



The Website of Maria Bueno, Tennis Champion



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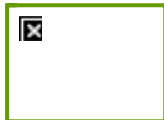
Birthday Celebration, 11 October 2007



It was Maria Esther's birthday on the 11th October and she was surprised by all the staff at her club in São Paulo, Sociedade Harmonia de Tênis, with three birthday cakes a beautiful bouquet of red roses.

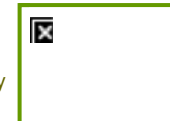
"I was told there was a fax for me in the supervisor's office," she said.

"When I opened the door, there they all were – everyone from the gardeners to the pros, the waiters and pool guys, in fact the entire club staff, all singing Happy Birthday to me! The only one missing was the chef who was cooking lunch... I was so astonished and touched, I burst into tears! It was really so nice of them all!"



Maria Esther Bueno (top left) shows off her birthday roses and cuts the cake (top right) watched by former tour pro Nico Mattar and brother Pedro...

...The whole group poses for posterity (left) and a relaxed portrait of Pedro with his sister.



BRAZILIAN WOMEN, 15 September 2007



Maria Esther appears in a beautiful coffee table book published recently by AB editora & cultura of São Paulo entitled 'Mulheres do Brasil (Brazilian Women)'.

It covers how the role women in society has grown in Brazil over the last decades to the point where they now shine on stages, in laboratories, running big corporations, even to piloting a war aircraft. In fact, women already account for more than 40% of the world's workforce.

Recognizing that women face a series of difficulties in the corporate world, Dow Brasil, sponsors of the book, give men and women equal work opportunities. Interestingly, the company has a goal to have women present in 30% of its leadership roles by 2012.

The book 'Brazilian Women' portrays the histories of 25 so-called famous working women.

With text by Patrícia Villalba in both Portuguese and English and plenty of photographs, it makes fascinating reading, although unfortunately it does show Maria Esther serving left-handed!

In the Preface, Pedro Suarez, President of Dow Latin America, says: "Who would be able to divide oneself between a just-born son and one of the world's most modern astronomic observatories? A woman, Thaisa Storchi-Bergmann, astrophysicist, astronomer and mother of three sons.

"What can be said about Valeria De Marco academic career, of one who has gone to public schools, started college at 17, and holds today a PhD by USP and is a reference as one of the most brilliant scholars of José de Alencar?"

"And who else but Maria Esther Bueno would be able to create a brilliant career in tennis, with more than 600 titles?"

"These women fight, inspire us all, today and ever."

For more details, visit [Antonio Bellini Editora](#) .



STUNNING STARS WIN IN NEW YORK, 12 September, 2007



Maria Esther looks back after the second week of the US Open: -

"It was an amazing performance by both Roger [Federer] and Justine [Henin], winning in New York. I really admired the way they both played, dominating their opponents and producing their best tennis when it really mattered.

And what a talent Novak Djokovic is!

I think he found the occasion pretty tough on Sunday and just couldn't convert those set points, double-faulting several times, which goes to show that it isn't easy to put Roger away in a big match like that.

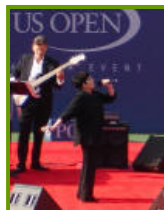


It was all about pressure and who could deal with it the best.



I was interested to see how Roger found his way past the young Serb to win his 12th Grand Slam. He didn't have any answers for a while there and was really lucky to win that first set. Then he began to dictate more and, like the great champion he is, came up with something special when he was threatened.

I'm sure it is going to be a lot tougher the next time these two meet.



Justine too deserves credit for a great tournament. She not only managed to beat both the two sisters, Serena and Venus [Williams], but also won the title – something no-one has done before. Both the matches against the Williams sisters were highly competitive matches and full of drama.

It was just a pity the final against [Svetlana] Kuznetsova was not of the same quality but then again, I think the Russian found the occasion a bit too much, although, of course, she did win here herself in 2004 and so we expected more from her.

As usual the Open was a huge success. We had beautiful weather for the full two weeks without any rain and attendance was over 700,000, breaking the record and making it the biggest sporting event in the world. The USTA also puts on a great show - Lisa Minnelli was the star turn before the men's final and was great!

I personally had a lot of fun working with the TV Globo/Sport TV team and we had plenty of laughs. We all put in some pretty long hours but I understand it was all well received back in Brazil so we should all be pretty happy for a job well done.



It was also fun to catch up with some old friends at the Final 8 Club cocktail party (see the pictures taken by Bev Raws), like [Wendy Turnbull](#) and [Anne Smith](#) to name but a few...



And so the last Grand Slam of the year is over and we all get to travel to points across the world, until it all starts again next year in Australia.

For now, we look forward to the Davis Cup and the build-up to the year-ending championships on the men's and women's tours.

That's the great thing about tennis – there is always something going on somewhere... Let's enjoy!"

For full results and details on the US Open > [Click Here](#) .

BREAKING BARRIERS IN NEW YORK, 1 September 2007

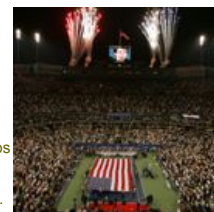
Maria says: -



"Now I am in New York for the US Open and it is the middle weekend and things are beginning to hot up.

On Monday evening the USTA held a special ceremony commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Althea Gibson's first singles title at the 1957 US National Championships themed "Breaking Barriers".

Althea died a few years ago and it was a pity she couldn't see everyone honouring her.



It was also an opening night tribute to a host of African-American women who have broken barriers in the world of sports, entertainment, science, politics and the arts, pioneers like Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, astronaut Dr Mae Jemison and Aretha Franklin and others.

The very impressive list of high achievers included the Chief of Police of Detroit, a billionaire and the first senator, who were presented on court in front of a sell-out crowd.



Then there was a unique programme of back-to-back singles matches featuring Serena Williams, the first African-American woman to win the Open since Althea in 1999, followed by her sister Venus, the first African-American woman to win Wimbledon since Althea that same year.

All week we have been hearing about Althea and her achievements. She had such a huge influence on so many people, it is amazing. Check out the section on the US Open website > [Althea Gibson](#) for more on all this.

I feel proud to have played a small part in her life as her partner at Wimbledon in 1958. It was funny because I had lost my singles and we were going on for our doubles match when she told me to get a grip because she was not going to lose the ladies doubles championships! It was quite a lesson for me and we did go on the win that year, my first Wimbledon title!



So far the women's matches here have been rather one-sided and the seeds are only now beginning to be pressed by the opposition. It should get more interesting from here on in.

Actually, it has all been a bit routine until the James Blake / Fabrice Santoro match on Wednesday night which finally set alight Arthur Ashe Stadium and was full of drama, going the full distance into the early hours of the morning. This is what New Yorkers love!

Then yesterday we had a great battle between Novak Djokovic and Radek Stepanek on Armstrong that seem to last all day.

It took 4 hours and 44 minutes and came down to the final set tiebreak and you couldn't get an extra body onto that court to watch these two fight it out if you had wanted to. There were huge lines outside hoping to get in to see the match, which was played in a wonderful spirit of sportsmanship that is a credit to both players.

Djokovic is certainly one to watch and is a real threat to both Federer and Nadal.



As always at the Grand Slams, conditions are improving and this year there have been enormous changes to the player areas, particularly the locker rooms and lounge.

The organisers are always trying to make things better for the public, players and media so the experience improves all the time. The USTA is being rewarded with record attendance.

There are a lot of new faces around too and I am busy each day doing the live transmission back to Brazil for TV Globo and Sport TV. It's very different to playing, or being a spectator, and I have to make sure I am up to speed on what is going on, doing research into the players who are on court and picking up on newsworthy items.

It is keeping me on my toes!"

AFTER THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES, August 2007



Maria sums up her thoughts in the Games: -

"The Pan American Games was quite an experience.

The weather, unfortunately, was at its worst for the full two weeks and the courts got soaked day after day so it was a real struggle to prepare them for the matches.

The conditions were difficult for the players, some who had to play two or three matches a day to complete the schedule.

Somehow Flavio Saretta from Brazil won the gold medal. He was in huge trouble against the Argentine Eduardo Schwank in the semi final, going two match points down and scrapping his way to win the tiebreak. His opponent collapsed after that!



He did the same in the final against Adrian Garcia from Chile, who couldn't close out the match either. The final was moved indoors to complete and had no spectators whatsoever, which was a great pity as the surroundings were a bit sad.

It's rather a coincidence that the same thing happened four years ago when Fernando Meligeni came back against Marcello Rios to take the gold.

The two weeks in Rio was hard work and the level of tennis was rather low compared to the pro tours, which we're more used to, but I think it was a good experience for everyone involved."

AT THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES, 26 July 2007



Maria has been in Rio de Janeiro covering the Pan American Games for TV Globo and Sport TV.

With 42 countries from the Americas participating over 16 days, the Pan is a regional edition of the Olympics and although many top athletes are not competing in their sports, it is a good training ground for aspiring young sports men and women.



Full details can be found on [the official Rio 2007 website](#).

The tennis event was restricted to 48 men and 32 women singles players and held at the [Clube Marapendi](#) where Maria has been watching with interest: -



"This has been quite an experience for me as I have had no involvement with the Pan American Games since 1963 when I won the singles gold medal in São Paulo. Then of course, I was playing and now, here in Rio, I am seeing things from a quite different perspective as a television commentator.

"I have been very privileged to spend time with many of the VIPs, including Mario Vazquez Ranã, President of ODEPA [\[the Pan American Sports Organisation or La Organización Deportiva Panamericana\]](#). We watched some of the tennis together.

"The women's tennis events have been completed and, as expected, Milagros Sequera, the top seed from Venezuela who is ranked 49 on the WTA Tour, won the gold medal in the singles, while the Argentine pair of Jorgelina Cravero and Betina Jozami took the doubles gold.

"Brazil won the bronze medal in the doubles when Joanna Cortez and Teliena Pereira beat the Americans Audra Cohen and Megan Falcon in the third place play-off. They saved three set points and then won the next 11 games and the crowd went wild, even doing the Mexican wave!

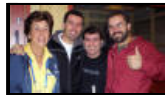
"The event is being played on clay courts and the awful rain we had last week hasn't helped the playing conditions at Marapendi. It's a credit to the ground staff that the courts are playable at all but they are still soft and slippery.

"So far the Brazilian men are still in contention with Flavio Saretta and Marcos Daniel reaching the quarters. Saretta, who is now ranked 139 on the men's tour, is the top seed, while Daniel is seeded four and is in the same half of the draw. We also have Thiago Alves who is the third seed but he is a round behind in the lower half of the draw.

"It hasn't been easy for the players as the weather has been so bad. Apart from the rain delays, it has been very windy and they have had to play two matches a day to try to catch up the schedule, which is never easy. It got so bad, the Pan flame went out in the cauldron at the Maracanã Stadium and they had to relight it overnight.



"It's been hard for the spectators too, to wait for the events to get going. I had fun signing tennis balls and hitting them up into the stands for them one evening.



"I've been amazed at how many people ask for my autograph here, even young people from other sports far away from tennis! To find such interest in me by the people of Rio, I'm really touched by their friendly reaction.

"As for the Pan, I think it's a pity that some of the better players have opted to stay away when countries like Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela fielded their top players. The standard in the tennis could have been so much better in both the men's and women's events.

"Many say that tennis shouldn't be in the Olympics at all but the fact is it helps the sport develop around the world because it ensures that funding received from the IOC is directed towards the growth of tennis.

"The Pan is important too because it gives players a taste of competing in an Olympic-style event and, believe me, it is quite a different experience to playing on the tour or at a Grand Slam. All the events are treated the same so imagine tennis being played along the same lines as track-and-field or volleyball!

"If a player is serious about winning an Olympic gold medal, then they have to know how to cope with these types of conditions. Tennis players are so well looked after these days wherever they play around the world that they have come to expect certain things. These things are not around at an event like this and maybe that's not such a bad thing, once in a while.



"Brazil is eager to demonstrate it can host a large international event like this well and I think on the whole the organising committee here in Rio has done a great job. So much is involved, from providing sports venues up to international standards to housing and security."

There'll be more from Maria after the completion of the games.

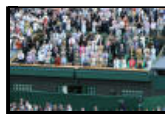
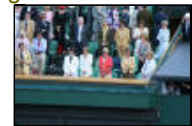
A FINE WIMBLEDON IN THE END, 9 July 2007



Maria continued her live daily news reports to [TV Globo](#) and her Blog as ['Wimbledon by Maria Esther'](#) last week.

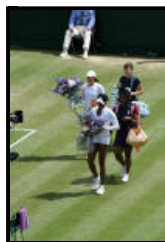
Here she wraps-up her thoughts on another spectacular fortnight at SW19...

"It really is amazing how Wimbledon could manage to finish on time after two weeks of horrible weather. It got quite controversial as some players had matches lasting for days and others had a week off but in the end the final weekend saw the sun and some great tennis.



"I was honoured to be a guest in the Royal Box for ladies finals day and was surrounded by friends, legends like [Bjorn] Borg, Billie Jean [King] and Martina [Navratilova] and other past champions.

"Sandra Reynolds from South Africa was there too, my opponent in the 1960 final, so we had a chance to catch up a bit, which was nice.



"I also talked to the Duke of Kent and Prince Michael and saw lots of international friends from around the world.

"Sitting there, watching Venus win, felt rather strange, not in terms of the tennis but because she was never really in contention at the start of The Championships, let alone Marion Bartoli who came from no-where.

"The French woman was very ill earlier in the year and played only two events before Wimbledon – Birmingham and Eastbourne – so it is quite something that she got to the final, playing really well.



"Venus spoke to me after most of her matches and told me she was taking it all very seriously. She found her form when she beat Sharapova in the quarters, returning unbelievable well.



"Once we got to the final itself there was never really any doubt though, mostly because of Venus' desire to win. It can't have been easy to play someone as unconventional as Bartoli who wasn't supposed to be there so that was added pressure, but both players handled the occasion very well in their own ways.

"I was surprised at Bartoli and what a character she is. She was very amusing and the crowd loved her for it. She also put up a credible fight but it was Venus' time again.

"On Sunday we had the dream men's final with [Roger] Federer against [Rafael] Nadal but it wasn't a great classic, other than the historic significance of the match for Roger – to win 5 times and equal Borg's incredible record. They played some magnificent points and also made some horrible errors but, fittingly, it went to five sets of real drama.



"I'm really pleased Federer won because he is the best player around on the grass but I'm sure Raffa will win at Wimbledon one day soon because he wants to be the best. It's nice to see such commitment, particularly as grass is not his best surface. He has always said he wants to win Wimbledon.



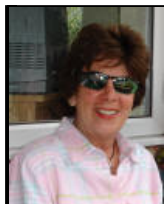
"It's been wonderful to be back at Wimbledon again, even if the weather was poor and there was no roof on centre court.

"Sitting there, watching, I remember every single moment I spent out there on that court. It's like a movie in my head, reliving all the situations I faced and enjoying those when I won.

"It seems like only yesterday!"



LOOKING BACK OVER THE FIRST WEEK OF WIMBLEDON, 30 June 2007



Maria has been filing a live daily report on the behind-the-scenes news to [TV Globo](#) as well as doing her [Blog as 'Wimbledon by Maria Esther'](#).

We caught up with her today to give us some of the highlights.

"The star of the week has been the weather, always posing the question – will there be play or won't there? There is nothing worse than a tournament with no tennis so we keep hoping for play but today we only had about an hour's play, which is a shame for the crowds.

"No matter what the weather, Wimbledon still has full capacity every day with plenty more standing in line outside.

"It's also very unique because players like to stay nearby rather than in hotels in town. About 200 beautiful homes are available for rent costing between £400 to £8,000 a week and we know that Federer, Nadal, Mauresmo, Navratilova and Billie Jean King take advantage of this, and lots of others.

"It gives them a chance to relax and do their own thing.

"Nadal has fellow Spaniards Feliciano Lopez and Albert Costa staying with him and he loves to cook so he baked a cake for Costa on Monday because it was his birthday. His father has a restaurant and Raffa thinks he is a great chef specialising in pasta and fish!

"Security has been a big feature here, particularly after the discovery of two car bombs in London that, thankfully, did not detonate.

"Strangely, defending champion Amélie Mauresmo was stopped taking her bike into the grounds when Martina Navratilova was allowed to ride her's in. Perhaps this is something to do with the number of titles you have won and I might qualify?

"It is quite surprising what some players get up to when it is raining. We know some play cards or computer games, listen to music or read books but Vince Spadea spends his time writing Rap music and he has written a special one for Andy Roddick which he tested out on a pretty girl in one of the sales kiosks.

"John McEnroe and Boris Becker are off to Wembley tomorrow for the Princes' Concert in memory of their mother, Princess Diana. Mac is a rock musician, married to the lead singer of a rock group, but apparently will not be performing. He and Boris are introducing a band from Hollywood called Orson.

"There have been no real surprises as yet in the tennis with the favourites doing enough to win through to the second week.

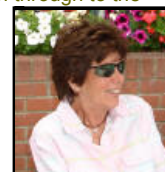
"We need the weather to improve so the best players can play the better players in good conditions. The roofless centre court is windier and brighter than usual and we want to see some exciting matches in the sun.

"One thing that has struck me is how well the French players, and there are many of them – both men and women – play on the grass. They all seem to be able to serve and volley well.

"At Queen's Mahut came through to be beaten by Roddick in the final after having match points, then played through three rounds of qualifying and made it through to the second round before losing to Gasquet.

"Now another newcomer worth watching is coming through the draw, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga who looks like a young Mohammed Ali. He is in the last 16 and now he plays the French number one, Richard Gasquet."

Any predictions? "Not yet!"



WIMBLEDON BLOG, 23 June 2007



As part of her duties for TV Globo and Sport TV, Maria will be producing her own Blog on the [TV Globo website](#).



This will be in Portuguese but some of her thoughts will be reflected here on this website over the coming fortnight at Wimbledon.

For starters, she has been explaining to Brazilian fans all about the intricacies of Wimbledon.

"Wimbledon is the most traditional tournament in the world and yet it is also the most innovative," Maria says on her Wimbledon Blog.

"The club was the first Grand Slam to accept professionals and amateurs in 1968 and while it has no on-court sponsorship, it is probably the most commercially run of all the tournaments.

"By 2009 the Centre Court will have a retractable roof so play can continue when it rains and we all know it always rains at Wimbledon!

"Building work has been going on for a couple of years but you would never know it when it comes to The Championships as there is hardly any sign of the changes.

"It will be a very different Centre Court this year though as it has no roof at all. I took a look today and spectators, even those in the Royal Box, will have to have hats or umbrellas to fend off the weather. We are all hoping for the hats!



"This year they are introducing Hawkeye onto Centre and No 1 courts with big screens that will make it look quite different.

"This is the line-calling system that has been so successful elsewhere on the pro tours. Players can query the line calls and a computerised system replays the flight of the ball onto the screens in the stadium.



"Spectators love it and it has improved the line-calling because players are embarrassed to get it wrong and umpires don't have to over-rule anymore.

"It has been used at Wimbledon as a television aid for the past few years but this year the players will have the right to 3 incorrect calls as opposed to 2 at other events. This is because the serve is so important on the grass. If a player gets it right, he gets to keep his calls. When they reach a tie-break, they get an extra call.

"The idea is to keep everyone honest but, interestingly, at the Davis Cup final last year players had unlimited challenges that prompted very few challenges so there is an argument for having no restriction on the number of incorrect calls a player can make.

"The build-up to Wimbledon is always so exciting. You only have to look at players like Federer and Nadal with their sights on the title.

"Nadal has always recognised that Wimbledon is the most important tournament in the world and although he is clay court player, he has been working on his grass court game since the beginning.



"So many players try to say Wimbledon doesn't matter, the grass is for cows and so on. How wrong they are. A Wimbledon title puts you up there with the best for ever.

"As for the women, this is the first time Wimbledon is offering equal prize money with the men and the debate will continue on that. Some compare the number of sets played and the difference in standard but really it is about men and women being treated equally on all stages."

FULLY RECOVERED, 1 June 2007



Maria had her left hip reviewed in April and is now well on the road to full recovery.

The procedure was necessary due to the gradual deterioration of the original hip replacement that was done in 1991.

"Despite the fact that replacing a replacement is always a more difficult operation, it all went very well," said Maria.

"I was on crutches for 6 weeks but now I am walking pretty normally without any aids and it's amazing!"

Maria is gearing herself up to go back to work at Wimbledon for TV Globo, and hopes to start hitting tennis balls again soon.

"It's a good incentive for me to get well," she said. "First it is Wimbledon, then I am off to the Pan American Games being held in Rio de Janeiro from 14th July, and on to the US Open in

August.

"I'm going to take it very easy when I do get back onto court as I really want to be fully recovered and to build up my strength without putting too much pressure on the new hip. It is really a miracle to be pain free and walking well. Playing again will be an added blessing!"

BRASIL OPEN AT COSTA DO SAUIPE, February 2007



Maria spent five days at Costa do Sauipe in the north of Brazil, co-hosting with the organisers various events over lunch and dinner, including lots of TV celebrities and singing groups as well as politicians and other personalities who attended the ATP Tour event there.

She also conducted a clinic for guests of the organisers, Octagon Koch Tavares, plus a further exclusive clinic for six lucky winners of a Sport TV competition draw who also received a special kit including a towel, shirt, cap and other goodies in a beautiful promotional sports bag.

"In the end we let in more people as so many turned up just to watch," said Maria. "It was amazing!"

Alongside these activities, Maria spent many hours in the commentary box helping to provide Sport TV's extensive coverage of the tournament with a healthy dose of her unique insight and humour into the game.

On the final day she had to sprint down from the box onto court for the prize-giving to the eventual winner, wild card Guillermo Canas after he upset top-seeded Juan Carlos Ferrero 7-6 (4) 6-2 to win his first tournament since returning from a 15-month doping ban and securing his first title since 2004 in Shanghai.



"I'm really happy to win this first title after my return," said Canas, the 29-year-old Argentine afterwards. "The match was really close with both of us playing very well. I played better the key points of the match to win this final."

Canas resumed his playing career unranked in September and won five challenger tournaments in South America to get his ranking up to just outside 100, warranting his wild card entry to the main tour.

"It's a real credit to his tenacity that Guillermo was willing to fight his way through the smaller events to re-establish himself on the tour," commented Maria. "I'm sure he will do well as he feels he has a lot to prove and make up for."

FUN PIX, January 2007

We are indebted to photographer Art Seitz who has sent in the following great images of Maria from his extensive library for exclusive use on this website: -



Any ideas when and where these were taken?

To contact Art Seitz, please email ASeitz2690@aol.com

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