



The Website of Maria Bueno, Tennis Champion



- Home
- Up
- Feedback
- Site Map
- Search

THE MEETING OF THE TWO MARIAS, 8 December 2009

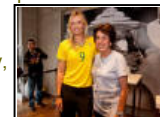
- Home
- Up
- News Updates
- Maria's Lifestory
- Photo Gallery
- Poetry in Motion
- Career Highlights
- Press Cuttings



Tennis played centre stage in Brazil this past weekend when Maria Sharapova and Gisela Dulko visited Sao Paulo and paid homage to local legend Maria Esther Bueno, who has been celebrating her 50th anniversary since winning Wimbledon for the first time all year.

At a news conference held in a downtown shopping mall, Sharapova said she was pleased to be in Sao Paulo. Asked if she knew Maria Bueno, she smiled, replying:

"I know she has won a lot more than me and I am very excited to meet her. Leaving a small country, it's amazing what she achieved," said Sharapova, referring to the lack of tennis tradition in Brazil at the time.



It was the meeting of the two Marias, both former world number ones and Wimbledon champions, and although the great Brazilian leads the tally with 19 Grand Slam titles to her name and topped the world rankings in 1959, '60, '64 and '66, the Russian is a superstar in her own right and attracts huge attention wherever she goes.

They met at the Nike store for a photo-call and blocked traffic on Oscar Freire, playing tennis over a make-shift net in the road and drawing the attention of passers by.



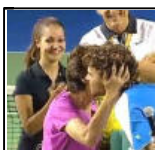
People stopped their cars to get out and watch, clapping the two Marias as they volleyed balls to each other.

The tennis stars travelled to Porto Felix for an exhibition match between Sharapova and Dulko, which took place on Saturday on a specially constructed tennis court in front of 800 invited guests at a new and exclusive residential complex some 87 kilometers outside Sao Paulo.

Before play, Sharapova played a brilliantly supporting role alongside the Argentine and Gustavo Kuerten, who made an emotional speech as part of the tribute to Maria, who won her first Grand Slam singles title 50 years ago.



Smiling, Sharapova presented Maria with a Tiffany necklace, while Dulko offered her flowers.



Guga, a three-times champion at Roland Garros, gave Maria a commemorative plaque, took the microphone and said: "Maria Esther began the history of tennis in Brazil. It was good I could contribute to the continuation of that story and I feel very happy today, to be able to commend her for her achievements as it is so easy for us to overlook our idols. For me it is both an honour and a thrill to be here with her today."

The event took place at Fazenda Boa Vista, a real estate project built around artificial lakes and two golf courses offering luxury residences as well as restaurants and shops.

An indoor stadium was built with a synthetic tennis court for the exhibition match, which was covered by TV Globo with Maria Bueno in the commentary box.

It was the Russian who eventually prevailed over the Argentine, who had dismissed her from this year's Wimbledon Championships, 6-3 3-6 [10-7].



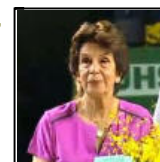
"They both played well and everyone enjoyed the occasion," said Maria Bueno. "I was very touched to be included and to receive such tributes from them all."

Maria conducted a clinic for 56 specially invited guests, which was watched by representatives of the media. For the last 10 minutes or so, Sharapova and Dulko joined in hitting with participants and having fun.

Giant screens at both ends of the court displayed an edited version of TV Globo's tribute to Maria Bueno entitled Wimbledon Ballerina.

"It all created a lot of interest and I was busy with interviews for all the TV stations and newspapers, which has resulted in lots of coverage that has to be good for tennis in Brazil," said Maria Esther.

"I was really impressed with Maria and Gisela, both of whom are very nice and extremely professional. It was a pleasure to meet them both.



"For me it was a perfect way to conclude the year's celebrations, which started at Wimbledon and continued through the US Open in New York."

To see the two Marias in action visit YouTube via the following link > [Click Here](#) and [Here](#).

A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE! 11 October 2009



Maria celebrated her 70th birthday in São Paulo with a series of parties with friends and family.

On the day itself, Francisco and Sandra Vasconcellos hosted a lunch in their home for around 45 guests from the Sociedade Harmonia de Tênis, Maria's club.

'Chef França' produced an impressive array of pastas with different salads, aided by 'Sous-chef Mariana Wanderley', while the home-baked birthday cake was made by Angela Wanderley and featured a tennis court complete with Maria perched on the edge!



"Everyone got together to bring something to the party and we had a spectacular lunch and a fun time together," said Maria. "I was very touched by all their kindness.

"There were 5 or 6 sommeliers present so there were special wines too.

"It was an incredible party set in a beautiful home, which made it a very special occasion for me. I really appreciate everyone's efforts – it was on a par with the Wimbledon celebrations earlier this year!"



US OPEN WRAP, September 2009

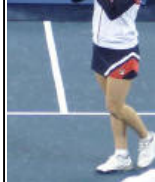
And when it was all over, Maria was asked to summarise her thoughts on this year's US Open Championships.

"It started out on track and produced a new champion in the form of Juan Martin del Potro, which was a real surprise," she said.

"None of us picked him as the winner, especially with the form that Roger Federer showed on his way in and the way Andy Murray was playing but del Potro just got better and better proved to be a worthy winner.

"He took care of some big names in the draw too, including Juan Carlos Ferrero, Marin Cilic and Rafa Nadal and then dethroned Federer when it looked like the Swiss couldn't lose. Quite something!

"Kim's win too was completely unpredicted and her story is also really something out of a fairy tale, winning the US Open in 2005, retiring to get married and to have a baby, and then returning to win the title again.



"She seemed so relaxed and just captivated the fans. She deserved to win because she played really well throughout the two weeks, beating the two Williams sisters on the way and holding her nerve until the very last ball.

"The Open was marred by two days of rain which always makes things difficult for everyone – players, spectators and media – I know because we had a lot of air time to fill!

"There was a lot of talk about why the USTA didn't use covers to protect the showcourt and why they didn't build a roof like Wimbledon as we watched the rain fall. Of course there were no real answers but it kept us busy!

"In all I would say it was another highly successful Open that once again finished a day late but what is that really? One year I had to wait for a hurricane to clear and it took a week before we could play the final. That's just the way it goes!"



HONOURED, September 2009

Maria was honoured during the delayed semi final between Kim Clijsters and Serena Williams when she was introduced to the Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd.

It happened towards the end of the first set when the stadium was full and as Maria waved to everyone, she was given a standing ovation by many.

"I was very touched," she said later. "It means a lot to me to have my accomplishments recognised because I feel I made a contribution towards women's tennis that is sometimes forgotten by the younger generations who think it all started with the WTA.

That is certainly not the case with the founder of the Women's Tennis Association, Billie Jean King, who is quick to acknowledge the remarkable career of Maria Bueno at every given opportunity.

"Maria was a big star who caught the interest of the fans at a time when the men took centre stage. She helped lay the groundwork for what was to come," recalls King. "She deserves to be recognised."



And recognised she was again when USTA President, Lucy Garvin, invited her to conduct the coin toss on court at the start of the women's final between Kim





Clijsters and Carolina Wozniacki. It was the first time the honour was bestowed on anyone other than the chair umpire at the US Open.



"It was a real thrill to walk out onto the stadium," said Maria. "I was surprised at how bright the lights are on the playing area and how big the court feels, but that's how I like it."

And the crowd loved it too.

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY, September 2009



Maria put in many hours commentating on the on-court action with the SporTV crew and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, paying tribute to her co-workers.

"They are a great team and pull together, even when things don't go so well," she said.

"We had a lot of technical problems at the beginning, which made life difficult at first - things like loss of feed or audio and that is a nightmare when you are trying to transmit back to Brazil but the crew solved it all and were wonderful to work with.

"They are a little crazy too, which makes life interesting... you have to stay on your toes because you don't know what is going to happen next!"

GRAND SLAM EXHIBITION, September 2009



One year later she was the first player to win the Grand Slam in doubles, a feat that was recognised in the exhibition put on by the International Tennis Hall of Fame in the US Open Gallery at Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre in Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

Maria won her Calendar Grand Slam with different partners – Christine Truman Janes in Australia and Darlene Hard at Roland Garros, Wimbledon and Forest Hills.

The Gallery is located in Louis Armstrong Stadium and each year the ITHOF puts on an exhibit that is visited by thousands of spectators over the course of the US Open.

This year the exhibit was entitled 'The Grand Slam: Tennis' Ultimate Achievement' and told the stories of those unique individuals who have captured the Grand Slam in singles, doubles and mixed doubles and on the junior level, highlighting the path each took to etch his or her name into tennis history by a show of great determination and perseverance.

The Grand Slam is made of titles at the Australian Open, the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open.

It means winning four major championships in one calendar year, on four different surfaces and in four different time zones.

In terms of ranking points, tradition, prize money awarded and public attention, they are the most prestigious events of the tennis year and winning the Grand Slam is the single hardest feat in tennis.

In 1933, Australian Jack Crawford won the first three majors of the year: the Australian, the French and Wimbledon. When he arrived at Forest Hills, talk began of a "clean sweep of the Big Four titles."

John Kiernan, New York Times columnist and noted bridge player, wrote, "If Crawford wins, it would be something like scoring a grand slam on the courts, doubled and vulnerable."

Crawford's date with destiny fell one set short to Fred Perry in the finals but five years later, American Don Budge did what Crawford could not: capture tennis' first Grand Slam.

Allison Danzig, the New York Times writer, borrowed Kiernan's phrase to describe Budge's feat, and it has remained in use ever since.



Maria was asked for a few words to accompany her exhibit and she wrote: "I am really proud to have achieved the very first Grand Slam in doubles in a calendar year as nobody had ever done this before!"

"In 1960 the media didn't pay too much attention to that, but it has become clear since that this is not easily done and while I feel very honoured, I often get forgotten in the record books.

"When we travelled to Australia we stayed for three months because it was such a long journey.

"It took me 60 hours to get there and 60 to return so we made the best of it, playing doubles as well as singles and mixed.

"I was always very keen to play doubles and, in fact, I played all three events most of the time – something that doesn't happen anymore, which is a great pity.

"I won with Christine Truman (Janes) in Australia but then teamed up with Darlene Hard in Paris, Wimbledon and at the Nationals at Forest Hills, winning all four majors in a row, which was a unique accomplishment.



"If I have any message for the players of today it is not to narrow your game to just one discipline because the mix of singles and doubles provides you with an all-round winning game. It certainly helped me."

NEW YORK CELEBRATIONS, August 2009

It's been a particularly busy period for Maria since Wimbledon.

She returned home to cover the Davis Cup for SporTV and had a few weeks to sort a few domestic things out before taking off again for New York and the US Open.

The Big Apple proved to be as exciting as Wimbledon in that 2009 marked the 50th Anniversary of Maria's first singles win at Forest Hills in 1959 when she defeated Christine Truman Janes 6-1 6-4 in just 42 minutes.



APRÉS WIMBLEDON, 8 July 2009



Maria had a pleasant surprise when Tim Phillips, Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, invited her to join in a little-known tradition involving The Committee and Centre Court.

After a very pleasant lunch at the club today, Maria had the opportunity to hit some balls on the Centre Court before rain forced proceedings indoors.

"It was a real joy to hit on Centre," she said. "I never thought I would ever get the chance again."

"I asked them why they didn't close the roof – after all, they have one now – but unfortunately for us, it was undergoing maintenance tests on the rollers or something, so we got soaking wet in the deluge because none of us wanted to come off!"

It did not dampen the mood, however, and the tennis continued in the covered courts.



THE CHAMPIONS' DINNER, 5 July 2009



After a full day of tennis at Wimbledon, the Champions are honoured at an exclusive dinner that this year took place at London's Intercontinental Hotel.

Around 500 guests arrived to be serenaded by Passionata, an all female rock-opera group of classical singers that fuse rock and classical opera to create a unique sound that has already generated widespread acclaim.

Maria joined Rod Laver, Neil Fraser and Ashley Cooper on former AELTC Chairman, John Curry's table.



"We were right up by the stage next to the top table where Serena and Roger dined with Tim Phillips," said Maria.

"It was a wonderful evening, full of glamour and history as the Chairman introduces all the past champions and the winners of The Championships who are present."

Maria wore another dramatic creation by Daniella Helayel whose fashion house Issa is attracting the attention of celebrities and folk from all walks of life.

"I have really enjoyed these dresses," said Maria. "Daniella is very talented and creative and our collaboration has been fun."



FEDERER BREAKS THE RECORD AFTER MARATHON, 5 July 2009



"What can we say about Roger?" asked Maria after the 4 hour 15 minute men's final on Sunday.

"He looked a bit shaky at times, especially in that very long final set that could've gone either way, and Andy Roddick played incredibly consistently until the final game, but Roger was able to power home 5-7 7-6(6) 7-6(5) 3-6 16-14."

"The loss was particularly painful for Roddick because he had such a fine run and got so very close to winning the title. We all felt sorry for him.

"Even Roger admitted he couldn't celebrate as he wanted to after winning match point because it was disrespectful to Andy's unbelievable performance."

Federer's epic and historic victory brought the 123rd Championships to a fitting climax in the evening sunshine on Centre Court when he overcame Roddick in a 30-game fifth set, the longest in Wimbledon history, to claim a record 15th Grand Slam title.



Pete Sampras, with whom Federer had shared the record following his success last month at the French Open, was a surprise spectator, joining other greats such as Rod Laver and Bjorn Borg in the Royal Box to see history made. It was the American's first visit to Wimbledon since 2002 and he slipped into the box just as the finalists were warming up.

"The crowd were quick to spot Pete and his wife, Brigit, arriving and gave them a warm round of applause," said Maria.

"Federer acknowledged Sampras with a wave on the first change-over, which was quite something!"

"I thought it was very good of him to fly all the way from LA to watch his record of 14 grand slam titles being broken."



With Rafael Nadal's withdrawal because of tendonitis of the knee, Federer always looked on course for the final and only dropped one set to get there.

In the other half of the draw it was a battle between Roddick and the 22-year-old British hope, Andy Murray.

"That was a fight that Roddick won in the semi-finals," said Maria. "He served and prevailed in four sets, effectively stopping Murray in his tracks.

"I know the British public were disappointed that Murray didn't come through but it probably was too early for him to win Wimbledon.

"He demonstrated his class over the two weeks, playing maturely and cleverly even if, at times, it was sometimes a little too defensively. You can't do that with a heavy hitter like Roddick and I think Murray will have learnt a lot from the experience. He certainly is one to watch at the US Open."



In addition to Murray's charge through the men's draw, the biggest talking point for everyone was the gleaming new roof over Centre Court, which has been three years in the making.



"The roof is fantastic! I saw them closing it when we filmed for the TV Globo documentary and it amazed me," said Maria. "No more waiting around for days for the rain to stop!"

In its typically perverse way, the British climate tried to prove that a roof was not necessary and it was closed only once, on the evening of the second Monday, following a short spell of rain that halted the Amelie Mauresmo-Dinara Safina match, and remained closed for the duration of Murray's five-set marathon against Switzerland's Stanislas Wawrinka.

"It is clearly going to be needed at future Championships," observed Maria. "I would just love to play under it!"

MARIA ESTHER BUENO - WIMBLEDON BALLERINA, 4 July 2009



TV Globo / SporTV's film on Maria was aired in Brazil on Saturday, marking the 50th Anniversary of her first singles title at Wimbledon.

"Apparently it has been shown several times already and everyone is talking about it back home," said Maria. "Reports are very good!"

The film is 44 minutes long and shows Maria at Wimbledon a couple of weeks before this year's Championships, talking about her life and career. It includes footage of her playing in 1959 as well as more recently.

"They shot around 4 hours of film all over the place, including inside the Club House, the Wimbledon Museum, at Cannizaro House where the crew stayed, and around London," continued Maria.

"It must have been very difficult to edit it all down to 44 minutes.

"When I spoke to my colleagues at TV Globo they admitted they are very proud of the film and happy it has attracted a lot of attention."

Filmed in Portuguese with interviews in English with John Barrett, the video can be viewed on the TV Globo website via the following link > [Maria Esther Bueno, a bailarina de Wimbledon](#)

SERENA SNATCHES THIRD TITLE FROM HER SISTER, 4 July 2009

Maria was in the front row of the Royal Box for the Ladies Singles Final at Wimbledon when the Williams sisters battled it out for the 2009 honours.



"Amazingly, Venus and Serena went into that match as equals having both won 10 times over the 20 occasions they have met on tour," remarked Maria later.

"Venus holds the advantage on grass, having won five singles titles here and reaching the finals two other times, while Serena's record was almost as impressive. She won in 2002 and 2003, beating her sister in the finals, but I think most people expected Venus to win again.

"Venus put up a good fight in the first set, which she eventually lost in the tie-break, and it seemed to me her movement was impaired, although she insisted the strapping was only for support.

"That's the good thing about both sisters – they never make excuses or complain, and just get on with the job in hand.



"Serena looked the more dominant and just got better and better once she won the first set, eventually winning 7-6(3) 6-2 in 87 minutes.

"It won't go down as a real classic but it was well contested and Serena is a deserving champion."

The demolition sisters, as one journalist named their progress through the draw, were watched by mother Oracene Price while their father, Richard Williams, was absent after observing both over the fortnight



He has a long-held policy that he never watches his daughters when they play each other, preferring to return home to mow the lawn in Florida: "My work is done," he likes to tell people.

In the Box alongside Royalty and Maria, the Chairman's Special Guest this year, were other former women's champions including Billie-Jean King, Martina Navratilova, Virginia Wade, Ann Jones, Angela (Mortimer) Barrett and Conchita Martinez.

"It felt really special today as Saturday 4th July was the actual date I first won the singles here in 1959," recalled Maria.

"I can't believe it is 50 years ago... to be here on Centre Court again brings back so many memories!"



OLYMPIANS CELEBRATE WIMBLEDON, Saturday 27 June, 2009



This Wimbledon has been a celebration of 50 years for Maria and she has been enjoying every minute of it as the Chairman's Special Guest.

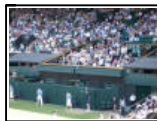
On the middle Saturday of The Championships, the Royal Box traditionally plays host to sporting legends and this year a host of British Olympic stars including Sir Chris Hoy, Sir Steve Redgrave, Dame Kelly Holmes, Jonathan Edwards, Rebecca Romero and Ben Ainslie were invited to attend.

Maria and Martina Navratilova were the only tennis champions in the box that day and were introduced to the crowd first, receiving rousing applause and cheers.

"It was so nice to be there, with all the Olympic champions on such a beautiful day," said Maria, who later was invited to sit with the Chairman, Tim Phillips in the front row of the Royal Box.



The BBC television transmission included clips of Maria winning her first singles title in 1959 when she defeated Darlene Hard, 6-4 6-3 in just 43 minutes.



Maria also recorded a lengthy interview with the BBC that has been aired during the fortnight several times and includes rare film footage of her triumphant return to São Paulo when she rode on a fire truck from the airport to her club, Tiete.

"I haven't seen the interview yet," says Maria. "But I hear it's pretty good and I am really looking forward to seeing that film of my return home.

"It was such an incredible time for me, first winning Wimbledon, which was a big enough deal for me at 17 years of age, but then flying home to a ticker-tape welcome and everyone wanting to talk to me. It got hard sometimes but it is something I'll never forget and will always appreciate!

"When I look at all these athletes here today, I understand the commitment they have made to excel in their sport and respect their achievements. It is often a lonely business becoming the best there is in your discipline and to be recognised on an occasion such as this makes it special and worthwhile."

THE HURLINGHAM GARDEN PARTY, London - 21 June, 2009



The Sunday before the start of Wimbledon traditionally belongs to Hurlingham, which hosts its annual garden party.

Bordering the Thames in Fulham, West London and set in 42 acres of magnificent grounds, the Hurlingham Club is a gem of international renown.

The striking Georgian Clubhouse mixes timeless elegance with up to date facilities and services. The excellent range of sporting and social opportunities ensure a constant hum of activity by the Members and their guests and there is much to enjoy.

On this occasion Maria was the special guest of Jim Sanger, the Club's Chairman, who hosted a magnificent lunch for some fifty guests that included an impressive array of dignitaries from the sporting world and politics.



Maria, wearing a patterned silk dress by Issa, the London-based Brazilian dress designer Daniella Helayel, was treated to a tour of the club and particularly enjoyed the beautiful English rose garden.

"I remember coming here many times and playing on the grass before Wimbledon started," she recalled. "The courts were always perfect and look as good today.

"It is such a beautiful place and it's hard to believe we are in the middle of London!"



The garden party gives club members an opportunity to bring guests for a day of activities and attractions that on Sunday included a jazz band and high class tennis matches as well as croquet, bowls, fencing and laser clay pigeon shooting.

"The club started in 1896 as a place for the sport of pigeon shooting," Jim Sanger informed his guest. "Nowadays it is done with lasers so no-body gets hurt!"

Maria was surprised to be watching a fellow-Brazilian play on the main show court - Bruno Soares teamed up with Kevin Ulyett to defeat Ross Hutchins and Stephen Huss in an entertaining doubles exhibition match.

THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB DINNER, London - 20 June, 2009

It was a glittering occasion at The Dorchester Hotel in London where Maria appeared as the after-dinner speaker at the International Club's annual ball on Saturday.



She is the special guest of the Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club this year in celebration of her first singles win at Wimbledon fifty years ago and is being honoured by the tennis fraternity with great love and affection.



Chairman of the International Club of Great Britain, Barry Weatherill, welcomed her to London and introduced her with a perfect summary of her great achievements, remembering also her receipt of the Jean Borotra Sportsmanship Award in 2004.

"As I was introducing her and explaining her exemplary on court behaviour, I distinctly heard her snort!" he recalled with amusement.

Maria, wearing an elegant gown created by Issa, the London-based Brazilian dress designer Daniella Helayel, gave a ten minute speech that had the 400 guests laughing and left them misty-eyed.



After describing her home-coming after winning The Championships, she said: "We almost didn't make it as we lost two of the plane's four engines and had to emergency land in Bahia.

"We finally arrived in Sao Paulo twelve hours late and instead of it being noon it was midnight but the church bells were ringing and the factories had their sirens going while thousands of people lined the route from the airport to the club- it was incredible!

"I was honoured with three statues, a postage stamp and civic titles and awards, which I think was better than a cow for Roger (Federer)."

The IC Ball kicks off the Wimbledon period and brings together the international players of the world. The IC was founded in the 1920s and now numbers 35 member nations, including Brazil. This year Spain and Argentina were invited to compete in matches around the country against Great Britain.

A BRAZILIAN COLLABORATION, 19 June 2009



Maria is collaborating with fellow Brazilian dress designer Daniella Helayel over the coming fortnight when she is the special guest of the Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, Tim Phillips.

"I have lots of social functions to do as well as appearances in the Royal Box so I want to look my best," said Maria.

"Daniella's clothing line reflects our Brazilian culture so it seemed appropriate for us to get together on this occasion. Her dresses are beautifully cut and easy to wear, which is important if you are on show all day."



Daniella Helayel created her fashion house, Issa, when she couldn't find anything to wear.

Her first collection, in 2001, was picked up by Daslu in Brazil; the second, a year later, by Maria Luisa in Paris and by Barney's in New York. Now the Brazilian designer oversees a label that sells around the world.

"I wanted a dress that makes me feel comfortable and glamorous at the same time, one that could take me anywhere, from work to play, bedroom to board room," says Helayer on her website at www.issalondon.com.

The name Issa comes from the sense of elation Helayer encountered on beaches at home in Brazil: "Issa' is a surfer's cry of joy when riding the perfect wave."

That happiness remains central to her philosophy. The abiding spirit of Issa, even for clothes worn in formal situations, is one of sunshine and warmth. The result is a label embraced by many celebrities, including Madonna, Kate Middleton, Scarlett Johansson, Sharon Stone, Kylie Minogue, Keira Knightly, May Sacco, Emmanuelle Beart and Jennifer Lopez.

Issa designs are luxuriously sleek, beautiful and highly wearable, made typically in soft silk jersey with distinctive colours and prints.

Now Maria Bueno is sporting the Issa look and attracting both interest and comment.

For more information on Issa, contact:

Issa Couture Ltd
Unit 45, 90 Lots Road, London SW10 0QD
Phone +44 (0) 20 7352 4241
Fax +44 (0) 20 7352 4224



JAN WILLIAMS FUN DAY - 7th June 2009



Beckenham Lawn Tennis Club celebrated the life of Jan Williams with a day of on-court and off-court fun.

Maria joined friends to honour an outstanding personality who, sadly, lost her life to cancer the previous year.

"Jan was a wonderful person," recalled Maria. "She was always laughing, friendly to everyone and the life and soul of the party."

"In May 2008, she went over with a group from the club to play in Countainville, Normandy, the tennis club twinned with Beckenham, and they all had a great time but she passed away in September, which was a great shock to us all.

"To see all her friends coming together to help raise money for St Christopher's Hospice is a tribute to Jan and her family."

Everyone was asked to wear something pink, Jan's favourite colour as well as the fund-raising symbol for cancer research.

An American Tournament, raffle, lavish tea and an open bar all served to raise around £2,000 for the hospice and the weather was kind too, offering a sunny window in a week of mixed forecasts.

"It was as if Jan was smiling on us and when it was all over, the heavens opened and it poured with rain!"



FILMING WITH TV GLOBO IN LONDON, 27 May 2009

Maria's arrival in London on Monday gave her little time for a breather as she went straight into filming a documentary with a film crew from TV Globo.

Ensnconced in the beautifully appointed Cannizaro House Hotel on Wimbledon Common, the crew has spent four days filming footage of Maria at the All England Lawn Tennis Club for a programme that is due to be aired nationally in Brazil on 4th July – exactly 50 years to the day of her first big singles win at The Championships.

"We have been everywhere at Wimbledon," she said. "Unfortunately the weather hasn't been good but we did manage to see the new roof in action today. It was amazing to see the Centre Court covered with a roof!"

The new roof over Centre Court is operational for the first time this year and weighs 1,000 tonnes and covers 5,200 square meters.

Constructed in two sections, the roof is of a folding fabric, concertina design, which is strong, flexible and translucent to help provide light and an airy feel.

"I'm told it takes around 8 minutes to close," said Maria. "And a further 20-30 minutes for the air management system to create the right sort of conditions inside. I guess they will still need the court covers when it first starts to rain!"

BRASILIA CELEBRATES, 24-26 April 2009



It is hard to believe but Brazil's capital city is celebrating its 50th Anniversary over this coming year.



It is also fifty years since Maria won her first singles crown at Wimbledon and it was after that amazing feat at the tender age of just 18 that she was requested by the President, Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira, to return home so the people could honour her in July 1959.

It so happens that Kubitschek completed the building of Brasilia during his Presidency and so it was more than appropriate for Maria to visit the capital over the weekend to join in the festivities that included the finals of the World Beach Volleyball Championships.

Kubitschek prophesied; "From this central highland, from this lonely place which very soon will be the head office of the main national decisions, I see the future of my country and I can foresee, faithfully, a new dawn for my homeland relying on its destiny."



Brasilia was chosen inland to develop the hinterland and after the completion of major road construction, brought automobile plants to Brazil.

In the bustling modern capital, Maria presented two signed photographs of herself with the President to his grand daughter, Anna Carolina, which are now hanging in the Kubitschek Memorial.

"The Memorial is an incredible building alongside some of the most amazing, modern architecture in the world," said Maria.



"They have taken great care in building a suitable Memorial to commemorate the life of an important Brazilian pioneer who showed enormous courage in moving the powers that be from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia."

In addition to the social activities of the weekend, Maria conducted a clinic for the invited guests and dignitaries.

TENNIS FESTIVAL, São Paulo - 7 March 2009

Maria's home club in São Paulo is Sociedade Harmonia de Tennis which held its third Tennis Festival in April for members and guests.

Holding court throughout the day, Maria helped a succession of around 300 keen players of all ages in sessions of 40 minutes each, providing tips to improve their games, while other pros concentrated on other aspects of play.

"It was a very good day," said Maria. "The club arranges these things so well and there was something for everyone to enjoy, both on and off the courts."

The weather was kind, cooling somewhat and affording more tolerable playing conditions after a particularly hot spell by Brazilian standards.

People on stilts played tennis with giant rackets, while a whole range of around 50 rackets were available for play-testing.

Participants were put through paces, wearing specially designed shirts for the occasion. They received a signed certificate from Maria together with Polaroid photo taken that day with her on court.

[\[Home\]](#) [\[News Updates\]](#) [\[Maria's Lifestory\]](#) [\[Photo Gallery\]](#) [\[Poetry in Motion\]](#) [\[Career Highlights\]](#) [\[Press Cuttings\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)



Click on the logo to visit our website
Copyright © 2004-2011 Celebrity Tennis Limited
Last modified: 07/21/11