

TENNIS EUROPE NEWS



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EUROPEAN MEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS



The victorious Spanish team (L-R) Nicolás Almagro, Guillermo García, Marcel Granollers, captain José María Piza

The European Men's Team Championships were held in Fabriano, Italy, during the first week of December, and ended with a first title in over 30 years for the Spanish team, who recaptured the trophy they first won in Madrid in 1972 against Hungary. The Spanish victory was a decisive one, as the second-seeded team swept through their opening ties against Croatia and Greece without the loss of a match. The up-and-coming Nicolás Almagro, who performed impressively throughout the week, anchored the young team and successful roles were also played by Guillermo García, a trainee at the Ferrero Academy, and the fast rising Marcel Granollers, winner of Tennis Europe's Junior Masters in 2002.

In the top half of the draw, the Polish team had forged two upsets to reach the final, first beating the fourth-seeded Czech team, and following up with a tight victory over the top seeded home team. The doubles experience of Mariusz Fyrstenberg and Marcin Matkowski, winners of the ATP event in Sopot earlier this year, was to prove the decisive factor in a nail biting tie. The final was not so competitive as the Polish players struggled to overcome the difference in singles ranking between them and their Spanish opponents.

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WIN AN EXCLUSIVE RACQUET



Signed by JUAN CARLOS FERRERO!

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year !**

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EUROPEAN MENS TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

(continued from front page)

The event, organised by MCP Eventi, was well attended, as the knowledgeable locals streamed into the 6000 capacity stadium to see a wide variety of players, ranging from Davis Cup players to juniors taking

their first senior international honours, with some renowned captains, such as Peter Fleming and Boris Breskvar at the helm.

As with the Women's Team Championships, the First Division was or-

ganised simultaneously at Espinho in Portugal by Joao Lagos Sports, where teams from Serbia & Montenegro and Monaco were promoted to the Champion's Division. Replacing them next year will be Great Britain and Croatia.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

The top eight European National Teams met for the European Women's Team Championships – Champions Division in Ostrava, Czech Republic in November. Strong entries from across the continent ensured some interesting and competitive ties as well as a number of surprises. The event was won by an ecstatic home team who thrilled the local spectators to quell the challenge of defending champions Poland in a thrilling final doubles rubber after Joanna Sacowitz had upset former world junior number one Barbora Strycova to score the first point.

The major surprise of the tournament was the demotion of the Greek team to the First Division. The team boasted the top ranked player in the event, Eleni Daniilidou (WTA-25), but the strength in depth of the other teams meant that this was no guarantee of success.

The Greek and Yugoslav teams will be replaced next year by Austria and Portugal, who were promoted



The Czech team celebrates; L-R, Ivo Kaderka (Czech Tennis Association President), coach Jan Havel, Barbora Strycova, Sandra Kleinova, Michaela Pastikova and Tennis Europe President John James.

after wins at the First Division event in Espinho, Portugal. The final standings for the both the Men's

and Women's Team Championships are below, and full results can be found at www.tenniseurope.org.

<u>MEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS</u>		<u>WOMEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS</u>	
1	SPAIN		CZECH REPUBLIC
2	POLAND		POLAND
3	GREECE		GREAT BRITAIN
	ITALY		CROATIA
5	CZECH REPUBLIC		SPAIN
	SLOVENIA		UKRAINE
7	CROATIA		GREECE
	GREAT BRITAIN		YUGOSLAVIA
1	SERBIA & MONTENEGRO*		PORTUGAL*
2	MONACO*		AUSTRIA*

* Promoted to Champions Division in 2004

TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE SPOTLIGHT—ELENI DANIILIDOU

During the recent European Women's Team Championships, the top player of the event, Greece's Eleni Daniilidou took time out to speak to us about her year and her plans for her forthcoming home town Olympics.

How would you evaluate your season?

I started very well and I had some really excellent matches. Then I began to put pressure to myself, which was bad. I am very happy to end the season in the Top 30 and even more I am very glad to finish the season without injury.

What are your plans for 2004?

I played 26 tournaments this year, so I will try to cut down to a maximum of 23. From the sporting perspective, the Olympics will be the highlight of the season but my main goal is still to enter the Top 15. The most important is to be in good health.

Are team events important for you?

Team competitions are always big fun for me. I always look forward to play the Team Championships even

though the timing at the end of the year is not so good for me. Still I look forward to playing it also in the future. It is good for the team spirit to play these championships, and also we as a team can benefit from the experience we gain here.

How popular is Tennis in Greece, and has your success affected its popularity?

It is getting more popular, mainly because of the good results of the Davis Cup team, but also because of my results in the last two years. The media took notice of that and they write more in the newspapers and there is more TV coverage.

Why have there been no top players until now in Greece?

There are various reasons but one reason was that there were not enough good coaches. Furthermore the infrastructure was not that good in the past and a lot of players stopped playing at around age 16 in order to study. It was the same for me; I had to decide at 16 whether I should study or focus on tennis. But I'm happy that I chose tennis!

How excited are you about the

Olympics, and do you feel extra pressure to perform in your home country?

Every Greek sportsperson is very excited. It will be a race to finish everything in time, but I am sure that we will have good facilities at the end. I do not feel too much pressure, but in order not to let the pressure grow I will stay away from Greece until the Olympics.

Is your Tennis season just focused on the Olympics?

It is important to have good results during the whole Tennis season and I will have to concentrate also on my ranking. The Games in Athens will be a highlight but I should not forget that I am still young and in 2008 there will be another Olympics.

If you were not playing professional tennis, what would you be doing?

Maybe studying medicine, as I was always interested in that subject. A lot of my friends are studying medicine and for me it is always interesting to listen to them when they tell me about their studies.

Magnus Grönqvist

TENNIS EUROPE AND ERSA JOIN FORCES

Tennis Europe has signed an initiative with ERSA (the European Racquet Stringers Association) to work together to promote tennis throughout Europe. Olli Mäenpää, Tennis Europe's Managing Director, External Affairs, explained "The partnership is an important one, and should have a great impact for the tennis industry in Europe. Through pooling of resources and widening of networks in certain highly specialised areas of the tennis community, both organisations and their affiliates will benefit. Furthermore the cooperation supports the policy of Tennis Europe to work as closely as possible with the tennis industry in Europe."

ERSA Managing Director Mark



Maslowski commented "This is the ideal partnership for our organization. ERSA's goals are to increase the technical knowledge of players, coaches and the tennis industry, and help promote tennis throughout Europe. Having players use the correct equipment, allowing them to perform better, can greatly help the game of tennis in Europe. Tennis Europe is the perfect organisation to help communicate this information with coaches and players. ERSA will also be working actively with Tennis Europe on other projects to

help the growth of tennis"

The ERSA, founded in 2001 as a partner organization with the USRSA, is a non-profit making association of racquet stringing specialists, coaches, players, tennis specialty shops, and manufacturers. ERSA supplies technical information through the magazine Racquet Tech Europe and web-site ERSA-Stringers.com, plus the annual stringing guide, "The Stringer's Digest Europe" (with over 3,000 stringing patterns for tennis, squash and badminton). ERSA also offers lectures on string and racket technology, workshops on stringing and racket tuning, and offer the only worldwide, industry recognized certification for stringing and racket tuning.

TENNIS EUROPE TO LAUNCH SOLIDARITY SCHEME

In welcome news for the development of European tennis, Tennis Europe is proud to announce its Solidarity Scheme for Member Nations, initiated by Jacques Dupré, with the support of the Development Committee. Challenged by a freeze in funding for new development projects, Tennis Europe has taken the innovative step of appealing directly to its more affluent and developed member nations to show solidarity with the less prosperous members of the Tennis Europe family, and to actively seek out mutually beneficial cooperations.

The national associations have been given a check sheet containing a variety of suggested modes of cooperation; ranging from inviting staff and players from foreign associations to see how things are run,

to loans/exchanges of coaching staff, to the donation of surplus/second hand equipment. This proactive approach has already provoked an eager response from a number of nations. Participating nations include France, Germany, Great Britain and Spain, while a variety of other Tennis Europe Member Nations such as Denmark, Netherlands and Slovak Republic have been quick to express interest in the scheme, which will be launched officially in January.

The initiative follows on from the success of the Federation Development Programme, launched in 2002. Five countries are currently benefitting from this scheme, accounting for just over half of the budgeted 60,000CHF.

Grants have been paid to the fol-

lowing countries to facilitate their development projects:

Estonia: Coaches Education
Norway: Girls and Tennis – A Four-Year Study
Turkey: Coaches Education
Hungary: Talent Spotting; From School Tennis Initiatives to Club Tennis
Cyprus: Women's Tennis Development Plan

The initiative runs in addition to the ITF/Tennis Europe Development Programme (annual budget approx \$600,000) is subject to close follow-up and will see progress reports made by the beneficiary nations at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting in Athens in 2004.

FIRST DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR FOR COACHES IN TURKEY

The Turkish Tennis Federation, supported by the ITF and Tennis Europe, organised the 1st Development Seminar in the Ankara Tennis Club from 7 to 9 November 2003. More than 100 coaches from all over Turkey attended the three day event, which was conducted by Ann Pankhurst of the LTA and Piotr

Unierzyski from Poland as the main speakers.

Among the main topics presented by the experts in lecture room and on court were: "How to increase the quality of a training session", "Creating an individual game-style" and "The LTA Long term development programme".

Mr. Birol Vural from Turkish Tennis Federation commented: "Such seminars are of great importance for us. In our opinion the quality of our coaches is the single most important element in developing successful tennis players in the future."

Hrvoje Zmajic

WTA NAMES NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE

The WTA has named Bjorn Alven as its new Managing Director for Europe. Alven, who brings more than twenty years of experience in international sales and management, has already taken up the position, and relocates from Sweden,

where he had been serving as Director of Global Tennis for Tretorn AB. Amongst his many achievements during this period, he played a vital role in the negotiations that saw Tretorn become the official ball of Tennis Europe, until the conclu-

sion of the deal at the end of this year. Tennis Europe would like to extend its congratulations to Mr Alven, and wishes all the best for this exciting and challenging new venture.



www.tenniseurope.org

TENNIS EUROPE NEWS / PRINCE COMPETITION

2004 will see the launch of a new-look Tennis Europe News. We aim to increase our current publication rates in order to keep you as up to date as possible with European tennis news. The new-look newsletter, commencing in spring 2004, will have a variety of new features, competitions, website link-ups, and a regular feature from Tennis Europe's official racquets, bags, strings and accessories partner, Prince, focusing on the brand and their players throughout the season.



Please note that due to the inherent costs of the increase in publication, we will no longer be able to send the newsletter by regular mail. The financial and administrative resources saved will instead be channelled to the further development of tennis in Europe. If you currently

receive the newsletter by regular mail and would like to continue to receive it digitally, please send your full name and email address to jonathanj@tenniseurope.org. In the near future, you will be able to subscribe/unsubscribe to the newsletter at our website, where of course, Tennis Europe News will continue to be published.

To celebrate the relaunch and to kick off the partnership that begins at the Winter Cups in February, we have joined forces with Prince for a very special competition. **A Prince racquet signed by Juan Carlos Ferrero** is on offer to the winner of the draw. All you have to do to enter is answer the following questions:

1. Which Grand Slam title did Prince player Juan Carlos Ferrero win in 2003?
2. Which Tennis Europe flagship junior event is brought to you in association with Prince?



To enter, simply email jonathanj@tenniseurope.org with 'Prince competition' in the subject line, or send a postcard to Tennis Europe Prince Competition, Seltisbergerstrasse 6, CH 4059, Basel, Switzerland.

SMS TO UNDERTAKE EXTENSIVE TENNIS RETAIL MARKET SURVEY

Sports Marketing Surveys Ltd, the world's largest sports and sponsorship research group, are undertaking Europe's biggest and most focussed tennis research programme amongst the specialist tennis retail market.

Based on the established Sports Marketing Surveys Inc research programme in the United States, this research survey will produce a directly comparable analysis of tennis performance in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom.

This syndicated survey has been set up with the full support of many of the major global tennis manufacturers to provide a detailed and unique insight into the

performance in the tennis sector. Companies supporting the programme include: Babolat, Dunlop, Slazenger, Fischer, Head Sport, Prince, Volkl, Wilson and Yonex.

Research is being carried out with tennis retailers in each of the five markets covering topics including:

- Customer profiles
- Tennis sales forecasts by equipment category.
- Brand share and brand ratings—including promotion, product innovation, customer service and overall performance.
- Brand distribution and average number of models carried by brand
- Best selling model

predictions and a rating assessment on latest equipment technologies and the benefits provided.

- Retailer feedback on each brand.

With fieldwork underway, the reports on the five markets are due to be completed in early December.

For more information about the surveys, or to be one of the retailers involved in the programme, then please contact:

John Bushell, Sports Marketing Surveys Ltd, Tel 01932 350 600
Email: info@sportsmarketingsurveys.com,
Web: www.sportsmarketingsurveys.com

JUNIOR GENERAL MEETING 2003

The 28th edition of the Tennis Europe Junior General Meeting was held on 21-22 November in Maia, Portugal, hosted and coordinated by the Portuguese Tennis Federation. There were more than 50 delegates from 26 Nations in attendance, including a number of tournament directors of events on the 12/14/16 & Under European Junior Tours.

The Meeting consisted of two main parts: The European Junior Tour (12/14/16 & Under), and the Tennis Europe official championships and other junior game issues.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Junior Committee, Michele Brunetti, who introduced the delegates to the two areas of focus; the Tour today and the Tour tomorrow. Covering the former, Mr Brunetti presented the 2003 12/14/16 & Under calendar, Players of the Year, Tournament Rankings and results from the European Masters. Massimo Morelli, the European Junior Tour Supervisor / Quality Coordinator then took the stand to make his annual report, followed by a second presentation later in the day covering the Tour Tomorrow, during which he gave an in-depth explanation of the 2004 Calendars and forthcoming rule changes, which are explained in further detail on the following page.

Tennis Europe's Managing Director, External Affairs, Olli Mäenpää then made a presentation during which he introduced Tennis Europe's new partnership with Prince, and was followed to the stand by speakers presenting a wide variety of topics, ranging from Junior Tennis in Portugal, reports from several top events on the European Junior Tour (including the Carl Gantois/Windmill Cup in Leeuwarden, Netherlands, and Jungsten Cup in Köln, Germany), Talent Identification, to the International Tennis Number, amongst other topics.

In other news from the meeting, Mr. Brunetti announced that the Junior

General Meeting will be changed to a biannual format, combining with the European Tournament Conference one year, and acting as a stand-alone conference every second year. The venue of date of the next meeting will be announced early in 2004.

During the Junior General Meeting, Tennis Europe News caught up with Hubert Warson, President of the Royal Excelsior Tennis Club, Hasselt, home of the Young Champions Under 14 event, which has recently been promoted from a Category Two to Category One event on the European Junior Tour.

Your event was recently promoted from Category 2 to Category 1 event. How did you feel about that?

Very happy. It's been only 5 years that we are organising it and we have managed to get it to number one. I would like to thank the people that have contributed to this: Tennis Europe, the ITF and Cosat, for providing us with strong players.

Does the event take up much of your time? How much work do you have to put into organising an event like this?

An event such as this it takes up most of the time of the Organiser. Our organiser Jacky Hox worked for weeks and weeks to ensure the smooth operation of the tournament.

Your event was very well attended by some of the best U14 players in Europe. Did you see a big leap in quality between last years Category 2 event? Who were the players that impressed you most?

Oh, yes. Comparing from last year to this year I saw a big difference. Better players came. We had two Japanese boys in the final as well. The player that most impressed me the most from this year event was Sorana Cirstea from Romania, from the first match through to her victory of the Tournament in Hasselt; the

scores were always very close, often going to final sets.

We know all about the current success of Belgium's professionals, but what is the outlook for Belgian juniors? Is there a new generation emerging who can live up to the high standards the country has set itself in recent years?

It looks very good. Flipkens as a junior participated in our event, losing in the semi final against Golovin. We have some good players that can do well in the near future.

What are your goals for the event in the foreseeable future?

One of our goals is to try to attract better European players. The problem with this is at the same time as Hasselt next year, the World Championships will be being staged, which makes it a bit more difficult than before.

How was the attendance at the event? Is it difficult to attract the public to watch junior tennis at this level?

It was difficult at the beginning but at the moment we are getting better. More and more people come to watch the matches of the youngsters.

What was for you the most memorable moment of this years event?

The whole event was memorable, but particularly the fact that two Japanese boys reached the final and no Europeans! I would like to thank once more Tennis Europe, the ITF and the team from the club for their outstanding work, especially Jacky Hox, and the people that really enjoy it and work for a lot of hours for free. Without the people of the club and all the help we receive from the other Young Stars Clubs (Paris, Leeuwarden, Rueil-malmaison and Köln), this event would not have reached Category One status; so many thanks to all of them!

(Stephanie Kamberi)

JUNIOR TOUR SUPERVISOR / QUALITY COORDINATOR REPORT

Once again we are at the end of a very positive year for the European Junior Tour. The number and the quality of tournaments have increased – a trend that will continue in 2004, and we are ready for a new thrilling season.

2004 will be a period of transition for the Tour. For over a year now, Tennis Europe has been working on the construction and approval of the new requirements for the 2004 European Junior Tour, taking into consideration the opinions of Tournament Directors, Coaches and Officials, and the Junior Committee of Tennis Europe. In effect, these new rules, which apply to the 14 & Under and 16 & Under tournaments only, will completely reshape the Tour, bringing the events in line with many aspects of the professional circuits.

The new requirements can be divided into two main groups:

- a) organisational requirements
- b) rule requirements

As far as organisational require-

ments are concerned, the major change is that category 2 tournaments will be asked to provide some sort of hospitality, to be chosen from seven different possibilities. Nothing changes for Category 1 tournaments in terms of hospitality requirements, while category 3 tournaments, although not requested, may choose to offer hospitality, and consequently have the chance, (assuming other requirements are satisfied), to request to be promoted for the following year.

Another important enhancement will be the visibility of Tennis Europe. This visibility which will be strictly enforced, by ensuring that tournaments, in different ways according to the categories they belong, promote the image of Tennis Europe by placing banners and logos in key positions and in the promotional material of the tournament.

Turning to rule requirements, there are a few significant changes. First of all, in order to make doubles more interesting, there will be a combined singles and doubles rank-

ing. Players will be accepted into the doubles tournaments with this new ranking as a first priority. Also, a welcome boost for the consolation draws is that ranking points will be awarded to players from the quarterfinal stages onwards.

Finally, the composition for qualifying draws has been specified, and is designed in order to guarantee places to players with ranking and to foreigners. To keep abreast of all the changes, you can find full details at the Tennis Europe website.

As you can see, 2004 promises to be a challenging year for the Junior Tour. I will be travelling extensively in order to implement these new requirements and I will be back to you in these pages to report to you about the impact that these new rules had on players, coaches and Tournament Directors.

I take the occasion to wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2004.

Massimo Morelli

PLAYERS OF THE YEAR—EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOUR

As announced at the Junior General Meeting in Maia, Portugal recently, Tennis Europe is pleased to confirm the following players as recipients of this year's 'Players of the Year' awards. As is now customary, the awards are presented to the top

three players at the end of the season in both 14 and 16 & Under age categories.

The awards have shown themselves to be a reliable indicator of greatness to come, with past recipi-

ents including two former World Number Ones—Martina Hingis (SUI) and Kim Clijsters (BEL), as well as a host of other household names, from Anna Kournikova (RUS) to Xavier Malisse (BEL) and Tommy Robredo (ESP).

GIRLS 14 & UNDER

1 RALUCA OLARU (ROM)

2 SORANA CIRSTEA (ROM)

3 EVGENIYA RODINA (RUS)

GIRLS 16 & UNDER

1 KATIA SABATE (ESP)

2 MIHAELA BUZARNESCU (ROM)

3 ANNA GERASIMOU (GRE)

BOYS 14 & UNDER

1 ANDREI KARATCHENIA (BLR)

2 MICHAL KONECHY (CZE)

3 MIKHAIL KARPOL (CRO)

BOYS 16 & UNDER

1 FRANKO SKUGOR (CRO)

2 ROBERTO VELILLA (ESP)

3 SLAVCO BJELICA (YUG)

EUROPEAN WINTER CUPS BY PRINCE—PREVIEW

As the year draws to a close preparations are already underway for the first European Championships of 2004; the European Winter Cups by Prince. The qualifying rounds will be played during the weekend of 13-15 February at four venues for each age category, with the final rounds being played a fortnight later. The partnership with Prince sees a new era for the European Winter Cups, and players will be able to benefit from the extra opportunities created by the relationship in the form of racquet testing sessions, players' parties and a variety of other on-site activities. The 2004 European Winter Cups by Prince have already attracted an impressive entry list, and the repartition is as follows (asterisk denotes participation to be confirmed):

	BOYS U14	GIRLS U14	BOYS U16	GIRLS U16
ZONE A	Hannover (GER)	Mons (BEL)	Bergen (NOR)	Minsk (BRS)
	Czech Republic Finland Germany Great Britain Hungary Sweden	Belgium Italy Poland Portugal Serbia & Montenegro* Turkey	Belarus Germany Hungary Norway Russia Ukraine	Belarus Hungary Poland Slovenia Sweden Ukraine
ZONE B	Pino Torinese (ITA)	Rakovnik (CZE)	Bastad (SWE)	Ostrava (CZE)
	Bosnia & Herzegovina* Croatia Italy Luxembourg Netherlands Portugal Spain	Croatia Czech Republic Germany Spain Sweden Ukraine	Czech Republic Latvia Netherlands Poland Slovenia Poland Slovenia Sweden	Belgium Czech Republic Russia Serbia & Montenegro* Slovak Republic Turkey
ZONE C	tbc (RUS)	Leeuwarden (NED)	Cholet (FRA)	Welwyn Garden City (GBR)
	Belarus Latvia Poland Russia Switzerland Ukraine	Belarus Bosnia & Herzegovina* Finland Netherlands Slovenia Switzerland	Belgium Bosnia & Herzegovina* France Finland Great Britain Spain Switzerland	Finland France Great Britain Netherlands Germany
ZONE D	Istanbul (TUR)	Bratislava (SVK)	Livorno (ITA)	Tolmezzo (ITA)
	Belgium France Malta Serbia & Montenegro* Slovak Republic Slovenia Turkey	France Great Britain Hungary Latvia Russia Slovak Republic	Croatia Italy Luxembourg Portugal Serbia & Montenegro* Slovak Republic Turkey	Bosnia & Herzegovina* Croatia Italy Portugal Spain Switzerland

FINAL ROUNDS

27-29 FEB	Forte Dei Marmi (ITA)	Pruhonice (CZE)	Montecatini (ITA)	Ronchin (FRA)
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DAVIS CUP FINAL

Australia have won the Davis Cup for the 28th time, beating Spain in a dramatic tie in Melbourne. The signs were encouraging for the Australians ever since announcing that they would be playing on their favourite grass surface. The Spanish were optimistic however, mindful that the home team's tactic had backfired in 2001, when France celebrated a famous upset on the grass at Melbourne Park. Emotions ran high as the Australians vowed to avenge their tough loss to Spain in the final in Barcelona in 2000.

The teams ended level after the first day, with two former world number ones engaged in an enthralling battle for the first rubber. Lleyton Hewitt, who had opted to stay in Australia throughout the indoor season to prepare for the tie, put on an impressive display for someone who

had not played a competitive match since the US Open and edged Juan Carlos Ferrero 3-6 6-3 3-6 7-6 (0) 6-2.

In the second match Carlos Moya produced an upset of sorts to beat Wimbledon finalist Mark Philippoussis in four sets, despite having only played one match on grass in the past two seasons, and having a much inferior record on the surface. Philippoussis later admitted to having been so nervous prior to the match that he had vomited before taking to the court.

The doubles match was to prove a considerable boost to the Australians. Todd Woodbridge, playing for the twelfth consecutive year partnered Wayne Arthurs to victory, the doubles expertise that has won a record-breaking 78 titles being the

decisive factor against the Spanish team of Alex Corretja and Feliciano Lopez, who was making his Davis Cup debut.

The decisive match was also the most dramatic of the final weekend. Philippoussis looked to be on course for a straight set victory over Ferrero as he comfortably took a two set lead, but as the match wore on he was increasingly affected by a strain to his right pectoral muscle, and Ferrero's consistent returning earned him parity with the match poised at 7-5 6-3 1-6 2-6. An injury time out at the beginning of the final set seemed to give Philippoussis the focus he needed to play through the pain, and the Australian raced through the set without the loss of a game, commenting afterwards that the match had been the greatest victory of his career.

FED CUP FINAL

France have regained the Fed Cup title that they first won six years ago, with a convincing victory over the United States in Moscow.

The French team was anchored by Amélie Mauresmo, who had enjoyed an impressive indoor season reaching the final in Moscow, winning Philadelphia and upsetting new world number one Justine Henin-Hardenne to reach the finals of the WTA Season Ending Championships to finish the year ranked fourth. Mauresmo ended 2003 with an 8-0 record in Fed Cup play. Another French player enjoying a return to form was Mary Pierce, the only player to have participated in both winning French teams.

The Americans would have been forgiven for being complacent ahead of their semifinal match with Belgium, made somewhat easier by the absence of world's top two players from the Belgian team. Belgium's top junior, Kirsten Flipkens, added some spice to the tie though, holding a match point against Meghann Shaughnessy before her

inexperience cost her, losing one of the longest matches in the events history 7-6 6-7 7-9. Belgian stalwart Els Callens capitalised on Shaughnessy's exertions the next day, beating her in straight sets but Elke Clijsters, making her Fed Cup singles debut, was unable to match the heroics of Flipkens and the 2001 winners were left to rue what might have been as Martina Navratilova, returned to Fed Cup play after an eight year break to successfully improve her 38-0 match record teaming with Lisa Raymond.

The draws strongest teams were paired in the second semi final, with France taking on the home team, who boasted four of the world's top 15 players. Russia, who were bidding for their first Fed Cup title, had high hopes based on the strong end of season performances of Anastasia Myskina and Elena Dementieva, but were to be undone in a series of close battles. Honours were even after the first day, as Mauresmo defeated Vera Zvonareva comfortably and then joined the team to watch Pierce come agonisingly close to an

upset of Myskina, who eventually ground her down for a 4-6 7-6 7-5 victory. The players then reversed for two three set victories for the French team on the second day.

The final was won decisively by the French team, with the crucial tie once again being an epic battle involving Shaughnessy, who eventually capitulated to Pierce 6-3 3-6 8-6. Unable to recover sufficiently to pose many problems for Mauresmo the next day, victory was fittingly sealed with a 6-2 6-1 victory, after which Mauresmo commented that the win was one of the highlights of her career so far: "It's right up there, it's one of the biggest moments, maybe the biggest one, and sharing this with a team makes it also very special."

Just before the final, the third annual ITF/ITHF Fed Cup Award of Excellence was presented to Larisa Savchenko-Neiland of Latvia, for her outstanding achievements in international team competitions.

EUROPEAN RANKINGS

Justine Henin-Hardenne did just enough with a semi final showing at the WTA Season Ending Championships to finish the year ranked #1. The Belgian, who won two of the four Grand Slams this year edged out compatriot Kim Clijsters with a fascinating battle for points as the season drew to a close. French Fed Cup heroine Amelie Mauresmo finishes at a career high third after an impressive end to an injury-blighted season.

The impressive advance of the Russians continues, and positions 4-7 are taken by four Russian players all celebrating career best years on the tour. Jelena Dokic showed signs of a return to form at the end of the year, an upset of former #1 Clijsters in Zurich heralding a return to the European top 10. Two veterans take the final two places, Anna Smashnova-Pistolesi of Israel finishes in the European Top Ten for the second time, having won two titles and had a consistent year on the tour, while Conchita Martinez of Spain manages the remarkable feat of finishing in the elite top ten for the 13th time in her career.

WOMEN	Player	Country	WTA TOUR Ranking	Points Total
1	Justine HENIN-HARDENNE	BEL	1	6628
2	Kim CLIJSTERS	BEL	2	6553
3	Amélie MAURESMO	FRA	4	3194
4	Anastasia MYSKINA	RUS	7	2581
5	Elena DEMENTIEVA	RUS	8	2383
6	Nadia PETROVA	RUS	12	1994
7	Vera ZVONAREVA	RUS	13	1808
8	Jelena DOKIC	YUG	15	1405
9	Anna SMASHNOVA-PISTOLESI	ISR	16	1353
10	Conchita MARTINEZ	ESP	18	1316

The European Women's Ranking is based on the final WTA Ranking of 2003.

With an imperious win at the ATP World Championships in Houston, Roger Federer capped his best year yet by snatching the European #1 and World #2 slot from Juan Carlos Ferrero. Both players won a first Grand Slam in 2003 and look sure to be challenging each other for the top spot over the next year. Rainer Schuettler of Germany finishes at a career-high third having started and ended the 2003 season strongly, while Carlos Moya and Sebastian Grosjean, no strangers to the top ten, round out the top five. Tim Henman salvaged an injury-hit year with his first Masters series victory in Paris, which ensured a place in the European Top ten for the 5th consecutive year, while the Netherlands claim two places for the first time, in the shape of Sjeng Schalken and French Open finalist Martin Verkerk. Jiri Novak and Tommy Robredo both debut in the end of year list.

MEN	Player	Country	ATP CHAMPIONS RACE	Points
1	Roger FEDERER	SUI	2	875
2	Juan Carlos FERRERO	ESP	3	841
3	Rainer SCHUETTLER	GER	6	641
4	Carlos MOYA	ESP	7	456
5	Sebastien GROSJEAN	FRA	10	322
6	Jiri NOVAK	CZE	12	302
7	Tim HENMAN	GBR	14	296
8	Sjeng SCHALKEN	NED	17	285
9	Martin VERKERK	NED	19	268
10	Tommy ROBREDO	ESP	21	259

The European Men's Ranking is based on the final ATP Champions Race Standings of 2003.

THE LATEST FROM TENNIS EUROPE

**CONGRATULATIONS**

Tennis Europe sends its warmest congratulations to our Head of Women's Department, Martina Lutkova, and husband Valery, on the birth of their first child. Daughter Tamara was born on November 14th, weighing in at 3.7kg.

STAFFING

Please note that Mrs Felicetta Rossitto is new General Secretary of the Italian Tennis Federation.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2004 Junior Official Championships Calendar

Feb 13-15	EUROPEAN WINTER CUPS BY PRINCE - Qualifying Rounds
Feb 27-29	EUROPEAN WINTER CUPS BY PRINCE - Final Rounds
March 4 -11	ITF/TENNIS EUROPE SMALL STATES CHAMPIONSHIPS - Luxembourg
April/May 28 - 8	ITF/TENNIS EUROPE DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONSHIPS - Serbia and Montenegro
May 6 - 16	ITF/TENNIS EUROPE DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONSHIPS - Armenia

SEASON'S GREETINGS


Once again, all of the staff of Tennis Europe would like to wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Please note that this year we have elected not to send a printed Christmas card, and will instead make a donation to a charitable cause.




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