

GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

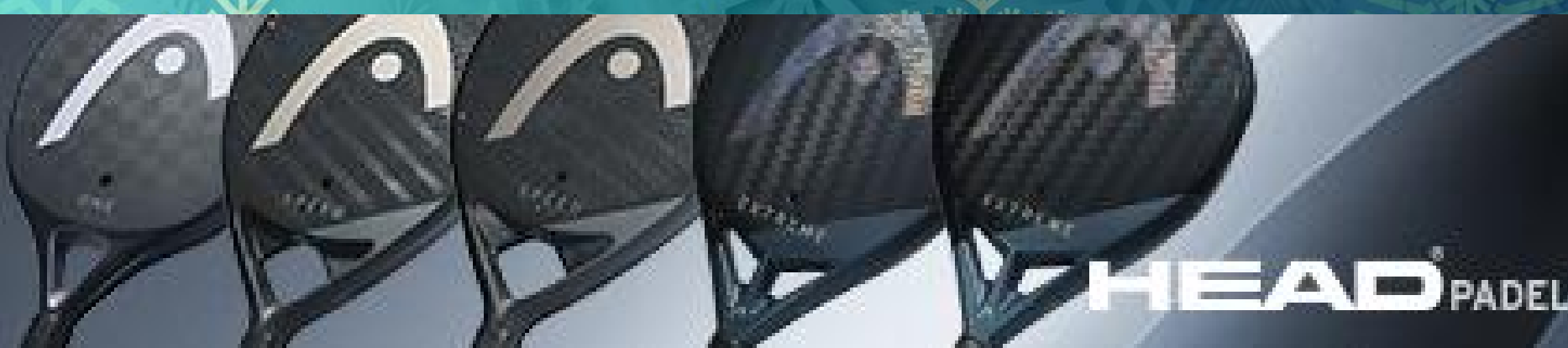
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Ben Shelton Opens the Door to His World with New YouTube Channel

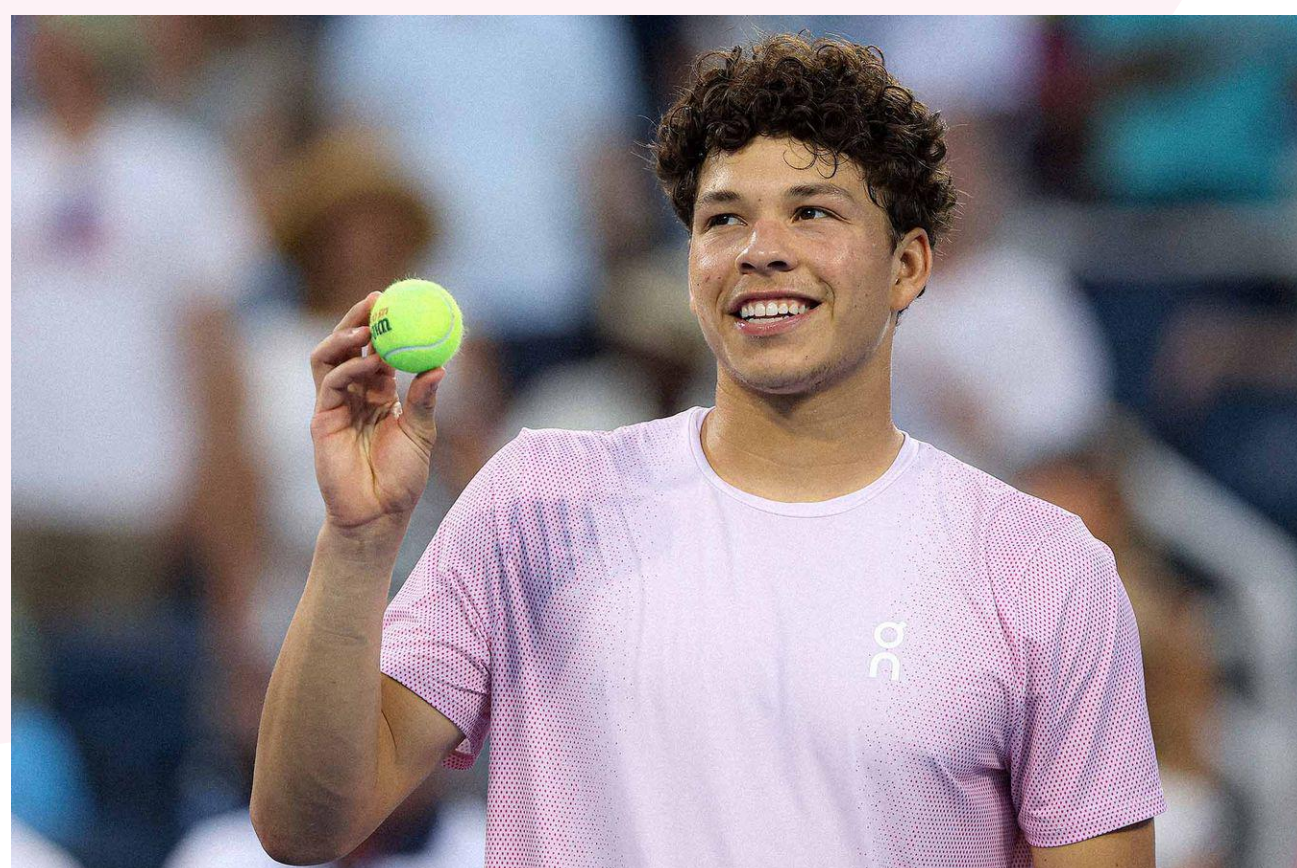
American tennis standout Ben Shelton is inviting fans into his life off the baseline with the launch of his very own YouTube channel — and it's already serving up plenty of behind-the-scenes intrigue.

On Wednesday, the 23-year-old unveiled his first video, an 11-minute feature titled “The Long Game”, giving viewers an intimate look at his journey through this season's highlights. Fans are treated to raw, unfiltered footage from major moments, including Shelton's run at the US Open and his debut at the Nitto ATP Finals in Turin.

Shelton, known just as much for his booming left-handed serve as for his charismatic presence on tour, explained in an intro clip why he decided to take the leap into content creation. “I'm really excited to show you guys the behind the scenes of my life,” he said, emphasising that the channel will go beyond polished highlights to reveal the unedited reality of life on the ATP Tour.

Currently ranked No. 9 in the PIF ATP Rankings, Shelton capped a breakthrough 2025 campaign with a 40-24 match record and the biggest title of his career — a Masters 1000 crown in Toronto.

With his new channel, Shelton is effectively opening the curtain on the rigours and rhythms of life as a top-tier pro — from training and travel to the mental grind that comes with competing at the highest level. Whether you're a casual fan or a die-hard follower of the burgeoning American star, there's plenty to sink your teeth into.



Taylor Fritz Trades Tour Rallies for City Streets in Japan as Offseason Begins

As the tennis season winds down and players scatter across the globe to recharge, American No. 6 Taylor Fritz has swapped his racket bag for travel plans choosing Japan as the backdrop for his 2025 offseason getaway.

In a snapshot of life beyond the baseline, Fritz has been spotted exploring the vibrant streets and cultural highlights of Japan alongside girlfriend Morgan Riddle, joining a growing list of ATP Tour stars making the most of their break. While some players opt for sun-soaked beaches or alpine retreats, Fritz's choice of Japan has given fans a fresh perspective on how elite athletes unwind after a long season.

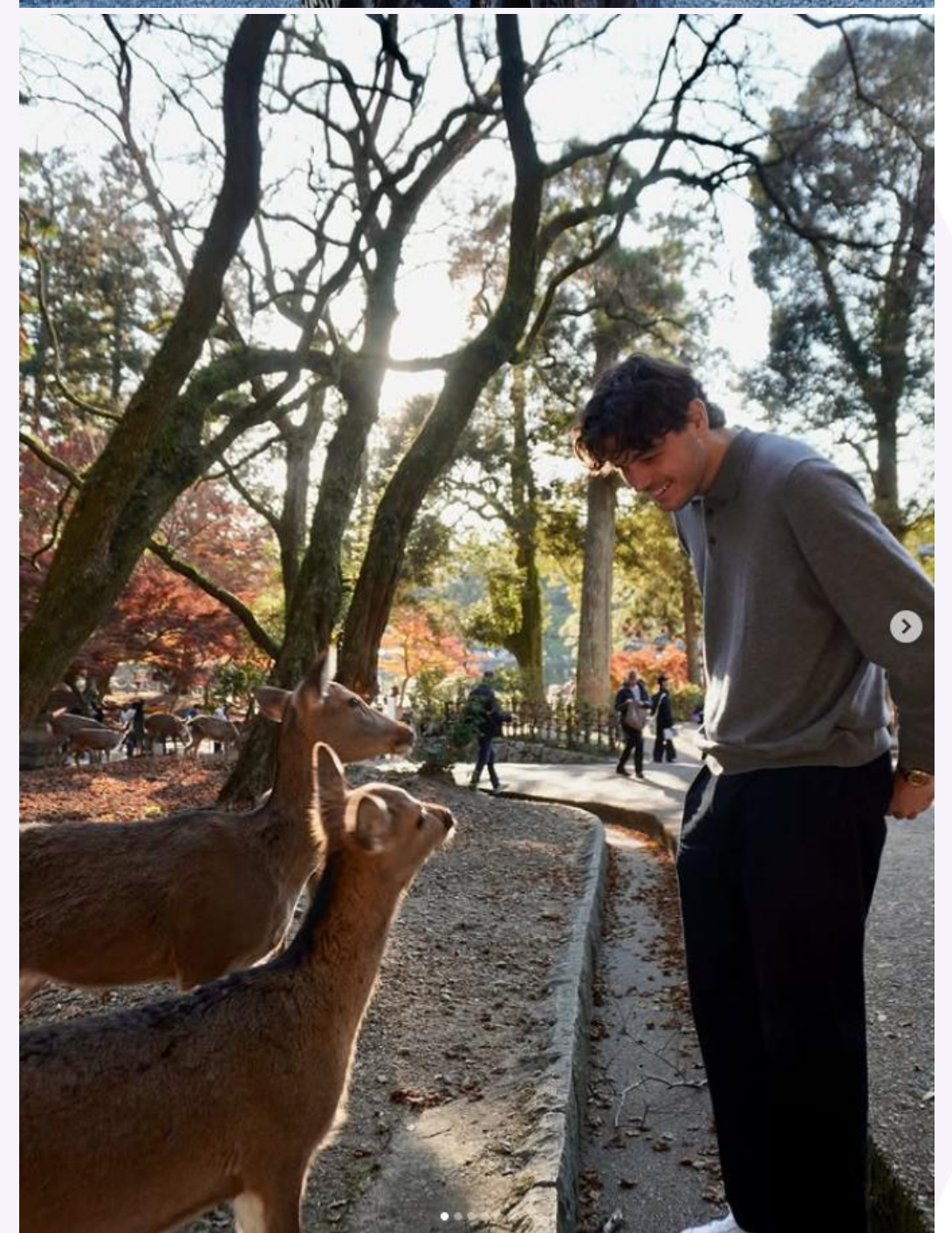
The trip comes on the heels of a demanding 2025 campaign in which Fritz competed at the highest levels of the sport, including a strong showing in Tokyo at the Kinoshita Group Japan Open — an ATP 500 event where he reached the final before falling to Carlos Alcaraz.

Off the court, social media has reflected the relaxed yet engaging tone of Fritz's break, with glimpses of local experiences and shared moments with Riddle capturing the attention of supporters online. While offseason travel is nothing new for top players, Fritz's choice has sparked conversation simply by highlighting the variety of ways athletes choose to recharge their batteries.

The Times of India

Beyond Japan, other ATP stars have been spotted in destinations ranging from the Maldives to the Alps, illustrating that the period between seasons is as much about personal exploration as it is physical recovery.

For Fritz, the journey is more than a holiday. It's a chance to reset both body and mind before turning attention toward the build-up to 2026 — a season sure to bring fresh battles and new challenges on the ATP Tour.



Moms Steal the Spotlight on the WTA Tour in 2025

The 2025 WTA season wasn't just defined by its Grand Slam showdowns and breakthrough stars, it was also a year of remarkable achievements by mothers who returned from maternity leave and made an unforgettable mark on the tour. From title wins to ranking surges, these athletes rewrote expectations and delivered some of the most inspiring narratives of the season.

Perhaps the most iconic story came from Belinda Bencic, who defied the odds to clinch the Mubadala Abu Dhabi Open just 10 months after giving birth to her daughter, Bella. In a moment that perfectly captured the emotions of the year, Bencic hoisted her trophy with Bella in her arms, the first time a mother had won a WTA singles title since 2023. She went on to add another trophy in Tokyo, while rising from No. 487 to No. 11 in the PIF WTA Rankings by season's end.

Not far behind in the storybook narratives was Tatjana Maria, the spirited German mother of two. In June, she made history by winning the HSBC Championships at Queen's Club, the first WTA 500 event held there since the tour's return and the first of her career. Maria's run included wins over top-ranked opponents, and she did it with her daughters cheering from the stands, a testament to both her tenacity and family support.



The doubles circuit saw a landmark achievement from Taylor Townsend as well, as she became the first mother to reach No. 1 in the world doubles rankings. Townsend also added her second Grand Slam doubles crown at the Australian Open, while making a memorable push to the US Open singles quarterfinals, where her young son Adyn captured hearts as a courtside mascot.

Naomi Osaka continued her comeback narrative too, ascending to a career-high ranking after advancing to the Montreal final and later the US Open semifinals, all remarkable milestones in her first full season back after becoming a mother.

Rounding out the season, Elina Svitolina enjoyed a resurgent year of her own, adding the Open Rouen Capfinances Metropole title to her résumé and finishing inside the world's top 15.

What tied all these achievements together, beyond trophies and rankings, was the message of resilience, strength and inspiration these women sent to fans around the globe. In 2025, motherhood and elite competition didn't just coexist on the WTA Tour, they flourished!

Star Power Headed to Brisbane: Sabalenka, Rybakina and Six Top-10 Names Set for 2026 Kick-Off

As the new WTA season edges closer, the 2026 Brisbane International has put together one of the most compelling entry lists seen in recent years — with seven of the world's top 10 players all committed to starting their campaigns at the Queensland Tennis Centre.

At the top of the list sits World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, the Belarusian powerhouse fresh off another stellar season and returning to defend her Brisbane crown. Joining her are fellow elite talents Elena Rybakina (No. 5) and Amanda Anisimova (No. 4), giving fans a heavyweight trio to follow from the very first week of January.

But it doesn't stop there. The draw also features No. 6 Jessica Pegula, No. 7 Madison Keys, No. 9 Mirra Andrejeva and No. 10 Ekaterina Alexandrova — all of whom bring a mix of big-match experience, firepower and Grand Slam pedigree to the event.

Brisbane — a WTA 500 fixture running January 4–11, 2026 — has quickly become a must-see stop on the early WTA calendar; not just as a warm-up for the Australian Open, but as a showcase of elite competition on hard courts that can set the tone for the year ahead.

Among the field are also six Grand Slam champions a reminder of the quality on offer as the destination for players looking to hit top form at the outset of a new campaign.

Adding further intrigue are notable wildcards and regional entries, including rising local talents and seasoned tour regulars, all of which help round out a vibrant and deep draw.

For fans in Australia and around the world, Brisbane promises to be more than just a lead-in event, it's shaping up as a preview of the biggest rivalries and storylines that could define the 2026 WTA Tour.



CARLOS SANTOS SHEDS LIGHT ON ALCARAZ-FERRERO SPLIT AHEAD OF AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2026

The sudden end of one of tennis's most successful player-coach partnerships sent ripples through the sport just weeks before the 2026 Australian Open. Now, Carlos Alcaraz's first coach, Carlos Santos, has offered a revealing insight into why the world No. 1 parted ways with Juan Carlos Ferrero on the eve of the season's first Grand Slam.

Alcaraz confirmed the split on December 17 via social media, closing the chapter on a relationship that began when he joined Ferrero's academy in Murcia as a teenager. Under Ferrero's guidance, the Spaniard transformed from prodigious talent into a six-time Grand Slam champion and the dominant force of his generation.



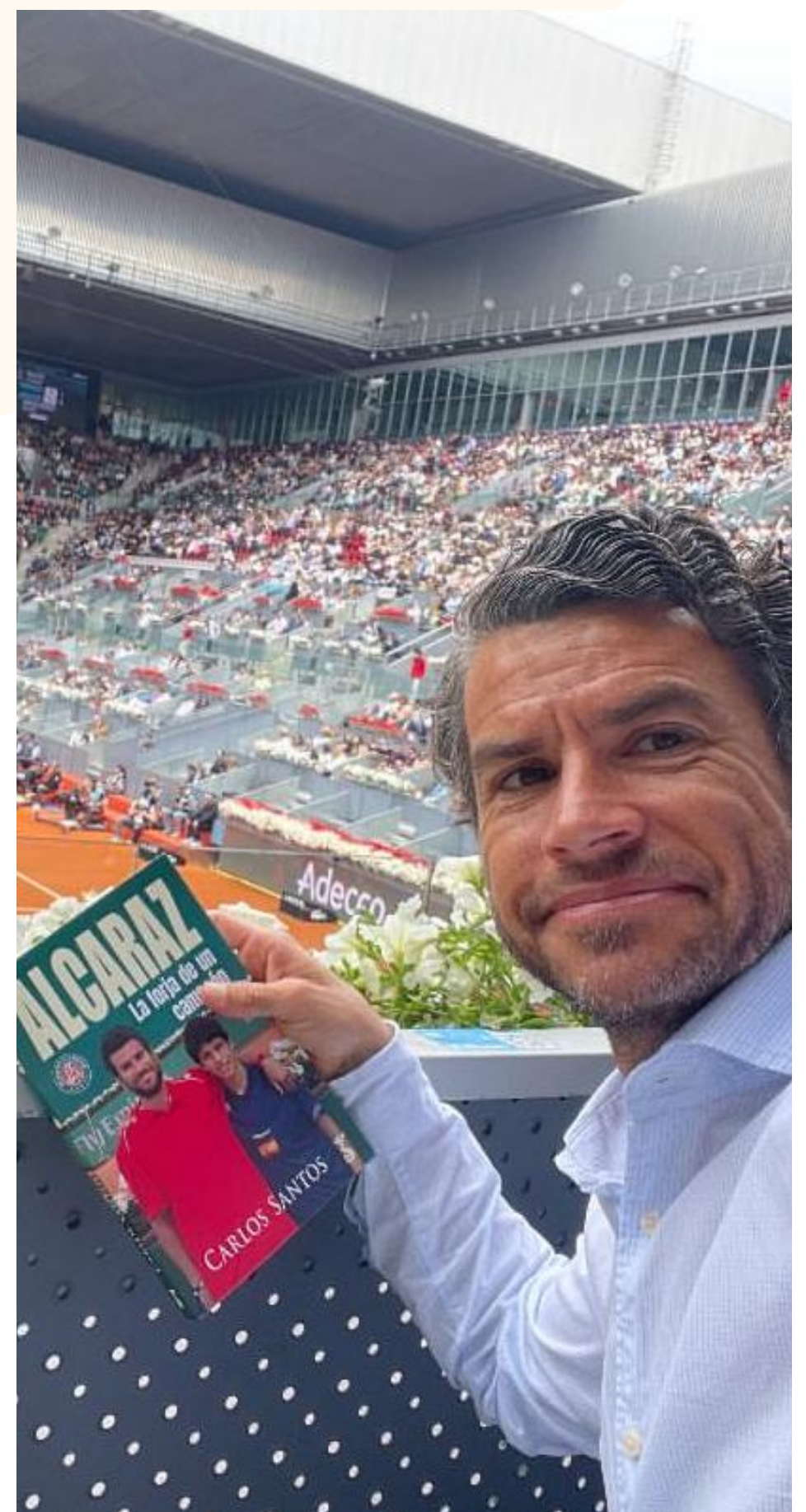
Yet according to Santos, the separation had little to do with tactics, form, or results.

“No, no — it wasn’t about what was happening on court,” Santos explained to Eurosport Spain. “It was a financial issue and, above all, a disagreement about the time Juan Carlos was expected to spend travelling with Carlitos.”

Santos, who coached Alcaraz throughout his childhood years, revealed that the crux of the problem centred on expectations of full-time commitment.

“They wanted Juan Carlos to be exclusively with him, travelling to every tournament,” he said. “And Juan Carlos doesn’t want to go to all of them — or simply can’t do that right now.”

The timing could scarcely be more delicate. Alcaraz arrives in Melbourne next month with history firmly in his sights, needing only the Australian Open title to complete a Career Grand Slam. His previous appearances in 2024 and 2025 ended at the quarter-final stage — solid runs, but short of the ultimate prize.



For Santos, the situation has stirred uncomfortable memories. He believes the same underlying dynamics that led to his own departure are now repeating themselves.

“I hadn’t thought about it until my wife mentioned it,” Santos admitted. “But in the end, Carlos’s father is the one who makes the final decisions. Carlitos himself would have continued with Juan Carlos for as long as he wanted.”

Drawing parallels with his own experience, Santos added:

“I was with Carlitos for eight years, Juan Carlos for seven. I asked for certain conditions; his father didn’t agree. Juan Carlos must have asked for different conditions, and again, his father didn’t accept them.”

Despite the circumstances, Santos acknowledged the respect Alcaraz has shown publicly towards Ferrero — something he feels was missing when his own tenure ended.

“At least Carlitos spoke very kindly about Juan Carlos. And it truly was an important period for him. It was for me as well — although I didn’t receive such generous words publicly.”



Still, Santos is adamant that the split will not derail Alcaraz’s dominance on the tour.

“Carlitos loves Juan Carlos very much and will always value what they shared. But he’s independent now,” he said. “He has absorbed everything Juan Carlos taught him.”

In Santos’s view, Alcaraz is no longer defined by who sits in his player box.

“He knows the circuit, the preparation, the mentality — he’s read Juan Carlos’s ‘book’, so to speak. He has a brilliant style of tennis that doesn’t depend on anyone. He plays his game, on his own terms.”

As the Australian Open begins on January 12 — with Jannik Sinner returning as defending champion — the spotlight will inevitably fall on how Alcaraz responds to life without the coach who helped shape his rise.

If Santos is right, the world No. 1 may be entering not a period of uncertainty, but the next phase of his evolution.

Nick Kyrgios has never been one to tiptoe around the edges, and once again the Australian finds himself at the centre of a storm as he prepares for a headline-grabbing Battle of the Sexes against Aryna Sabalenka.

After weeks of debate and division within the tennis world, the exhibition match is set to take place on 28 December at Dubai's Coca-Cola Arena. Love it or loathe it, the event has succeeded in one undeniable way, it has captured attention. And Kyrgios, unsurprisingly, is embracing every second of it.

“Not many males would take this on”

Speaking while competing in the World Tennis League, Kyrgios made it clear he views the contest as something few of his peers would dare attempt.

“It's going to be fun, but also I'm a bit nervous,” he admitted. “I like doing things that are outside the box. Honestly, not many males in my position would have done that and taken the opportunity.”

Those words have only added fuel to an already blazing discussion around the match, with critics questioning the concept and supporters applauding the willingness to challenge convention.



Kyrgios confident of victory

Despite the noise surrounding the event, Kyrgios insists his belief remains sky-high.

“I think my chances are really high. I'm very confident in my ability,” he said, underlining that this is far more than a novelty appearance in his eyes.

The Australian is well aware of the scrutiny that comes with the occasion, particularly given the handicaps introduced to level the contest. Sabalenka will play on a court reduced by nine per cent, while Kyrgios will be restricted to using just one serve throughout the match.

Whether that satisfies critics remains to be seen, but it has done little to dent Kyrgios' confidence.

Sabalenka arrives battle-hardened

If form is the measuring stick, Sabalenka enters as the sharper competitor. The Belarusian has enjoyed a formidable 2025 season, reaching three Grand Slam finals and lifting the US Open title. She closed her campaign by finishing runner-up to Elena Rybakina at the WTA Finals, underlining her consistency at the very top of the women's game.

In contrast, Kyrgios' year has been disjointed. Injuries derailed two comeback attempts — one early in the season and another midway through — limiting his competitive appearances and leaving questions around match sharpness.

Building momentum the hard way

Kyrgios has, however, begun ramping up his preparation. Alongside Sabalenka, he took part in exhibition events in the United States, first at the Atlanta Cup, where he was beaten by Ben Shelton, before falling to Tommy Paul at the Garden Cup. Neither result brought the breakthrough he was searching for, but both added valuable time on court.

He has since travelled to India to compete in the World Tennis League in Bengaluru, representing the Kites team alongside Marta Kostyuk. With Daniil Medvedev, Gaël Monfils, Paula Badosa and Elina Svitolina also in action, the event has provided Kyrgios with competitive intensity, even if results have been slow to come. He has lost both doubles matches so far and is still awaiting his first win since returning to the sport.

Another chapter in a familiar story

Controversy has followed Kyrgios throughout his career, from on-court outbursts to outspoken opinions. The Battle of the Sexes feels like a natural extension of that narrative, another moment that polarises opinion and places him squarely in the spotlight.

“I don’t know what’s going to happen, we’ll see,” Kyrgios admitted. “I’ve been in a lot of controversies in my whole career and this is another thing I get to experience.”

On 28 December, the talking stops and the tennis begins. Whether it ends in triumph, backlash or something in between, one thing is certain: Nick Kyrgios has once again ensured that all eyes are firmly on him.



Djokovic's Mind Over Muscle Leaves Even Guardiola in Awe

There are champions, and then there are competitors who redefine what competition itself looks like. Novak Djokovic belongs firmly in the latter category, a truth reinforced not by tennis peers this time, but by one of football's sharpest minds.

Pep Guardiola has spent a career dissecting pressure, dominance and longevity at the very highest level. So when the Manchester City manager singled out Djokovic's mentality after the Paris Olympic final, the praise landed with unusual force.

Djokovic's gold-medal victory over Carlos Alcaraz last summer was not merely another trophy added to an already crowded cabinet. It was the final piece of an unfinished puzzle, and it arrived in the most demanding of circumstances. Fifth attempt. A rising superstar on the other side of the net. And nearly three hours of unrelenting tension.

At 38, Djokovic did not overpower Alcaraz. He outlasted him. Two flawless tie-breaks sealed a 7-6, 7-6 win that showcased something increasingly rare in modern sport: absolute control under maximum pressure.



For Guardiola, that performance distilled elite competition to its purest form.

What sets Djokovic apart, the coach suggested, is not simply his trophy haul, though 24 major titles speak loudly enough, but the environment in which his greatness was forged. Unlike champions who rise in eras of transition, Djokovic climbed alongside Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, pushing himself against two all-time benchmarks every step of the way.

Paris was the perfect illustration. Break points came and went. Momentum shifted. The noise grew. Yet Djokovic never blinked.

“That mentality,” Guardiola said, “is something magnificent.”

It is why, as Djokovic prepares for another season from his training base in Dubai, few are willing to write him off. Turning 39 in 2026, he remains firmly in the world's top four, still chasing a historic 25th Grand Slam title — and still measuring himself against the new standard-bearers, Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner.

Greatness, as Guardiola noted, is not about winning once. It is about enduring. Adapting. And proving yourself again and again on the sport's biggest stages.

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In 2024



In 2025



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TEAM GRSA

These are just some of our wishes for you
for the coming year!

1

That you continue to see the value in constantly learning, understanding that there is a lesson to be learnt from every occasion and circumstance. That even the most experienced of professionals continues to pick up valuable information that they can implement in their daily life.

2

The advancements of technology are fast changing, it's down to us to keep up with that pace, not to rest on our laurels and then play catch-up. Keep your finger on the pulse, stay informed, and pass that information on to your teams and your clients.

3

That you value your time away from your business, take time for you and yours. This will always help you stay in a balanced state of mind and avoid burnout. Bills and earning is important, but remember that you cannot pour from an empty cup.

4

Invest in you, invest in your materials, tools, appearance both physical and virtual. In a world where social media is the biggest hangout place, be seen, but be real, be ingenious, but be original, it's how you'll stand out from a huge selection of professionals.

5

Trust your abilities, believe in your capacity to grow and be the best you can. These things are totally in your control, they are not only achievable, they are not difficult to achieve. You can accomplish anything you apply yourself to!

Stringer Solutions

with Richard Parnell

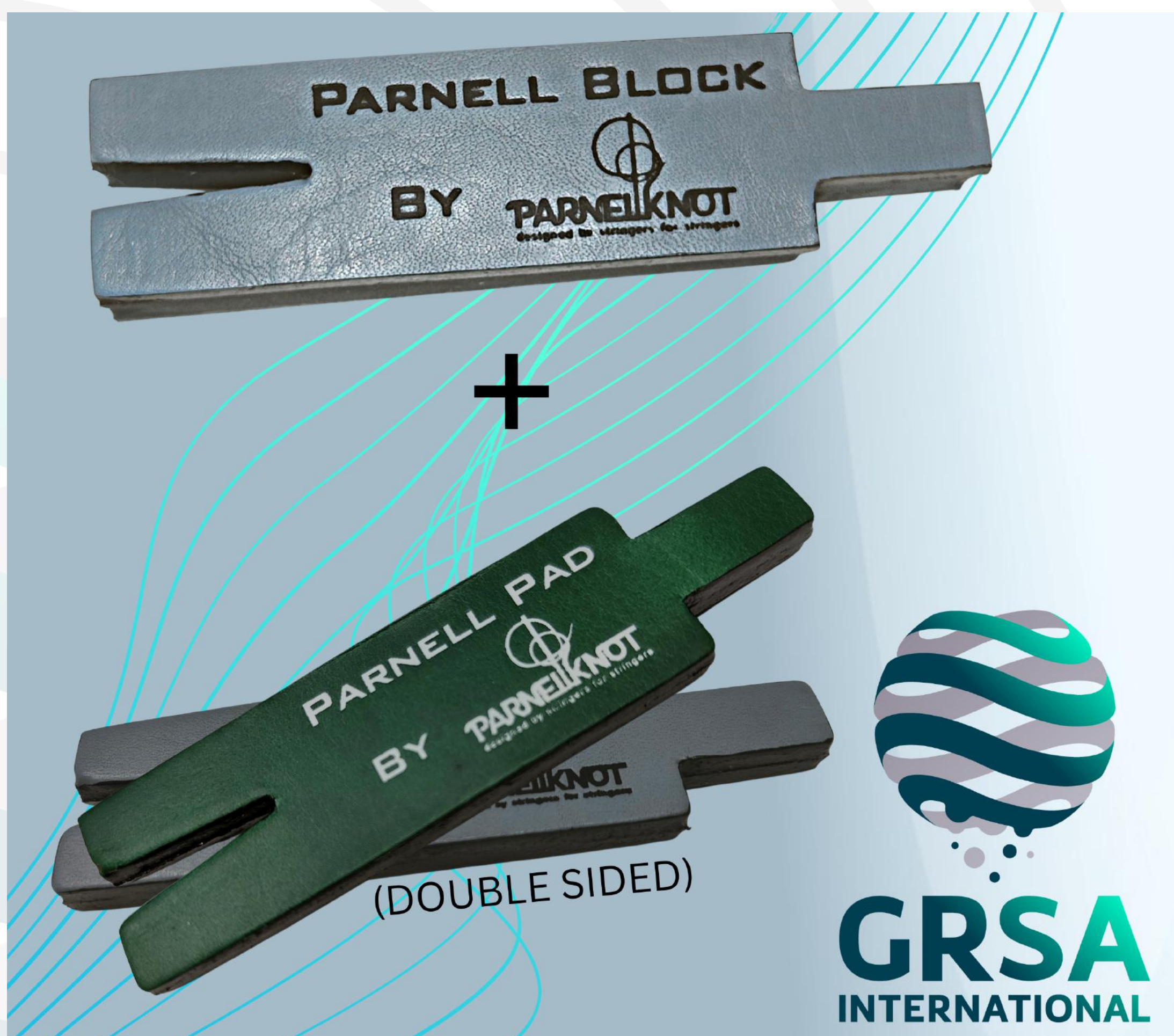


Firstly, I think that an explanation of what exactly is a “Starting Block”, what it is used for and when to use it would be a good start.

What is a Starting Block – A “spacer” that is used to move the contact point of the starting clamp on the string.

What does a Starting Block do and when should I use it? – By placing a starting block between the clamp and the frame, the piece of string held by the clamp is moved further away from the grommet. This means that the piece of string will not be stressed twice by being clamped and then on the angles in the grommets. The use of the block will mean that the piece of string that has been held by the starting clamp is now out of the grommets and moved into the string bed.

Using a starting block is imperative if you are using the “Yusuki” starting method with a starting clamp placed outside the frame.

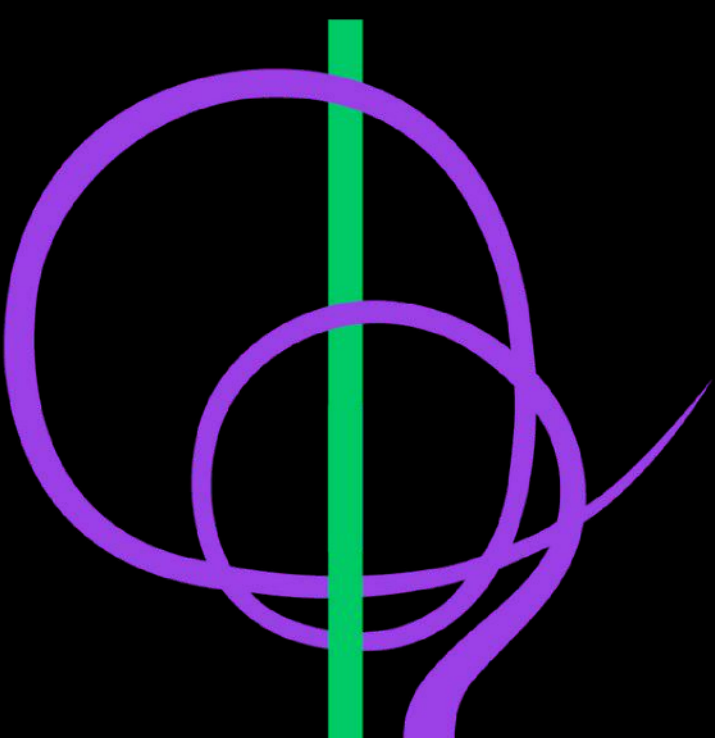


Note: Sometimes a player can suffer unexplained breakages towards the top of the string bed, if this occurs, change starting methods by using the other recommended starting method of the machine clamp backed up by the starting clamp for safety.

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.



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1 TO 1 WORKSHOPS IN THE NETHERLANDS



Järvi van Veghel was the latest addition to the list of people taking the Pro Stringer and Pro Master Stringer workshops in the Netherlands

Mark Jan Greebe has held a number of workshops now with more planned. Jarvi showed patience and quite a mature understanding considering his age.

It's exciting to see the younger generation want to learn more about this special craft, with ambition and with respect towards its importance in the industry,

Well done Järvi!





If you'd like to take part in these workshops and other GRSA initiatives in the Netherlands, please contact Mark Jan Greebe.

If you'd like to take part in these workshops and other GRSA initiatives in the Netherlands, please contact Mark Jan Greebe.

BOOK YOURS



Workshop profesional stringer Jesper Telder Saturday the 13th of December

Jesper Telder did his Profesional Stringer workshop. We practiced all aspects required to become a professional stringer, such as stringing a hybrid, putting on a shrink sleeve, removing and replacing a grommet set, putting a new grip on a racket, and many more things to makes the difference between just a hobby stringer and someone who really knows what they're doing. After a great day's work, he completed all his exams and from now on, he can call himself a GRSA Certified Pro stringer. **Jesper keep on going**, and congrats on your certification!



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A Message from the President of GRSA International

At this special time of year, it is natural to pause and reflect on the past, the present, and the future. It is a moment to look back at what we have achieved, to assess where we stand today, and to consider the paths we want to take as we move forward. It is also a time to revisit our goals and ensure that the plans we put in place truly reflect the values of our association.



2025 has been a truly special year for GRSA International. One of our major objectives strengthening stringer education on a global level has seen remarkable success in Asia. With 12 workshops delivered across China, hundreds of stringers have been supported in learning the fundamentals of stringing or in taking the next step toward maximising their professional potential. As education sits at the very heart of GRSA's core values, this achievement directly reflects the purpose of your association.

Our ongoing partnership with Wilson China, through "The Path of a Master" and "Wilson Featuring GRSA" workshops, has been another major highlight of 2025. These events showcased the value of collaboration between brands and certified expertise, and we are already looking ahead to making 2026 an even bigger success.

Another exciting milestone this year was the launch of the GRSA Badminton Project, led by GRSA Grand Master Mark Goodman. This initiative marks an important step in GRSA's continued expansion across racket sports, and 2026 will see the first dedicated badminton workshops offered to our members.

The GRSA International Stringing Team has also been busier than ever in 2025, servicing more tournaments than at any time in our history. This incredible effort particularly across Germany, Austria, and Switzerland has only been possible thanks to the dedication of our members in those countries, and the outstanding organisation provided by Mr. Mann and his company, P.R.S.

I am extremely proud to announce that in 2026, the GRSA International Stringing Team will be organising the official stringing service for the Mutua Madrid Masters. This collaboration between our major partner HEAD and GRSA International represents a significant step forward and an extension of our long-standing involvement in tournament stringing at the highest level.



Mutua Madrid Masters 2026 will mark the official launch of: “HEAD Official Stringing Service – Powered by GRSA International.”

More details will be shared as we move forward with the organisation and final composition of the team required to manage what is widely considered one of the most demanding events outside of a Grand Slam. Watch this space.

The 2nd Annual GRSA Stringers' Conference was another standout moment this year an inspiring few days filled with knowledge-sharing, expertise, and meaningful networking with some of the most experienced professionals in the industry. The evening events helped strengthen the relationships formed during the day and brought an element of enjoyment to the serious business of stringing. The quality of this year's speakers and the information shared set a very high standard, and the 3rd Annual GRSA Stringers' Conference in 2026 will aim to raise the bar even further.

Throughout the year, GRSA ATW (Around the World) has continued to play a key role in connecting our global community. The magazine has become a platform where stringers, instructors, and industry professionals can share knowledge, experiences, and insights from tournaments, workshops, and events around the world. GRSA ATW reflects what our association stands for education, transparency, and the sharing of expertise across all racket sports.

At the same time, the GRSA community continues to grow. Our members, instructors, certified stringers, and partners form the backbone of everything we do. The strength of GRSA International lies in this global network of professionals who support one another, share knowledge, and work together to raise standards within our industry.

Central to this is the GRSA education and certification pathway, which provides structure, recognition, and long-term development for stringers at every stage of their careers. Whether through our online courses or in-person workshops, our goal remains the same to give stringers the tools, confidence, and recognition they deserve.

Looking ahead, 2026 is about building on a solid foundation and creating even more opportunities for stringers to grow and succeed through education, collaboration, and continued professional recognition.

GRSA International is, and always will be, an association dedicated to the recognition of the art of stringing and the vital role of the stringer in racket sports. Tennis, squash, and badminton simply cannot exist without stringers. That is how important this profession is and together, we must continue to make the world aware of it.

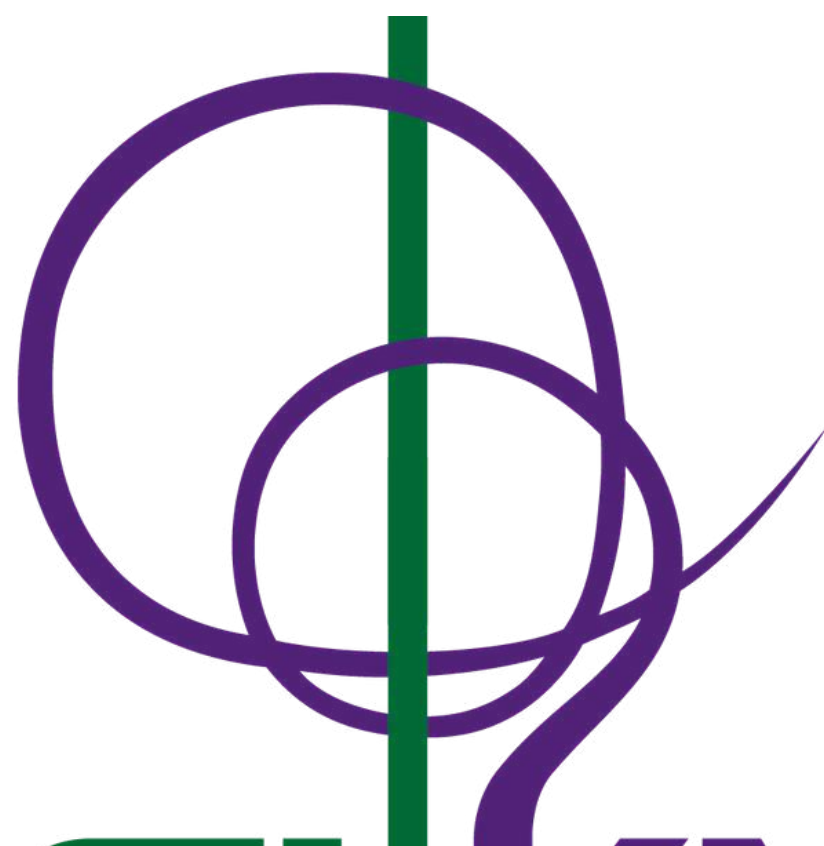
I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and may 2026 be a year filled with peace, prosperity, good health, and continued success.

Richard Parnell
President, GRSA International



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GRSA × Tennispro.fr: A Partnership Delivering Power Across Europe

Now in its second month, the collaboration between GRSA International and Tennispro.fr continues to give members meaningful value — including 10% off across Tennispro.fr on rackets, strings, grips, apparel and accessories from one of Europe's most established racket-sport retailers.

For GRSA, the partnership reinforces its global mission: to educate, connect and elevate the stringing and racket-sport community. Members already benefit from the monthly GRSA ATW Magazine, the GRSA A-Z of Stringing Guide, certification pathways, partner discounts and access to the annual conference — all through a sustainable, digital-first membership model.

Trusted Retail. Specialist Support.

With roots dating back to 1981, Tennispro.fr has earned its place as a major force in European racket-sport retail. Its combination of deep online stock and a strong in-store presence makes it a natural fit for GRSA's network of stringers, coaches and dedicated players seeking choice, speed and sharp pricing.

Hands-On Learning in France

Beyond savings, the partnership is set to bring GRSA-powered workshops to France. Delivered by GRSA-certified instructors working with TennisPro, these sessions will focus on advanced stringing techniques, player-specific customisation and emerging trends across tennis, padel and other racket sports. It's practical education — brought straight to local communities.

Why It Matters

Behind every confident player is a skilled stringer. Precision setup reduces injury risk, boosts performance and keeps pro shops and clubs thriving. GRSA helps members grow through structured learning; Tennispro provides the tools, machines and products that turn that knowledge into daily excellence.

Make the Most of Your Membership

Your 10% discount at Tennispro.fr is live — and workshops are coming soon.

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Christian



Natasha

































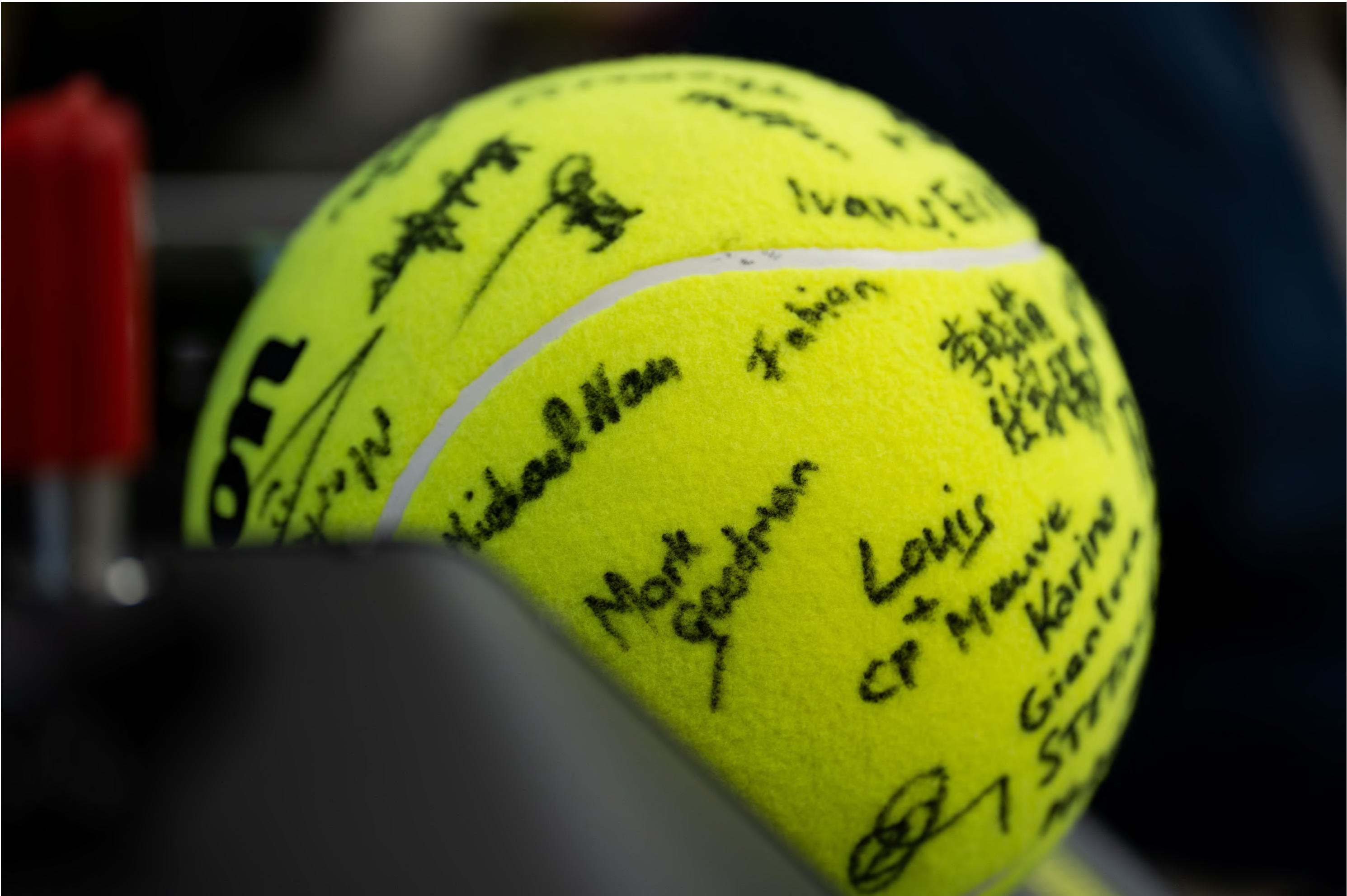
















WILSON CHINA – PATH OF A MASTER

GRSA International has the privilege of partnering with Wilson China on their “The Path of a Master” certification project. The first two workshops were held in Shanghai from the 3rd to the 6th of December 2025 with a total of 71 attendees. The first two days were dedicated to beginner level training with the second 2-day workshop dedicated to level 1 stringers and their certification.

GRSA International helping Wilson China with this project was a perfect fit as stringer education is a core value of both partners.

These workshops were the first of many, with more planned to come in the near future.



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NICK DOWN

talks about the

EYE RACKETS

This is a relatively new brand of rackets. They are, as an entire brand, on the Non-Standard list of rackets because of the unusual arrangement of having a single loose grommet in each hole of the racket and no bumper strip at all. If all of the models had what I'll term as an ordinary bumper strip, only the rackets with a generic fan pattern would be listed, but as it is all models are on the list. The challenge is in removing string and re-stringing the racket without losing any grommets, or at least losing as few as possible. This article is about getting the string out and then back in, without losing any grommets not how to re string each model.



One method that has proved to be a success is to cut the strings in the stringbed in the normal way, then only partially push the strings from inside the hoop outwards so that a series of loops are present outside the hoop. (The racket will look as if it's had a bad haircut!). If the action of pushing the strings has loosened or dislodged any grommets, at this stage, they won't be lost but they will be sitting in the loop of string outside the frame. Simply push them back into the hole. Then to remove the string completely, pull the strings back through the frame from within the hoop, having first cut the loop outside the hoop.



Nick's Nugget

“Teardrop” shaped rackets is a term that is incorrectly used as an alternative to “Closed Throat” rackets. In fact a “teardrop” shaped racket can be either a “Closed Throat” racket or an “Open Throat” racket.

Whilst installing strings, when pushing strings from inside the frame to outside the frame and then pulling the remaining length of string through, putting a slight angle on the string so that it gently forces the grommet against the frame, will usually stop the grommet from dislodging. When outside the hoop completely, pushing the string through a grommet and hitting the grommet by accident will just push it further home. The grommets will only be dislodged when being pushed from inside the hoop to outside. The grommets have nothing inside the hoop to prevent dislodging.

Following any of these methods will afford any stringer opportunities to not spend time buried in a bin looking for lost grommets.

When installing main strings, a stringer is likely to have a “spare” hand as opposed to installing cross strings where a “spare” hand has the job of fanning strings. When there is no “spare” hand, it is important to remember the correct method of installation so as not to end up searching for the grommets.

Eye-rackets sell sets of grommets that will fit all rackets in their range. I always have a set or two about. They are useful for any racket, not just eye-rackets, in fact, no stringer should be without one.

Also, throughout all methods described above, remember that equally important is maintaining surveillance on all of the grommets; i.e. keep watching them!

Next month:- Pro Kennex Twister and Booster wrap around bridge.



**Listen to my
playlist on Spotify**



EMAIL ME AT: **nick@grsa-international.com**

Anahat Singh – India's Squash Prodigy Carving Her Legacy

At just 17, Anahat Singh is redefining what it means to be a teenage phenomenon in world squash. Born on 13 March 2008 in New Delhi, this quietly driven athlete has turned early promise into history making achievements, becoming one of the brightest stars of the sport globally.

From the moment she stepped onto the squash court as a child, having first dabbled in badminton after idolising PV Sindhu, Anahat displayed an unerring knack for the game's rhythm and strategy. Encouraged by her elder sister and guided by elite coaches, she soon outgrew junior ranks to take on the world.



Her trophy cabinet already gleams with impressive honours: multiple junior titles across Asia and Europe, golds at continental events, and a remarkable breakthrough at the 2025 World Junior Squash Championships in Cairo, where she claimed bronze, India's first individual medal at the event in 15 years. Her gritty performance ended a long medal drought and signalled her readiness for elite competition.

But Anahat's story isn't just about junior accolades. Since turning professional in 2023, she's captured numerous PSA Tour titles and climbed steadily up the world rankings, reaching a career high inside the top 30 by late 2025, a stunning feat for someone still in her teens.

In 2025 alone, she captured national crowns, clinched the Indian Open and made deep runs on the Challenger circuit, showcasing tactical intelligence beyond her years, and blending precision with an instinctive flair that belies her age.

On the international stage, she's already delivered standout moments, including upsetting higher-ranked opponents at the World Squash Championships in Chicago confirming her potential not just as a junior great, but as a future contender among the world's elite.

Off court, Anahat balances competitive life with academics, reflecting a maturity that hints at even greater chapters ahead. With eyes now set on the Paris and Los Angeles Olympic cycles and a trajectory that refuses to slow, India's young queen of squash is sprinting, not merely climbing towards sporting immortality.

India Make Maiden World Team History With Emphatic World Cup Triumph

India wrote a new chapter in world squash history in Chennai, sweeping past top seeds Hong Kong to claim their first-ever World Team title at the SDAT World Cup, and doing so in emphatic style on home soil.

Roared on by a packed crowd inside Express Avenue Mall, the hosts delivered a flawless performance to dismantle the tournament favourites 3-0, exorcising painful memories of their semi-final exit on the same court two years ago.

The mixed-team event brought together 12 nations, but by the end of the final, there was no doubt who owned the stage.

Veteran campaigner Joshna Chinappa set the tone in the opening match. The 39-year-old Chennai native rolled back the years against Hong Kong's Ka Yi Lee, producing a composed and clinical display that belied her world ranking. Drawing on a rich vein of form reminiscent of her former top-10 days, Chinappa weathered a brief second-game wobble before asserting control to seal a 7-3, 2-7, 7-5, 7-1 victory.

That early breakthrough ignited the home crowd, and India never looked back.

Next on court, men's No.1 Abhay Singh was ruthless. Facing Hong Kong's in-form Alex Lau, Singh delivered a masterclass in precision and aggression, striking clean winners and pinning his opponent deep from the opening rally. The Chennai-born star wrapped up a dominant 7-1, 7-4, 7-4 win in just 19 minutes, leaving the top seeds staring at an insurmountable deficit.

The final match carried symbolic weight — and it was 17-year-old Anahat Singh who rose to the moment. Tasked with facing Hong Kong's top female player Tomato Ho, the teenager displayed astonishing composure, pace and court awareness, completely outmanoeuvring her opponent to clinch victory 7-2, 7-2, 7-5 and seal India's place in the history books.

With that result, India became just the sixth nation ever to lift a major World Squash team title.

Afterwards, an emotional Chinappa reflected on the occasion:

“Playing here in Chennai with this support makes all the difference. Representing India has always been my biggest motivation, and nights like this make every sacrifice worth it.”

Singh echoed the sentiment, calling the win “an unbelievable evening”, adding:

“To do this in my home city, in front of this crowd, is something I'll never forget. I hope it inspires the next generation watching, discipline and hard work really can take you far.”

For Indian squash, this was more than a trophy. It was a statement, delivered loudly, proudly, and on the biggest stage.

Next Generation Titans: Tino Libaak & Álex Chozas Set to Unite for 2026 Padel Campaign

In a development that has the professional padel world buzzing, Argentine stars Tino Libaak and Álex Chozas are reportedly planning to join forces for the upcoming 2026 season, combining two of the sport's most promising talents into a single formidable pairing. The announcement marks a significant chapter in the reshaping of elite partnerships ahead of the next Premier Padel calendar. (Sources: Multiple reports on emerging partnerships in 2025/26 padel market.)

Libaak and Chozas both emerged from Argentina's deep talent pool and have steadily matured into players capable of competing at the highest levels of international competition. Libaak, just 20 years old, has already made waves on the circuit with his strong left-handed drive and fearless shotmaking, climbing the rankings and securing experience against world top-50 opponents. Meanwhile, Chozas brings a well-rounded game and tactical prowess, attributes that have helped him rise through competitive draws and deliver consistent performances against seasoned campaigners. (Player background: fantasy padel rankings; partnership history.)

Their competitive history together includes notable results in Premier Padel and FIP events, where the duo combined effectively to upset higher-seeded teams, including a standout victory over a top-5 pair in the Finland Premier Padel P2 tournament. There, Libaak and Chozas navigated through tense double tiebreaks to reach the later stages of the event, signalling early chemistry and potential as a pairing to watch. (Tournament result reports.)

The move to unite for 2026 comes amid a wider reshuffle of partnerships across the professional scene. As many established duos dissolve or reform after the 2025 season, Libaak and Chozas's potential collaboration represents one of the most intriguing "NextGen" projects, blending youth, aggression, and complementary skill sets. At just 20-22 years old, both players are still developing but already possess the tools to challenge elite competition and ascend the rankings together. (Market trends and partner changes in padel.)

Their union will also be closely watched in Argentina, a nation that has long been a powerhouse in international padel. Both players have represented their country on big stages, contributing to high-pressure matches and earning respect from rivals and fans alike. Should their partnership materialise as expected, it could signal the rise of a sustained Argentine threat in the global doubles hierarchy through the mid-2020s. (National team selections and player history.)

As the 2026 season approaches, anticipation around their duo will grow. Premier Padel's demanding tour schedule will test their synergy, adaptability, and mental toughness—especially when competing against veteran pairs with major titles under their belts. If Libaak and Chozas can harness their individual strengths and translate them into consistent team success, they could quickly become one of the most exciting new partnerships in professional padel.

For fans and analysts alike, the question now is not if they'll officially team up, but how quickly they'll climb into the sport's upper echelons, and whether they can convert promise into trophies when the new season begins.

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Whether you're a seasoned player or just picking up a paddle for the first time, discovering where you can join open competitions is part of the fun in this ever-growing sport. Here are some upcoming dates — and for full details, head over to the Pickleball Global website.

DUPR ROME OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP 6TH ED.**EID:** 2209 EUR 40**Organizer:** Marco Maurizi**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** March 13, 2026 to March 15, 2026**City:****Tournament Venue:** Standout Pickleball Arena**Registration Deadline:** March 01, 2026 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**WPC SERIES - ITALY 2026****EID:** 2240 EUR 40**Organizer:** Marco Maurizi**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** May 08, 2026 to May 10, 2026**City:****Tournament Venue:** Standout Pickleball Arena**Registration Deadline:** April 30, 2026 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**WPC SERIES - European Pickleball Open****EID:** 2219 EUR 55**Organizer:** Pickleball Global**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** February 25, 2026 to March 01, 2026**City:** Málaga, Spain**Tournament Venue:** Martin Carpena Arena**Registration Deadline:** February 07, 2026 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 4**MORE
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Major League Pickleball (MLP) has unveiled its full 2026 season calendar, confirming a packed summer of elite team action spanning May through August and taking the league deeper into its home markets than ever before.

The schedule blends regular-season events hosted in franchise cities, the always-anticipated Mid-Season Tournament, and an expanded three-week MLP Playoffs, underlining the league's rapid growth and rising confidence on the professional sports stage.

Tickets for most 2026 events are already available via Tixr, with two notable exceptions: St. Louis and the regular-season finale at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World, both of which will be sold exclusively through Ticketmaster.

Dallas sets the tone – twice

The season will begin and end where champions are made. Dallas, Texas, home of the 2024 MLP champions Dallas Flash, will host both the opening regular-season event (May 22–25) and the opening round of the 2026 Playoffs (August 6–9)—a fitting nod to one of the league's strongest markets.

For the first time in league history, the regular-season finale will take place at Disney's ESPN Wide World of Sports in Orlando, Florida, from July 30 to August 2, bringing MLP to one of the most iconic multi-sport venues in the United States.

From there, the playoff journey continues west to San Diego, California (August 13–16), before culminating on the sport's biggest stage yet: New York City, which will host the championship weekend from August 28–30.

A proven format, growing impact

Regular-season events will once again run Thursday through Sunday, following the same city-based format that proved a resounding success in 2025. That structure delivered a 52% year-on-year increase in attendance, more than doubled sponsorship revenue, and sparked meaningful local community engagement across MLP's expanding network of franchises.

Beyond the pros

MLP's vision for 2026 extends well beyond the professional spotlight. Selected events will also feature registered amateur competitions, including Junior MLP and Minor League Pickleball (MiLP)—strengthening the pathway from grassroots to the professional ranks and reinforcing pickleball's status as one of the fastest-growing sports in the world.

Did you know?

Pickleball is now one of the fastest-adopted sports in North America, with professional team formats like MLP playing a major role in attracting new fans, sponsors, and broadcasters alike.

Leah Jones steps out of mum’s shadow with Junior PPA gold

For Allyce Jones, pickleball has always been more than competition it’s a shared language at home. With a court in the family backyard, the seasoned player has spent countless hours training alongside her eldest daughter, Leah, watching the sport spark the same passion in the next generation.

That dedication paid off in style at the Junior PPA Florida Dairy Farmers Daytona Beach Open, where Leah Jones produced a breakthrough performance. Competing in the girls’ under-14 division, Leah reached the final of singles, then went one better in doubles, capturing gold and underlining her status as one of the junior circuit’s rising talents.

Her mother’s pride was clear as she reflected on Leah’s rapid development from her growing athletic frame and long reach, to her increasing confidence taking balls out of the air and attacking at the right moments. Just as important, Allyce has been shaping Leah’s tactical and mental approach, helping her learn to build points patiently, move opponents with smarter dinks, and stay calm under pressure.

The unique setup of the PPA Tour, with junior matches played alongside the pros, has made the experience even more special for the pair. They not only compete at the same event, but also learn from each other with Leah even offering tactical feedback to her mum during matches.

With a big year behind her and a coach she trusts most at her side, Leah Jones looks like a junior star firmly on the rise.



Double Delight for Shi, An and Cheah at BWF Player of the Year Awards

Badminton's brightest stars were celebrated in style as Shi Yu Qi, An Se Young and Cheah Liek Hou emerged as the standout winners at the BWF Player of the Year Awards, announced during the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2025 Gala Dinner in Hangzhou.

For Shi and An, it was a night of emphatic confirmation. Both claimed the Players of the Year titles in their respective singles categories, while also earning the coveted Players' Player of the Year awards a rare double honour that reflects not just dominance on court, but deep respect from their peers.

Malaysia's Cheah Liek Hou matched that feat in para badminton, being named Para Badminton Male Player of the Year and, alongside Fareez Anuar, securing Para Badminton Pair of the Year.

The awards were presented by BWF President Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul, recognising athletes who embodied excellence, consistency, fair play and personality across the season spanning December 2024 to November 2025.

A Season That Set the Standard

Shi Yu Qi's resurgence has been one of the defining stories of the year. Already a former winner, the Chinese star made clear that 2025 represented a different level altogether.

"Last year also I got the Player of the Year award, but my performance last year can't be compared with what I achieved this year," said Shi.

"If I had to rate my 2025 performance, it would be eight or nine out of ten. But I will keep going."



An Se Young, meanwhile, continued her reign as the sport's most consistent force in women's singles, adding emotional weight to her Players' Player of the Year recognition.

"Winning titles proves my efforts; however, the Players' Player of the Year Award is recognition from other players," she said.

"It embodies the love and appreciation of my competitors, so it's a very special one."

Did you know?

Only a handful of players in BWF history have won both Player of the Year and Players' Player of the Year in the same season, a testament to dominance matched by sportsmanship.

Doubles Excellence Across Continents

In men's doubles, Korea's Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae were rewarded for a breakthrough season built on chemistry and relentless work ethic.

"This was an award I always wanted," Kim admitted. "Pairing with Seung Jae this season is an honour and a pleasure — I've given my all on court."



China's Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning claimed Women's Doubles Player of the Year, with Liu already looking ahead. "We will encounter more challenges," she said. "But we will stay committed to our path. We have many role models in the Chinese team, and a lot to learn."

Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Supissara Paewsampran completed the doubles honours in mixed doubles, Dechapol paying tribute to partnership above all else.

"If not for her, we could not do this," he said. "Win or lose, we stayed strong."

An advertisement for Ashaway badminton racket strings. On the left, a female player in a black athletic outfit is shown in a dynamic pose, swinging a racket. The Ashaway logo and website (ASHAWAYUSA.COM) are visible. On the right, two boxes of Zymax racket strings are displayed against a green background. The first box is labeled 'Zymax 68 TX' and the second 'Zymax 66 Fire'. Below each box, text highlights features: 'TEXTURED SURFACE' for the 68 TX and 'MAINTAINS TENSION' for the 66 Fire. At the bottom left, it says 'Manufacturing world class racket strings for 200 years'.

Rising Stars and Para Badminton Recognition

One of the evening's most uplifting moments came with the Eddy Choong Rising Star of the Year Award, presented to 20-year-old Victor Lai. The Canadian made history this season as his country's first-ever medallist at the BWF World Championships.

"This award is affirmation of the work I've put in this year," said Lai.
"I hope this is just the beginning of more growth."

Para badminton continued to shine on the global stage. Alongside Cheah's double success, Switzerland's Ilaria Olgiati was named Women's Para Badminton Player of the Year.

"I'm feeling very happy and honoured to be amongst such unbelievable players," she said.
"Training against tough opponents helped me improve a lot."

Cheah himself described his award as a milestone moment.

"It is very meaningful for me because this is the first time I got this award," he said.
"I would like to thank BWF for recognising that I'm one of the best athletes of 2025."

Style on and off Court

The lighter moment of the evening came with the Best Dressed honours, awarded to Satwiksairaj Rankireddy of India and Indonesia's Putri Kusuma Wardani, proving that flair isn't limited to match play alone.





QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q - Why is a GRSA certification good for me?

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

Q - What makes GRSA stand out from the rest?

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

Q - What does GRSA teach its certified stringers?

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

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