



The Website of Maria Bueno, Tennis Champion



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2008 NEWS

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MARIA ESTHER AND RONALDO, 13 December 2008

Up



It was a day for Brazilian sporting legends who hail from São Paulo when Maria joined Ronaldo for the inauguration of the Sportwear Nike Juventus store there on Saturday.



2010

Brazil's soccer hero, Ronaldo, has recently signed for the Corinthians soccer club, the second best team in Sao Paulo, but has yet to set a date for his official return to the sport following a serious knee injury sustained in February at AC Milan.

2009

"I am only going to return to play when I am ready," he told his fans recently. "I hope that my return will be as soon as possible so I can prove myself on the field and I want to show the world that I am able to overcome yet another difficult obstacle."



2008

2007



Maria was happy to play a part in the proceedings at the new Nike store, saying: "It is always nice to spend time with elite athletes who have trained hard and found success in their sport. Ronaldo has some work to do to overcome his injury and get back into shape but this is just another challenge to be overcome and I'm sure he will just do it!"

2006

2005

2004

MORE TREE PLANTING, 8 December 2008



In a special ceremony held in a park in São Paulo, 27 trees were planted today honouring the City's World and Olympic Champions. There are 27 of them and 17 were present for the planting, including Maria. The new trees will eventually grow up around the unique sculpture unveiled on this day.



After a band had played the National Anthem and speeches made by the Mayor and the Minister of Sport, each sporting star set about planting their own tree. Maria was then asked to say a few words on behalf of all the champions present.

"It was a great honour and quite unexpected," she told her website. "I told them that on behalf of us all I felt it was the best thing they could do to help keep the names of those who set the history of the various sports in the public's eye. By preserving this memory in green, it is also a very modern and right thing to do!"



Maria was told that her tree - a Pau Cigarra - promised to grow very tall and would bloom with pretty blue flowers and a beautiful fragrance.

HARMONIA CLUB CELEBRATIONS, September 2008



The Sociedade Harmonia de Tênis in Sao Paulo celebrates its anniversary each year during the month of September and part of the programme this year included honouring Maria with a silver tray, glasses and a bottle of Argentine wine presented by a visiting Argentine delegation of tennis players.



2008 is the 78th year of Harmonia and a wide range of activities brings all the members together. These ranged from a tournament and clinics to a gala dinner.

DAVIS CUP FINAL, November 2008



Maria was back in the commentary box in Rio for the Davis Cup final between Argentina and Spain held indoors in Mar del Plata from 21-23 November.

"This was the best chance Argentina had to win the Davis Cup for the first time and they were considered favourites when (Rafael) Nadal didn't come," Maria recalls.

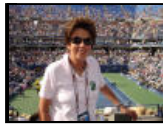
"The Argentines picked the venue, the surface, the balls – everything to try to disrupt Nadal but when he didn't show up, it all worked against them. It was live until the third day, demonstrating how close it was, but it turned out

to be quite dramatic win for Spain when Fernando Verdasco substituted for David Ferrer to beat Jose Acasuso.

"Acasuso replaced Juan Martin del Potro and it took Verdasco nearly four hours to beat him in five sets to seal Spain's third Davis Cup title. It was yet another triumph for Spain in an incredible year for them, this time without Nadal's help."



THE US OPEN IN NEW YORK, August/September 2008



Almost immediately the US Open followed the Olympics one week later in New York and Maria was there.

"The Open is one of the most important events in the calendar and with the Olympics in Beijing the top players who won through only had a week to recover," commented Maria.

"Once again it proved to be a great tournament, with wonderful hospitality provided by the USTA who put on such a good show.

"In the women's draw there were lots of surprises but the top four came through in the men's.

"Andy Murray has always been a great prospect and he is now turning into a real star. Over the past few months he has matured from a talented boy into an accomplished man capable of playing great tennis. His great run was stopped by Roger Federer in the final but he will have learnt from that experience for the future.

"To see Roger take one Grand Slam this year was a credit to him as he has struggled with his health and it is tough to stay at the top of your game when you are not feeling a hundred percent.

"Having said that, most players would have been happy to have achieved what he did this year despite his patchy form."

OLYMPICS FROM RIO, July 2008



Maria covered the whole of The Olympic Games from Beijing for TV Globo based in Rio, working through the night because of the time difference.

"It was quite an experience for me because we covered lots of different sports, not only the tennis," Maria told her website.

"It was incredible to sit alongside the experts in other sports and I learned a lot about them all. Sport TV and Globo got the best on the team to comment of their sport and so the standard was very high.

"I was interested to see how well the top players supported the Olympic Tennis Event. They were all there – the ones not in Beijing were either injured or ineligible with the exception of Andy Roddick who opted out to concentrate on playing the US Open, his home Grand Slam.

"Spain has done really well in sports this year, starting with Rafael Nadal's win in France, the national team winning the European Cup in football and then Nadal winning Wimbledon and Olympic Gold.

"It was also great to see how Roger Federer handled his defeat in the singles, going out to play doubles with Wawrinka as if it was the last match of his life. He changed overnight from being tired and disappointed to setting a great example by playing a really great doubles match to win the Gold medal. It meant so much to him.

"Another great match was the bronze medal match between Novak Djokovic and James Blake, which Djokovic won.

"In the women's, it was all about the Russians. Elena Dementieva took the gold, beating Dinara Safina in three sets in the final, while Vera Zvonareva took the bronze medal against local favourite Li Na.

"There is a lot of controversy still about whether tennis should be in the Olympics or not. I for one believe it should and I would have loved to have experienced playing in it. You only had to look at the players enjoying the Opening Ceremony to feel they were loving every minute of it!"

WIMBLEDON FROM AFAR, June/July 2008



Maria couldn't make it to London for Wimbledon this year due to personal problems, which was disappointing.

"Wimbledon is a highlight of my year and it is now many years since I didn't make it over," she said.

"You feel you are missing out on all the buzz when you are not there as the whole tennis world comes together to catch up on everything. It was unbelievably disappointing but I did get to cover one of the best finals ever. It will be up there together with the famous Borg v McEnroe final."

Maria provided her expert commentary on the matches for audiences of Sport TV in Brazil, which included the magnificent men's final between Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal – one of the all-time great matches.

"It was such a great contest," recalls Maria. "Two gladiators fighting to the end in very difficult conditions. It had us all guessing until the very last point, while the quality of play was quite extraordinary. Because of the rain delays the match lasted all day and was just completed in time before it got dark – very dramatic at the end!"

"The fact that Rafa finally beat Roger on the grass, winning Wimbledon for the first time on Federer's favourite court, was particularly historic and I was pleased for him although it was a pity that Roger didn't make his sixth title in a row... now that would have been unbelievable.

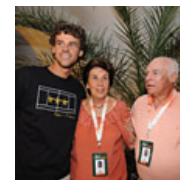
"It could have gone either way and turned out to be a great result for Nadal. I really admire him because he is the only clay-court specialist who hasn't said that grass is for cows and has always wanted to win on that surface. He was prepared to become very good on grass and deserves his title on it."

COSTA DO SAUIPE, February 2008



Maria was on assignment for TV Globo at the Brazilian Open held at the glamorous resort on the Costa do Sauipe in the north of Brazil.

She spent the week there staging teaching clinics on court between her commentaries on the matches and doing PR with the sponsors and their guests



She also advised the organisers on the celebrations of Guga's career that coincided with the tournament and Gustavo Kuerten's retirement year. She said a few words to the Brazilian favourite on court when he was presented with a cup sporting the country's national colours.



Together with Guga, Maria also planted a tree for the environment as part of a grand scheme to plant a forest of some 5,000 trees over the coming months at the resort.

"It was a fun week," said Maria. "Nicolas Almgagro beat another Spaniard, Carlos Moya, in three long sets in the final but it was really the festivities surrounding Guga that caught the public's attention. This was one of many appearances in his retirement year and was particularly enjoyable for him because he had a lot of friends and his family here with him."

(Photos by João Pires - FotoJump)

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