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## FRANCE RETAINS EUROPEAN TENNIS TROPHY

France has won the Overall European Tennis Trophy award for the second year in succession. The race for the award went down to the very last event of the season, where Spain had to win the European Men's Team Championships in order to regain the title they last won in 2002. Their subsequent first round loss meant that they were unable to secure enough points to dethrone the French.

The award, made annually by Tennis Europe to recognise the performances of its 48 member nations across a number of areas of the sport, highlights a year in which French tennis has excelled on a consistent level throughout all areas of the game. Although they were edged by Spain for the professional tennis title, and saw a slight decline in points from 2003, this year saw Amelie Mauresmo become the first ever French World #1, adding a silver medal at the Olympics for good measure. The French Davis and Fed Cup teams both reached the semi finals of their respective competitions.

The consolidation of the French first placing overall is largely due to improvements in the other contributing fields. The most notable of these is Junior tennis, with France leaping from sixth to third. Especially strong at the 14 & Under level, they were victorious at the three largest competitions; the European Winter Cups by Prince in the spring, European Individual Championships and Summer Cups.

The French also made significant advances in the spheres of Veterans Tennis (improving from tenth to sixth) and Wheelchair tennis (from third to second).

Christian Bîmes, President of the French Tennis Federation commented, "The French Tennis Federation is honoured to receive the European Tennis Trophy for the second consecutive time. This award recognizes the work accomplished with passion and professionalism by the FFT teams, both volunteers and executives. Above all it encourages us to pursue and emphasize our efforts by acknowledging our efforts in the three categories in which we have improved this year (juniors, veterans and wheelchair), but also, in a broader way, in the cooperation and exchange programmes that have been established with (continued overleaf)

## FRANCE RETAINS EUROPEAN TENNIS TROPHY

[continued from front page] several European countries. In this regard, I would like to stress the active role of Jacques Dupré, General Secretary of the FFT and member of Tennis Europe Committee of Management, in favour of the promotion and development of our sport in Europe. The 2004 European Tennis Trophy thus represents a fantastic incentive to continue to develop our engagement for tennis."

The biggest improvements overall came from the Slovak Republic and Switzerland, both of whom climb five places from last year, to finish ninth and eleventh respectively.

Spain regained the Professional Trophy from France, and has now won five of the last six professional trophies. Russia remains third despite increasing their points total by a massive 26%. The Czech Republic climbs one place to fourth, followed by Italy, who improve two places to fifth. The most notable change in the top ten was Belgium, who slipped from 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, thanks in large part to the relative inactivity of their two leading female players.

The Junior Trophy was decided by the slimmest of margins, as Russia edged Spain by a mere five points to take the title for the first time since 2000, and the third time overall. The biggest improvements come from France, as previously mentioned, and the Slovak Republic, who climb from thirteenth to fifth. Last years winners Romania slipped to seventh.

Germany won the Veterans Trophy for an incredible fourteenth successive year, a tribute to the popularity and excellent organisation of the Veterans game there.

The Netherlands retained the Wheelchair Trophy, which it has won each year since its introduction in 2001. Great Britain lost some ground on the leaders and slipped to third behind France.

The Trophies will be officially handed over at the forthcoming Tennis Europe Annual General Meeting, scheduled to be held in April in Malta. Further information on the European Tennis Trophy, including the full rankings for each category can be found at [www.TennisEurope.org](http://www.TennisEurope.org).

### 2004 EUROPEAN TENNIS TROPHY—FINAL STANDINGS

	OVERALL	PRO	JUNIOR	VETERANS	WHEELCHAIR
1	France	Spain	Russia	Germany	Netherlands
2	Spain	France	Spain	Austria	France
3	Russia	Russia	France	Great Britain	Great Britain
4	Germany	Czech Rep	Czech Rep	Sweden (3=)	Switzerland
5	Czech Rep	Italy	Slovak Rep	Italy	Germany
6	Netherlands	Germany	Croatia	France	Poland
7	Italy	Croatia	Romania	Belgium	Israel
8	Croatia	Slovak Rep	Netherlands	Spain (7=)	Austria
9	Slovak Rep	Sweden	Italy	Netherlands	Sweden (8=)
10	Austria	Belgium (9=)	Poland	Czech Rep	Belgium

## SOLIDARITY SCHEME UPDATE

At the beginning of 2004, Tennis Europe launched the European Solidarity Scheme for its Member Nations. As a result of a freeze in funding for new development projects, Tennis Europe took the step of appealing directly to its more developed member nations to show solidarity with the less prosperous members of the Tennis Europe family, encouraging them to actively seek out mutually beneficial co-operations.

The A and B nations of Tennis Europe were given a check-sheet containing a variety of suggested modes of cooperation; ranging from staff exchange programs, giving foreign associations the chance to see how things are run in other Associations, to exchanges of coaching staff and players, to the donation of surplus/second hand equipment. This proactive approach provoked an eager response from many of the member nations. Participating nations at the moment include Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Spain and Switzerland.

One result of this initiative, we are happy to announce, is that the Lawn Tennis Association of Great Britain, in consultation with Tennis Europe, has offered to help 17 Nations (i.e. those part of the Development Programme) with new equipment for mini and junior tennis, to a total value of GBP10,000 (€ 15,000 approx.).

This is the biggest contribution to the Scheme so far, and Tennis Europe thanks the LTA on behalf of all member nations. Special thanks also go to our Commercial Partner, Prince Sports Europe, who have kindly contrib-



*LTA President Charles Trippe (left) and Tennis Europe President John James formalise the deal.*

uted to this LTA donation by providing excellent purchasing conditions and, additionally, has kindly provided extra equipment free of charge for the benefit of the Solidarity Scheme.

The 17 nations part of the development program will be informed in early January about the exact content and delivery of the donations.

Generous gestures like the one of the LTA strengthen the relations among our tennis family, and help to develop the sport in those countries with less available resources, and we look forward to another year of fruitful co operations under the Solidarity Scheme.

A collage of various banners and logos for TennisEurope.org. The banners feature the website's navigation menu, news headlines, and promotional messages. At the bottom, a large banner reads: "TennisEurope.org has a new logo and a new look. Click here!" with a circular arrow icon. Logos for Prince, Play, and other partners are also visible.



## 2004 EUROPEAN TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

The home team of the Czech Republic (pictured) defeated Poland to successfully defend their European Women's Team Championships crown, held during the week of Nov. 11-14th in the town of Cesky Krumlov.

The final was a rematch of the 2003 decider, and featured the last two teams to have won the event. In the end the victory was a decisive one, with Sandra Kleinova scoring a 61 62 victory over Olga Brozda and Michaela Pastikova defeating Karolina Kosinska 61 63 to settle the tie before the final doubles rubber, having previously swept aside teams from Greece and Austria without losing a set.

The Polish team had the trickier path to the final, holding their nerve to win decisive doubles rubbers by a 7-5

third set score in both their first match against the Ukraine, and also in upsetting the second-seeded Spanish team in the semi finals. In all, eight teams from across the continent took part in the event, which has been played annually since 1986 and was enthusiastically attended by the local public.



Tournament Director and Czech Tennis Association General Secretary, Josef Nechutny commented: "We're extremely happy to have won again. With the tennis calendar increasingly crowded, the

opportunities to compete in team events are less and less. Over the years, this event has proven to be an excellent chance for players to represent their countries, and is a vital experience for the players involved, many of who are also playing, or competing for places, on their national Fed Cup teams."

The Czech Republic completed a rare sweep of European Team Championship titles this weekend as their men's team (pictured) added their trophy to that won by the women last month.

While the Czech women's team had had the benefit of playing at home, the men had to travel to Spoleto, Italy, where the host team would be their final opponents.

Top seeded Italy had come through two surprisingly tight matches to reach the final, having to win deciding doubles matches against both Monaco and Greece. Meanwhile in the bottom half of the draw, the second-seeded Czechs also struggled early on, with 2-1 victories over Serbia & Montenegro and Slovenia on the way to the final.

The biggest upset of the competition came on the opening day, as defending champions Spain were beaten

convincingly by surprise semi finalists Slovenia.



The final result was a minor upset, as Martin Stepanek took the first rubber for the Czech Republic with a straight sets win over Stefano Galvani 76 64. The second, and decisive, rubber was much closer though, as Ivo Minar fought back from the loss of a 20-point first set tie break to eventually triumph 67(9) 75 64.

The consolation event was won by Poland; walkover victors against Spain.

Tennis Europe President John James remarked, "We are delighted to have had such an exciting final between two of the biggest tennis nations in Europe. My congratulations especially go to the Czech Republic for their remarkable achievement of winning both of this year's events."

## SPAIN DOWNS U.S.A. FOR SECOND DAVIS CUP BY BNP PARIBAS TITLE

Spain were triumphant at the finals of the Davis Cup by BNP Paribas, scoring a 3-2 win over the United States in front of a partisan crowd in Seville. The crowd of 27,000 at the Olympic Stadium in Seville was confirmed as the biggest crowd ever assembled at an officially sanctioned tennis event.

Given their lack of affinity for clay, a victory was always likely to be hard work for the Americans, who duly found themselves 0-2 after the day, which started off with a routine victory for Carlos Moya over Mardy Fish. 18-year old Rafael Nadal followed for Spain, surprising many who expected former World #1 Juan Carlos Ferrero to face the US' top player

Andy Roddick. The gamble paid off though, as Nadal played one of the matches of his young career to defeat the World #2 in four sets.

The roles were reversed on Day 2, when Ferrero surpris-

ingly substituted Nadal, who was scheduled to line up with Tommy Robredo in the doubles match against the Bryan twins. The difference between the two pairs was clear, as the Americans – seven times tournament winners in 2004, and the top team in the world – schooled their opponents with a straight sets win lasting just an hour and a half.



The final day saw Moya take on Roddick, who had beaten him in all of their previous matches. This time however, they were playing on clay, and the surface and location were obviously to Moya's liking, as he closed out a straight sets win to seal the title.

Mardy Fish managed to pull one rubber back for the Americans, defeating Tommy Robredo on a champagne-sodden court, but the fiesta continued around them unabated. It is the second Davis Cup title for Spain in five years, and moves them back to the top of the Nation's ranking.

## RUSSIA WINS FIRST FED CUP TITLE

As befits a year in which five of the last six Grand Slam finalists were Russian, Russia finally won its first Fed Cup title at home in Moscow.

Both teams had posted whitewash 5-0 victories in the semi-finals, held earlier in the week. The top seeded Russians conceded just one set to Austria, while France went one better, winning all ten sets played against Fed Cup stalwarts Spain.

The tie had started with an upset for the French, as Nathalie Dechy saved a match point in coming back to beat US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova 36 76 86. The Russian #1, Anastasia Myskina then won back to back matches, beating both Dechy and Tatiana Golovin in straight sets. Golovin, at 16 the youngest player on either team, then followed up with best victory of her career so far, with a straight sets defeat of Kuznetsova

to even the tie. The Russians then brought their star player back, teaming with Vera Zvonareva in a surprise substitution for the more established team of Kuznetsova and Elena Likhovtseva. The strategy was a successful one though, as they eventually overcame the French team of Marion Bartoli and Emilie Loit in a close straight sets match.

With seven of the top fifteen players in the world and numerous youngsters still advancing, 2004 is likely to represent the first of many Fed Cup victories for the Russians, who now have a real opportunity to usurp the achievements of the Spanish in the early '90s.

Next year will see some changes as the Fed Cup reverts to home and away ties, with the final moving earlier in the season, to the week following the US Open.

## SPAIN NAMED ITHF'S GREAT TENNIS NATION 2004/2005

The International Tennis Hall of Fame took the opportunity of the recent Davis Cup final in Sevilla to bestow the title of 'Great Tennis Nation' upon the hosts. A number of dignitaries including Tennis Europe President John James, Juan Antonio Samaranch, ITF Vice President Juan Margets and Spanish Secretary of State for Sports, Jaime Lissavetzky were on hand as Ruurd de Boer, chairman of the ITHF's Great Nation committee, presented the award to Agustin Pujol, President of the Spanish Tennis Federation.



*Ruurd de Boer (left) with Agustin Pujol.*

"Spain has a long and strong tennis history," stated Ruurd de Boer. "With the development of great players, like former World No. 1s Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Manuel Santana, Carlos Moya and Juan Carlos Ferrero, and the successes of Spain in international team competition along with the enthusiasm of over two million recreational players, Spain is most deserving of the Great Tennis Nation honor."

The biannual award is designed to recognise the

achievements of individual nations within the sport, and is awarded to those who have a distinguished tennis history, produce outstanding tennis players and leaders, and develop and promote tennis programs and facilities for its citizens of all ages. Spain is only the fifth such nation to receive the award, following in the footsteps of Sweden, USA, France and Australia.

## The Tennis Event Report



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## BABETTE PLUIM INTERVIEW

Babette Pluim, an expert in tennis medicine, has co-authored a book on the subject. 'From Breakpoint to Advantage – A Practical Guide to Optimal Tennis Health and Performance' was recently published and is designed to be a comprehensive reference point for tennis players of all levels and their coaches. Pluim (pictured) has worked as a federation doctor for the Royal Dutch Lawn Tennis Association since 1990, and was a speaker at the recent European Coaches Symposium. We caught up with her to discuss the project.

*What prompted you to write this book?*

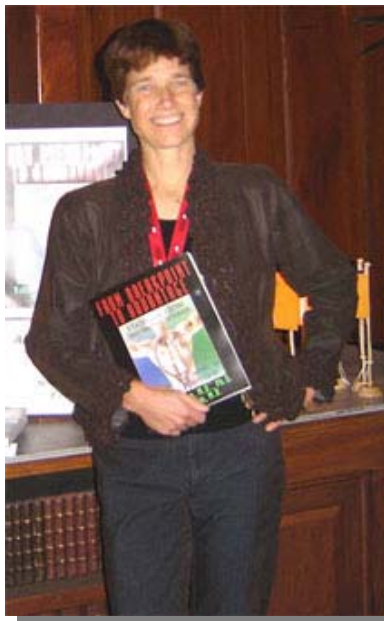
I have worked in tennis medicine for 15 years now, and during that period I have written quite a number of articles for coaches and players. I have also edited several books and journals on this topic, including the ITF book "Tennis medicine for tennis coaches" and the scientific journal "Medicine and Science in Tennis". I just thought it would be great to bring together all the knowledge and experience I have acquired over the years into one book. Writing my own book on a topic I feel quite passionate about is a dream I have had for many years. I asked Marc Safran to help me because he is very knowledgeable and interested in tennis medicine, good with words, and a great person!

*There is something for everyone in the book, regardless of their tennis level, but who was your target audience when you set out to write it?*

Our target audience is tennis players and coaches, but I have to admit that I wanted physiotherapists and doctors to read the book as well. I had a bit trouble letting go of them. The publisher, Crawford Lindsey, eventually convinced me that you can't write a book for such a broad audience. He was very stern with me and I had to rewrite the first draft of the book!

*The range of topics covered is extremely comprehensive - how long did take to write, and how did you decide what to include and what not to cover?*

All in all, it took three years to write. Marc and I made a list of topics we wanted to include, and then compared our proposed content with the contents of other books on sports medicine, to see what was missing. We then also tried to look at it from the perspective of the tennis player and coach: what would they like to read in a book like this? Which information would they like to find in the book when working on court or while on the road? That is why we did not limit ourselves to injuries, but also included information on nutrition, travelling, doping, illnesses etc, so the player and coach would not have to turn to other books for answers to medical questions, but would be able to find all the necessary information in this one book.



*The style of the book is most useful, being one that you can dip into for reference rather than having to read from cover to cover. Was this intentional?*

Yes, our intention was that chapters could be read individually. That is also why some of the illustrations show up several times in the book, in different places. We wanted people to be able to look up an injury, illness or exercise and understand it, without having to refer to another page or chapter to find the illustration that goes with it.

*The praise for the book has been pretty unanimous, and your credits list a number of top players past and present who recommend it. What's the most satisfying piece of feedback you have received?*

Personally, I was most pleased with Richard Krajicek's statement. For me, he is the best tennis player Holland has ever had, and to receive praise from him means a lot to me. I was very happy to be able to present him the first copy of the book on October 14th when the book was released in the Netherlands. But to receive praise from Brian Hainline, who is the chairperson of the ITF medical commission and chief medical officer of the US Open, was also very satisfying.



## BABETTE PLUIM INTERVIEW

*Obviously, to some degree injuries are inevitable in professional sport. Do you think that this is especially true for tennis players, given the nature of the game?*

Well, tennis is clearly different from a sport like soccer or rugby, where there are a great number of traumatic injuries. In tennis, most injuries are due to overuse. I am a firm believer that it is possible to greatly reduce the number of injuries by incorporating preventative measures like periodisation, strengthening and co-ordination exercises, orthotics etc. However, a certain percentage of injuries are inevitable, and in professional sports more injuries will occur than in recreational sports, because professional athletes go to extremes, and will try to find the limits of what is physically possible. And sometimes they go over these limits.

*What are the most common mistakes that players make in terms of injury prevention?*

I would say that there are three main errors. Firstly, I think the most common mistake in competitive athletes is inadequate periodisation, with too much play and inadequate rest. Correct periodisation is at times difficult in tennis, because players may have to sign up several weeks in advance for tournaments, and can not always predict how many matches they will play. Rest periods should be scheduled at regular intervals in order to avoid over-training and injuries.

The second common mistake is that players often go straight back to the tennis court after recovery from an injury. So they get injured, take some rest, and then start playing full-time again. In most cases the rest should be supplemented by strengthening and co-ordination exercises, such as in the case of a shoulder, knee, or ankle injury. Also, after the injury there should be a gradual build up of play. In most cases, a player does not go from 'injured' to 'healed' in one day. There is a transitional period during which the tissue gradually gets stronger and the player can handle more load. This period should be taken into account.

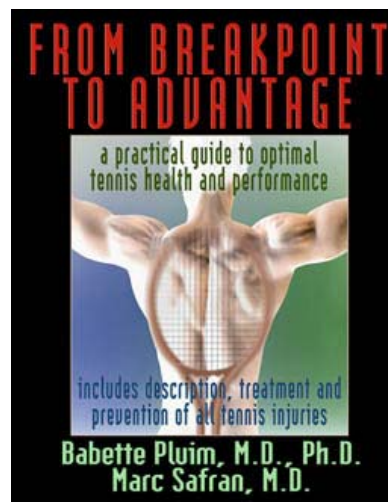
Finally, experience has taught me over the years that after a serious overuse injury, such as a tendon injury to the shoulder or wrist, a sprained ankle, or a knee problem, this tends to remain a weak spot. So the player needs to incorporate preventative exercises into his daily training program. But usually, after the pain is gone, this is forgotten, which carries a great risk of a recurrence.

*Professional tennis is increasingly affected by injuries to players. 2004 has been notable for this, especially in the women's game. In your opinion, what are the main contributory factors towards this, and what can be done?*

This comes back partly what I said before. I think the main reason for these injuries is that there is a limit to the load that body can handle, especially the growing body. So either you have to reduce the load - with less matches, or more rest periods - or you have to increase the capacity of the body to handle the load - with more physical training, exercises to reduce imbalances, or simply to grow older and mature. The problem with overuse injuries is that they tend to develop gradually, with some slight pain first, then some nagging pain, then continuous pain and before you know it there is already a full-blown injury. It is sometimes difficult to know when to stop and the pressures to continue playing are enormous. The WTA, through their primary health care providers, has a great system in place to prevent and treat injuries, and slowly this is getting the recognition it deserves. But we have to be a step quicker, and focus even more on the prevention. The WTA, ITF and ATP are working on a common injury registration system, which may prove to be very helpful, not only for the treatment, but ultimately also the prevention of injuries.

'From Breakpoint to Advantage - A Practical Guide to Optimal Tennis Health and Performance' by Babette Pluim and Marc Safran is available now and can be ordered through [www.racquettech.com](http://www.racquettech.com).

372 Pages. ISBN 0-9722759-1-6





## IPIN: A MAJOR NEW ENTRY INITIATIVE FOR THE ITF'S PRO CIRCUIT

IPIN, the International Player Identification Number, was introduced by the ITF in October 2004, with all players competing on the ITF Pro Circuit being encouraged to visit a specially-designed website to receive their unique number. From 1 January 2005, every competitor must possess an IPIN before they play their first event of the year.

The IPIN will make it possible for the ITF to communicate more effectively with players via the internet and vice versa. It also heralds the arrival of a new Online Entry Service that goes live in April.

The Online Service will allow men and women to enter and withdraw from their tournaments via the web, rather than by fax, which is the current method. Not only will players be able to better manage their schedules, but they will also have access to other news and information relating to the Circuit, such as calendar updates and results. Further down the line, players will be able to manage their own details, and pay fines where necessary.

A key part of the changes is that the ITF will be the sole entry authority for all men's and women's ITF Pro Circuits from the beginning of 2005, including women's tournaments in Europe and the USA for the first time. Tennis Europe and the United States Tennis Association will undertake a new role as the first point of contact for players and tournament directors in their region/country, and will be responsible for co-ordination of the associated calendar.

While obtaining an IPIN is free, there will be a charge of \$35 annually for using the Online Service. This is because, although large quantities of paper will be eliminated under the new system, the work that goes into creating and maintaining the online system continues. In fact, as the ITF Pro Circuit expands, the work grows.

There are more than 10,000 active circuit players, and in 2004 there were 820 tournaments, 471 for men and 349 for women; two years ago there were 730 tournaments. An administrative cost is now necessary to deal with the increased number of events.

"The ITF needs an efficient, automated computer system in place in order to manage the ever-growing tournament administration," says Jackie Nesbitt, Head of

Professional Circuits. "Although registering for the online service won't be free, we're confident that players will recognise that this cost balances out against all the expensive faxes and phone calls they will no longer need to make."

As well as being more efficient and cost-effective, the IPIN and online service will be much more flexible to use, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and in English, French and Spanish. There will still be the option to enter tournaments using the traditional fax method as well as online, but players electing not to sign up for the Online Service will be charged a 'Process Fee' for each tournament they play in.

Although the fee for the Online Service will usually cover a year, in 2005 the system won't go live until April, while substantial testing is being completed. Even if players haven't registered for an IPIN by the beginning of 2005, they can still do so before the entry deadline of the first tournament they want to compete in.

Long-term, the ITF envisages that every player participating in its events, from juniors through to seniors, will have an IPIN and be part of an integrated system. They will carry their unique number throughout every stage of their playing career and reap the benefits of being better informed about and more in control of their chosen tournaments wherever they are in the world.

"I would like to extend my thanks to the ITF's Regional and National Associations and the Entry Authorities for Women's Circuits in Europe and the United States who have worked with the ITF to publicise the project," said Nesbitt. "Their cooperation thus far has been invaluable in promoting the IPIN."

Further details of IPIN and the Online Entry Service can be found at:

**[www.itftennis.com/ipin](http://www.itftennis.com/ipin)**.



## 2004 EUROPEAN TOURNAMENT CONFERENCE

Following the kind invitation of the French Tennis Federation, the Ligue de Corse and the ASPTT Ajaccio, the 2004 European Tournament Conference took place on 20-21 November 2004 in Corsica, France and was a great success. In attendance were representatives of over 20 of Tennis Europe's member nations, comprising more than 50 Delegates.

The biannual conference was opened by Tennis Europe President John James, and was divided into three parts; status reports, specialist sessions (Pro Circuits, Juniors and Officiating) and 'crossover' themes.

The status reports section began with Francois Pareau from the French Tennis Federation, who gave a presentation on their Competition Department. His FFT colleague Remy Azemar followed, outlining the functions of their Officiating Department. Other first morning speakers included the ATP's Joanna Langhorne, who gave a report on the Men's Challenger Circuit, Jackie Nesbitt of the ITF, presenting their Professional Tennis Report, and Tennis Europe's Martina Lutkova, reporting on the European Professional Men's and Women's tournaments.

The Conference continued with a report on the 18 & Under Junior game

from the ITF's Luca Santilli, which was followed by a summary of the European Junior Tour at 12, 14 & 16 & Under level from Tennis Europe's Charlotte Ferrari. The ITF's Mike Morrissey was next, with the ITF Officiating update, before John Frame of the LTA brought the session to a close, presenting the Junior Officiating Programme in Great Britain.

The second phase of the conference was characterised by specialist sessions in which the delegates separated into 3 working groups; Professional Circuits, Juniors and Officiating. Each group was able to hear and contribute to follow ups from the Status reports, and to hold discussions on the most important news and changes for 2005.

The conference's first session came to a close with the crossover themes session. This was divided into two parts; a discussion on the tournament strategy of national associations (how the National Associations in Europe establish their Tournament structure, how their tournaments are financed and how is the relationship with the organising clubs), followed by the presentation of Ivo Van Aken of the Belgian Tennis Federation "Player International Career Path from Junior to Professional – Position of International Tournaments".

The second day of the conference once again placed the delegates in working groups, this time working on a number of themes central to tournament organisation and its relation to player development.

During the event, we spoke to Michel Bouchy, local organiser of this year's Conference, and also Tournament Director of the 12 & Under Team event held annually at La Raquette De Corail in Ajaccio, Corsica.

*Your tournament is an exceptional one on the Under 12*

*Tour in that it is a team event. Why were you keen to stage such a tournament at this level?*



There are many indi-

vidual tournaments for under 12s, but we wanted something different. We want to help in the development of children playing tennis. Team competition is very important for the unity of players, and to have boys and girls competing for their country at the same venue is great. We try to organise things a bit differently to other tournaments. We provide full hospitality, a very good hotel by the beach and a car for the official coach of each nation during the entire stay for the team to be able to go wherever they want.

*How much work goes into organising an event such as this? Is it very time consuming?*

It takes a whole year to organise. Not necessarily every

## 2004 EUROPEAN TOURNAMENT CONFERENCE

day but a lot of time. I am not alone; there are 4 other people that help as well. I am retired, which is a good thing for the competition as I have more time.

*How many nations are typically represented at the event?*

In 2004 we had 14 countries participating, and in 2003 we had 15 teams, so it's a good mix.

*What about spectators? Are they difficult to attract, and who forms your audience?*

We have free entrance to our Tournament. Our audience/spectators basically are children from the schools here, fans of tennis and club members. Every day we have different people coming. During the whole week there are approximately 600-700 spectators.

*What is your favourite part of the event?*

I always enjoy the first Saturday, with the arrival of the

teams. Once you see all the teams in the club together, you really know that the year of preparation has been worthwhile.

*Have you had any future big names playing here?*

Yes, from the top of my head, we've had Feliciano Lopez, Richard Gasquet, Tommy Robredo and Paul Henri Mathieu, amongst others.

*What are your future goals for the event?*

Well, our main goal is to be the best tournament in the 12 & Under age category, and to attract the best players. At the moment we are the only club in Corsica that can organise events such as this, so we would to continue and also to organise other international tournaments. It's not always easy, and I'd like to thank the French Tennis Federation, the local sponsors and organisers, who understand our difficulties and help to make the event possible.

## COACHES DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS IN SERBIA & MONTENEGRO AND MACEDONIA

Frank Zlesak (pictured) of the Czech Republic conducted two 2-day Coaches seminars in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro and Skopje, Macedonia recently. In total over fifty top coaches attended the seminars, which examined complex approaches to developing advanced players.

The most important theoretical and practical presentations of the course focused on technical analyses from a biomechanical point of view, tactical preparation for different surfaces and post match analysis, as well as talent identification and yearly periodisation for advanced junior players.

Zlesak commented: "The highlights of both seminars were practical presentations. In Belgrade, the coaches especially enjoyed the presentation on improving per-

ception skills in order to make correct tactical decisions demonstrated by top junior girls."

"During the seminar in Skopje, the Macedonian Davis Cup team assisted me in demonstrating integrated on court practice.

During this presentation we worked simultaneously on tactical improvement and players' special fitness."



### EUROPEAN RACQUET STRINGERS ASSOCIATION

The latest issue of Racquet Tech Europe magazine can be found at <http://www.ersa-stringers.com/pdf/enews604.pdf>

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## EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOUR - PLAYERS OF THE YEAR 2004

Tennis Europe has announced the winners of the 2004 Players of the Year awards. The award is given each year to the three best-performing players in each age category on the European Junior Tour. Medals and diplomas are handed over to a representative from the National Association of the player each year at a ceremony at Tennis Europe's Annual General Meeting. Introduced in 1991, the awards have shown themselves to be a reliable barometer of future greatness. Players such as Kim Clijsters, Justine Henin-Hardenne, Martina Hingis, Tommy Robredo and Richard Gasquet are all former winners.

	14 & U GIRLS	14 & U BOYS	16 & U GIRLS	16 & U BOYS
1	Renée Reinhardt (NED)	Jerome Inzerillo (FRA)	Alexandra Dulgheru (ROM)	Robin Roshardt (SUI)
2	Klaudia Boczova (SVK)	Vladimir Ignatik (BLR)	Arina Rodionova (RUS)	Pere Riba (ESP)
3	Elena Kulikova (RUS)	Ricardas Berankis (LTU)	Maria Miziouk (RUS)	Andrei Karatchenia (BLR)

## EUROPEAN WINTER CUPS BY PRINCE—PREVIEW

The 2005 European Winter Cups by Prince have attracted record levels of participation in each age category. The qualifying rounds are set for the week-end of February 11-13th at sixteen venues across Europe, with the final rounds following two weeks later in Pruhonice [CZE; G14], Forte dei Marmi [ITA; B14], Ronchin [Frau; G16] and Montecatini [ITA; B16].



A full report follows in the next issue of Tennis Europe News. Updated scores from Europe's largest junior tennis event can be found at [www.TennisEurope.org](http://www.TennisEurope.org) during the competition.

## EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOUR - RESULTS 14 & UNDER

Venue	Cat.	Winner	Runner-up	Score
GOTHENBURG (SWE)	Boys	ULRIK THOMSEN (DEN)	TOM FARQUMARSON (GBR)	63 62
	Girls	MARTA SIROTKINA (RUS)	STEPHANIE CORNISH (GBR)	62 61
TIM '91 (FRA)	Boys	YANNICK REUTER (BEL)	JAMES CHAUDRY (GBR)	75 62
	Girls	PETRA MARTIC (CRO)	KATRIN SCHMIDT (GER)	W/O

## EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOUR - RESULTS 16 & UNDER

GOTHENBURG (SWE)	Boys	ALEXEY NIKOLAEV (RUS)	PETER FRANCIS (GBR)	62 60
	Girls	CATHERINE GAUCHE (LUX)	CONNY PERRIN (SUI)	64 62

## EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOUR RANKINGS

The Race for the 2005 European Junior Masters event is now on! December sees great change in the rankings, as many layers are no longer eligible for certain age categories. To view the 2004 Year End Junior Rankings, please visit [www.TennisEurope.org](http://www.TennisEurope.org).

How the rankings work: Players earn points throughout the year according the round they reach at tournaments part of the Tennis Europe Junior Tour. The top eight European juniors are invited to take part in the Junior Masters at the end of the season. Rankings are updated every Thursday, and the full ranking lists can be found in a variety of formats, including a breakdown of points per tournament at [www.TennisEurope.org](http://www.TennisEurope.org)

14 & UNDER GIRLS				14 & UNDER BOYS			
Rank	Name	Nation	Points	Rank	Name	Nation	Points
<b>1</b>	Ksenia Pervak	RUS	415	<b>1</b>	Illia Shatskiy	RUS	265
<b>2</b>	Polona Hercog	SLO	415	<b>2</b>	Vadim Pinko	LTU	225
<b>3</b>	Nikola Hofamnova	AUT	380	<b>3</b>	Radim Urbanek	CZE	215
<b>4</b>	Petra Martic	CRO	355	<b>4</b>	Yannick Reuter	BEL	212
<b>5</b>	Katrin Schmidt	GER	322	<b>5</b>	Vadim Chergov	BUL	200
<b>6</b>	Alice Moroni	ITA	310	<b>6</b>	Andrei Vasileuski	BLR	195
<b>7</b>	Jasmina Kajtazovic	SLO	290	<b>7</b>	Giorgi Khmriadashvili	GEO	172
<b>8</b>	Elena Kulikova	RUS	280	<b>8</b>	Vlad Adrian Stefan	ROM	170
<b>9</b>	Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova	RUS	270	<b>9</b>	Andrei Savulescu	ROM	170
<b>10</b>	Patricia Chirea	ROM	255	<b>10</b>	Anton Galkin	RUS	167
16 & UNDER GIRLS				16 & UNDER BOYS			
<b>1</b>	Alexandra Dulgheru	ROM	550	<b>1</b>	Andrei Karatchenia	BLR	470
<b>2</b>	Arina Rodionova	RUS	445	<b>2</b>	Petru Luncanu	ROM	320
<b>3</b>	Maya Gaverova	RUS	390	<b>3</b>	Artem Gramma	UKR	295
<b>4</b>	Ekaterina Jeritsheva	EST	380	<b>4</b>	Valentin Dimov	BUL	270
<b>5</b>	Raluca Ioana Olaru	ROM	340	<b>5</b>	Mikhail Karpol	CRO	270
<b>6</b>	Anastasia Kharchenko	UKR	325	<b>6</b>	Daniel Lopez	PAR	265
<b>7</b>	Ioana Ivan	ROM	325	<b>7</b>	Deni Zmak	CRO	260
<b>8</b>	Stefanie Voegele	SUI	296	<b>8</b>	Ilija Martinovski	MKD	260
<b>9</b>	Agnieszka Radwanska	POL	270	<b>9</b>	Radu Albot	MDA	255
<b>10</b>	Jana Belohlavkova	CZE	267	<b>10</b>	Thomas Fabbiano	ITA	245

## EUROPEAN RANKINGS

Maria Sharapova's victory at the WTA Championships in Los Angeles sees her climb to a career best position of third in the European rankings.

Amelie Mauresmo, the only player to beat Sharapova in LA strengthens her position at #1, and has an excellent opportunity to regain the World #1 spot from Lindsay Davenport during the Australian hardcourt season.

Justine Henin-Hardenne's injury enforced absence sees her drop to sixth in Europe, and leaves her in danger of following compatriot Kim Clijsters out of the leaders list should she fail to repeat her excellent start to the 2003 season.

Roger Federer polished off his excellent season with victory at the ATP Master's Cup in Houston, giving him a record ATP Race points total, twice that of second placed Marat Safin.

Britain's Tim Henman and Swede Joachim Johansson finish at career highs of fourth and fifth respectively,

Tommy Haas caps a remarkable comeback to finish in tenth position. After missing all of 2003 with a shoulder injury, he regains his place as the top German player, and looks a sure bet to improve even further in 2005.

Rankings are based on ATP/WTA ranks of December 13th.

WOMEN	Player	Country	WTA TOUR Rank	Points Total
1	Amélie MAURESMO	FRA	2	4546
2	Anastasia MYSKINA	RUS	3	4012
3	Maria SHARAPOVA	RUS	4	3536
4	Svetlana KUZNETSOVA	RUS	5	3533
5	Elena DEMENTIEVA	RUS	6	3448
6	Justine HENIN-HARDENNE	BEL	8	2884
7	Vera ZVONAREVA	RUS	11	2299
8	Nadia PETROVA	RUS	12	2022
9	Patty SCHNYDER	SUI	14	1683
10	Elena BOVINA	RUS	15	1598
MEN	Player	Country	ATP CHAMPI-ONS RACE	Points Total
1	Roger FEDERER	SUI	1	1267
2	Marat SAFIN	RUS	4	612
3	Carlos MOYA	ESP	5	504
4	Tim HENMAN	GBR	6	493
5	Joachim JOHANSSON	SWE	12	303
6	Tommy ROBREDO	ESP	13	293
7	Dominik HRBATY	SVK	14	276
8	Sébastien GROSJEAN	FRA	15	274
9	Mikhail YOUZHNY	RUS	16	268
10	Tommy HAAS	GER	17	266



*And a Happy New Year, from all the staff of Tennis Europe!*

## NOTES FROM NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Peter Teuschl has taken over as General Secretary of the Austrian Tennis Association.

The Bulgarian Tennis Federation also has a new General Secretary; George Donchev.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please note that Tennis Europe's 2005 Annual General Meeting will be held in Malta during the weekend of April 15th-17th.

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