challenges can be overcome, and let's keep striving for a world where every individual is judged by their abilities, not their gender. The legacy of Billie Jean King's victory lives on, and as she once said, "We're not done yet. Let's keep going for it."



In the Room

With Richard Parnell

Tournament Stringing - Player Interaction.

This month's thoughts, in the room, are to do with etiquette at Tour Events & specifically about the interaction with players.

If a stringing room is in the public domain or commercial area of the tournament, most players won't bring their rackets themselves as they tend to be "mobbed" by fans and for this reason they will normally send a representative (coach or team member) with the rackets. In this scenario, the stringers don't get to interact with the players so etiquette doesn't feature.

If the stringing room is in the player area, which is a reserved area where the general public don't have access, then the players can move around freely and will bring their rackets themselves. This is where player interaction and etiquette come into play. When the players are in "their" area, they don't expect to be bothered for photos or autographs and for this reason most teams have some rules regarding this interaction. Some tournaments have very draconian rules, which include cancellation of the accreditation if a photo with a player turns up on social media. This has happened and the stringer was kicked out of the tournament. As a member of a stringing team, each member must abide by these rules or suffer the consequences.

GRSA noted that there were no existing certifications that included a guide on how to act at a tour event and has created the Competition and Competition Master Certification series of exams which cover this in depth as well as general etiquette in a tour stringing room. This certification fits perfectly between Pro Master and Tour and gives a great heads up on what to expect and how to handle it as well as a stringing part that prepares you for the workload to be expected.

Be part of the change.

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

Promote positivity and your expertise will shine brighter!

FUN FACTS



The tougher it gets on the squash court, the more passionate the victory becomes.



Nour el Sherbini

1

The origins of squash are a bit ambiguous, with two main theories attempting to explain its evolution. The first theory suggests that squash was invented around 1830 by a group of students at Harrow School, located just outside London.



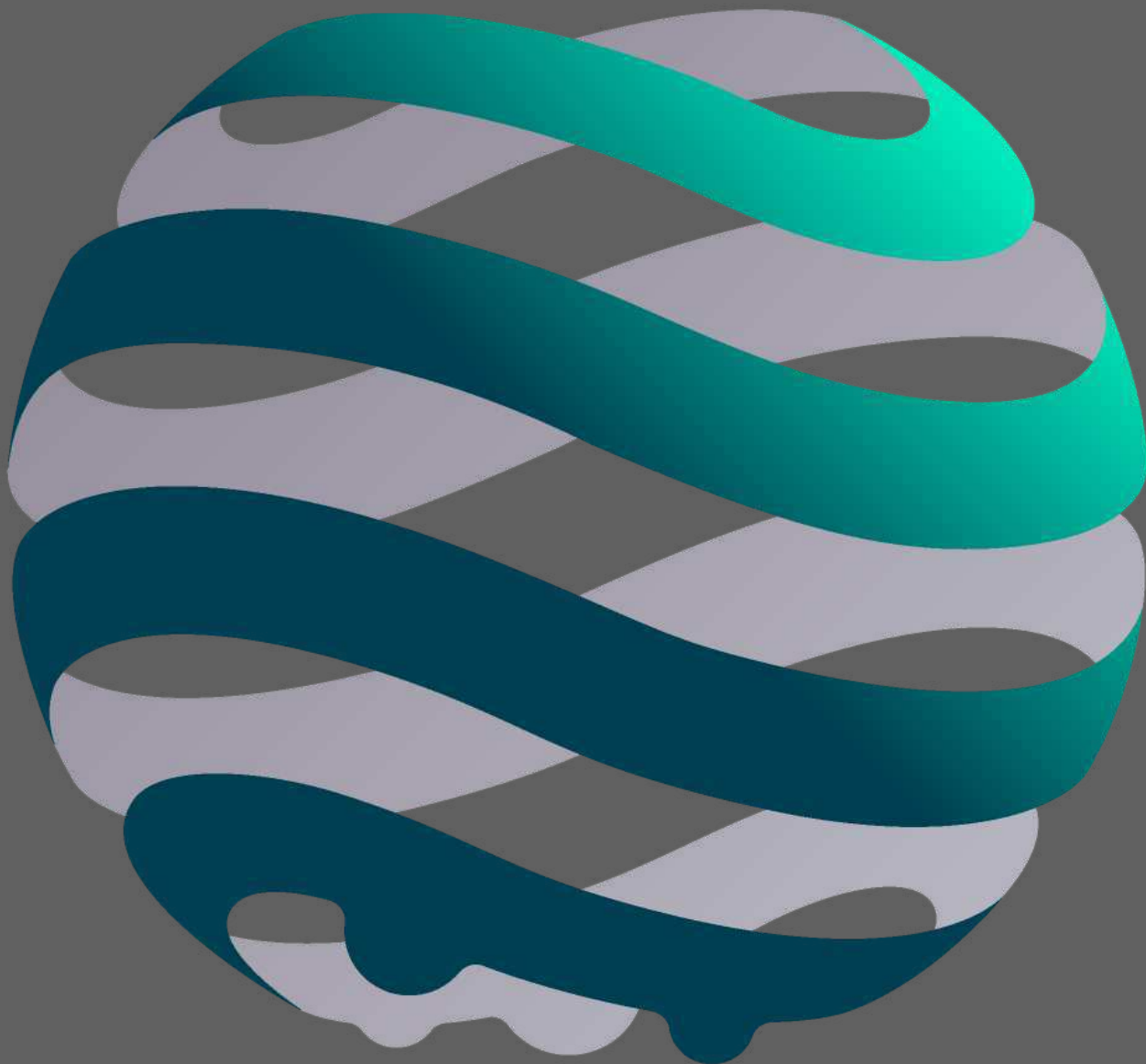
2

We all remember the Titanic which sank in the Atlantic Ocean in 1912. It's intriguing that there was a squash court on the Titanic, and it's a unique piece of history. The fact that professional tennis player Fred Wright, who also played squash during the offseason, tragically lost his life when the ship sank adds a poignant and lesser-known dimension to the Titanic's story. It's a reminder that the passengers on the Titanic came from various backgrounds and had diverse interests, including sports like squash.



3

Squash has been a popular sport among various segments of society, including the royal family. According to reports, Prince Philip played squash while awaiting Queen Elizabeth II to give birth to Prince Charles. The fact that the labour process took 30 hours adds a unique and somewhat amusing perspective to the sport's history.



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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!

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WITH



GRSA's South East Asia Manager Kenneth Leong talks about his tournament experience with HEAD & GRSA.

China Open 2023 Head Stringing Team

It was a great honour and privilege to be a part of HEAD's stringing team for the China Open 2023. Throughout my 15-day stint in Beijing, the team collectively strung more than 2000 rackets for 3 tournaments - ATP500, WTA 1000 and ITF J300, which were running concurrently.

Upon confirmation of my trip, my work consisted of preparing all my stringing tools - so as to be sure I have an extra set of each item to last the entire duration of the tournament, re-reading GRSA's A-Z stringing guide and revising the competition stringers' guide.

As it was my first professional tournament, nothing could prepare me for the high stress environment in the stringing room. The first couple of days were relatively light, but when the men's first round matches coincided with the women's practice and qualifying rounds, the work had truly begun.

Our work day would usually start at 8.30am and end around midnight, when the last match of the day typically ends. However, there were exceptions, like the conclusion of the Zverev vs Fokina match at 3am. Despite battling the lack of sleep and fatigue, the stringers continued to provide professional services to all players.



Chen: China, **Wu:** China, **Xiang:** China,
Ah Fa: China, **Rafa:** Spain, **Richard:** UK/Spain,
Martin: Germany, **Kenneth:** Singapore,
Thomas: Hong Kong,
Ren: China, **Wang:** China



The team was split into two rooms - 6 in the main room with the front desk, and 5 in the secondary room - where customisation services were provided.

All rackets go through the check-in process at the front desk, where the players' details are recorded and subsequently allocated to each stringer. To ensure quality and consistency from stringers, every racket strung has its dynamic tension measured and recorded by the front desk. It is also common practice for players to have the same stringer string on the same machine for them throughout the tournament.

Tournament stringing is something I've been working towards for the past 10 years. There were many aspects to the job I managed to learn through listening and observation, with the two most important guiding factors being teamwork and humility. Having earned the level of Certified Tour Stringer, I would like to add that the entire certification process offered by GRSA is rigorous and up to date with the developments in the tennis industry.

Attaining the Certified Tour Stringer certification is the first step towards getting yourself ready for professional tournament stringing.

Do I miss the late nights ? **Maybe not.**
Do I miss the teamwork & camaraderie? **Most definitely.**

Yep, that's me, thank you **HEAD China** and **GRSA International** for the amazing experience and giving me the chance to be part of this professional stringing team.



Stringer Solutions

Compression Mat & Suitable footwear

A compression mat is a part of the stringers hardware that shouldn't be overlooked and often is.

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.

We often see DT's slowly going down the more tired the team gets. By checking the DT's on all rackets we can control this and bring it to the attention of the stringers. The compression mat just makes the long hours standing behind the machine more bearable and reduces the stress placed on the feet.

If you don't have a compression mat, they are not expensive and well worth investing in.

Another important part in reducing stringer fatigue is the type of shoes used while stringing. Normally a soft cushioned running shoe is probably the most comfortable, with most tennis shoes being the least comfortable and hard. Covered sandal-type shoes (Crocs or Ufos) are also an option as they can keep the feet cool, protected and are quite soft and cushioned.

GRSA does not recommend stringing barefoot, we have mentioned this before but it's always good to be reminded that an awl or snippers have sharp points and can fall out of a tool tray. Even though the harm might be minor, a trip to A & E will leave a stringing team with one less active member and mean everyone else has to take up the slack. You will not only be letting yourself down but the team as a whole.

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

THE IMPORTANCE OF MANNERS

In a world where digital engagement is at the forefront of communication, basic elements of our day-to-day are being left by the wayside, hello's, good afternoon's, please and thank you's are being forgotten & it really is something we need to pay attention to.

Imagine walking into a boardroom and saying "I WANT A PAY RISE", what do you think the outcome would be? Well, at the same time, when running your own business or dealing with people that help you in that business, you know that basic manners, yep, the ones we're all taught at school, are very handy when wanting to achieve a certain goal or outcome.



Using the right words, timing and information will help you communicate with other people, whether they are friends, work colleagues or people you're trying to engage with for a specific purpose, including clients. We should never forget that we are not the only people who are busy or trying to do something, our interruptions in someone's day affect them and the service they also provide, it's good to acknowledge that their time is also valuable.

We all have busy schedules, we get carried away and tunnel vision kicks in, wanting to get to something the quickest way possible and often forget the very simplest of ways to get there. In a stringing environment, it's hectic, timeframes must be met, deadlines and deliveries, questions and doubts arise within the business and we need to deal with the diversity of obstacles. At the same time remember that above all, we're here to provide a service, to help and we must strive to do so in the best way possible.

This includes speaking to your colleagues in a polite way, asking them if they need help, thanking them for the assistance and making sure that when you need something from them, they are in a position to help, either by asking them if they have time, or if they are the right person to help you with what you need.

Basic manners go a long way, they show your thoughtfulness and consideration for others.



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GRSA AROUND THE WORLD

GRSA powering the Official HEAD Stringing Team

Huafa Properties Zhuhai
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ZHUHAI

The second edition of the Zhuhai Championships 2023 took place from 20th-26th of September 2023 at the Hengqin International Tennis Center hosting a 28S MD and a 16D MD. HEAD CHINA ran the official stringing service with 5 stringers and a front desk manager.

Representing GRSA, Richard Parnell as Head Stringer, Martin Mann as Front Desk Manager (Manager Germany, Austria, Switzerland) (Front Desk), Rafa Madrid (Manager China), Wang, Chen & Faxing.

Facts & numbers:

Winner Singles: Karen Khachanov. **Winner Doubles:** Jamie Murray & Michael Venus

Number of Rackets strung in total: 432 **Highest tension:** 28,2/27,2 **Lowest tension:** 16,5/16,5



GRSA AROUND THE WORLD

BEIJING

China Open 2023 ATP 500/ WTA 1000

The 2023 edition of the China Open 2023 as an overlapping combined event of ATP 500 and WTA 1000 took place from the 26th of September - the 8th of October 2023. It was at the same time, the first edition since 2019 due to the pandemic.

The Beijing Olympic Green Tennis Center, built for the 2008 Olympic Games, was hosting a 36S MD and a 16D men's MD as well as a 64S MD and a 32D women's draw.

On top of the WTA and ATP events, the ITF ran J300 junior m/f competition which also was covered by the very strong HEAD CHINA Official Stringing Team.

Representing GRSA, Richard Parnell as Head Stringer, Martin Mann as Front Desk Manager (GRSA Manager - Germany, Austria, Switzerland) (Front Desk), Rafa Madrid (GRSA Manager - China), Kenneth Leong (GRSA Manager - South East Asia) Wang, Xiang, Wu, Tomas, Chen & Faxing.



RECENT CERTIFICATIONS



Pascal Hämmerli, visiting from Switzerland, took a MasterClass with GRSA President **Richard Parnell**, with a resounding pass!



Nick Down gave another MasterClass, Mick Dixon took his second certification with Nick, this time a natural progression from the **GRSA Certified Pro Stringer** to **GRSA Certified Pro Master Stringer**. Mick is the last person to make this jump as the new Competition & Competition Master certifications have now been launched.

If you're looking to add even more knowledge and bridge the gap between the Pro Master and Tour certifications, the Competition and Competition Master certifications have been devised precisely with that in mind. Extra information on how to prepare for tournaments, extended techniques to improve speed and maintain quality.

If you're still undecided as to which certification suits you, or if you are wondering if your existing certification is sufficient, contact us and we'll be more than happy to find the right solution for you.



info@grsa-international.com



A unique project to empower disadvantaged adults by providing racket stringing equipment and training and to enable underprivileged children to learn through sport by providing tennis equipment and clothing.

GRSA NSA is a Swiss non-profit association founded in March 2023 which aims to use racket stringing as a tool to empower disadvantaged adults by providing them with training and a profession that ensures them a sustainable income.

GRSA NSA also aims to make racket sports and stringing accessible to all, considering that everyone has the right to participate in sports and benefit from their physical and mental strengths.

GRSA NSA seeks to establish partnerships with other associations in the field of sports sharing the same fundamental values.

GRSA NSA's commitment to its mission will be reflected in its efforts to provide free materials and equipment to underprivileged children and adults across the world



GRSA No Strings Attached has as its mission to use stringing and racket sports as a tool to empower individuals by providing them with the training & resources needed for them to create a sustainable income.

GRSA NSA believes that, by educating people in the art of racket stringing, we can help them achieve financial independence and promote the art of racket stringing around the world.

GRSA NSA strives to create the opportunity, through education, training, and a hands-on approach, to make racket sports and stringing a pathway from poverty to self-sufficiency, accessible to everyone.

GRSA NSA believes that everyone should have the chance to participate in these sports and benefit from the physical and mental benefits they offer.



OUR FIRST PROJECT

The first of many



GRSA NSA has chosen the **Unite Nepal** charity as the first recipient of aid.

Why choose **Unite Nepal** as our first project? Because we share the same core values.

The following information from their website explains their amazing work in Nepal:

“**Unite Nepal** are based in Lamjung, Nepal very close to all the projects that we support. We are hands-on and therefore very well placed to witness change and that the money and support end up in the right place. There are no directors’ wages and bonuses to pay which means that all the money and support goes where it should. We urge our supporters to come and visit us and witness first-hand how we run. Come and speak with the children, people, volunteers, the schools etc. We want you to ‘grow with us’”.

The part of the Unite Nepal project where GRSA NSA intends to make the biggest impact is in the tennis academy they opened to create education through sport. By providing the stringing material needed as well as stringing training, GRSA NSA believes it can offer a real chance of providing a sustainable income for impoverished adults through stringing and racket sports.

GRSA NSA intends to support different parts of the Unite Nepal project by providing tennis material including rackets, shoes and clothes so children and adults alike can learn through sport.



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ARCHPOWER by Technifibre

with NICK DOWN

This month's pattern from the list of non-standard rackets is the Tecnifibre Archpower. The Tecnifibre Archpower was used on several rackets and the following year was discontinued in favour of drilling holes in it's "arch" and then adding an X to AP to make an APX. The APX is not on the non-standard list of rackets.

The AP is Tecnifibre's version of a ring at the throat, which like many other brands, struck when Prince forgot to renew a patent. Tecnifibre called it Archpower, it has straight lines and technically is an Arch, not a ring.

There are 16 mains and 16 crosses. No shared holes. No double-barrelled grommets and enough tie-off locations to use two pieces of string.

Stringing this type of pattern is better with two pieces of string as it avoids long runs of string around the outside of the frame which looks unsightly and can unbalance the stringbed.

Tecnifibre have three different models sharing this pattern; the Tecnifibre Dynergy AP125, the AP130 and the AP135.

The AP125 has the signature of pro player Miguel Angel Rodriguez, the Colombian cannonball.

For the purpose of this article, I have used the 125 version with 2 pieces of string.

It is important that there is a hard weave at the bottom cross.



Nick's Nugget

About 50% of Squash Rackets, whether standard or non-standard, have mains that end at the head. They can usually be strung in either 1-piece (2 knots) or 2-piece (4 knots). Make sure there's enough knot-holes.

Instructions

Mains

(Start at Head and all Mains must be pulled at the Head only).

LH1 to below Arch

RH1 to above Arch

(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 arch or hinge etc. The right side will do the opposite).

Below Arch to RH2

Above Arch to LH2

LH2 to LH3

LH3 to below Arch

Above Arch to LH4

RH2 to RH3

RH3 to above Arch

Below Arch to RH4

RH4 to RH5

RH5 to above Arch

Below Arch to RH7

LH4 to LH5

LH5 to below Arch

Above Arch to LH7

LH7 to LH9

LH9 to below Arch

Above Arch to LH12

RH7 to RH9q

RH9 to above Arch

Below Arch to RH12

Tie-off both sides at H9

Crosses

Start at H6(either side)

If starting at LH6 weave goes over LM5

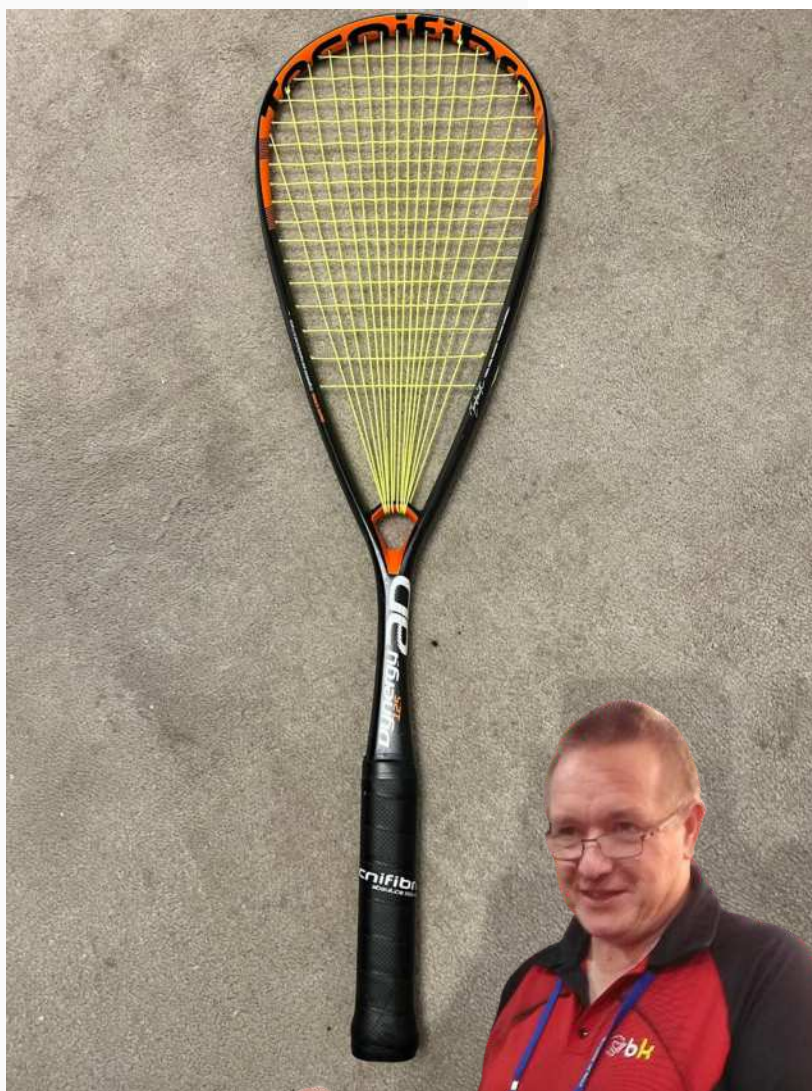
If starting at RH6

weave goes under 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.

Double Gold for Malaysia as India Takes Mixed Doubles

In an exhilarating finale of squash at a recent Asian Games, Malaysia's Sivasangari Subramaniam and Eain Yow Ng clinched the two singles gold medals, while the Indian duo of Dipika Pallikal Karthik and Harinder Sandhu secured the historic gold in the inaugural Asian Games mixed doubles event.

Subramaniam triumphed in a captivating five-game encounter against Hong Kong's Chan Sin Yuk, a match that could have gone either way. This victory marked a sweet redemption for Subramaniam, as she had faced Chan in the final of the Asian Championship earlier this year and narrowly lost, with Chan claiming Malaysia's fifth consecutive Asian Games women's singles title with a thrilling 12-10 win in the fifth game.

Reflecting on her incredible feat, Subramaniam, who was also part of the Malaysian women's team that secured gold earlier in the competition, stated, "I was the flag bearer, and now, to win two gold medals, it seems like a movie to me. I don't think anyone would have expected me to win two gold medals after the last year and a half. I started playing well only in maybe April or May, but before that, I was really struggling. I had a lot of challenges to go through, and I cannot believe this at the moment."

Malaysia's top-ranked male player, Ng, then secured Malaysia's third squash gold at the Games. He mounted an impressive comeback to defeat India's Saurav Ghosal, who had previously bested Ng in the team event.

"It's huge!" exclaimed Ng. "What a way to do it. I'm just soaking it in at the moment... at times, it just felt like there was no way we could win a point. Everyone was just picking everything up. All credit to Saurav. What a legend. If you watch him over the last two weeks, he has played unbelievably."



In the doubles category, the top-seeded pair of Pallikal Karthik and Sandhu faced a formidable challenge from the second-seeded duo of Aifa Azman and Syafiq Kamal in a gripping final. They managed to secure victory in both games with sudden-death points at 10-10.

"My mum was crying, my husband, my sister, and my best friend – they were all watching together. I think the whole family was... I'm just happy to be going back with a gold," said Dipika.

Sandhu added, "I was playing for Dipika, nothing for me. I just wanted to make sure I do as much as I can for her on court. She just kept backing me. I was like a kid in school when you're not doing well, and the teacher is constantly behind you. I played like that on court!"

The VITAGEN Singapore Squash Open 2023, a PSA Gold-level event taking place from November 14th to 19th at Singapore's OCBC Arena, promises to be an exciting spectacle. Defending women's champion Joelle King and men's World #1 Ali Farag will headline the event, with 11 top 10 players from both men's and women's PSA World Rankings participating.

In the men's draw, the world's top six players will compete, led by Ali Farag. Notable contenders include Diego Elias, Mohamed ElShorbagy, and Mostafa Asal. Farag, fresh from winning the season's opening Platinum events, faces potential challenges from David Baillargeon or wildcard Marcus Phua in the second round and a potential quarter-final bout against Youssef Soliman.

In the women's top half of the draw, Joelle King is set to face either France's Melissa Alves or Ka Yi Lee in the second round. She may clash with Salma Hany in the quarter-finals. Meanwhile, New Zealand's Paul Coll and Mostafa Asal could square off in the men's quarter-finals, with Coll facing Lucas Serme or Mohamed Abouelghar and Asal taking on Todd Harrity or Saurav Ghosal in round two.

In the bottom half of the women's draw, England's Gina Kennedy, the third seed, might meet the USA's Sabrina Sobhy in the last eight. Second seed Nour El Tayeb could potentially face double Asian Games Gold medalist Sivasangari Subramaniam if the Malaysian progresses past Tong Tsz-Wing in round one.

The men's draw features the ElShorbagy brothers potentially meeting in the quarter-finals, and a thrilling rematch between Mohamed and Youssef Ibrahim from their Qatar Classic clash. Ali Farag, as the top seed, aims to continue his dominant form.

This year's VITAGEN Singapore Squash Open promises intense competition as some of the world's best squash players vie for the prestigious title.





OLYMPIC SQUASH

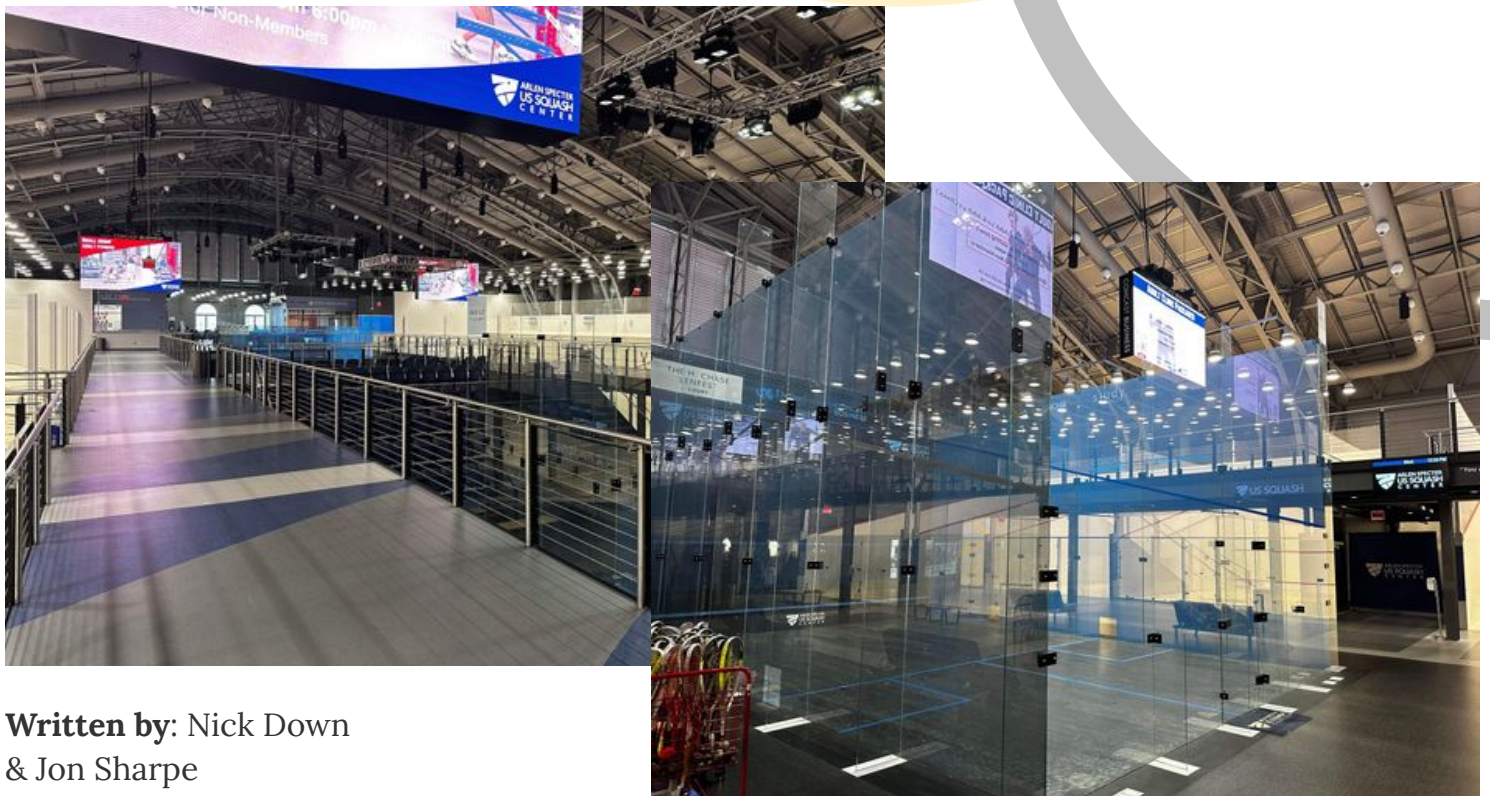
Squash in 2028 Olympics, Los Angeles, USA

Squash is in every set of games that exist, as of 2028, it has been included as a new sport at the Olympics. Prior to now, that sentence would read; “except the Olympic Games”. Squash is now an Olympic Sport!

Squash is a truly global racket sport, there are 115 National Association members of the World Squash Federation and squash is played on something like 130,000 courts worldwide, in about 185 countries, by about 20 million players. It's getting more popular.

In the UK, it even got a mention, along with the other new sports, on Breakfast TV.

There has been quite a bit of speculation on social media about prospective medal winners. Even 7-time ladies' world champion, Nour El Sherbini, who was the youngest finalist in the British Open at 16 in 2012 (lost to the great Nicol David), will be 32 and probably too old for a medal. The current main contenders are thought to be, Amina Orfi, Hania El Hamamy and Mostafa Asal. The fact of the matter is that anybody from any country could come along in the next 5 years. Most of today's top stars will be too old!



Written by: Nick Down
& Jon Sharpe



For squash, the Olympics will represent the pinnacle of a player's career and after many close decisions, we are finally across the line. The question has always been 'What is the commercial worth of the Olympics with squash being included'? Well, the answer has generally been not too much... until the US started to become a serious player in the sport. US college squash is now at the sharp end of world junior squash, with millions invested every year into university squash. The best junior players, who choose to go to university are now heading to the US for their studies where they are offered coaching by some of the top former pros. Some of the top squash programmes, Drexel, Cornell, MIT and others all have former world No1's as head coaches.

This has led to US squash players performing better on the PSA pro tour, which now makes squash a viable commercial opportunity for the US to aid its development and ultimately its inclusion into the Olympics. The Walter Family heavily backs the sport now, having initially invested in the Tournament of Champions in New York for many years and they have now pledged money to the wider tour. For those unaware of The Walter Family - there's a lot of money behind them - and there's a close relationship with the latest Chelsea FC ownership. It has to be said that this must have heavily influenced the inclusion into LA 2028 - after all, it's likely that their money may help the US to achieve some success in the next Olympics.

Should money be a reason for inclusion? Probably not, but being realistic, it certainly helps. Having backers who are willing to inject much-needed cash into the sport, and the fact that they genuinely love the game is a good balance. There are a lot of players and fans who have been waiting a long time for the rest of the world to see just how great our sport is.

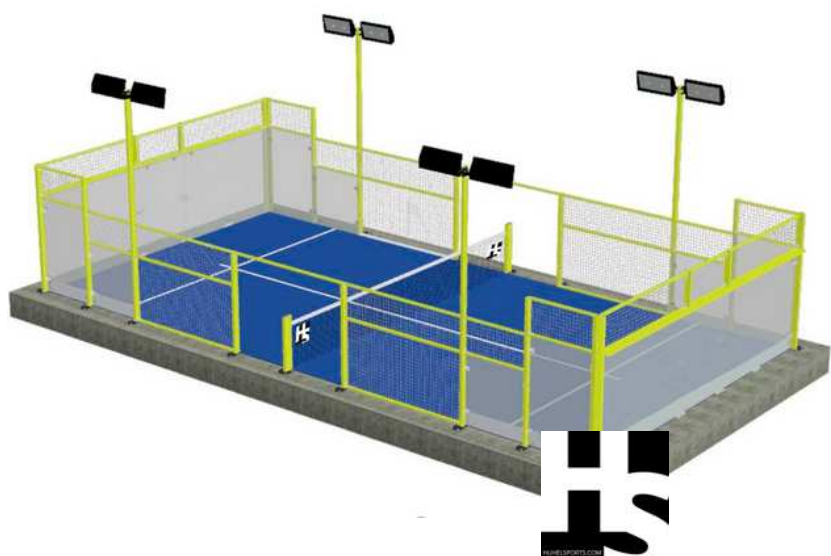
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INDIVIDUAL PANORAMIC COURT

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

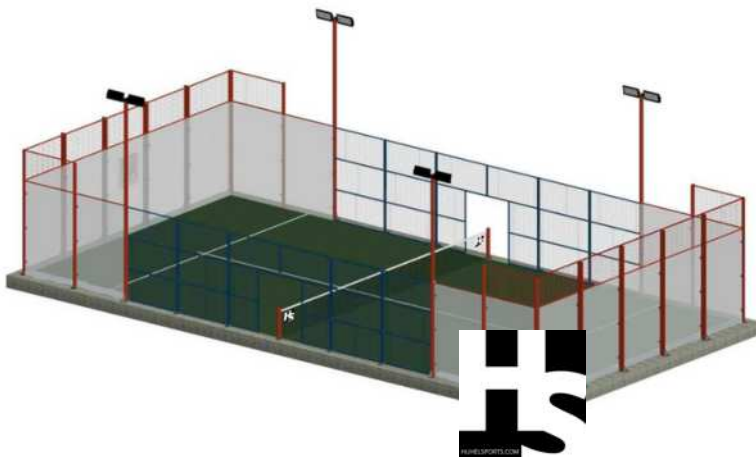


EUROPE COURT

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

Eli Amatriain, aged 39, is preparing for her final tournament as a professional padel player at the upcoming World Padel Tour event in Menorca. Her retirement marks the end of an era for the sport as another influential star bids farewell to the game.

Amatriain shared her thoughts on this decision through an Instagram post, emphasizing that it was her body and mind that ultimately guided her towards this moment. She had contemplated this choice for a significant period and chose Menorca as her swan song, wanting to bid adieu to her career surrounded by her fellow countrymen.

Reflecting on her journey, the former world number one, who once held the top spot in the rankings and played a pivotal role in the Spanish national team, expressed her deep gratitude. She considers herself exceptionally fortunate to have made a livelihood from her passion over the years and will forever cherish this opportunity.

As she transitions into a new phase of life, Eli Amatriain has exciting plans in the realm of sports psychology. She intends to devote herself to this field, a source of great joy for her. Amatriain hopes to maintain her connection to the world of padel and continue to cross paths with fellow enthusiasts on the courts.

The FIP-Platinum event held in Sardinia ranks as one of the top-tier FIP tournaments, closely following the Premier Padel tournaments. Consequently, it attracted a significant number of renowned international players seeking to accumulate ranking points for the upcoming season.

In the women's category, the competition saw the withdrawal of both the top and third seeds, ultimately elevating Lucia Sainz and Patricia Llaguno to the status of the highest-ranked pair in the tournament. This duo has had an impressive run throughout the event and has secured their place in the final.

Sainz and Llaguno encountered their most challenging match in the quarter-finals when they faced off against Marina Guinart and Carolina Navarro, putting their skills to the test.

On the men's side, Mike Yanguas and Federico Chingotto have booked their spot in the final. A notable point of discussion on social media arose when they initially teamed up, as fans debated who would cover the left side of the court. In their opening match, it was revealed that Chingotto would take on the backhand side. Their journey to the final has been marked by two closely contested and intense matches.

The other pair set to compete in the final, Francisco Gil and Ramiro Moyano, have surprised spectators with their impressive performances in both the quarter-finals and the semi-finals. In the quarter-finals, they defeated the second-seeded duo of Momo Gonzalez and Javier Garrido, who have struggled to achieve results since forming their partnership. Gil and Moyano also clinched a victory over Coki Nieto and Javier Rico in the semi-finals.



For a considerable period, there had been ongoing speculation, with previous reports from Padel Alto hinting at a potential merger between Premier Padel and the World Padel Tour in 2024. However, the definitive announcement came at the end of August when Premier Padel's owner, Qatar Sports Investment, acquired the World Padel Tour, resulting in a unified tour starting from next year.

Paquito Navarro shared his expectations for this new, combined tour in an interview with the Spanish newspaper Sport: "We are finally embarking on a fresh project where we hope to experience greater harmony between the players and the tour. We anticipate that this will be a year of stability, one in which we all collaborate," Navarro stated.

Navarro went on to discuss what the new tour can learn from the World Padel Tour:

"Premier Padel needs to understand why there has been a lack of success and understanding between all players and the World Padel Tour in the past. As the tour has played a pivotal role in promoting this sport and expanding padel to various places, they must consider the perspectives of all players, the public, and the media and involve them in the circuit."

"I believe Premier Padel should also recognise that the World Padel Tour has significantly contributed to the growth of this sport. The tour should adopt successful practices and learn from past mistakes. If Premier Padel can achieve both these objectives, I genuinely foresee a bright future for the sport."

Navarro also emphasised that one key factor contributing to the success of Premier Padel has been the tour's commitment to listening to players from the very beginning:

"Always, right from the outset. Without this collaboration, it wouldn't have been possible. They have taken our input into account when making decisions. This aligns with the prerequisites for establishing a long-lasting and sustainable partnership."

The FIP-Platinum tournament in Sardinia attracted top international players seeking valuable ranking points. In the women's division, Lucia Sainz and Patricia Llaguno, elevated to top seeds due to withdrawals, showcased their prowess, clinching the title in a commanding fashion. They triumphed in straight sets, with a final score of 6-4, 6-2, against the challenging duo of Carolina Orsi and Carla Mesa.

In the men's category, Mike Yanguas and Federico Chingotto, initially top seeds, navigated a challenging path to the final. Facing questions about their court positions, they ultimately emerged as the stronger pair. Their final showdown featured Francisco Gil and Ramiro Moyano, a duo that had already surprised by defeating higher-ranked opponents in earlier rounds. Despite a fiercely contested match marked by close duels, Chingotto and Yanguas secured the championship with a final score of 6-4, 6-3, cementing their status as the tournament's top performers.



Padel has experienced explosive growth in recent years, and this trend shows no signs of slowing down on a global scale. According to the latest report by Deloitte and Playtomic, the number of padel courts worldwide is expected to double by 2026.

Eric Babolat, the CEO of Babolat, shared his insights on the future of the sport and the brand's history in it with Spanish Marca. He revealed that their journey with padel began in 2001 when they designed their first padel racket in Barcelona, despite initially learning about the sport in Mexico back in 1970.



Babolat's commitment to padel has been evident since 2015 when they established their padel headquarters at the La Maso facility in Madrid. While tennis products continue to outsell padel products due to their global reach, Babolat recognizes the tremendous growth potential in the padel market. Spain, Italy, Sweden, and Argentina are leading the way, but Babolat believes it's just the beginning for the sport's expansion in other countries.

In Spain, where the padel market surpasses the tennis market in size, Babolat's padel racket sales are also thriving. Eric Babolat envisions a future where padel racket sales may even surpass tennis racket sales for the brand.

Babolat's involvement in the world of sports goes beyond padel, as they sponsor tennis legends like Rafael Nadal and the rising star Carlos Alcaraz. In padel, their investment in Juan Lebron showcases their commitment to the sport. Additionally, Babolat has established The Babolat Padel Studio in Barcelona, a hub for designing, testing, and innovating padel rackets using cutting-edge manufacturing methods. This studio aims to drive innovation in padel equipment, meet players' needs, and promote responsible racket manufacturing, ultimately producing high-quality, high-performance rackets in limited quantities. Eric Babolat sees it as a true center of innovation in the world of padel.





Former world football sensation and 2004 Ballon d'Or winner, Andriy Shevchenko, is set to join the ranks of retired athletes who have taken up padel. Shevchenko has been confirmed as a participant in The Padel Classic, a Pro-Am tournament scheduled for May 2024 at the renowned Hurlingham Club in London.

The Padel Classic, hosted at the iconic Hurlingham Club in West London, has now welcomed Shevchenko to its roster of players. In a statement released by the tournament's organizers, Shevchenko expressed his enthusiasm for the sport and his eagerness to compete alongside fellow retired athletes, including former cricketer and Ashes winner Michael Vaughan.

Shevchenko shared his perspective on transitioning from professional football to padel, emphasising the enduring competitiveness that drives retired athletes to explore new sporting avenues.

The tournament has a philanthropic dimension, aiming to raise funds for the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, a global charity dedicated to positive social change through sports. Over the years, the event has featured retired rugby players and cricketers.

Charlie Grave, co-founder of The Padel Classic, expressed delight at Shevchenko and Vaughan's participation, highlighting the significance of having such prominent sports figures come together for the inaugural Padel Classic event at Hurlingham. Shevchenko's legendary status in football and Vaughan's stature in cricket make them noteworthy additions to the growing roster of sporting stars supporting the charitable cause.



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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!

Arlberg Pickleball Championship, WPC European Finals**EID:** 1339 **PRICE** EUR 40**Organizer:** Pickleball Global**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** December 15, 2023 to December 17, 2023**City:** St Anton am Arlberg, Austria**Home Club:** Arlberg Wellcom**Registration Deadline:** November 30, 2023 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 4**Pickleball Finland Xmas Games 2023****EID:** 1335 **PRICE** FREE**Organizer:** Tuomo Antikainen**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** December 02, 2023 to December 03, 2023**City:** Ullanmäentie 21, 02750 Espoo, Suomi**Home Club:** Pickleball Finland**Registration Deadline:** November 23, 2023 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 1**Cologne Open****EID:** 1245 **PRICE** EUR 40**Organizer:** Uli Jordan**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** November 24, 2023 to November 26, 2023**City:** Neubrücker Ring 48, 51109 Köln, Deutschland**Home Club:** Pickleball-cologne**Registration Deadline:** November 01, 2023 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 1**MORE
INFO**

Where is Jack Sock?

In a surprising twist that's been the talk of the sporting world, former American tennis ace Jack Sock has officially embarked on a new and promising journey within the rapidly growing realm of pickleball. At 31 years of age, Sock's transition comes on the heels of the 2023 U.S. Open, where he teamed up with fellow American John Isner in the doubles event, effectively marking the end of a storied tennis career. With a staggering career earnings total of \$11.9 million and four ATP singles titles under his belt, including a career-high world ranking of No. 8 in 2017, Sock leaves an indelible legacy in the world of tennis that few can rival.

The Professional Pickleball Association (PPA) CEO, Connor Pardoe, has expressed a significant amount of optimism regarding Sock's prospects in pickleball, confidently stating, "If Jack fully commits to pickleball, I believe he can rise to become a Top-5 player within just 12 months." This transition was evidently in the works for some time, with Sock occasionally participating in pickleball events during his tennis career's intermissions.



Pickleball, often described as a sport reminiscent of mini-tennis, offers a less physically demanding alternative for Sock, who has grappled with his share of injuries in the world of tennis. Sock sees his new journey as a bridge between both sports, emphasising that there's no need for competition between them; instead, he envisions a harmonious coexistence.

Jack Sock's pickleball adventure doesn't stand alone. He's joined by another former American tennis star, Sam Querrey, who has also chosen to retire from tennis in favour of a professional pickleball career. Notably, this transition comes with substantial financial incentives, as top-ranked pickleballers such as Ben Johns are reportedly earning an estimated \$250,000 annually. Sock's unique career trajectory serves as a beacon, highlighting that professional athletes can find fresh avenues to channel their skills and passions after retiring from their primary sport. His story underscores the myriad possibilities that await athletes in different disciplines. The PPA's tour, encompassing "25 stops across the United States" and culminating in the prestigious PPA Finals in San Clemente, CA, promises to be a captivating journey as Jack Sock forges his path in the pickleball world.

Jack Sock's transition underscores the potential for athletes to explore fresh challenges and thrive in diverse arenas. Sock's decision to embrace pickleball serves as a testament that it's not about retiring from sports; it's about embarking on a new chapter, a second sporting life brimming with potential and excitement.



Additionally, in a recent development, Selkirk Sport has announced an exciting long-term sponsorship deal with Jack Sock, solidifying his place among the top professional pickleball players proudly represented by the Selkirk 'family.' This sponsorship agreement was initially hinted at recently by PicklePod and is now officially confirmed.

The 31-year-old tennis sensation, a two-time Wimbledon champion in doubles (2014 and 2018), is part of a growing trend of former tennis stars setting their sights on professional pickleball. Sock, however, stands out as the clear frontrunner in terms of potential.

Notably, Sock made an impressive pro debut on the PPA Tour earlier this year, earning a gold medal in doubles alongside Anna Leigh Waters. One particular line from Selkirk Sport's statement caught our attention, stating, "We're thrilled to announce that this tennis star has now joined the Selkirk Sport team and will be the face of our upcoming Luxx paddle series!"

With the buzz surrounding the Luxx paddles and perhaps accompanying apparel set to hit the market soon, the pickleball community is eagerly awaiting what Sock's partnership with Selkirk Sport will bring to this rapidly growing sport. We already witnessed Selkirk Pro, Rob Nunnery, standing on the medal stand after a dominating performance, sporting a fresh new blue and black paddle. This exciting development further adds to the anticipation surrounding Sock's partnership and the potential for innovative equipment to enhance the game.

Jack Sock's transition to the world of pickleball is not only inspiring but also an emblem of the limitless possibilities for athletes who seek to reinvent themselves in new sporting disciplines. With the support of Selkirk Sport and the promise of groundbreaking equipment, Sock's journey promises to be a thrilling ride. As we eagerly await his next steps in the world of pickleball, it's evident that this is just the beginning of an exciting new chapter in his sporting career.

In more Pickle News...

Once a favourite among seniors with replaceable hips, pickleball has exploded into a sporting phenomenon that transcends age. Entire residential communities now unite around their shared love for the sport, often touted as the fastest-growing in the United States.

A testament to pickleball's diverse appeal is the incredible journey of Anna Leigh Waters, who, in 2022, established herself as the world's premier female player. She delivered an MVP performance, securing an astonishing eight triple crowns – triumphing in the singles, doubles, and mixed doubles events at various tournaments. Her prowess catapulted her into celebrity status, sharing the court with renowned athletes like Michael Phelps and Hollywood stars like Jamie Foxx.

However, a physical setback hampered Waters' 2023 campaign, the painful extraction of her wisdom teeth, briefly sidelining the young prodigy, Waters made a triumphant return. Recently, she secured yet another triple crown at the Professional Pickleball Association's (PPA) Texas Open and now sets her sights on repeating the feat at the Orange County Cup in Southern California.



Technically, at the age of 16, Waters should be a high school junior. However, her unconventional path led her away from traditional schooling, opting for online coursework and professional pickleball.

In the world of pickleball, the word "unprecedented" is more than fitting. With no established legends like Serena Williams or LeBron James to emulate, young players like Waters are navigating uncharted territory. The sport's rapid ascent, with tours, sponsorships, television coverage, and celebrity endorsements, adds to the challenge of carving out a clear path for the next generation.

Waters, with her infectious enthusiasm, summarised the prevailing sentiment: "Everybody's just kind of figuring it out as we go, honestly."

The origins of Anna Leigh Waters in the sport are already legendary, considering pickleball's relative youth. Born to athletic parents – a former University of South Carolina tennis player (Leigh) and a Gamecocks golfer (Stephen) – Waters initially struggled with sports. Her athletic prowess only truly blossomed at the age of 12. Waters began excelling in tennis and soccer, leading her family to move to South Florida to support her burgeoning passion.

In 2019, Waters and her mother clinched the national title in women's doubles, solidifying their place as a formidable duo in pickleball. Her journey parallels the sport's meteoric rise, attracting marketers, sponsors, and considerable prize money. Today, Waters enjoys endorsements with brands like Carvana, Dynasty Financial Partners, Lock Laces, and Fila, as well as representation from the prestigious Octagon management agency.

As a committed full-time athlete, Waters maintains a rigorous training regimen under the guidance of her trainer, Brandon Oakes, and mental coach, Jack Llewellyn. With the sport still defining its culture and rules, Waters is keen to make a mark as a rising star. Despite the uncertainty, she finds inspiration in athletes like Roger Federer, aiming to reach the pinnacle of pickleball, much as she once aspired in tennis.

Waters' dedication and success have not only changed the course of her life but also redirected the narrative of pickleball itself. While college soccer was once her dream, pickleball's ascent has steered her towards uncharted waters. As long as the sport continues its incredible growth, Waters envisions the possibility of playing college soccer after her pickleball career. Her achievements, both on and off the court, position her as a trailblazing figure in the evolving story of pickleball.



The Professional Pickleball Association (PPA) Championships in Las Vegas recently marked an exciting return to action for both pros and enthusiasts. The event, now in its fourth annual edition, was proudly sponsored by Guaranteed Rate and presented by Thorlo. With its status as one of the few "major" events on the PPA schedule, it drew a significant crowd of top professionals, promising a thrilling showdown at the Darling Tennis Center, a stone's throw away from the Las Vegas Strip.

This year, the tournament attracted nearly 1,100 participants, both professional and amateur, all vying for glory and recognition in the world of pickleball. The stage was set for fierce competition, and the battle for top rankings intensified as the season neared its conclusion.

One significant aspect of the PPA Championships was the race for qualification in the year-end PPA Finals, scheduled for the first weekend in December in San Clemente. Only the top 8 players in singles and mixed doubles, along with the top 16 gender doubles teams, would secure a coveted spot in this prestigious event. With just a couple of PPA tour stops remaining to influence the rankings, the pressure was on to perform at the highest level.

The PPA Finals can be likened to tennis' ATP Finals, where the top eight male players engage in a round-robin tournament, creating a spectacle that delights fans and enthusiasts alike. The pickleball version promises to be equally captivating for all who appreciate this burgeoning sport.

Let's dive into the tournament action and discover the standout moments:

Men's Pro Singles Recap

The Men's Pro Singles category once again showcased the depth of talent in the sport, as emerging players continually made impressive runs. Aanik Lohani, seeded #23, displayed remarkable tenacity, defeating established pros such as Julian Arnold, Hayden Patriquin, and JW Johnson en route to the final. Lohani's remarkable journey culminated in a face-off against the sport's #1 player, Ben Johns. While Lohani put up a valiant fight, it was Johns who clinched the gold medal, highlighting the unpredictability and vibrancy of the men's singles division.

- * Gold: Ben Johns
- * Silver: Aanick Lohani
- * Bronze: J.W. Johnson



Women's Pro Singles Recap

In the Women's Pro Singles, the competition was once again headlined by the indomitable Anna Leigh Waters. However, the absence of #5 Hurricane Tyra Black opened the door for others to make their mark. Dominique Schaefer, seeded #12, seized this opportunity, making a deep run and securing a bronze medal. Ultimately, the gold medal match featured a familiar showdown between #1 Anna Leigh Waters and #2 Catherine Parenteau, with Waters emerging victorious after a hard-fought battle.

- * **Gold:** Anna Leigh Waters
- * **Silver:** Catherine Parenteau
- * **Bronze:** Dominique Schaefer



Mixed Pro Doubles Recap

Mixed Pro Doubles proved to be one of the most competitive categories in pickleball, with top pros often facing challenging seedings. Notable upsets and standout performances were the order of the day. The #23 seeded team of Christian Alshon & Hurricane Tyra Black made waves by defeating higher-seeded opponents, leaving a lasting impression. The gold medal match featured the unstoppable pairing of Waters & Johns, who secured yet another title in their illustrious partnership.

- * **Gold:** Waters & Johns
- * **Silver:** Bright & Ignatowich
- * **Bronze:** David & Wilson



Men's Pro Doubles Recap

The Men's Pro Doubles category witnessed a shift in dynamics as former partners Matt Wright and Riley Newman embarked on separate journeys. Wright, teaming up with James Ignatowich, made a solid run before an injury forced their withdrawal. Newman partnered with A.J. Koller but fell to the under-seeded #6 team of Staksrud & Tellez. The gold medal match, as has become customary, saw the Johns brothers taking on the formidable duo of JW Johnson & Dylan Frazier. After a thrilling contest, the Johns brothers emerged victorious.

* Gold: Johns & Johns

* Silver: Johnson & Frazier

* Bronze: Staksrud & Tellez

Women's Pro Doubles Recap

The Women's Pro Doubles category continued to be dominated by the formidable pairing of Waters & Parenteau. The #1 seeds showcased their supremacy by surrendering just 15 points across eight games, clinching the gold medal with conviction. In the gold medal match, they faced a strong challenge from the "Team Length" duo of Callie Smith & Lucy Kovalova, ultimately securing the title.

Gold: Waters & Parenteau

Silver: Smith & Kovalova

Bronze: Jones & Wright



Champions (Senior) Pro Competition Quick Recap

In the senior pro competition, Mattias Johansson emerged as the men's champions pro singles winner, while the men's champions pro doubles title was claimed by the team of Mircea Morariu & Dayne Gingrich.

As the PPA Championships concluded, the Pro Pickleball Medal Tracker was updated, providing a comprehensive history of professional medals across various tours and events. The pickleball schedule also received updates for the 2024 season.

The Hertz National Championships in Daytona Beach in mid-November, the last opportunity for pros to qualify for the year-end finals in San Clemente, will take place in the first week of December.



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