

ITF/GSDF boys' teams - 30 years of history

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ABSTRACT

After thirty years of traveling with the ITF team I want to do a review of some of the tours, players, results on the junior and pro circuit, and the countries involved across all of these years with the different boys' teams that I was taking part of it.

Key words: ITF, GSDF, juniors, teams

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INTRODUCTION

European Tour

1987 was the year the ITF, headed by Development Director Doug MacCurdy and with the support of the Grand Slam Tournaments, decided to create a program for the benefit of junior players to help those less developed nations to bring players to international exposure by competing in the best junior tournament around the world.

The first ITF/GSDF team competing in Europe had the participation of 20 players, 10 boys and 10 girls, with one boy and one girl each representing the ten South American countries. We were two coaches and one tour manager for the whole team.

Up until 1994, the team consisted only of South American players and one Mexican player. In 1995, the new Development Director Dave Miley decided to have an International team including all continents to give players from all over the world the opportunity to be part of this program. Also, he added new teams. The program continues as such to this day.

During the past 30 years, a total of 221 players participated from 62 different countries participated in this program.

Other teams

- Florida Tour: This tour was created in 1999 until 2002 to compete in tournaments such as the Eddie Herr and the Orange Bowl. After a break, in 2010 it was played for the last time. A total of 14 players from 13 different countries had the opportunity to compete in this tour.

- USA/Canada Tour: This tour was created in 1999 and is still on the calendar: 81 players had the opportunity to

participate in this tour when I was with them as a coach, representing a total of 42 countries. Then from 2013 to 2015, I was absent and some other coaches were there with a group of players. In 2016 I was again part of the team. A total of 7 new countries not involved in other teams were here.

- Mexico/Florida Tour: This tour began in 2012 and continues to this day. 12 boys have competed in this tour from 12 different countries.

BEST BOYS' PERFORMANCES STATISTICS

Grand Slam Singles Titles or Runner Up in Boys:

1993 Wimbledon runner up - Jimmy Zsypansky (VEN)

1999 US Open winner - Jarkko Nieminen (FIN)

2001 Australian Open winner - Janko Tipsarevic (former Yugoslavia)

2003 Wimbledon winner - Florin Mergea (ROU)



2003 Australia winner - Marcos Baghdatis (CYP)

2005 US Open winner - Ryan Sweeting (representing Bahamas)

2007 Roland Garros winner - Vladimir Ignatik (BEL) also runner up at Wimbledon

2007 US Open winner - Ricardas Berankis - LTU

BOYS' GRAND SLAM DOUBLES TITLES

1994 US Open - Nicolas Lapentti (ECU)

1994 Roland Garros - Gustavo Kuerten (BRA)/ Nicolas Lapentti (ECU)

1997 Roland Garros - Jose De Armas (VEN)/ Luis Horna (PER)

1997 Wimbledon - Luis Horna (PER)/ Nicolas Massu (CHI)

1997 US Open - Nicolas Massu (CHI)

1998 Roland Garros - Jose de Armas (VEN)

2002 and 2003 Wimbledon Florin Mergea (ROU) / Horia Tecau (ROU)

2005 Australia - Kim Sun-Yung (KOR)

2008 Roland Garros - Henri Kontinen (FIN)/ Christopher Rungkat (IDN)

2008 Australian Open and Wimbledon - Hsieh Chen Peng (TPE)

2009 Australian Open - Francis Alcantara (PHI)/Hsieh Chen Peng (TPE)

2009 US Open - Hsieh Chen Peng (TPE)

2010 Roland Garros and US Open doubles - Duilio Beretta (PER)/ Roberto Quiroz (ECU)

2017 Australia - Yu Hsiou Hsu (TPE)

2017 Wimbledon and US Open - Yu Hsiou Hsu (TPE)

Other Titles in Grades A/1

During the different years the boys competed in tournaments of the European tour, which usually began in Santa Croce and ended at Wimbledon, there was always a champion in singles in each of them.

Total number of boys players in different teams

326 boys' players have competed in all of the programs in which I was involved, some of them have been selected to

participate in the different tours in the same year and also some have played for two or more years as well.

The total number of countries that have received the opportunity to bring their players to the different tours is 65.

BEST PERFORMANCES OF FORMER ITF/GSDF JUNIOR PLAYERS ON THE PROFESSIONAL CIRCUITS

- Top 10 Pro Singles Ranking Players: Gustavo Kuerten (BRA), Mariano Puerta (ARG), Paradon Srichapan (THA), Marcos Baghdatis (CYP), Nicolas Massu (CHL), Nicolas Lappenti (ECU), Janko Tipsarevic (SRB)

- Top 20: Hernan Gummy (ARG), Victor Troicki (SRB), Jarkko Nieminen (FIN)

- Top 50: Fernando Meligeni (BRA), Luis Horna (PER), Thomas Belucci (BRA), Ricardas Berankis (LTU), Yen Hsun Lu (TWN), Hyeon Chung (KOR), Damir Dzumhur (BIH)

- Top 100: Mauricio Hadad (COL), Jimmy Zsypmanský (VEN), Luis Herrera (MEX), Ramon Delgado (PRY), Alejandro Hernandez (MEX), Yeu Tzoo Wang (TPE), Ryan Sweeting (USA), Gastao Elias (POR), Alejandro Gonzalez (COL), Radu Albot (MDA), Ricardo Mello (BRA)

GRAND SLAM TITLES

Singles as professionals

Gustavo Kuerten won the French Open title three times in singles: 1997, 2000 and 2001. He achieved a highest ATP ranking of # 1 in 2000.

Mariano Puerta from Argentina was runner up at the French Open in 2005. His highest ATP ranking was # 9 that same year.

Grand Slam Doubles Titles or Runner Up as Professionals

Wimbledon

2010, 2011 and 2012 - Horia Tecau (ROU), runner up

2013 - Marcelo Melo (BRA), runner up

2015 - Jean Julian Roger (NED)/ Horia Tecau (ROU), winners

2017 - Marcelo Melo (BRA), winner

Australian Open

2014 - Raven Klaasen (RSA), runner up

2016 - Bruno Soares (BRA), winner

2017 - Henri Kontinen (FIN), winner

French Open

2008 - Luis Horna (PER), winner

2015 - Marcelo Melo (BRA), winner

US Open

2010 - Aisham Ul-Haq Quereshi (PAK), runner up

2013 - Bruno Soares (BRA), runner up

2016 - Bruno Soares (BRA), winner

2017 - Jean Julian Roger (NED)/ Horia Tecau (ROU), winners



2017 GRAND SLAMS COMPETITIONS – PROFESSIONALS COMPETING

- Australian Open: A number of nine players who did the ITF juniors in the past were competing in the 2017 singles main draw. In doubles, fourteen players played main draw in this event
- Roland Garros: A total of nine players in singles who in the past were part of the ITF junior teams were competing this year in the main draw of the Roland Garros tournament, all of them in the top 100 of the ATP ranking. In doubles, fifteen players were part of the ITF team
- Wimbledon: Nine players in the singles draw with a top 100 pro ranking competed in this Grand Slam tournament. All of them were part of the ITF/GSDF team. In doubles fourteen players were competing
- US Open: A total of nine singles players competed in the main draw of this US Open and fourteen players did take part in the doubles tournament. All singles and doubles players were part of the ITF/GSDF teams

TOP PROFESSIONAL DOUBLES RANKED PLAYERS

All the players mentioned here were part of the ITF team and right now they are on the top professional doubles ranking: Melo, Kontinen, Soares, Tecau, Mergea, Aisham Quereshi, Jean Julian Roger, Klaasen, Julio Peralta, Hans Podlipnik. Bruno Soares was recognized as the 2016 ITF world doubles champion.

COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES

Among the benefits to be part of the ITF/GSDF teams is the opportunity the players have to finish their education and graduate for free or after finishing college to try to play professional tennis, as has happened in many cases. Many past members of the teams achieved playing college level tennis and gaining a university degree

CONCLUSION

I want to thank Doug MacCurdy who was the Development Director at that time, for having the vision to create this team and for confiding in me to be part of this. I would like to thank the ITF for the opportunity and confidence they gave me to be part of this team and I wish all the best in the future for the next teams. Thanks to I the GSDF for their support for this program and for giving the opportunities to many players to achieve their dreams. And last but not least, I want to thank all of the coaches who shared this great adventure of being part of the ITF/ GSDF team with me. I hope that my contributions have helped all the players who were part of those wonderful teams to achieve their best potential in their tennis and everyday life

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