

GRSA INTERNATIONAL ATW MAGAZINE

September - 2025

US OPEN

Alcaraz unstoppable

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CONTENT

Section 1 - Tennis

Alcaráz soars in the US, we also look at his return to the number 1, the Honey Deuce is a record breaker, never heard of it? Well, it will surprise you just how influential it is. Plus there's a whole load more.

Section 2 - GRSA INTERNATIONAL

Stringing services powered by GRSA were and are underway in China, we take a look at one of them, we also look a little further into the Stringer's conference which is just around the corner..... are you going to be there?

Section 3 - Squash

The generic fan pattern is on Nick's radar this month, and in news, Egypt and the Pyramids was an idyllic setting.

Section 4 - Padel

Federer made people chuckle when he met another titan of his sport.

Section 5 - Pickleball

From commentating to being an integral part of a new game, the story of Dave Flemming.

Section 6 - Badminton

The story told in his own words...ZHENG SI WEI shares his mindset to success, Lee Zii Jia's long road back to the court.

Honey Deuce: the US Open's most reliable money-maker

The US Open's signature serve doesn't come off a racquet — it's poured over ice. Grey Goose's Honey Deuce, the vodka-lemonade crowd-pleaser crowned with honeydew "tennis balls", has evolved from novelty to juggernaut, putting up numbers any sponsor would envy.

Past sales: a record run

Grey Goose confirms the tournament sold "over 550,000" Honey Deuces in 2024, taking the lifetime tally since 2011 past 2.8 million. With the drink priced in the low-\$20s last year and \$23 in 2025, that 2024 volume translated to roughly \$12.8 million in sales — a figure widely reported after last year's fortnight.

Costing: the price fans pay

For 2025 the sticker is set: \$23 per cocktail, souvenir cup included (while supplies last). That's premium stadium pricing, but the cup's a collectible and the ritual is part of the appeal — hence the queues and the stack-'em-high cup towers around the grounds.

2025 projection: can it top last year?

Attendance momentum (even Fan Week set fresh highs) and the drink's social-media superstardom suggest another bumper haul. If sales merely match 2024's ~556,000 pours at \$23, revenue lands around \$12.79m. Several outlets peg ~\$13m as a realistic target for 2025 — effectively a photo-finish with last year and a new high if surpassed.

The prize-money comparison

The US Open's 2025 total purse is \$90 million, the largest in tennis. Stack the bar tab against that and the Honey Deuce's expected haul would be about 14% of the entire prize pool (~\$12.8–\$13.0m vs \$90m). For further context, the singles champions' cheques are expected around \$5m each — so the drink alone can out-gross either singles title payout by more than 2:1 over the fortnight.



Unseeded Pair Shine while WTA 125 Crowns New Champions

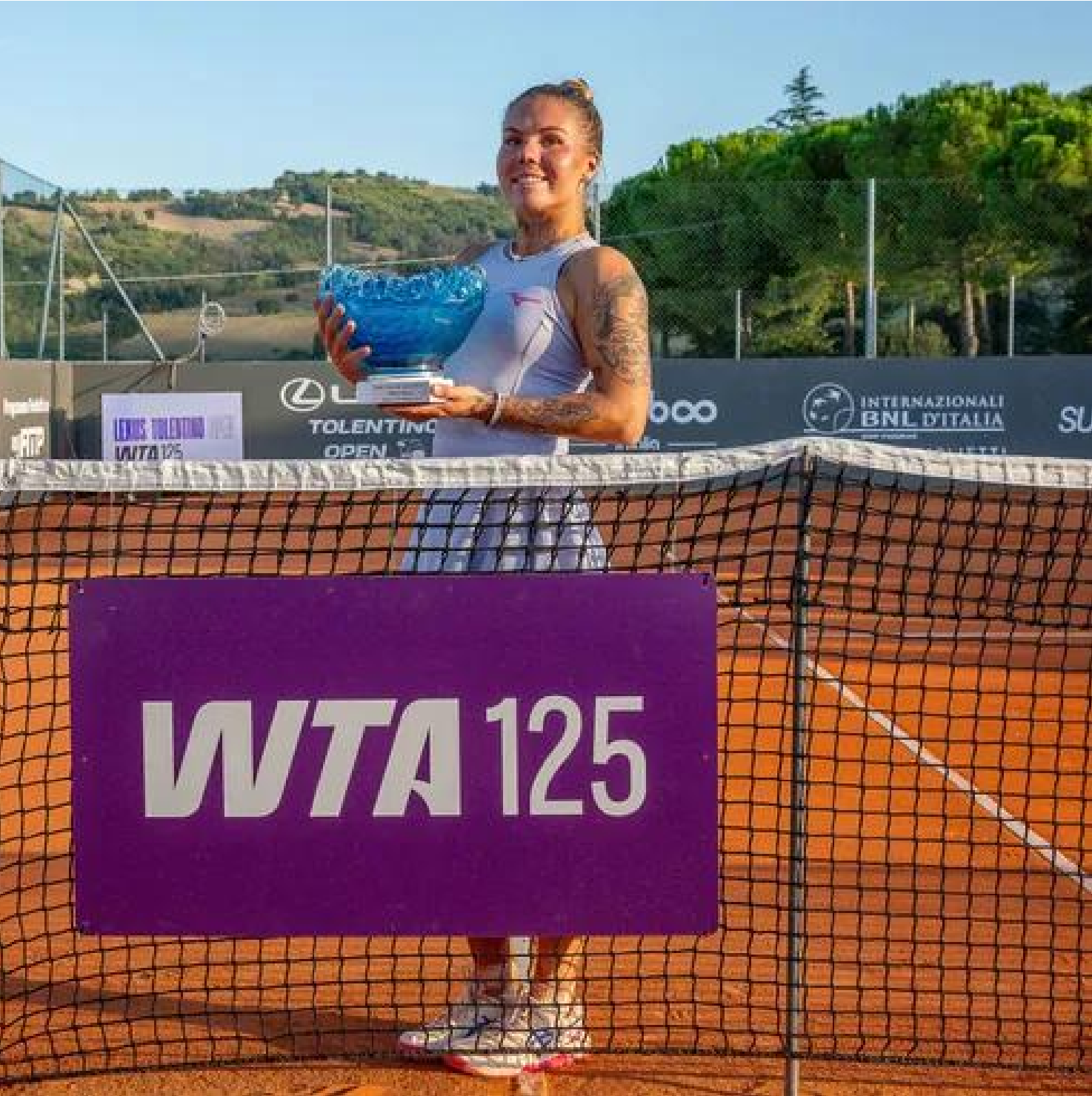
It was a week of breakthroughs on the WTA circuit as two unseeded players claimed their maiden WTA 125 titles. Ukraine’s Oleksandra Oliynykova stormed to glory at the Lexus Tolentino Open in Italy, losing just 18 games across five matches on clay. Meanwhile, Polina Iatcenko announced herself on the big stage by lifting the Full Protein Caldas da Rainha Ladies Open trophy on hard courts in Portugal.

Oliynykova’s Remarkable Journey: From Refugee to Champion

Oliynykova’s story is one of resilience and reinvention. At just 11 years old, she and her family fled war-torn Ukraine, settling in Croatia as political refugees. Initially competing under the Croatian flag, Oliynykova turned to innovative – and sometimes unorthodox – ways to fund her tennis career. These ranged from crowdfunding campaigns and cryptocurrency ventures to a headline-grabbing moment in 2021, when she auctioned off a small section of her arm as an NFT.

In 2022, she returned to representing Ukraine, a poignant choice given that her father now serves in the Ukrainian army.

This year has marked a significant turning point. The 24-year-old has clinched five titles, including four on the ITF circuit, and made her Grand Slam qualifying debut at Wimbledon. Her season record now stands at 42-15, propelling her ranking from No. 328 to No. 136 in just 12 months.



“We set a goal to win a tournament at this level by the end of the season — and we’ve done it in a month,” Oliynykova shared on social media. “My biggest wish is for my dad to see me play. He has been my unbreakable support since the very beginning.”



Tolentino Triumph

Oliyunkova was in ruthless form throughout the week. She dispatched second seed Darja Semenistaja 6-2, 6-2 in round two and then defeated former Roland Garros semi-finalist Tamara Zidansek 6-2, 6-3 in the quarter-finals.

In Sunday's final, she overwhelmed home favourite Nuria Brancaccio 6-2, 6-0 in just 64 minutes, sealing her first WTA 125 crown in style.

Did You Know?

Oliyunkova's win in Tolentino was only her second professional tournament played entirely in Italy — a country where she has never lost a match.

Other Highlights in Tolentino

Nuria Brancaccio battled through to her second WTA 125 final, staging a dramatic first-round comeback from 2-5 down in the decider to upset third seed Sara Bejlek 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(1).

Georgia's Ekaterine Gorgodze produced the tournament's shock result, dismantling top seed Mayar Sherif 6-0, 6-2 — her first Top 100 win since 2022.

In doubles, top seeds Jesika Maleckova and Miriam Skoch captured their fourth WTA 125 title of the year, edging Brancaccio and Silvia Ambrosio 6-3, 3-6, [10-8] in a nail-biting final. The Czech pair now boast an impressive 40-14 record for the season.

Iatcenko Stuns Pliskova, Lifts Trophy in Portugal

The Caldas da Rainha event saw the return of a familiar name: former world No. 1 Karolina Pliskova, back in action after a year out with an ankle injury. Playing as an unranked wild card, the Czech star fought past Tessah Andrianjafitrimo 6-1, 4-6, 7-5 in her opening match.

However, her comeback was halted in round two by Polina Iatcenko, a 21-year-old Russian ranked No. 267, who battled back for a 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 win in a gruelling two-and-a-half-hour clash.

Riding that momentum, Iatcenko went on to claim the title, defeating Gabriela Knutson 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 in the final. This was her first appearance in a WTA 125 main draw, and she has now surged into the Top 200 for the first time.

Did You Know?

Iatcenko had to qualify just to enter the main draw in Portugal, a journey that ended with her lifting the trophy and rewriting her career trajectory in a single week.

Carlos Alcaráz Seals Second U.S. Open Title with Perfect Performance

Carlos Alcaráz has once again carved his name into tennis history, claiming his second U.S. Open crown and reclaiming the world No. 1 ranking. The 22-year-old Spaniard overcame Italy's Jannik Sinner 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 in a gripping final at Flushing Meadows, producing one of the most complete performances of his young career.

The moment the final ball sailed out, Alcaráz dropped to his knees in tears before leaping to embrace his team. This victory marked his sixth Grand Slam title and confirmed his status as the sport's leading force.

"This has been the best tournament I've ever played in my life," said an emotional Alcaráz. "Winning here again and returning to No. 1 means so much. My level of consistency has been very, very high. I'm proud, because it's something I've been working on."

Family and team were front and centre in his celebrations. He embraced his father, Carlos Sr., his brother Álvaro, and his coach Juan Carlos Ferrero, who praised the performance: "Carlitos did it perfectly; his dynamism turned into aggression. Hopefully, he'll go very far – he has a huge future ahead of him."



The celebrations continued long after the final point. Alcaráz posed for the traditional on-court family photo before leading his entourage back to the locker room, where champagne bottles were popped and sprayed in a jubilant scene that perfectly captured the unity of his close-knit team.

"It's special when you make your coach feel like you played perfectly," Alcaraz admitted. "If you want to win the U.S. Open, if you want to beat Jannik, you have to play like that. And today, I did."

Did you know? Alcaraz now joins Rafael Nadal as the only men's players in the Open Era to win six majors before turning 23, putting him ahead of Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer at the same age – a sign that he could challenge their legendary records in the years ahead.

With his relentless energy, tactical maturity, and growing trophy haul, Alcaraz is no longer just the future of men's tennis – he is very much its present.

Tsitsipas Battles Form and Fitness Woes After Tumultuous Summer

Stefanos Tsitsipas has endured a turbulent few months, both on and off the court, as his 2025 season continues to unravel.

The Greek star parted ways with former Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic after a disappointing campaign at SW19, opting to return to a familiar face — his father, Apostolos, who has resumed his role as Stefanos’ main coach. However, this reunion has yet to yield the results Tsitsipas was hoping for.

At the US Open, Tsitsipas suffered a heartbreaking second-round exit in a gruelling five-set duel with Germany’s Daniel Altmaier, extending a miserable run of six defeats in his last eight matches. The loss has left many questioning whether the former world No.3 can rediscover the form that once made him a Grand Slam contender.



TSITSIPAS: NEXT TIME DON'T WONDER WHY I HIT YOU ON PURPOSE, IF YOU SERVE UNDERARM...



ALTMAIER: IT'S BEST IF YOU JUST LEAVE 🤨

The Greek yielded to an Altmaier who dismissively ignored the complaints raised by the Greek online after the match.

A Season Slipping Away

While Tsitsipas has shown flashes of brilliance this year, his results have been a far cry from his peak performances in previous seasons. The Greek’s on-court frustrations have been compounded by the challenges of re-establishing his coaching set-up and managing a lingering injury that refuses to fully heal.

With just a few months left in the season, the focus now turns to recovery and rebuilding. Tsitsipas must decide whether to push through the pain or take a step back to reset physically and mentally before the 2026 campaign.



Rafael Jodar's Journey:

From Idolising Nadal to Forging His Own Path



Growing up in Madrid, it was inevitable that a young tennis fan would idolise Rafael Nadal. For Rafael Jodar, the connection ran deeper — he shared his legendary namesake’s first name.

Born in September 2006, when Nadal had already claimed two Grand Slam titles, Jodar is now stepping into his own spotlight. At just 19, he’s making waves on the ATP Challenger Tour, and his past year has been nothing short of remarkable.

A Breakthrough Year

In 2023, Jodar announced himself on the global stage by winning the US Open boys’ singles title, calling it “one of the best weeks of my life.”

Fast forward 12 months, and he’s now a Challenger champion, claiming his first professional title in Greece last month. Add to that a December meeting with his hero Nadal and it’s fair to say Jodar is living a young player’s dream.

Balancing Books and Backhands

Now a sophomore at the University of Virginia, Jodar is juggling five classes while competing at the highest level of collegiate tennis — and increasingly, on the pro tour.

His freshman season was a standout: ITA National Rookie of the Year and All-American honours. That success secured him a spot in the ATP Next Gen Accelerator, which grants top college players entry into Challenger events.

“It’s a great opportunity to get ranking points early and compete in tougher tournaments.”

Meeting Rafa

“I was at the Next Gen ATP Finals as a hitting partner, and Rafa was there,” Jodar recalled.

“We chatted for about 10 or 15 minutes. He congratulated me on my US Open win — that was just incredible.”

When Nadal recognised his achievement, Jodar realised his idol closely follows the progress of Spain’s next generation. “It showed me how much he cares about the future of Spanish tennis,” he added.

By then, Nadal had retired, leaving behind 92 titles and a legendary 14 Roland Garros victories. For Jodar, Rafa remains the ultimate inspiration.

“He’s one of the greatest Spanish athletes of all time. What he’s done is just mind-blowing.”

After nine Challenger appearances this season, his first title was at Hersonissos, Greece. At 19 he’s ready to use that momentum, determined to create his own legacy while carrying Spain’s proud tennis tradition forward.

Carlos Alcaraz: From Teen Sensation to the Battle for No. 1

At just 19 years old, Carlos Alcaraz scaled the peak of men's tennis, rewriting history in the process. His victory at the 2022 US Open was more than just his first Grand Slam title — it crowned him as the youngest World No. 1 in PIF ATP Rankings history, at 19 years and four months.

Over the following year, the Spaniard would experience the highs and lows of life at the top, enjoying four separate stints as World No. 1 — two of them before even celebrating his 20th birthday. But as Novak Djokovic's relentless pursuit continued, Alcaraz would soon discover just how fiercely contested the top spot can be.



The First Ascendancy: September 2022 – January 2023 (20 weeks)

Alcaraz's maiden reign began in dramatic fashion. At the 2022 US Open, he defeated Norway's Casper Ruud in a high-stakes final where the rewards were twofold: a first Grand Slam trophy and the No. 1 ranking.

Despite finishing the season as Year-End No. 1, injury quickly tempered his celebrations. A painful oblique tear forced him to miss the prestigious Nitto ATP Finals, and a right leg injury later ruled him out of the 2023 Australian Open.

While Alcaraz recuperated, Djokovic seized his moment, winning in Melbourne to reclaim top billing. The message was clear: the king would not be dethroned easily.

Did You Know?

Alcaraz's 20-week opening reign remains one of the longest first-time stints at No. 1 by a teenager a testament to his meteoric rise.

The Brief Return: March 2023 (Two weeks)

The young Spaniard wasn't about to fade quietly. Returning to the tour with determination, Alcaraz stormed through his opening tournaments, winning 14 of his first 15 matches and clinching titles in Buenos Aires and Indian Wells.

This scorching run briefly restored him to the pinnacle in March 2023. Yet, the celebration was short-lived. Djokovic, ever the competitor, struck back just two weeks later to reclaim No. 1. The battle lines were drawn.

A Summer Tug-of-War: May – September 2023

The rivalry truly caught fire during the summer swing.

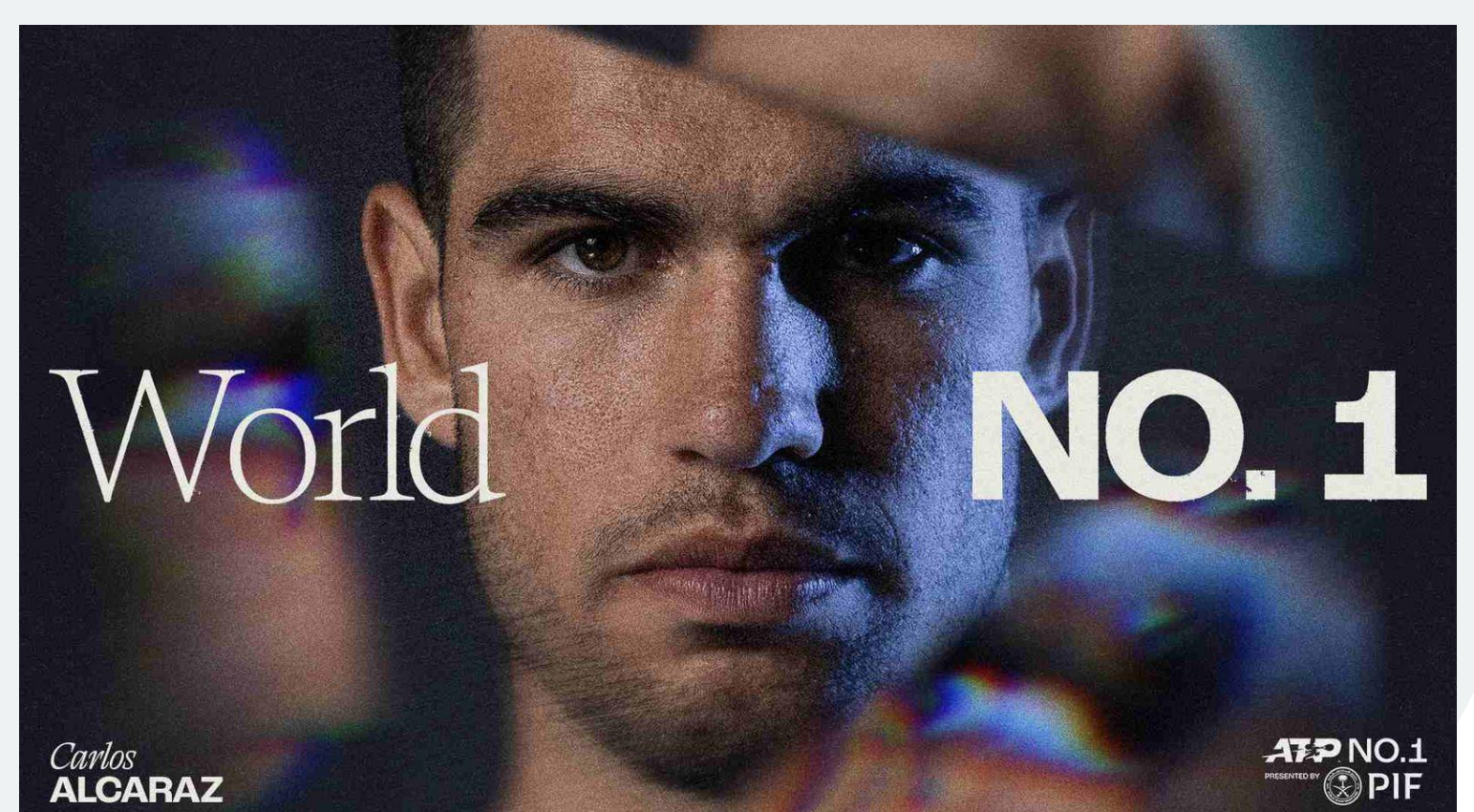
- Third Stint (22 May – 11 June, three weeks): Alcaraz climbed back to No. 1 in May, only to be dethroned once again by Djokovic, who powered through to win Roland Garros.
- Fourth Stint (26 June – 10 September, 11 weeks): The Spaniard's response was emphatic. He captured the Queen's Club title to retake the summit, then produced one of the finest performances of his young career at Wimbledon. In a thrilling five-set final, he toppled Djokovic, a seven-time champion, on Centre Court.

This 11-week stretch was Alcaraz at his dazzling best — fast, fearless, and unshakable under pressure.

But Djokovic wasn't done. The Serbian legend rallied, edging Alcaraz in an epic Cincinnati final before storming to his fourth US Open crown. With that victory, Djokovic once again reclaimed the No. 1 ranking, forcing Alcaraz to regroup.

The Road Ahead

Carlos Alcaraz's early journey at the top has been a rollercoaster of triumphs, setbacks, and learning curves. While Djokovic's experience and consistency have repeatedly tipped the scales, Alcaraz's youth and explosive game promise that this rivalry is only just beginning.



THE **BIG**
QUESTION

It's never been if Carlos will return to the Number 1 Spot, it's how long he'll stay there, and who will be the one to dethrone this titan of the sport?

Star-Studded Line-Up for Ningbo and Osaka WTA Events

Five of the world's top 10 players are set to light up Ningbo, China, when the 2025 Aux · Ningbo Open gets underway on 13 October, running through to 19 October.

Leading the field at this WTA 500 event is US Open finalist Amanda Anisimova, who heads a strong line-up featuring teenage sensation Mirra Andreeva, World No. 5 Jessica Pegula, Roland Garros finalist Jasmine Paolini, home favourite Qinwen Zheng, and Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina.

Other notable names in the 28-player singles draw include former World No. 3 Elina Svitolina, Karolina Muchova, rising American Emma Navarro, and Spain's Paula Badosa.

The Ningbo Open, contested on outdoor hard courts, has steadily risen through the ranks since its founding in 2010. It became a WTA 125 event in 2013 and achieved WTA 500 status last year. The champion will walk away with 500 ranking points and a cheque for \$164,000.

Last year's winner, Daria Kasatkina, returns to defend her title, having beaten Andreeva in a thrilling final twelve months ago.

Osaka Welcomes Naomi Osaka and Rising Stars

Meanwhile, across the East China Sea, Osaka will also be brimming with talent as the Kinoshita Group Japan Open takes place the same week.

The home crowd will be treated to a star turn from four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka, who headlines a strong draw featuring Belgium's Elise Mertens, former US Open finalist Leylah Fernandez, Czech prodigy Linda Noskova, and 17-year-old American Iva Jovic. Jovic comes into the tournament riding high after claiming her first WTA Tour title in Guadalajara last weekend, making her the youngest champion on tour this year.

Also in contention are French Open semi-finalist Lois Boisson, American Hailey Baptiste, former World No. 3 Maria Sakkari, Philippines' rising star Alexandra Eala, and Peyton Stearns of the United States.

Previously part of the joint men's and women's Japan Open, the women's tournament became a stand-alone WTA event in 2009. After a three-year break, it returned to the tour last year.

The defending champion, Suzan Lamens, returns as a main-draw alternate after triumphing over Australia's Kimberly Birrell in last year's final – with Birrell also entering as an alternate this year.

In doubles, Ena Shibahara and Laura Siegemund will aim to defend their crown.

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SportAI: Bringing AI-Powered Coaching to Every Tennis Player

For tennis fans, the season is a near year-round spectacle. From the opening volleys of the Australian Open in January to the electric atmosphere of the US Open in September, the sport delivers a constant flow of top-class action. Between these Grand Slams, the calendar is packed with international clashes and individual tournaments that keep fans and players on their toes.

Whether it's Carlos Alcaraz's explosive shot-making, Jannik Sinner's precision play, or the enduring brilliance of Novak Djokovic, the men's game continues to evolve. On the women's side, Aryna Sabalenka, Iga Świątek, and Coco Gauff headline a generation of athletes pushing the limits of skill and athleticism. Behind every star lies an often unsung hero: a great coach. At the highest levels, elite coaching can be the deciding factor between being a good player and a Grand Slam champion.

But what if that level of coaching insight was available to everyone, not just the pros? Enter SportAI, a Norwegian sports technology start-up on a mission to democratise tennis coaching through the power of artificial intelligence.

Game, Set, Match: The Birth of SportAI

Founded in late 2023, SportAI is the brainchild of three industry heavyweights:

- **Lauren Pedersen** (CEO) – former NCAA Division 1 college player and Norwegian national representative at the ITF Masters World Championships.
- **Felipe Longé** (CTO) – technology and software expert with a track record in advanced computing.
- **Trond Kittelsen** (Head of Commercial) – entrepreneur and former CEO of Sevensix Tennis, a platform for analysing and improving technique.

Their mission? To bring cutting-edge, data-driven tennis insights to players, coaches, federations, and even equipment manufacturers – using nothing more than video footage.

Despite being a young company, SportAI has already raised \$3.6 million in funding, setting it up for a rapid rise.

Did you know?

Hawk-Eye technology, now a staple of professional tennis, was initially met with scepticism. Today, SportAI hopes to achieve similar acceptance by bringing advanced analysis to everyday players.

How SportAI Works

At the heart of SportAI's innovation is computer vision and machine learning. By analysing standard video footage – whether from an iPhone, a mounted court camera, or professional broadcast equipment – the platform creates a 3D biomechanical model of a player's movements.

Here's what makes it revolutionary:

- No wearables needed – No need for sensors strapped to your body or racket.
- Instant analysis – Video is uploaded to the cloud, processed by AWS, and returned in seconds.
- Pro-level comparisons – Players can see how their shots stack up against the world's best.
- Actionable insights – From wrist speed to hip rotation, every movement is captured and explained.

The system even identifies the kinetic chain – the sequence of movements from hips to shoulders to wrists – revealing exactly where technique breaks down and how to fix it.



Coaching revolution:

“A tennis lesson today might cost \$100 an hour,” says Pedersen.

“But even with the best coach, you don't have hard data to back up what's being taught. SportAI changes that, giving players and coaches evidence-based feedback.”

Beyond Coaching: Data for Manufacturers and Federations

SportAI's technology isn't just for individuals. The data it captures is valuable to a wide range of stakeholders:

Federations and academies can monitor player development across entire programmes.

Equipment brands can understand exactly how their products perform in real-world conditions.

Broadcasters and retailers can create new fan experiences and training tools.

Kittelsen highlights the gap SportAI fills:

“Manufacturers know how a racket feels in the lab, but not how it performs in the hands of players on court. With SportAI, we can finally measure the biomechanics behind every shot.”

Performance as Precise as Hawk-Eye

In tests, SportAI achieved 98% accuracy compared to Hawk-Eye, using nothing more than a standard phone camera recording at 30 frames per second.

Pedersen is quick to stress that this isn't just a tool for elite players:

“The top 1% already have access to performance analysts and manual video breakdowns. Our goal is to give the other 90 million tennis players worldwide the same level of insight.”

This universal approach makes SportAI as relevant to a weekend warrior as it is to a rising star.

Building the Future: AI, Edge Processing, and Global Partnerships

As SportAI gears up for its full rollout, several exciting developments are in play:

- Matchi partnership – Integration with the global racket sports booking system, which manages 15,000 courts, 2,000 of which are already camera-enabled.
- Edge processing – Moving from cloud-only to on-site data analysis, reducing costs and latency.
- 3D analysis & AI coaching agents – Advanced features to deliver even deeper insights, personalised to each player or federation.

The company is also exploring applications in injury prevention and healthcare, such as detecting dangerous playing styles that could lead to joint problems.

The Bigger Picture

SportAI's vision is bold: to change how tennis is taught, analysed, and enjoyed. By lowering the barrier to advanced data, it hopes to make improvement accessible to everyone, from beginners taking their first swing to professionals honing their craft.

As Pedersen sums it up:

“We're passionate about sport and technology. Our dream is to see progressive coaches, academies, and brands worldwide using this data to really change the game.”

Trivia Break:

Hawk-Eye's first official use in tennis came at the 2006 US Open. Two decades later, AI-driven analysis like SportAI could represent the next great leap in tennis innovation.

Final Serve

With cameras becoming cheaper and more powerful, and with AI maturing rapidly, SportAI arrives at just the right moment. It promises to do for tennis what Fitbit did for running and Strava did for cycling – make performance data a natural part of the sport for millions.

Whether you're chasing your first tournament win or refining a Grand Slam-worthy forehand, SportAI could be the tool that takes your game to the next level.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can't improve yourself if you deny that there is any improvement to be made.

T.A.D

Some of the most famous motivational quotes from the tennis world and its giants

1

Arthur Ashe

One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation

2

Billie Jean King

Champions keep playing until they get it right

3

Rafael Nadal

I play each point like my life depends on it

4

Serena Williams

You have to believe in yourself when no one else does

5

Martina Navratilova

The mark of great sportsmen is not how good they are at their best, but how good they are at their worst

Stringer Solutions



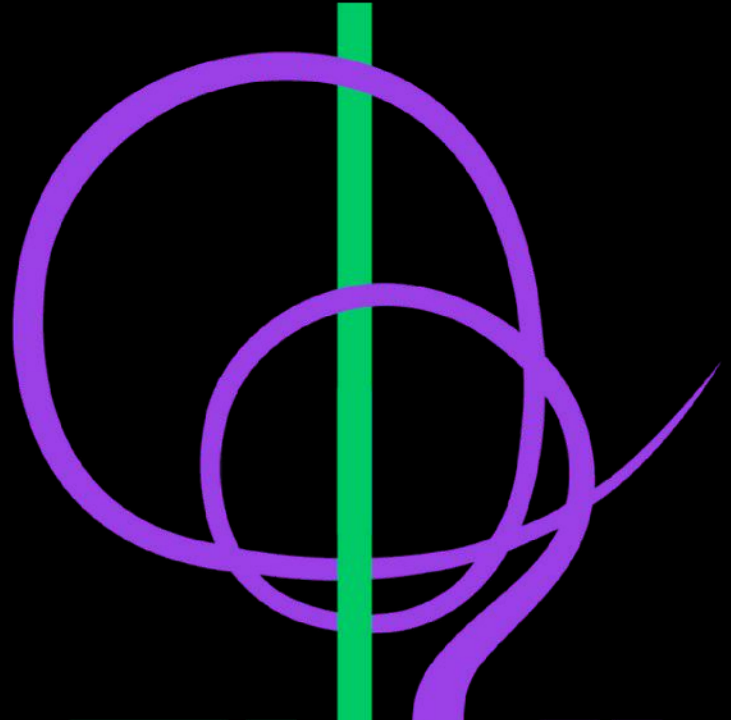
An easy tip on how to pass the string through a tight space between the frame and the clamp.

Once you have strung all the center strings going through the bridge, the string starts coming through the grommet at an angle.

When you get to this point just bend the tip slightly so that it isn't straight, this means that when it comes through the grommet and hits the machine clamp, it will just slide and not get stuck against the clamp. Saves a few seconds every time and makes the whole process more fluid.



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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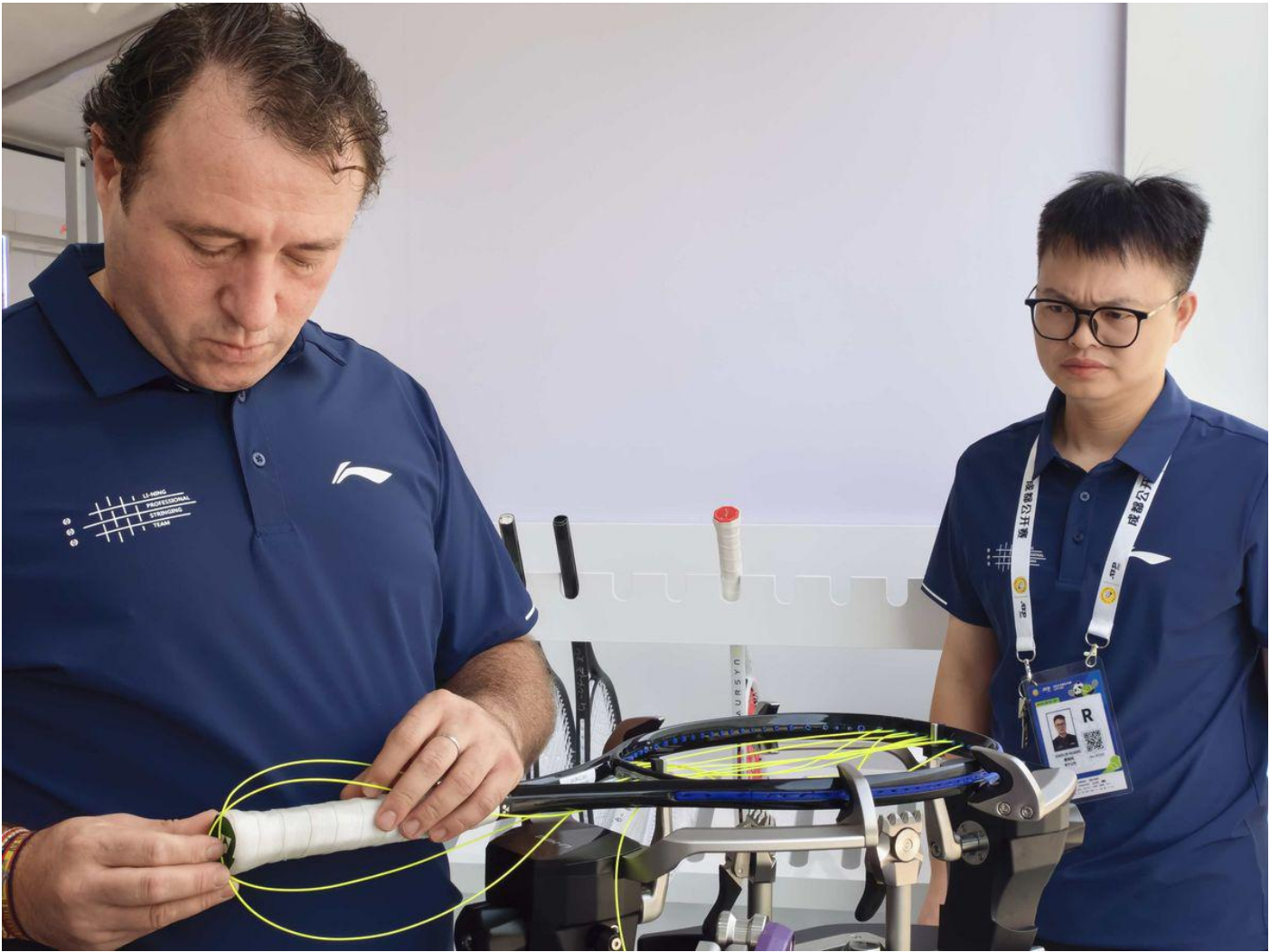
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Rafa Madrid-Murcia, Spain (GRSA Instructor, China)
Wang Xiao Lin-Fuzhou, China (Li Ning Badminton Chief instructor)
Huang Ting-Ningbo, China (Li Ning Badminton Chief instructor)
Liu Qi-Chengdu, China
Kenneth Leong-Singapore
(GRSA Asia Chief Instructor and Li Ning Professional Stringing Team Service Manager)



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任家琛-中国, 北京, (GRSA中国区高级教务)
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刘琪-中国, 成都
Kenneth Leong - 新加坡 (GRSA亚洲首席讲师/李宁专业穿线团队服务经理)

感谢@成都公开赛组织这场精彩赛事。
2026年再会。



Thank you to @chengduopen for organising such a spectacular event.
See you in 2026.

Meanwhile in Beijing...



20?? 😊

Marat Safin at Wimbledon some 20+ years ago and again this month at the China Open as part of Andrey Rublev's team. A few minor differences in the two photos.....



2025





More information about
this great tournament and
some others in
month's magazine! next

RN Parnell International S.L

Here's a breakdown of the network

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



In 2022 GRSA was launched



Please contact us for more information about any of our services.

In 2024



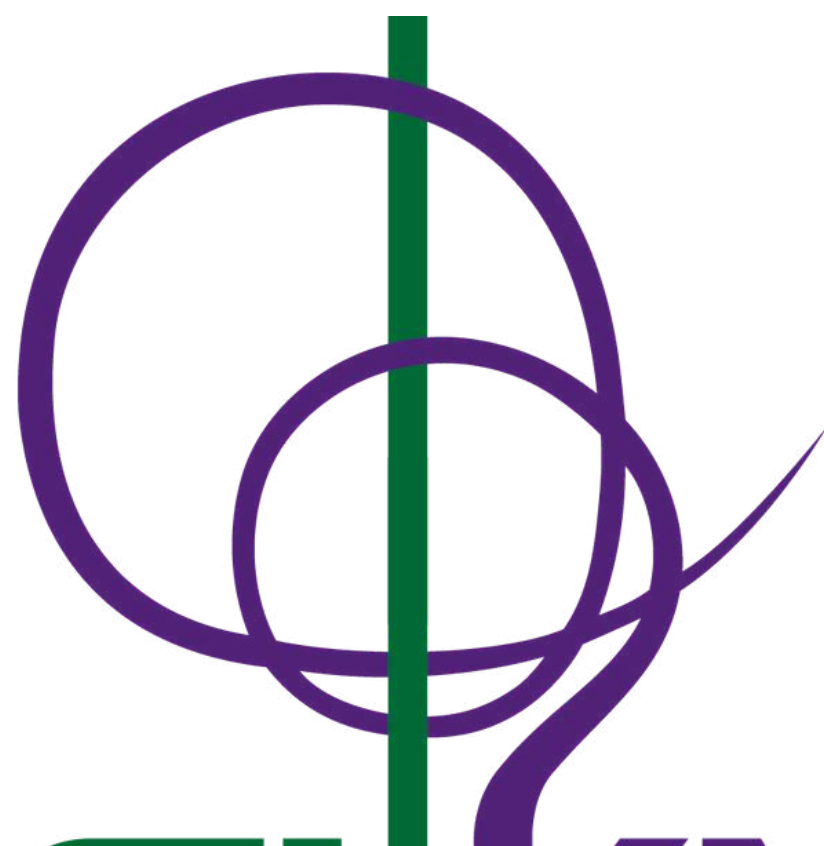
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NEWS FOR ALL GRSA MEMBERS

GRSA International teams up with Tennispro.fr to serve members a Europe-wide boost

GRSA International is delighted to announce a new collaboration with Tennispro that delivers immediate value to GRSA members across Europe. From today, GRSA members can enjoy 10% off at Tennispro.fr, covering everything from rackets to accessories and much more, unlocking savings at one of the continent's leading racket-sport retailers.

For GRSA members, this partnership dovetails neatly with the association's core promise: to educate, connect and champion the global stringing and racket-sport community. Membership already opens the door to the monthly GRSA ATW Magazine, access to the GRSA A-Z of Stringing Guide, exclusive partner discounts, certification exams and diplomas, and participation in the annual GRSA conference, all part of a fully digital membership built to minimise waste and maximise reach.

On the retail side of the net, TennisPro brings serious clout. Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Entzheim, the company has grown into a major force in European racket-sport retail, with a deep online catalogue and a recognised bricks-and-mortar footprint. That blend of e-commerce breadth and specialist expertise makes Tennispro a natural fit for GRSA's community of stringers, coaches and avid players who demand choice, speed and sharp pricing.

The collaboration isn't just about savings at checkout. Workshops in France will commence soon, powered by Tennispro, GRSA-certified instructors working for TennisPro will be bringing a hands-on learning opportunity to the French stringers community. Expect practical sessions focused on modern stringing methodology, player racket customisation and the latest trends being used in tennis, padel and other racket sports. It's an on-court extension of GRSA's education mission to "increase product knowledge and stringer education... globally."

Why this matters: stringers are an athlete's quiet advantage. The right strings, the right tension, the right setup, delivered by a trained, certified professional, can unlock performance, protect players from overuse injuries, and keep business running efficiently in clubs and pro shops alike. Through GRSA, members sharpen those skills with structured learning and certification; through Tennispro, they gain everyday access to the machines, strings and accessories that make the difference.

In short, GRSA members now have more value at purchase and more learning at hand. Whether you're prepping frames for league night, or chasing marginal gains for competing juniors, the GRSA × Tennispro.fr partnership is designed to elevate your everyday.

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GRSA International's Stringer's Conference 2025: A Gathering of Industry Titans in Málaga

The countdown is officially on. With less than two months to go, excitement is building for the Second Annual Stringer's Conference, taking place from Thursday, 13th November to Sunday, 16th November 2025 at the Wyndham Grand Costa del Sol.

After last year's hugely successful debut, which brought together passionate stringers and racquet technicians from around the globe, this year promises to be bigger, better, and even more inspiring.

Industry Giants Take Centre Stage

One of the greatest strengths of the GRSA International Stringer's Conference lies in the calibre of its speakers and presenters. This year, we are proud to welcome some of the most respected figures in the racquet sports industry.

- Ron Rocchi, legendary tour stringer and Wilson's Global Innovation Director, will share his unparalleled expertise and unique perspective on the evolving demands of the professional circuit.



- Denis Fabian, representing HEAD, brings with him a wealth of knowledge from one of the most recognisable brands in racquet sports, offering delegates insights into performance, technology, and the future of stringing.

- Yves, the owner of the iconic ERT300 Tennis Computer, will also be joining us. His presence ensures delegates have the opportunity to explore the science behind string tension and racket diagnostics with the man who literally changed the way we measure performance.



And these are just the headliners. More names will be revealed in the coming weeks, ensuring that this year's programme is filled with industry leaders ready to share their stories, strategies, and secrets for success.

2025

13th to the 16th, NOVEMBER 2025
Mijas, Málaga (Spain)

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UPDATE

LEARNING FROM THE BEST

This conference is designed to empower attendees with practical knowledge they can immediately apply to their businesses and careers. From technical demonstrations to hands-on workshops, every session has been carefully curated to maximise learning and engagement.

Highlights include:

- Scaling your business – Gain insights from seasoned professionals who have built thriving enterprises, learning how to grow sustainably in a competitive market.
- Advanced techniques – Explore the latest developments in stringing, diagnostics, and equipment care, ensuring you stay ahead of the curve.
- Interactive presentations – Engage with leading experts in sessions that blend theory with practical demonstration.

Whether you are just starting out or have decades of experience, there is something here for everyone, and the value of the knowledge shared cannot be overstated.

A Community Like No Other

Of course, the Stringer's Conference is not only about education. It is also about community, connection, and celebration. Last year's event proved the strength of the GRSA International network, with friendships and collaborations formed that continue to grow today.

This year we are taking it even further, with evening dinners, cocktail receptions, and a spectacular gala event. Delegates will enjoy entertainment, surprises, and the chance to relax and unwind in the company of like-minded professionals from all over the world.

And for those travelling with family or partners, there will be a range of optional excursions and wellness activities available, so everyone can make the most of their time in Málaga.

With demand already high and tickets limited, this year's Stringer's Conference is shaping up to be the most anticipated gathering in the racquet sports calendar. The combination of world-class speakers, invaluable learning opportunities, and an unforgettable social programme ensures it will be an experience like no other.

We cannot wait to welcome you back – or indeed to welcome you for the first time – to Málaga this November. Together, we will celebrate the craft of stringing, push the boundaries of innovation, and continue to build a truly global community.



Activities and Excursions for Families and Guests

This November, the GRSA International Stringer's Conference promises not only an unmissable professional experience but also an opportunity for families and partners to enjoy the very best of Andalusia. Whether you're arriving a few days before the conference or looking to fill your days while your partner is attending workshops, there is a rich programme of activities to choose from, both within the resort and further afield.

Excursions Before the Conference

For those arriving ahead of the official conference start on Thursday, 13th November, a range of guided day trips will be available:

- Monday, 10th November: Gibraltar or Ronda & Setenil
- Tuesday, 11th November: Caminito del Rey, Gibraltar, Ronda, or Tangier (Morocco)

Please note that Sunday, 9th November will not feature organised tours.

Excursions During the Conference

Throughout the conference, why not visit some of the most beautiful cities in Spain:

- Granada – €90 per person, including entrance, guide, coach transport, and a visit to the Alhambra Palace (limited places available).
- Seville – €78 per person, including entrance to Seville Cathedral and the Giralda Tower.
- Córdoba – €78 per person, available on Thursdays, including guide and entrance to the Mezquita and Synagogue.

Additional options include tours to Gibraltar, Caminito del Rey, Tangier, Ronda, Nerja & Frigiliana, and Mijas & Marbella.

Activities at the Hotel (FOC for Guests)

Guests staying at the Wyndham Grand Costa del Sol can enjoy a wide selection of complimentary daily activities. The hotel's entertainment programme features:

- Fitness classes such as Pilates, Yoga, Aqua Fitness, and Water Polo.
- Sports and competitions including Archery, Air Rifle Practice, Ping Pong, Pool, and Darts.
- Leisure activities like Sangria demonstrations, Bingo, French Boules, and Quizzes.

These activities are designed for hotel guests and included free of charge, offering plenty of fun ways to relax and stay active.



Wellness & Relaxation

For something more indulgent, the hotel's Wellness Centre offers a wide menu of treatments:

- Massages from €35 (25 minutes Swedish holistic) up to €120 (90-minute Cleopatra ritual with aromatherapy oils).
- Luxury facials such as the Antistress massage (€45) and Lifting Agestop (€85).
- Body rituals, scrubs, wraps, manicures, pedicures, and hairdressing services are also available.

To book, email wellnesscentre@wyndhamcds.com.

Balinese Bed Experiences

For those who want to elevate their poolside experience, Wyndham offers several Balinese bed packages:

- VIP Pool Experience – €50, including a Balinese bed, mineral water, fruit platter, towels, and optional waiter service.
- Recline & Dine Experience (Adults only) – €80, including a 2-course lunch at Mediterraneo Pool Terrace.
- Family Recline & Dine – €100 for 2 adults + 2 children, with a 2-course lunch at Safari Restaurant.

Reservations can be made via Restaurant.Booking@WyndhamCDS.com.

Adventure in the Sierra de Mijas

For a dose of adrenaline, families can also book buggy and quad tours through the Sierra de Mijas, an unforgettable way to explore the Andalusian countryside.

With so many options — from cultural city tours and Moroccan day trips to wellness indulgences and adventurous buggy safaris — there's truly something for everyone. While you're attending the conference, rest assured your loved ones will be experiencing the very best of southern Spain.

BOOKING CONTACTS

- ➡ To book excursions: excursions@wyndhamcds.com
- ➡ To book wellness treatments: wellnesscentre@wyndhamcds.com
- ➡ To book Balinese Beds: Restaurant.Booking@WyndhamCDS.com



NICK DOWN

talks about the



Generic Fan Pattern



Every brand has its own Fan Pattern. Hence, its name, the Generic Fan Pattern. The mains normally start at the head. There can be 14 or 16 main strings and numbers of cross strings can vary. Also, unlike the Prince Powerfan, there are shared holes with no double-barrelled grommets at the throat. The Generic Fan Pattern has been seen, recently, on the PSA World Tour more and more, but it started out as a cheaper racket for new players. That is why it is popular with the majority of brands and so widely used.

The main idea behind the pattern is power. The properties of this are that all mains are long and a similar length. Most rackets with this pattern have a closed throat (no bridge), although there are a few with open throats (with a bridge), mainly from Dunlop with 16 mains finishing at the head not the throat. There are normally 14 mains, but only 4 holes on each side at the throat; meaning that 3 on each side are shared by two main strings. (By drilling less holes, it made each racket cheaper). Bear in mind that manufacturers already had thicker drills for knot holes, so bigger holes to take two strings, didn't mean extra expense for factories!

Believe it or not, it is necessary to still achieve a hard weave at the throat/bottom cross. Although the height difference is almost negligible, it stops twists in the mains, which are common, unfortunately.

Often the bottom cross string is shared with the outer most main string, so it is acceptable to string the crosses up from throat to head if using one long piece of string or, when the tie off holes are further up because of all the shared holes. It's also possible to string this pattern in 2 pieces of string or ATW in some cases (usually by more confident stringers).

It is important to remember the integrity of the frame when stringing for all sports. For that reason, it's normal to string the mains 'no more than 3 ahead!'; that causes a minor issue with the Generic Fan Pattern because of the shared holes at the throat. For example, the first 4 strings use the first 4 holes at the head, but only 2 at the throat, that's the case on both sides. For that reason, it is normal to string, this pattern only, by stringing 4 mains on one side before changing to the other side. Squash tensions are also lower, so I take the view that frame integrity is preserved because only 2 holes have been used at the throat.(4 at the head but only 2 at the throat, average of 3).



Listen to my
playlist on Spotify



EMAIL ME AT: nick@grsa-international.com

In the shared holes at the throat (mains), when the racket is in the machine, there is a top and bottom string. It is important that these strings are not twisted, and create a hard-weave at the 1st cross that they come too (at the throat).

The racket used in the pictures has been strung in 2 pieces, which is probably the easiest way to do it. This racket is a Mantis power 110.

I have found that if a policy of adopting four quarters of the mains, it will apply to any racket that uses this pattern, regardless of the number of strings. I always string 4 on the left, 4 on the right, then keep going on the right, either 3 or 4 mains, then catch up on the left again. If 2 piece is chosen, it is necessary to count however many crosses there are, to ensure a hard weave at the throat. That is equally true if any ATW method is chosen, but not when stringing the crosses up from the bottom, since the 1st cross string will be at the bottom (hard weave).

Mantis Power 110

(14M X 18C)

Mains(14)

1HL to 1TL

1TL to 2TL

2TL to 3HL (when tensioning the 2nd main on the left side, put a thumb or fingernail to put downward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the lower part of holes 1TL and 2TL).

3HL to 2HL

2HL to 1TL

1TL to 4HL (when tensioning the 4th main on the left side, put a thumb or fingernail to put upward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the upper part of holes 1TL and 2TL).

1HR to 1TR

1TR to 2TR

2TR to 3HR (when tensioning the 2nd main on the right side, put a thumb or fingernail to put upward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the upper part of holes 1TR and 2TR).

3HR to 2HR

2HR to 1TR

1TR to 2TR

2TR to 4HR (when tensioning the 4th main on the right side, put a thumb or fingernail to put downward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the lower part of holes 1TR and 2TR).

4HR to 5HR

5HR to 3TR

3TR to 4TR

4TR to 9HR (when tensioning the 7th main on the left side, put a thumb or fingernail to put upward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the upperpart of holes 3TL and 4TL)

9HR to 7HR

7HR to 3TR

3TR to 4TR (tie-off at 4TR ensuring that the string stays below the string already occupying hole 4TR which also keeps both loops parallel, as they run outside the frame).

4HL to 5HL

5HL to 3TL

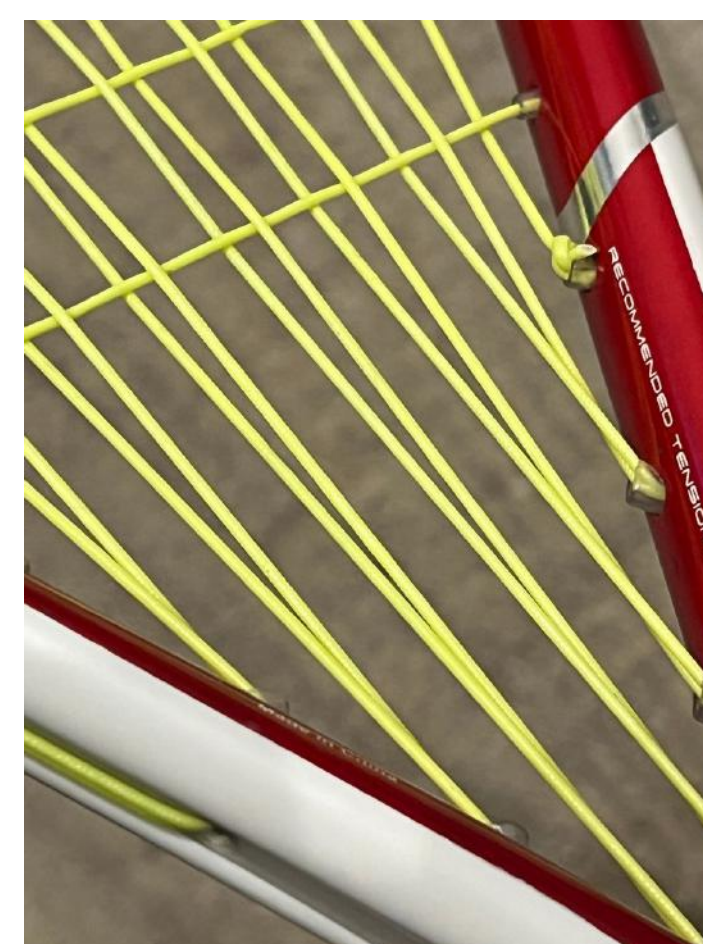
3TL to 4TL

4TL to 9HL (when tensioning the 7th main on the left side, put a thumb or fingernail to put downward pressure on the loop of the string outside the frame to get the string to occupy the lower part of holes 3TL and 4TL).

9HL to 7HL

7HL to 3TL

3TL to 4TL (tie-off at 4TL ensuring that the string stays above the string already occupying hole 4TL which also keeps both loops parallel, as they run outside the frame).



Cross Strings

Tie-offs either at 5HL or 5HR and 6TL or 6TR.

18 crosses from either 6HL or 6HR down to either 5TL or 5TR. The only cross and main shared hole is 9HL and 9HR.

As with most models, getting the mains installed correctly is the more challenging part. Get that part right and it should be plain sailing. When the mains are installed as I have instructed, they will run from the top of all throat holes and then go to the left of the main occupying the same, shared hole at the throat. This will happen across the whole throat, regardless of side.

NEXT MONTH:- The side by side Pattern.



Nick's Nugget

Most Tennis rackets have an “Open Throat”. In Squash it’s only about half, sometimes in Squash they are referred to as “traditional” “classic” or “pro” shape.

Asal and El Hammamy Make History with Early Qualification for PSA Tour Finals

Egypt's dynamic duo, Mostafa Asal and Hania El Hammamy, have etched their names into squash history as the first players to secure their spots at the 2025/26 PSA Squash Tour Finals, following their triumphs at the CIB Egyptian Open.

The pair struck gold – or rather, Diamond, on home soil in front of the awe-inspiring Great Pyramids of Giza, delivering a showcase of Egyptian squash dominance under the desert night sky.



How Tour Finals Qualification Works

The road to the PSA Squash Tour Finals is fiercely competitive. There are three routes to qualification:

- Win a Diamond-level event – the sport's most prestigious titles.
- Be the reigning World Champion – automatically securing a place.
- Climb into the top eight of the Road to Tour Finals standings, with points awarded at every PSA World Tour event throughout the season.

Asal and El Hammamy have bypassed the points chase by seizing the biggest prize of the season's opening month.



Asal and El Hammamy Dominate in Cairo

In their first appearances of the new season, both players were unstoppable.

World No.1 Asal powered past Diego Elias (World No.2) in the men’s final, staking an early claim as the man to beat this year.

El Hammamy, ranked World No.2, overcame fellow Egyptian Amina Orfi (World No.5) in a gripping women’s final, showcasing her trademark blend of speed and precision.

These victories not only secure their Tour Finals tickets but also propel them to the top of the early standings. Asal now leads the men’s Road to Tour Finals leaderboard, while El Hammamy sits just behind Orfi, who added valuable points after backing up her London Classic title with another deep run in Cairo.



Rising Stars and Big Movers

The tournament also shone a spotlight on the sport’s next generation:

- Fayrouz Aboelkheir (19) stunned fans with a career-best run to the semi-finals, highlighted by a thrilling five-game victory over eight-time World Champion Nour El Sherbini. Her performance rockets her to fourth in the women’s standings.
- On the men’s side, Victor Crouin and Karim Gawad earned crucial points with semi-final appearances, sitting fifth and sixth respectively.
- England’s Jonah Bryant, one of the sport’s brightest young talents, celebrated his first major quarter-final, jumping into the top eight of the standings.

Did You Know?

The CIB Egyptian Open remains one of the most visually spectacular tournaments on the squash calendar, with the glass court set against the ancient pyramids, a venue steeped in history and grandeur. Egypt has now produced both the men’s and women’s champions for the fifth consecutive year, underlining its status as the sport’s powerhouse nation.

With Asal and El Hammamy already booked for the season-ending showdown, the race is officially on. The rest of the field now face a year-long battle across the PSA World Tour to secure their coveted spots at squash’s grand finale.

Historic Debut: First-Ever Welsh Wheelchair Open Squash Tournament Hailed a Triumph

Cardiff, Wales – Squash in Wales reached an important milestone the weekend of the 13th of September as the very first Welsh Wheelchair Open took centre stage at Rhiwbina Squash Club, marking a groundbreaking moment for inclusivity in the sport.

This inaugural event was more than just a competition – it was a celebration of resilience, accessibility, and progress. For the first time, players with disabilities had the opportunity to compete in a national wheelchair squash tournament on Welsh soil, setting a powerful precedent for the future.

A Day of Passion, Power, and Precision

Eight trailblazing athletes came together, competing across two groups before battling through playoffs to determine final standings. The intensity was palpable from the first serve to the final rally, with each match showcasing remarkable skill, grit, and sportsmanship.

The climax came in a thrilling final between Paul Preece and tournament organiser Richard Plenty, where Preece emerged victorious to become the first-ever Welsh Wheelchair Open champion. His performance set a high bar for future tournaments and captured the crowd's imagination.

“We thank the players who took to the court and made history,” said Plenty, who is also a disability squash coach at Rhiwbina. “Their enthusiasm and commitment have laid the foundations for wheelchair squash in Wales. This is just the beginning – we’ll be working to grow this event year on year and bring more players into this fantastic sport.”

Beyond Competition: A Movement for Inclusion

The tournament wasn't just about crowning a champion. It sent a powerful message about breaking down barriers in sport. Squash Wales, who collaborated on the event, see this as a launchpad for lasting change.

The event was made possible thanks to support from Pickerings Lifts (sponsors), Karakal (prize suppliers), and Abbey Bookbinding, who provided the official tournament shirts.



Russell Edwards, Business Manager at Squash Wales, emphasised the bigger picture:

“This isn’t just about the competition. It’s about creating a truly inclusive sporting landscape. We believe this event will inspire others and spark the development of regular wheelchair squash programmes across the nation.”

The event was made possible thanks to support from Pickerings Lifts (sponsors), Karakal (prize suppliers), and Abbey Bookbinding, who provided the official tournament shirts.



🏆 Final Standings – 2024 Welsh Wheelchair Open

CONGRATULATIONS

1. **Paul Preece** – Champion 🏆
2. **Richard Plenty** – Runner-Up
3. **Alex Rowlands**, 4. **Steve McGrath**
5. **Simon Kilshaw**, 6. **Harry Thomas**
7. **Jamie McAnsh**, 8. **John Cooper**



Federer & Belasteguín Laughs in Unforgettable Laver Cup Moment

Legends from two racquet sports—Roger Federer from tennis and Fernando “Bela” Belasteguín from padel—delivered one of the most memorable moments of the Laver Cup, thanks to a spontaneous bit of humor and respect.

When & Where:

During the Wilson event held as part of the Laver Cup.

Who:

Roger Federer & Fernando Belasteguín.

What Happened:

While Belasteguín, one of the greatest padel players ever, was signing his padel racket for Federer, the Swiss icon decided to break the formal vibe. He quipped, “I am Roger,” with a laugh, as Bela was dedicating the paddle. The joke earned smiles all around and was immediately shared on social media by Belasteguín.

Bela admitted that despite his many appearances and fan moments, this one left him especially nervous. “I’ve never had my hand shake so much signing an autograph,” he said, reflecting his admiration for Federer and the moment’s gravity.



They didn’t stop there. Federer signed his tennis racquet for Belasteguín; Bela reciprocated with his paddle. It was a symbolic exchange—two masters from different sports, connected by mutual esteem.

Bela invited Federer to meet on a court next time, padel or tennis. Fans can only hope to see that happen.



Lisboa, Sánchez-Jiménez and Merino-Nogueira Claim Glory at Cristiano Ronaldo's Padel Centre

Lisbon was the stage for an electrifying weekend of padel as Maxi Sánchez and José Jiménez in the men's draw, and Melania Merino and Ana Nogueira in the women's, clinched the FIP Silver titles. The event was held at none other than Cristiano Ronaldo's state-of-the-art sports complex, a venue making its debut on the international circuit.

Although Ronaldo himself couldn't be there in person due to his commitments with Al-Nassr in Saudi Arabia, the football icon ensured he was still part of the action. The finals were streamed live on his official YouTube channel — just as he had done earlier this year with the Riyadh P1 tournament — giving fans worldwide a front-row seat to the drama.

Men's Final: Sánchez and Jiménez Stand Tall

With 32 pairs battling it out in the men's draw, the competition was fierce. In the final, Maxi Sánchez and José Jiménez delivered a clinical performance, defeating Spain's Enrique Goenaga and Luis Hernández in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4.

From the very first game, Sánchez and Jiménez imposed their rhythm, combining tactical precision with explosive winners. Their sharp net play and relentless pressure left Goenaga and Hernández struggling to find solutions.

Did You Know?

Maxi Sánchez is no stranger to the big stage — his experience includes multiple top-tier titles on the professional padel circuit, making him one of the most respected figures in the sport.

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

Pickleball Milan Open DUPR tournament**EID:** 1842 **EUR** 40**Organizer:** Lucia Ugge**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** November 28, 2025 to November 30, 2025**City:** Piazza Marco Polo, Basiglio, MI, Italia**Tournament Venue:** Sporting Milano 3**Registration Deadline:** November 22, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**INDONESIA EAST JAVA INTERNATIONAL PICKLEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2025****EID:** 2155 **USD** 50**Organizer:** Indonesia Pickleball Federation**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** November 17, 2025 to November 23, 2025**City:** Arabica Homestay, Jalan Kawah Ijen, Kalisari, Kalisat, Ijen, Bondowoso Regency, East Java, Indonesia**Tournament Venue:** Sports Tourism Wonderful East Java**Registration Deadline:** November 12, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 1**Cologne Open****EID:** 2019 **EUR** 35**Organizer:** Uli Jordan**EVENT - TOURNAMENT****Starting:** December 05, 2025 to December 07, 2025**City:** RTHC Bayer Leverkusen e. V., Knochenbergsweg, Leverkusen, Germany**Tournament Venue:** Rthc Bayer Leverkusen E.v**Registration Deadline:** November 16, 2025 (OPEN)**Tier Level:** 3**MORE
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Wilson

From Commentary Booth to Console: Dave Fleming Becomes a Pickleball Video Game Star

Broadcaster Dave Fleming never imagined that a casual hitting session with one of pickleball's top athletes would land him an unlikely role, as a playable character in the upcoming PPA Pickleball Tour 2025 video game.

What began as a favour quickly evolved into something unforgettable, proving that sometimes the best opportunities come when you least expect them.

“Last year in Mesa, FarSight Studios needed someone to hit with Meghan Dizon for her motion capture session,” Fleming recalled. “They said, ‘We need someone who can actually hit,’ so I volunteered. Afterwards, they handed me the motion capture suit and said, ‘Put this on — we might have an idea.’ That’s how it all started.”

The result? The man widely known as “The Voice of Pickleball” is no longer just providing commentary, he’s now in the game.



A Dream Come True for the Senior Pro

For Fleming, who grew up playing video games, the experience has been nothing short of surreal.

“It’s incredible,” he said with a grin. “I’ve been lucky to do some amazing things in pickleball, but this... this is a dream. And now, at least in the virtual world, I can beat Ben Johns — something that would never happen on a real 20-by-44 court.”

FarSight Studios gave Fleming an overall player rating of 87, breaking it down into key categories:

- Athleticism: 82
- Power: 84
- Accuracy: 86
- Hand Speed: 86
- Dinking: 98

It was that top-tier dinking score that really made him laugh.

“At 5’8” and in my 50s, you’d better believe I’ve had to master the dink,” he joked. “I think they were having a bit of fun with that number, but I’ll take it! Just don’t speed the game up — my hands aren’t in the same league as the pros.”

A Character with Commentary

As if playing as himself wasn’t enough, Fleming also provides the in-game commentary, even for his own matches.

Players will hear a mix of praise and playful self-mockery, with lines such as:

“Out of the booth and into the winner’s circle for Dave Fleming — that’s me!”

“What a forehand! Beautiful shot from Dave right there!”

“Dave Fleming makes yet another mistake. He should stick to the booth.”

Fleming admitted recording those extra lines was a highlight of the project.

“We added a bunch of unscripted stuff for fun, including some self-deprecating humour — which, let’s be honest, is the best kind,” he said. “When I saw the final result with the motion capture suit, the headset, and even a pretty authentic two-handed backhand, I was thrilled.”

More Than Just a Game

For Fleming, this quirky twist in his career is yet another reminder of the joy and unpredictability pickleball has brought into his life.

“I’ve been given so many incredible opportunities through this sport,” he reflected. “But to see myself in a video game — that’s next-level fun.”

So, next time you boot up PPA Pickleball Tour 2025, don’t be surprised if Dave Fleming isn’t just calling the action — he’s right there on the court, ready to dink you to death.

China Para Badminton International 2025: Bhagat Strikes Gold, Kadam and Nagar Shine with Silvers



Beijing, China – 21 September 2025 – India’s para badminton stars lit up the courts in Beijing as they delivered a string of impressive performances at the China Para Badminton International 2025, reinforcing the nation’s growing reputation as a powerhouse in the sport.

Leading the charge was Pramod Bhagat, who made a sensational return to international competition after an 18-month hiatus. Bhagat, a former Paralympic gold medallist, battled his way to the Men’s Singles SL3 title, showing grit and determination in a comeback that had fans and teammates alike on their feet.

Pramod Bhagat’s Golden Redemption

Bhagat’s journey back to the top has been anything but easy. Having missed the Paris Paralympics due to three whereabouts failures, the 37-year-old from Odisha had a point to prove.

His final against Muh Al Imran of Indonesia began on a shaky note, with Bhagat losing the opening game 2-15. But true champions rise under pressure. Showing trademark resilience, he roared back to take the next two games 21-19, 21-16, sealing a memorable victory.

“This gold medal is very special for me,” an emotional Bhagat said after the win. “Coming back after 18 months and proving myself again is priceless. I want to thank my coaches, supporters, and everyone who stood by me. This is just the start of my comeback story.”

Bhagat’s campaign didn’t end there. Teaming up with Sukant Kadam in the Men’s Doubles, the pair fought valiantly before narrowly losing to fellow Indians Jagadesh Dilli and Naveen Sivakumar in a nail-biting three-game thriller: 18-21, 22-20, 18-21. The result handed them a well-earned silver medal.

Sukant Kadam Battles to Double Silver

World No. 1 Sukant Kadam showcased his consistency throughout the tournament, adding two silver medals to India’s tally. In the Men’s Singles SL4 final, he faced the formidable Lucas Mazur of France. Despite a spirited effort, Kadam went down 9-21, 8-21, acknowledging Mazur’s sharp play.

“Winning silver in such a competitive field is an honour,” said Kadam. “Lucas was brilliant today, but this is a learning experience. My aim is to turn silver into gold in the next tournaments. I’m proud to represent India and bring glory to the country.”

Kadam’s partnership with Bhagat in doubles was another highlight, further underlining his versatility on the court.

Krishna Nagar’s Fighting Spirit

Tokyo 2020 Paralympic champion Krishna Nagar once again proved why he is one of India’s most exciting talents. Competing in the Men’s Singles SH6 category, Nagar fought tooth and nail against Thailand’s Natthapong Meechai in a match that kept spectators on edge.

He took the first game 22-20, but Meechai stormed back to clinch the next two 21-7, 21-17. Nagar had to settle for silver, but his performance was full of heart and determination.

“Every medal pushes me to aim higher,” said Nagar. “The final was tough, and though I didn’t win, I gave everything I had. My focus now is on coming back stronger and chasing more golds for India.”

India’s Para Badminton Surge

This tournament was another reminder of India’s rapid rise in para badminton. With a gold and four silvers, the team demonstrated depth, resilience, and a hunger for success.

Did you know? India has consistently been among the top nations in para badminton since the sport debuted at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics, where the team brought home five medals, including two golds.

The countdown to the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympics begins, and it’s clear that there will be performances that will inspire the next generation of athletes and keep India firmly in the spotlight on the global stage.



Rasmus Kjær and Frederik Søgaard Split as New Danish Partnership Emerges

Badminton Denmark has confirmed that men's doubles duo Rasmus Kjær and Frederik Søgaard have decided to go their separate ways, ending their successful partnership by mutual agreement.

"They've enjoyed a great partnership and achieved some fine victories together, but we naturally respect their decision to part ways," said Thomas Stavngaard, Danish National Head Coach, in an official statement.

New Pairing: Kjær & Kjær

In response to the split, Badminton Denmark has moved swiftly to form a new men's doubles team by pairing Rasmus Kjær with Christian Faust Kjær — no relation, despite the shared surname.



Christian Faust Kjær recently made headlines by securing silver at the Thailand Open, a prestigious Super 500 event, alongside former partner William Kryger Boe.

Explaining the rationale behind the new partnership, Stavngaard commented:

"We believe Rasmus and Christian have complementary skill sets. With time to develop their style and synergy, we see real potential for them to become a world-class men's doubles pair."

Did You Know?

The Thailand Open is part of the BWF World Tour, attracting some of the top international players. A podium finish there is often a strong indicator of future success on the global stage.

What Next for Frederik Søgaard?

The shake-up leaves both Frederik Søgaard and William Kryger Boe without current partners. While their immediate futures remain uncertain, Stavngaard was quick to offer support.

"We hope Frederik chooses to continue his career because he's a fantastic player. At the same time, we fully understand if he needs a break to reflect on his next steps. We'll give him space and work together on a plan when the time is right," he said.

For now, Søgaard's next move — and whether Boe will quickly find a new partner — remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that the Danish men's doubles landscape is set for an intriguing period of transition in the months ahead.

Satwik & Chirag: Reinventing the Game and Rising Again

India's premier men's doubles badminton duo, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, are proving that champions aren't just defined by their victories, but by their ability to adapt, evolve, and rise again.

After a challenging spell marked by injuries and illness, the former world No.1 pair have stormed back onto the international circuit with renewed purpose. Their resurgence has been nothing short of remarkable — highlighted by a World Championships bronze in Paris, back-to-back finals appearances at the Hong Kong Super 500 and China Masters Super 750, and a return to seventh place in the world rankings.

Now, with nine BWF World Tour titles under their belt, Satwik and Chirag have their sights firmly set on a milestone tenth.



A New Approach: The Side-by-Side Revolution

Traditionally, the Indian duo relied heavily on the classic front-and-back formation, with Chirag anchoring the net and Satwik unleashing his booming smashes from the rear. But in recent months, they've added a fresh tactical layer to their arsenal — the side-by-side strategy, particularly right after the serve.

"We've been trying to play side-by-side more, especially after service, to control the pushes," Chirag explained. "Coach Tan Kim Her suggested it, and we found it really works. Once one of us serves, the other positions at the front to intercept — it's been a game-changer in recent tournaments."

This tweak in formation has given them greater control during fast exchanges, allowing them to dictate rallies rather than react to opponents' pace.

Serving Up Success

Chirag has also been honing a new weapon — a sharp, flat serve that keeps opponents guessing.

"The game is too quick to stick to just one style," he said. "In the last few tournaments, we've served far better than before. Multiple service variations give us different ways to win points, and that's vital at this level."

Their improved serving has been instrumental in their recent run of deep finishes, setting the tone for aggressive follow-up play.

From Setbacks to Comebacks

The journey back to the top hasn't been easy. Over the past 16 months, Satwik battled a shoulder injury, while Chirag struggled with fitness concerns. During this period, their ranking plummeted to No.27 — a stark fall for a team accustomed to competing at the very top.

"Everyone expects results, but sometimes there are factors you can't control," Chirag reflected. "To go from 27th back into the top eight in just a few months is something we're really proud of."

Despite the setbacks, they fought their way to multiple semifinals and two major finals — a testament to their resilience.

Confidence from Paris

Their bronze medal in Paris was especially significant, not just as hardware but as a psychological breakthrough.

"We had tough draws and faced pairs who had beaten us before," Chirag said. "Winning those matches reignited our belief. That confidence carried us into the back-to-back finals that followed."



A Coach Who Knows Them Best

Their mentor, Tan Kim Her, has been a constant figure throughout their journey. Having coached them since their early days, his guidance goes beyond tactics.

"He always joked he wouldn't pose for pictures until we won medals," Satwik shared with a smile. "After the Worlds, he finally said, 'Now I can post with you guys.' He always reminds us — once you start, there's no stopping."

The bond between coach and players has been a cornerstone of their success, fostering trust and open communication.

Switching Off Before the Next Big Push

For now, the duo is taking a well-earned breather.

Satwik has been soaking up the festivities of Dussehra with friends, while Chirag enjoys precious time with his family. The short break offers them a chance to recharge before returning to Hyderabad for intense preparation ahead of upcoming tournaments in France and Denmark.

"Being home really helps clear the mind," Satwik said. "We need that balance before diving back into the grind."

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