



The Website of Maria Bueno, Tennis Champion



2012 NEWS



ROGER FEDERER VISITS SAO PAULO, 6-9 December 2012

The Gillette Federer Tour kicked off Roger's first South American visit in Sao Paulo, Brazil, last week and he was keen to involve Maria in the proceedings.

The two met at the Player Party, where Roger was joined by Maria Sharapova, Caroline Wozniacki, Victoria Azarenka, Serena Williams, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and the Bryan Brothers.



Roger invited Maria to hit with him so he could see her legendary backhand for himself and arrangements were made for them to take to the court laid at the Ibirapuera indoor arena.

Maria instructed him not to hit 'anything spinny', to which Roger replied that he would play her like he does with his parents and afterwards admitted she was way much better than them!

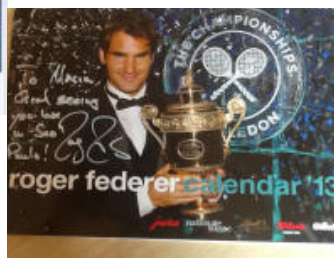
Later he posted a picture of them on his Facebook page, saying: "About to play tennis Maria Esther Bueno... she has won 19 Grand Slam titles (7 singles, 11 doubles and 1 mixed)... she still plays amazing!"

As for Maria, she was just astonished at how well he hit the ball.

"He sliced one backhand that sped off the court like it had skidded off a line," she said. "I said: Whoa! What was that? And he just laughed!

"It was a fantastic experience and I think he enjoyed it too!"

The two players swapped gifts – she gave him a framed photograph, which she signed 'You are simply the best' while he presented her with one of his rackets, personally signed on the handle.



Later Roger gave her one of his calendars on which he wrote: "So great to see you live in Sao Paulo!"

"It was an amazing few days," said Maria, who was not only acting as an ambassador for Gillette but commenting also for TV Globo's SporTV on the matches.

"He is such a great ambassador for the sport - always friendly and smiling."



"I have always admired him but now that I have spent time with him, my respect for him has gone through the roof. His energy and generosity of time are truly amazing."

"It was around 40 degrees in the stadium and he never slowed down or looked tired even."



"He clearly loves what he is doing and basically outshone everyone else in the group. This was very much his show!"

Maria enjoyed quite a lot of attention herself: "I was surprised at the reaction of the public, who were after my autograph all the time and calling out my name. I was actually mobbed leaving the arena on Friday, so much so I fell on the steps so the organisers arrange a security detail for me after that."

"It is astonishing how many young people now seem to know me but, I suppose, they are all tennis fans."

As for Federer, he acknowledged Maria as he was introduced onto court on Thursday evening, saying she had more Grand Slams titles than anyone else in the place – 19 compared to his 17!

Although he narrowly lost his opening match against Thomaz Bellucci, Federer's form improved and he dispatched Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Tommy Haas with some awesome tennis.

"The way Roger played on the last night was incredible," said Maria. "He obviously enjoyed it because afterwards he asked me if I had seen the match point!"



when we were teenagers hitting a great point – just delighted! It was so refreshing!



"As I said, I am so impressed with him as a person and wish him well."

Maria also had the chance to catch up with the other players too, particularly Maria Sharapova with whom she had that memorable hit in the Rua Oscar Friere outside the Nike store there a couple of years ago, and Caroline Wozniacki.

"I also met Rory McIlroy, who is so friendly and charming. He seemed to be having a wonderful time too in Brazil," said Maria. "He was so unassuming!"

The Gillette Federer Tour, which enjoyed near capacity crowds at each session, continues in Argentina and Colombia.



PUTTING BACK THE PIECES, Sao Paulo, December 2012

It has been hard for Maria following the loss of her brother, Pedro. The two were extraordinarily close and, of course, there is a huge gap to be filled.

The coaching team at the Sociedade Harmonia de Tennis, Maria's home club, have been keeping her busy by encouraging her to play more.

Head Pro Mauro Menezes has been hitting with her regularly, and recently won the 40 & Over Seniors Masters in Rio de Janeiro, beating Tomas Koch in the final.

"I am very grateful to Mauro and the crew because they have offered me so much support, I'm not sure how I would have managed without them.

"Everyone at the club has been incredible, I can't thank them enough."

Maria was very touched when the club decided to rename the trophy that Pedro introduced ten years ago to the Trussardi Pedro Bueno Cup.

This is won each year by the winner of the masters event following a series of singles tournaments held during the year for members.



This year's final were played over the weekend of 8-9 December and Maria managed to take time away from the Gillette Federer Tour to present the prizes.

"It turned out to be an emotional occasion for us all," admitted Maria. "Pedro was so important to the club for many years and he is missed to this day."

A few days later she learned that the club Council had met and in a rare gesture of respect, marked Pedro's passing with a minute's silent.

"I was very touched by that."



HARMONIA ANNIVERSARY, 29-30 September 2012

Every year the Sociedade Harmonia de Tennis celebrates its birthday with a series of activities that includes clinics for both adult and junior members.

This year was as popular as ever and involved Maria who helped many with their games.

She was watched by Pedro on the Saturday but, sadly, he collapsed on the Sunday and was admitted into hospital forcing Maria to cut short her on-court appearance.

Sadly, Pedro was unable to recover and passed away about 10 days later.



CLUBE TIETÊ CLOSÉS AFTER 107 YEARS, São Paulo, 26 November 2012

Maria was very sad to learn that the tennis club where she grew up is to close in São Paulo on Wednesday.

The Bueno family home was just across the road from the Clube Tietê and it is where Maria and her brother, Pedro, learned to play tennis.

It was a haven for the two children, who enjoyed the wide range of facilities the club had to offer, including the two swimming pools, the five outdoor tennis courts (and one indoors), gymnasium, running track



Their father became the number one member at the club and not only played tennis there but also pursued rowing in the nearby River Tietê.

The club offered 21 different sports to thousands of members and their families but in recent years it has fallen into decline.

When Maria won her first Wimbledon singles title Tietê commissioned a statue of her which stands at the entrance of the club, and after she took her third Wimbledon crown, they included three stars on the club flag and the uniforms to commemorate the remarkable achievement.

The club's trophy room is full of memorabilia relating to Maria's exploits alongside the many successes of the teams and athletes from a variety of sports.

"I am very sad to see Tietê close," Maria told the many reporters who contacted her about the story this week.



"When everyone is trying to talk about giving incentives to encourage people to play sport, the club is forced to close because they owe a lot of tax, which they cannot pay.

"In the end, it is the members and their families that lose out, which is a great pity.

"I am very pleased that Harmonia is trying to save my statue and have offered to move it to a square behind the club and to look after it.

"It would be such a shame if that, too, disappeared."



The Bueno family moved from Tietê to the Club Sociadade Harmonia de Tennis in 1967 but always remained in contact with the old club where Maria remained an honorary member.

Only recently Tietê renewed the plaques that many years ago dedicated court 1 to Maria and Court 2 to Pedro in recognition of their tennis achievements.

To see the club in such disrepair without any prospect of being saved is a great shame for sport in São Paulo and Brazil.



A BEAUTIFUL SERVICE, Sao Paulo 17 October 2012

They filled the church – family, friends and acquaintances – to celebrate the life of Pedro Bueno Neto, and to bid him fond farewell.

Around 300 people packed into Paroquia Nossa Senhora do Brasil on Wednesday for the Memorial Mass, which was a simple service that moved many to tears.

Pedro's first grandson, Andre, and his third son, Lucas, delivered the two readings as all the family and congregation mourned the loss of their popular patriarch.



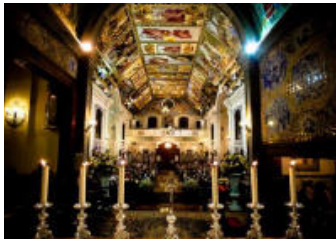
"There was no more room in the church, which is very large," said Maria Esther, Pedro's sister, who was both surprised and pleased at the turnout.

"Some people had to stand for the service and it took more than an hour afterwards to talk to all his friends as they left."

Maria, together with his sons Pedro Jr, Andre and Lucas, greeted mourners as they left the church.

"Everyone said how nice the service was and what a loss he [Pedro] was to their lives. He was very popular and everyone

liked him," continued Maria.



"Even his doctors and nurses were all there, as well as club members and staff, people from his building and from all walks of life that he touched.

"It was very touching to see how loved he was."

The family greatly appreciates the support and affection shown by the large attendance and the many messages of condolences they have received.

"He was such a large part of my life that I feel I have not only lost my brother but also my best friend," concluded Maria.

At age 75, Pedro's passing has affected not only his family but a large community in Sao Paulo and our thoughts are with them all at this difficult time.



PEDRO A O BUENO NETO, Sao Paulo 15 October 2012

Born 20 June 1937 / Died 11 October 2012

Pedro Bueno Neto, brother of Maria Esther Bueno, died aged 75 in hospital in Sao Paulo on 11 October, 2012 – his sister's birthday - following cardiac arrest and a long battle with Parkinson's.

In addition to his sister, Maria Esther, he leaves three sons – Pedro Junior, Andre and Lucas - their respective partners, Mariana, Fernanda and Juliana; and six grandchildren – Andre, Ana Beatrice, Nina, Camilla, Mariana and Antonio.

Pedro was a tennis player and although he did not achieve the same prominence in the world game, he played a significant role in the success of his sister, who won a total of 19 Grand Slam titles in her illustrious career.

Encouraged to take up the game by their parents, the siblings practiced together at the Club Regatta Tiete in Sao Paulo and were inseparable.

They travelled and played many tournaments together, driving across the United States several times as well as around Europe.



Pedro represented Brazil in both the Pan American Games and the 1956 Davis Cup against Mexico in a tie held from 6-8 July, at the C. D. Chapultepec in Mexico City, when he lost in the singles to Tony Palafox outdoors on the red clay, 3-6 7-9 1-6. His team mates were Armando Viera, Jose Agüero and Eugenio Saller and Brazil lost the tie 1-4.

He studied at Lamar Tech in Texas and won the NAIA Doubles titles in 1955, 56 and 57 and the LSC Doubles in 1959.

In 1956 he competed in the US National Championships, losing in the main draw in straight sets to Chauncey Depew Steele Jr 6-1 6-2 8-6.



He competed in several tournaments and again at the Nationals in 1960, losing in the first round to Robert Mark 6-3 6-0 6-0.

In 1958 he won the NAIA All-Time Individual Championships in singles and the next year partnered Paul Wilkins to win the NAIA All-Time Individual Doubles Championships.

He was also selected to represent Brazil in the Pan-American College championships in which he played one of the longest sets (1958). It was the quarters of the NAIA National Championships when he lost to Britain's Reginald Bennett of Pan-American College and the UK, 32-30 6-0, in a best 3 set match.

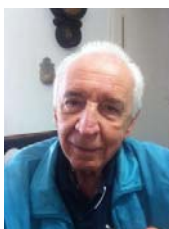
Bueno was inducted into the Cardinal Hall of Honour at Lamar University in 1999 and named in the LSC 75th Anniversary All-Sports Team for tennis.

After his training in the United States, Pedro returned to Brazil and married Vera Mello Reis with whom he had three sons, Pedro Junior, Andre and Lucas.

He worked as a mathematical engineer at several enterprises, including Ford, the Refinery for Corn Brasil and, latterly at Votorantim.

He also spent many happy years as a member of the Sociedade Harmonia de Tenis where he served as Tennis Director for some eight years and then on the club Council until his health declined in recent years.

Pedro was a very popular personality at Harmonia and many members and staff attended the funeral on 11 October in Sao Paulo to mark their respects.



He will be remembered as a friendly, fun-loving and generous character, who was outgoing and gentlemanly, and missed by all who knew and loved him.

A memorial service mass will be held in Sao Paulo this week on Wednesday 17 October at Paroquia Nossa Senhora do Brasil at 12.45pm.

PEDRO A. O. BUENO NETTO - Amanhã, às 12h45, na igreja Nossa Senhora do Brasil, praça Nossa Senhora do Brasil, 1, Jd. América.

TÊNIS

Aos 75 anos de idade, morre ex-tenista irmão de Maria Esther Bueno

Por ESPN.com.br com Agência Gazeta Press

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0

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 Compartilhar

 Comentários

Uma triste notícia para o tênis foi divulgada nesta quinta-feira. O ex-tenista Pedro Bueno morreu aos 75 anos de idade, em São Paulo. Irmão de Maria Esther Bueno, ele cresceu praticando a modalidade junto da multicampeã e chegou a defender as cores do Brasil na Copa Davis.

Pedro Bueno também foi treinador de tênis, participando da carreira da irmã e chegou a ocupar os cargos de diretor e conselheiro da Confederação Brasileira de Tênis (CBT).

Em nota, a entidade que comanda a modalidade no Brasil lamentou o falecimento do ex-tenista e deixou mensagem de solidariedade à família de Pedro Bueno.

[Pedro's Results.pdf](#)



Últimas notícias

Tênis perde Pedro Bueno



São Paulo, 11 de outubro de 2012 – Faleceu nesta quinta-feira, em São Paulo, aos 75 anos, Pedro Bueno, irmão da campioníssima Maria Esther Bueno.

Pedro jogou tênis desde a infância, foi campeão de muitos títulos, além de participar ativamente na carreira tenística da irmã. Também foi diretor e conselheiro da Sociedade Harmonia de Tênis, nossa filiada.

O velório acontecerá das 14h às 16h, na Beneficência Portuguesa, e o enterro será às 16h, no Cemitério da Consolação.

A Federação Paulista de Tênis envia suas condolências à família.

smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray

That he'll come back, or

You can open your eyes

And see all that he's left.

Your heart can be empty because

You can't see him or you can be

Full of love you shared.

You can turn your back

On tomorrow and live yesterday,

Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember him

And only that he's gone,

Or you can cherish his memory

And let it live on...

BRAZILIAN GOLD, Sao Paulo, September 2012

Maria's return to Sao Paulo promoted a further TV Globo special retrospective on London 2012 and she had the opportunity to meet some of the Brazilian medal winners, like the women's volleyball team.



WELL DONE ANDY! US Open New York, Tuesday 11 September 2012

Andy Murray's first Grand Slam title was well worth waiting for. Maria knows how hard it is to achieve success at the majors:

"This was Andy at his best – the one who played at the Olympics," said Maria.

"So many times he drags himself around the court and doesn't look like a champion, but today [Monday] he looked very much the part.

"He has been so close to breaking through, so many times, and he really deserves his first big win.

"He has been playing in an era in which Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic have been so dominant and while Andy has been ranked number four, he wasn't quite up there with these three. He is now.

"It was an amazing final, with incredible rallies, that lasted almost five hours.

"Both players showed how fit they are and what mental toughness they have. In the end, Murray managed to come back from the disappointment of dropping sets three and four to take the title.

"If his Olympic Gold medal was an inspiration to British tennis, it will go wild over this because no Briton has won a major since Fred Perry in 1936, 76 years ago!

"That has been a lot of pressure on Murray, as it was for Tim Henman and to a lesser degree to Greg Rusedski, because the British media have always held high expectations.

"Andy came very close at Wimbledon this year, and even took a set off Roger, but he didn't win and it generated so much press that you have to feel sorry for him. It was difficult to come back from that as strongly as he did to win the Olympics, and now this.

"I've said it before but to win a major you have to be very focused and able to sustain your game over two long weeks. You have to win even when your game is off. You have to find a way through those difficult matches and do whatever it takes. And then you have to be ready for the next one, equally focused.

"In my day we played singles, doubles and mixed but that was what we were used to. It was a lot of tennis but I always felt it helped me because it kept me sharp.

"It must have been hard for Roger to not play a match since Saturday until Wednesday night and that probably contributed to his loss to [Tomas] Berdych.



"As for Andy Murray, he played unbelievably well on Ashe and struggled on Armstrong but he came through to win after a long two weeks in New York. It was well done!"

Murray defeated Djokovic 7-6(10) 7-5 2-6 3-6 6-2 in four hours fifty-four minutes to become the latest in an exclusive group of players to win in New York.

By winning his first major, Murray joined Juan Martin del Potro (2009 US Open) as the only players to break the Grand Slam dominance of Djokovic, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

The trio has won 29 of the past 31 majors dating back to 2005 Roland Garros.

Only three other players have won the Men's Olympic Gold medal and the US Open Title, namely Rafael Nadal (2008 / 2010), Andre Agassi (1996 / 1994 and 1999) and Beals Wright (1904 / 1905).

Now there is Britain's Andy Murray, who did it all in the same year.



SERENA WINS, BUT ONLY JUST, US Open New York, Monday 10 September 2012

It took Serena Williams two and a quarter hours to win her fifteenth Grand Slam title and the victory seemed as sweet to her as the first. Maria was there to see her do it:

"We all thought Serena would win easily but [Victoria] Azarenka had said before the match she was going to do everything she could to stop her and she almost did," said Maria.

"The first set went so easily that it seemed as if Serena would do what she has done to all the others at the US Open, just brush them aside.

"Azarenka is a notorious slow starter but even so, it is tough to come back against Serena but she managed to hang on to her serve at the start of the second and to put pressure on Serena's, breaking her to go two up.



"It seemed to unsettle Serena because she stopped going for shots like had been doing, and that gave Azarenka the chance to win the rallies.



"When she levelled, the first player to take a set off Serena since I don't know when, it got really interesting and it looked like she would pull off the win, except that Serena has that unique quality of champions – she found something extra to fight back.

"From 3-5 down she put pressure and levelled. It was then pretty well over because Azarenka could not believe she had served for the match and failed.

"You can't help admiring Serena's effort!"



INTO THE FINAL WEEKEND, US Open, New York, Saturday 8 September 2012

Maria has been delivering commentary and features to TV Globo's SporTV on a daily basis, covering all the topical stories and activities surrounding the US Open.

She is pictured right with Laura Neves, the Producer for SporTV.

Weather struck the tournament and on Saturday when a tornado warning was issued for the New York area as a severe thunderstorm capable of producing a twister moved over the area, dumping heavy rain.

"When I got to the Tennis Center and caught up with my crew, they told me they's had a tornado there that morning," Maria said.

"It's very unlucky that the organisers have to delay the finals again, as they have done now for five years.

"Players like [Novak] Djokovic have been complaining that the USTA has no covers for the courts and no plans for a roof, making this the only Grand Slam now without the ability to play during bad weather.

"In fact the USTA are now looking into how to cover Arthur Ashe Stadium, which is the biggest tennis court in the world. There are many logistical problems that they must solve but, at least, they are now actively exploring options along with their plans to upgrade the facility over the next three years or so.

As for the tennis?

"Well, we are not surprised to see Serena [Williams] in the final," said Maria.

"I didn't think there was anyone in the draw who could make an impact on the way she is playing right now, but it will come, sooner or later.

"Perhaps [Victoria] Azarenka can challenge her in the final. She is the world number one and hits the ball aggressively but she will need to be at her best from the start or Serena will run away with the match and the title.

"I feel sorry for Roger [Federer], who lost to Berdych the other night. It was his first night match loss and he didn't play at his best, although he has always found it difficult playing Berdych.

"Andy Murray managed to win through to the final in terrible conditions today against Tomas Berdych.

"It was very difficult to play but Andy dealt with the wind and the humidity much better than Berdych although he very nearly let it slip towards the end but managed to pull it out in the tiebreak.

"The conditions got so bad for the [Novak] Djokovic and [David] Ferrer match that they stopped it at 5-2 in favour of Ferrer to evacuate the stadium ahead of the in-coming storm.

"It was amazing at how quickly organisers cleared the grounds!"



ITHOF LEGENDS BALL, New York, 7 September 2012

Maria, along with a host of other Hall of Famers, attended the New York Gala fundraiser on Friday night, which was held at Cipriani's on 42nd Street.

In addition to recognising the 2012 inductees – Jennifer Capriati, Guga Kuerten, Manuel Orantes, Mike Davies and Randy Snow – a number of awards were made, including the Eugene L Scott Award made to Chris Evert and the Joseph F Cullman 3rd Award to BBC Sports.

Maria was in demand for TV interviews and photographs and also spent a while catching up with Gugu, who specially recognised her in his remarks to the assembled guests.

"That was very nice of him," she said.

"The Gala is a very important function for the Hall of Fame because it helps to raise funds to maintain the museum in Newport, the birthplace of tennis in the United States.

"We [the Hall of Famers] try to help by attending and spending time with some of the guests."



MOVING INTO WEEK TWO AT THE OPEN, 2 September 2012

Maria gives some thoughts on the US Open so far:



"It seems to have been a rather uneventful tournament to this point, with only a few matches really catching alight.

 Laura Robson

"Of course, it was amazing that ten of the men managed to come back from two sets down to win their respective matches – a bit of a record that – and we have seen some amazing tennis from a few newcomers, such as Laura Robson and Sloane Stephens.

"I'm impressed with Laura, who showed us that she has a powerful game that is now coming together. With her height and her serve, backed up with aggressive groundstrokes, she proved too much for Kim (Clijsters) and Na Li and now faces Sam Stosur, who has looked very comfortable so far.

"It is always sad to see great players leave the game and Kim is one of the nicest. She entered the singles, doubles and mixed and by Saturday was out of all events so she has reached her retirement and we wish her well in her future life.

"I guess the women's draw is really all about Serena (Williams) and I still think she is the strongest contender for the title. No-one so far has made much impression on her and she has only dropped 12 games in 3 matches.

"(Victoria) Azarenka has lost only 6 games and looks the mostly likely to meet Maria Sharapova in the semi-finals.



"Andy Murray has been a huge talking point this past week, coming in as Olympic champion and he has always been popular here with the New York crowd.

"He had a real battle on his hands on Saturday against (Feliciano) Lopez in the really hot and humid conditions and was lucky not to have to go to a fifth set because he looked very tired after nearly four hours of play.

"His impact on tennis in the UK is amazing and now that Laura is also doing well, there is an entirely different feel to the sport in that country.

"Roger (Federer) is cruising through the draw and it is almost too easy for him, as it has been for (Novak) Djokovic.

"I think it is important to be pushed at some time in the earlier rounds so that you are match tight when it really matters, in the quarters, semis and final, so we will have to see how they get on when they are well challenged.



"The men's is really down to those three, with perhaps (Juan Martin) Del Potro and (John) Isner also, and, of course, there is David Ferrer too.



"Andy Roddick is still in after announcing his retirement on Thursday night. He too will be missed as he is one of the great competitors.

"He was unlucky to have met Federer in three appearances in the Wimbledon finals but has won the Open (2003). It is a good thing that American tennis now has some real contenders coming up.

"Week two will be interesting, as it always is when the better players get to play each other. Let's hope the weather holds because after three years of rained-out final weekends, the organisers will be hoping to finish on schedule.

"It had an impact on their attendance figures and they are on track to better the last record attendance (in 2007) with sell-out crowds this Labor Day weekend."

HAPPY TIMES IN NYC, New York, 1 September 2012

Maria has been working with Brazilian TV at the US Open:

"Happy times with the SporTV crew in New York," she says.

"Here is a picture taken by our friend up in the Sky Box on Ashe. He told us to look as if we liked each other when he clicked the camera!

"It's always good to work these guys – [pictured left to right] Laura, Tigrão, me, David and Marcos.



"The box is so high up that we get an eagle's eye view of the court below but, of course, we have monitors to track everything, including the outside courts.

"We are also surrounded by all the TV equipment needed to transmit back to the studio in Rio where our colleagues are working.

"We also film up on the roof, which has magnificent backdrops of New York City and the old World's Fair site.

"The whole crew is very creative and great fun to work with!"

A VISIT TO MASON'S TENNIS, 31 August 2012

Maria paid an impromptu visit to Mason's Tennis on 56th Street (between Park and Madison Avenues) on Friday and got mobbed:

"The shop was full of people and when they spotted me, I was mobbed for autographs and pictures," she said.

"They were mostly Brazilians who have been watching the coverage of the London Olympics and also caught a feature piece we did for a local Brazilian TV channel...

"I was amazed! It's been a while since I have received that kind of reaction!"



Owner Mark Mason and Sharianne, the Selling Specialist & Portuguese Translator, were on hand to rescue Maria from the crowd and to show her around the shop.

To mark the occasion, they put up a picture onto their website at www.masonstennis.com .

NEW YORK! NEW YORK! 26 August 2012

Maria flew into New York City ahead of the US Open on Saturday morning and went straight to Nike.

"It is always great to visit with Monica [Kolstad] at Nike and to catch up with all the news," she said. "I am always made so welcome by the whole team when we meet here and in London and Paris.

"They take such good care of me, which I really appreciate!"



Monica took the time to have a quick look around this website with Maria (pictured right).

Over the weekend Maria had various commitments including a private tennis engagement at the Town Tennis Club (pictured left).

Asked by many what she thought about the coming action, Maria responded: "To win a Grand Slam you have to get through the tough opening rounds first and then build up and maintain your momentum through seven matches over two weeks.

"For the men, they play best of five matches, which can be physically draining under these conditions.

"The favourites, of course, are Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray.

"Roger has had a fantastic year, winning seven tournaments including Wimbledon and regaining the world number one ranking, while Djokovic has consolidated the incredible year he had last year by winning the Australian.

"Murray got to the final at Wimbledon and then won the Gold medal playing some amazing tennis to beat both Djokovic and Federer in the London Olympics so he is feeling very confident too.

"But there are dangerous floaters in the draw and, as I said, winning a Grand Slam takes a lot of guts – both mentally and physically – plus you need some luck along the way!

"As for the women, it will be hard not to back Serena [Williams] after she has won both Wimbledon and Olympic Gold.

"Whatever happens, it will be a fascinating two weeks again which I hope will be free of weather dramas as has happened in the last four years!"

As usual Maria will be busy with her TV commitments over the coming weeks.



INSPIRING OLYMPICS, London 7 August 2012

As Maria's assignment in London comes to a close, she gives her thoughts on the 2012 Olympic Games:

"I have had so much enjoyment from being a part of London 2012 and I can't thank TV Globo and SporTV enough for my involvement. It has been a huge opportunity for me to learn about other sports and to meet some of the heroes of the Games.



On Monday, Brazil's Arthur Nabarrete Zanetti won Gold medal on the rings, a discipline in gymnastics, and he also became Latin America's first Olympic gymnast to win a medal ever. An amazing achievement!

I had the pleasure of meeting Arthur in the studio afterwards when all the crew came round to shake his hand and congratulate him.

It was the first time I got to see a Gold medal for myself and it was surprisingly big and heavy! I know I would be extremely proud to win one.

The best thing has been to share the thoughts of those athletes I have met.

They face a lot of similar things to tennis players but we can all also learn a lot from each other's sports.

In fact, I have heard from many players that their experience mixing with other athletes at the Olympics has been a real inspiration to them and I feel sure it is also the other way around too.

What the organisers have done here in London is really fantastic.

They transformed the east end of London from a very depressed area into one full of hope and light.

The Olympic Park has been buzzing all day and all night around all the various stadiums built specially for these Games, with several hundred thousands of people visiting daily.

It is these spectacular facilities, along with the new Stratford Station and the enormous Westfield Shopping Centre, that are bringing huge benefits to the local communities.



The Athletes' Village is set to become housing for families as soon as the Games are over.

There is a real sport fever going on here, all around London, and the atmosphere is extraordinary.

To remember that just a year ago there were riots happening all around the country and now everyone is having a huge party and are happy together, is unbelievable.

It just goes to show what a positive impact sport at this level has on society.

I really have to congratulate Team GB for their outstanding performance across so many sports.

So many have risen to the occasion to win medals and, as we speak, Britain is lying third in the medal table. That is a fantastic achievement and there are still many days to go.



I am still thrilled that Andy Murray won the Gold in tennis, mostly because it will have so many benefits for the sport in this country and also because he played so well and deserved the win.

They already brought out a stamp for Andy, as they have done for each of the British Gold medallists, which reminds me of the stamp I got for winning Wimbledon the first time!

Royal Mail, however, has gone one better here by painting a post box Gold for each of the medallists in their home towns, which is amusing.

Roger Federer never ceases to amaze me. He was so gracious in defeat, smiling broadly when he shook hands with Andy and then helping him with the flag around his shoulders after the victory ceremony later.

He also had a genuine smile when he received the Silver medal and said later that he felt he had won it rather than lost the Gold.

Roger is a true champion and has a really great attitude. I know how much he wanted the Gold and how much it meant to him and yet he was still happy for Andy!

This demonstrated the human side of sport for me, which is, after all, what this is all about in the end.

London's motto is: Inspire a Generation.

That's exactly what is happening here and to have played a small part in that by transmitting some of these sights and memories back to Brazil is a real honour for me."



MURRAY AND SERENA WIN GOLD AT OLYMPICS, London 6 August 2012

Here are some reflections from Maria on the Olympic Tennis Event:

"It has been quite a week. It started with good tennis but lots of empty seats on Centre Court and that was not right for Wimbledon.

Of course, Olympic tennis is totally different from what we know as Wimbledon.

For a start the men's matches are best of three sets instead of five and that too makes it totally different.

But it wasn't the singles that caught the eye early on - it was the doubles and the mixed that were the most entertaining and clearly the crowds enjoyed those matches, probably because club players relate better to doubles.

The high quality of the men's semi-finals on Friday was quite unbelievable. It was an incredible day of tennis with all four playing well.

Juan Martin Del Potro produced amazing tennis, as did Roger Federer, and between them they played the longest match in Olympic history - over four and a half hours of nail-biting competition, which Roger eventually won 19-17 in the third.

Andy Murray's defeat of Novak Djokovic in straight sets showed his growing confidence and maturity that we first saw at Wimbledon a few weeks back when he reached the final.

He showed a lot of emotion after his defeat to Roger then and it endeared him to the public. This week he had masses of support and it all contributed to an amazing atmosphere when he played.



The women's draw too was interesting, particularly the way Serena Williams came through to the final with the loss of only 16 games. On the way she took out two world number ones - [Caroline] Wozniacki and [Victoria] Azarenka and totally demolished Maria Sharapova in the final.

It was the most one-sided match in Olympic tennis history and it wasn't that Maria played badly. It was just that Serena has such a presence and hits the ball so hard that she really couldn't get into it. The windy conditions didn't help her either and in the end it was an easy victory for the Gold medal for Serena.

Serena has had her ups and downs but she is now playing like she used to years back when she was way too strong for the other players on the tour. She is so confident now and proving unbeatable.

Murray is really confident too and playing with great consistency. It served him well in the final when he played like a man on a mission. He could've played with his eyes shut, everything worked for him and Federer had no answers whatever he tried.

Roger didn't serve as well as he could and he certainly wasn't the same player who beat Del Potro.

In some ways he was lucky to get to the final because he had a few scares on the way, unlike Murray who had a relatively easy passage and only dropped one set, to [Marcus] Baghdatis.

Murray gave Federer no chances and he won in three convincing straight sets in the best of five final.

The atmosphere on Centre was amazing - a much younger crowd and filled with athletes and kids so a quite different crowd altogether.

Seeing Murray's recent surge of form makes me feel he is becoming a real contender now at Grand Slams. Up until now I felt he was always a step behind Federer, Djokovic and [Rafael] Nadal but now with an Olympic medal to his name, I think he can hold his head up high and really compete with the best and show his true potential.

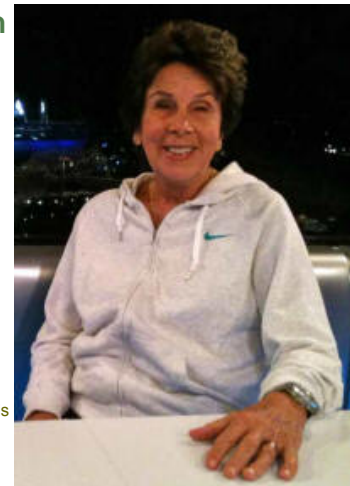
His win is fantastic for British tennis and the fact he has done it at the Olympics means so many more people who would not ordinarily pay much interest in tennis. It has to be a huge boost to encouraging kids to take up the game.



As for tennis at the Olympics, the fact that it was played at Wimbledon was always going to make it attractive to everybody but it lacked the Wimbledon organisation and was, at times, a little chaotic.

The club looked different and the organisers (who were not the All England Club) did their best to make it feel very unlike Wimbledon. It had to, of course, be run the Olympic way, which means all the sports are treated the same and I am sure that this will serve to make the players really appreciate The Championships next year.

Perhaps with the new interest in the sport and the more relaxed, casual crowd that enjoyed the tennis this past week, some lessons can be learned.



OLYMPIC TENNIS, London 29 July 2012

Maria visited the All England Lawn Tennis Club on Sunday to see for herself what changes had been made since The Championships just three weeks ago and the Olympic Tennis Event that got under way on Saturday.

"It was always going to be very different," she said.

"The signage, using fewer match courts, giving sponsors exposure – that is all very far away from what we are used to at Wimbledon.

"The groundsman have worked incredible hard to get the grass courts back to a good playing standard in no time at all but they are already showing signs of wear which is a bit of a concern.

"Wimbledon is my club and I'm used to being able to move around freely and to visit areas away from the massive crowds during The Championships but during the Olympic Tennis Event, members have no privileges on the grounds.



"There is a massive security procedure to go through before you can get in, a bit like an airport, and once in, it is obvious that there are fewer people around.

"In some ways that is good because you can get food and sit to eat it which is sometimes impossible for spectators during Wimbledon itself.

"The players are clearly enjoying the challenge for Olympic medals and we are hoping for some great tennis over the coming days."

Sunday's play, however, was interrupted by rain.

"Just like Wimbledon," said Maria. "Great to have Centre Court for some guaranteed tennis!"



A LONG BUT MAGNIFICENT NIGHT, London 27 July 2012

Maria was called to the SporTV studio on the edge of the Olympic Park early on Friday, charged with adding colour to the prelim program leading into the Opening Ceremony and then a wrap-up show in the early hours of the morning.

"It was a long night, I must admit, but an exhilarating one!" she said later.

"I really admire the television crews who make it all happen, live on TV back home. They work really hard in difficult conditions and under a lot of pressure but it all seems to work out in the end."

Setting aside all the concerns leading up to London 2012, the Opening Ceremony night set the tone for a magnificent Olympic Games that has excited both the public and media.

Artistic director Danny Boyle's breath-taking 100-minute opening show not only captivated the 80,000 crowd packed with celebrities and VIPs in the Olympic Stadium but enthralled a worldwide television audience said to number over 1 billion viewers.

The buzz built from the moment the Red Arrows roared over Stratford's Olympic Park trailing red, white and blue plumes at precisely 20:12 as performers entertained the crowd entering the arena.

The single chime of the 23-tonne Olympic bell got the program under way and tableaux covering 200 years of British history from the industrial to the digital revolution unfolded to a worldwide audience.

There were glimpses of quirky British humour and plenty of big surprises held under wraps until the big night despite three major dress rehearsals earlier in the week.

With seamless interludes of live performance intertwined with pre-recorded film, the show had everything, including an unprecedented early appearance by The Queen leaving Buckingham Palace accompanied by James Bond actor Daniel Craig in a helicopter, from which she parachuted into the stadium.

With impeccable timing Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II appeared in the VIP Box to rapturous applause, smiling winningly.

The greatest secret was the identity of the lighter of the Olympic cauldron in the centre of the stadium, which was not revealed until well after midnight.

Highpoints included the climax of the industrial revolution segment, with the Olympic rings, in red hot steel suspended over the stadium bathed in blue light; a cameo by Rowan Atkinson, the comedian behind Mr Bean, as the white-mopped Sir Simon Rattle conducted music from the Olympics film Chariots of Fire; and an extended passage celebrating the National Health Service featuring hundreds of children and NHS beds and employees.

The entry of the 205 national delegations was cleverly kept to schedule by a masterful choice of accompanying music supplemented by the drumbeats of a thousand drummers.

All the nations' flags, each accompanied by a mysterious bronze 'petal', were pitched on the green mound at one end of the stadium, from where London 2012 Chairman Sebastian Coe welcome all.

"In the next two weeks, we will show all that has made London one of the greatest cities in the world," Lord Coe promised. "This is our time"

The Queen, seemingly none the worse for her parachute glide, declared the Games open.

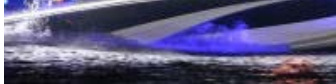
The Olympic flag was raised in the presence of a frail Muhammad Ali and was followed by the night's concluding moment: the symbolic lighting of the Olympic cauldron, intricately made up from the 205 bronze petals borne in by each participating country.



David Beckham steered a speedboat up the Thames with the Olympic Torch burning brightly at the bow and accompanied by fireworks.

The flame was transferred to Olympic rower Sir Steve Redgrave, who ran it from the canal into the stadium but it was the honour of seven young athletes, representing the host nation's hopes for the next Olympics and beyond, to light the petals, which caught alight and were raised up to form the Cauldron in the dramatic climax to the evening.





As the fireworks burst above the London 2012 Olympic Stadium at a little before 1am it became clear that London 2012 was starting with a spectacular bang.

"It was amazing! And very different to what we are used to in previous Olympics," said Maria.

"For me, it was a great experience to play a part in the shows that were transmitted back home, especially as this was viewed by over a billion people worldwide. I think the Opening Ceremony broke all records and had the biggest television audience ever. Incredible!"

BECKENHAM'S BUENO LOUNGE IN GLOBO FEATURE, Beckenham 23 July 2012

On the day the Olympic Torch Relay made its way through Beckenham on its way towards Wimbledon's Centre Court, Maria gave a TV Globo film crew a guided tour of Beckenham Cricket Club, within which the Tennis Club is located in the Summer Pavilion.

"It was amazing to see so many people turning out to cheer the Olympic Torch through the streets," said Maria.

"The Torch Relay started in May and reached London on Friday. Now it is making its way to the Opening Ceremony this coming Friday. All very exciting!"

In fact the Torch Relay is taking 70 days to complete, involves 8,000 runners and covers 8,000 miles of the United Kingdom.



On this day several tennis personalities are bearers, including Andy Murray, Venus Williams, Sue Barker and Tim Henman.

It is all part of the rich history that is the tapestry of sport.

Back in Beckenham the TV crew were amazed to see one of the country's oldest tennis pavilions housing the Maria Bueno Lounge, full of memorabilia linking our champion with the club.

The Old Pavilion, which was built circa 1890 and acted as the main clubhouse and international tournament changing rooms until 1969, was thoughtfully and lovingly restored by some of the dedicated tennis members and officially re-opened in June 2003 when the tennis lounge was dedicated to Maria, three-time Wimbledon champion and club member.

The Summer Pavilion, as it is now called, is a listed building and played a central role in the 125-year celebrations in June 2004.

"I feel so privileged to be an Honorary Member of this club and very proud that the members went to so much trouble to create this tribute.

"I was telling the crew all about my many memories here, when I played the international tournament in the 60s on the grass and the great times I've had in recent years.

"I think they may make two features out of the material they shot here because it is such a beautiful place rich in history. We are so lucky to be able to film this on an incredibly day with a perfect blue sky as the backdrop."

Perhaps when the Olympics get to Brazil, Maria will get her chance to bear the Torch and create another chapter in history.



AN HOUR AHEAD OF THE FOOTBALL FOR MARIA, London 20 July 2012

Maria spent Friday preparing for a one-hour live slot appearance on SporTV's prime-time lead-in program to the friendly football match between Brazil and Team GB.

The match, which was held at the Riverside Stadium in Middlesbrough, was broadcast live to Brazil.

"SporTV has the use of a magnificent studio on the 19th floor in a building in Haymarket, central London," said Maria, who saw the facility for the first time.

"It is part of AP's set-up and we apparently will be using this as well as the main central studio for TV Globo/SporTV in Stratford during the Olympic Games.

"We used this as a preamble to the Games, which start in just one week's time.

"I was able to report on the progress being made at Wimbledon where they are changing the grounds from what we are used to during The Championships to the venue for the Olympic Tennis Event.

"It is quite different, with purple backdrops to the courts and Games signage everywhere.

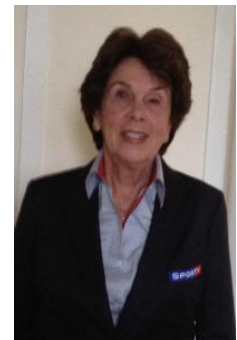
"The Club has moved out completely for the duration of the Games and is operating out of Aorangi Park, which makes it feel entirely different to the All England Lawn Tennis we are all used to.

"Security is a priority and many roads are closed or have check points. Spectators are going to find it all very different to attending Wimbledon!"

Brazil swept aside Team GB 2-0 in the warm-up ahead of the Olympics, which was no surprise to Maria and her colleagues.

The country is fielding three tennis players – Tomaz Belluci in the men's singles draw, and Marcello Mello and Bruno Soares as well as Andre Sa with Belluci in the doubles.

"With so many sports going on, it will be interesting to see how we are going to cover the tennis!"



VISITING THE HOUSE OF LORDS, London 17 July 2012



Maria was invited by Baroness Billingham to tea at The House of Lords and they were joined by The Speaker of The House of Commons, John Bercow.



Both are tennis enthusiasts and relished the opportunity to talk the game with Maria.

Angela Billingham is Chair and Captain of the Commons and Lords Tennis Club as well as the the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Tennis Group; while The Speaker is an avid player who numbers the Prime Minister, David Cameron, among his partners.

"It was amazing to be in the tea room of the House of Lords in such company," said Maria.

"It was all very imposing – magnificent. You get to appreciate the history of the place when you visit and meet such famous and interesting people.

Members of the House of Lords conduct their day to day business against a backdrop of grand neo-Gothic architecture and ornate Pugin designed interiors.

The Palace of Westminster is shared with the House of Commons and Maria was shown around the House and peeked into the Library.

"It was enormous," she marveled.

The Royal Gallery is used for important occasions including state receptions, dinners and parliamentary ceremonies, often with Members of both Houses present.

Several portraits of monarchs and their consorts line the wall of the Gallery.

"That room was really impressive... the size of the paintings was amazing and to learn that it is all in its original state just blew my mind away.

"This is history beyond compare. You see it on television, of course, to be actually there is an experience that was quite amazing."



The highlight was listening to a debate in the Lords Chamber, which is made up of 750 Members, often called 'Peers'.

"We saw the throne where The Queen sits to open Parliament and heard part of the debate on a security bill.

"I've seen so many pictures of that and couldn't believe I was there listening to it all.

"The Chamber sparkled – covered in gold and heraldic shields and stained glass windows. Very ornate and beautiful."

FEDERER BREAKS THE RECORD, London, 16 July 2012

TV Globo ran a feature on Roger Federer's passing Pete Sampras' record for the most weeks spent at No 1 in the World.

After winning his seventh Wimbledon title at the age of 30, Federer continues to break all the records and Maria gave an exclusive interview on camera to add her praise for the Swiss' accomplishments.

"It is always a pleasure to talk about Roger, who is one of the greatest players of all-time as well as a true sportsman," said Maria in the interview.

"It took him two and a half years to get back to the top of the game when many had written him off.

"He is a huge talent with a fantastic physique that has helped him to stay relatively injury free, and, hopefully, he can continue to play for several more years.

"Sampras has said he doesn't mind losing his record to Federer because he is one of the greatest players of all time.

"It was nice to see him playing as a junior and then coming back as a man to win in front of his young family."

Federer has now held the top spot in the rankings for 287 weeks, an all-time record.

"I had set a goal with my team to try and get back to the top of the rankings, but I never thought with the depth in the game this year that I would have been able to get it back so quickly," Federer admitted.

"I am extremely proud and honoured to have beaten Pete's record as he was my childhood hero and I have always looked up to him."

To view the TV Globo news segment, follow the link > [Click Here](#)



BECKENHAM FINALS DAY, 14 July 2012

Maria is an old hand at dishing out the prizes on Beckenham Finals Day, having done so on several previous occasions.

"I feel at home here," she on Saturday.

"From the very first time I came here to play in the tournament, I have been made to feel welcome and part of the family."

Maria first played at Beckenham in 1964 and has since been made an Honorary Life Member of the club.

In fact, she is one of only a small number of players who won both the Wimbledon and Beckenham championships in their career, and one of even fewer who did it in the same year – 1964.



She now has her own lounge in the Summer Pavilion commemorating her illustrious career that is well worth a visit.

It was needed on Finals Day, which was played under grey and drizzly skies that did not deter players from fighting out for honours on the court.

"I can't believe how they just keep playing in the rain," Maria observed. "To me it's cold!"



Just a British summer that is trying everyone's patience but all events – open and juniors - were completed. Congratulations to all!

For more photos visit: [Beckenham Tennis Club - News](#)

WIMBLEDON REFLECTIONS, London, 10 July 2012

It was an extraordinary Wimbledon, affected by adverse weather and producing some astonishing results.

Maria reflects her thoughts on the closing week of The Championships:

"This was a year in which outside factors dominated the outcome of Wimbledon.

"All the dramas centred around the roof on one way or another – when it was open, closed; should it be this or that... the players agreeing or disagreeing. Those poor organisers couldn't get it right.

"It certainly affected [Rafael] Nadal's unreal loss to [Lukasz] Rosol early on, and also the men's final when Roger [Federer] overcame Andy Murray.

"The roof was a significant factor – closing the roof changed the conditions and it saved some and caused others to lose.

"Wimbledon is an outdoor tournament and the roof has proved to be a saviour as far as spectators are concerned but from the players' perspective it changes things when it shuts, no question.

"Federer says the court gets slower under the roof. It also gets humid and hot – quite different to the blustery, cool conditions outside.

"Is it fair to play one semi indoors and the other with the roof open? Not really, but tennis is now about guaranteeing a program to the worldwide television audience so player must adapt.

"The roof allowed matches to extend into the night to complete and, again, we have to question the validity of these, even in the poor weather conditions experienced this year.

"It all adds up to high drama and, of course, it captures the public's interest so there are always winners.

"I guess the outstanding successes came from the Germans – both men and women – who had good runs well into the draws; while the Australians surprised by their lack of progress this year.

"[Jonathan] Murray caused delight for British fans by winning the men's doubles title for the first time in goodness knows how long... ages; and, of course there was disappointment that Murray couldn't quite make that last hurdle.

"It wasn't that he played badly – he didn't. In fact, he played outstandingly to reach the final and put up a good fight there too but he met the master in Federer, who just got better and better as the match wore on.



"Roger has taken two and a half years to make his way back to world number one and these last two weeks at Wimbledon were not easy for him.

"I was surprised to see him call for the trainer in the quarters because you never see him injured or, if he is, he never lets on.

"He played through his back issue to beat [Novak] Djokovic impressively and although he started shakily against Murray he found his way to take the title for a record seventh time.

"Serena [Williams] also looked very shaky at the start of the Championships but improved as the tournament moved on. In the end she looked unbeatable and deserved the title.

"It was good to see [Agnieszka] Radwanska come through as she is a new face but she wasn't well and although she managed to win a set in the final to make it a match, she didn't have the weapons to stop Serena take her fifth Wimbledon win.

"Overall, I feel the weather did its best to disrupt this year's Wimbledon but the roof saved the day and all credit to the referee, Andy Jarrett, for completing the event on time!"

UPSETS AND CHANGING CONDITIONS AT WIMBLEDON, London 4 July 2012

It took just 43 minutes on 4 July 1959 for Maria to score her first win over Darlene Hard and win her first singles championships at Wimbledon.

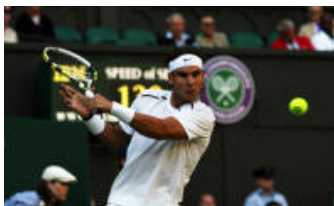
"It was a wonderful day," recalls Maria.

"I had lost to her 12 times so to beat her for the title was special. I served 19 aces and came through 6-4 6-3.

"It feels like yesterday!"

It shows the determination of a champion, to endure against a dominant opponent, and this holds true to this day. It is what makes the game so fascinating.

"This Championships will be remembered for all the upsets and how the roof has played a major part in that. It has been very exciting.



"Look at the Nadal match and Federer's... The roof featured in both matches.

"Rafa had the momentum at two sets all against [Lukasz] Rosol when they closed the roof.

"We expected Rosol to fold in the fifth but he couldn't go wrong and destroyed Nadal who apparently couldn't adjust to the different conditions.

"Both Federer and Djokovic dropped sets indoors and for sure Centre plays differently under the roof - slower, in fact.



"Of them all, Djokovic has played the most there with the roof closed - three matches - so he is better prepared than the others for that.

"It has been quite controversial because it has been closed with the sun shining and then open when it was drizzling, so the players have been questioning the protocol for the roof.

"Of course, without it, we know how Wimbledon is, so you get no complaints from the fans or the media who get to watch tennis regardless of the weather!

"In the women's it has been a struggle for the top players. Lots of new faces scoring wins and Serena using up her nine lives to get to the semis.

"Sharapova won Roland Garros but lost at Wimbledon proving again how difficult it is to transition from clay to grass. She lost rather easily to Sabine Lisicki, who then lost to Angelique Kerber, another German.

"They are doing really well. Kerber beat Lisicki in three long sets to make the semis and in the men's there were two Germans - Philip Kohlschreiber and Florian Meyer.

"David Ferrer has also been playing really well, perhaps because Rafa has gone, who is a huge thing in his head - he has only won four times in twenty meetings against him.

"He met Andy Murray, who has reached the quarters for the sixth year in a row in what was the toughest quarter and that match had everyone's attention.

"Murray eventually won but it was a real battle that could easily have swung Ferrer's way.

"Somehow Andy found that something extra to get to the semis for the fourth year where he plays [Jo Wilfried] Tsonga.

"I am always impressed about how well the French play on grass. They all do, and Tsonga is the last survivor of a bunch of them.

"In the other semi we have Djokovic and Federer and with both playing well, it should be a great match.



"Roger played so well against [Mikhael] Youzhny. It was a master-class.

"I enjoyed the Russian asking for help from the Royal Box in which Prince William and Katherine were seated alongside Steffi [Graf] and Andre [Agassi]. They all seemed to be having so much fun!

"The women now take the stage, with Kerber against [Agnieszka] Radwanska and Serena against Victoria Azarenka.

"Not so easy to predict but as things progress, it becomes harder to bet against Serena on the grass at Wimbledon...

"Perhaps the best news of the tournament is that the WTA is taking steps against the grunTERS on court and although it is going to take a while, spectators will be relieved to know that this habit is on the way out!"

Maria is working for TV Globo at Wimbledon, providing on-camera features on all things related to The Championships.



LONDON, 14 June 2012

Maria arrived in London the start of the British grass court season as the wet weather washed out the first day of play at both Queen's Club and Edgbaston Priory:

"It's been raining like mad in Brazil too, but here it feels like winter," she said. "Let's hope the sun comes out soon!"

It was a sentiment echoed by all tennis fans here.

Maria dropped in to her club at Wimbledon where arrangements for The Championships are well in hand.



"It is always so nice to come to the All England Club," she said. "It is a very special place for me, with so many good memories.

"It may have changed a lot over the years, as the game has, but it has retained its character and style. That never changes, which is great."

After walking around the grounds, Maria enjoyed a lunch in the Members' Dining Room in the Clubhouse.

"It is used for the Royal Box guests during the Championships and is a very special area, with the balcony looking out over the field courts. A great place for people watching!

"Royal Box guests have lunch in the dining room before watching the tennis on Centre Court. During the afternoon they are served a full English Tea on the balcony."

The sun did make an appearance eventually, a must for the preparation of the grass courts.

"They looked absolutely wonderful but have had no play yet, apparently, and need to dry out after all the rain. I'm sure Wimbledon will have it all perfect for the tournament."

Maria has also been spending time at her other London clubs - playing at David Lloyd Beckenham on the indoor courts with pro Andy Margason and fine-tuning her rackets with expert stringer Mike Harding at Woodfield Grove Tennis Club.



"These clubs are all so different," says Maria. "Woodfield Grove is a small four-court club in south London and a total contrast to David Lloyd Clubs! I think it is fun to be part of tennis here."



ROLAND GARROS, Paris - 11 June 2012

Maria briefly summarises the French Championships:

"It is fantastic to see Rafael Nadal winning his 7th title at Roland Garros, beating even Bjorn Borg's record, which we thought could never be done.

"He is clearly the best clay court player around and has come through a lot to get back against Novak Djokovic, who has dominated men's tennis for the last eighteen months or so.

"It was just great, too, to see so many new faces on the women's side, especially Sara Errani, who seemed to come out of nowhere to make the final.

"You can tell the Italian really enjoys herself on the court - she smiles a lot, which is refreshing as the game needs personalities.



"She is quite short for tennis these days but makes up for it by being quick and convincingly beat several seeds on the way to the final - Ivanovic, Kuznetsova, Kerber and Stosur - to meet Maria Sharapova, who is one of the tallest!

"While Errani didn't play her best in the final, she has certainly made an impact.

"My congratulations go to Maria on winning the French. She now has won all four grand slam titles in her career, which is a fantastic achievement, especially after having shoulder surgery.

"It is a hard rehab after that and she has struggled a bit with her form, particularly her serve, but has finally come through and regained the number one ranking. You have to admire that."

MARIA ESTHER WELCOMES ALVIN CRAWFORD TO HARMONIA, Sao Paulo, 14 March 2012

Maria Esther Bueno was pleased to receive a visit from Alvin Crawford, the renowned Paediatric Orthopaedic surgeon from Cincinnati, USA, at her club, Sociedade Harmonia de Tênis, in São Paulo, Brazil, on 14th March.

Doctor Crawford was in Brazil for a conference and stopped by to meet Maria Esther, who showed him around the club and gave him a few on-court tips as he hit with 'Rato', a local pro.

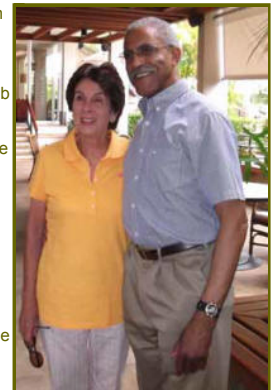
They were introduced by a mutual friend, Doctor Sergio Brushchine, also an Orthopaedic surgeon and another attendee of the conference.



They all had much to talk about because Doctor Crawford is both an avid tennis fan and a director of the Arthur Ashe Foundation that amongst other activities, teaches the practice of tennis to underprivileged youth.

He is also an accomplished musician, favouring the clarinet as his instrument of choice.

Co-director of the Crawford Spine Centre at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, where he also serves as a professor of orthopaedic surgery, Doctor Crawford specializes in treating scoliosis, or curvature of the spine, in children.



He is one of America's foremost authorities on video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery, which allows surgeons to insert rods through small incisions to straighten the spine, and also is an authority on neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorder often associated with scoliosis.

"It was really interesting talking to Doctor Crawford," said Maria Esther. "He is charming and intelligent company and we had a good time together."

Photo captions:

- 1) Maria Esther Bueno and Doctor Alvin Crawford
- 2) Brushchini's brother-in-law, also an Orthopaedic surgeon, Sergio Brushchine, Maria Esther Bueno Doctor Alvin Crawford
- 3) The club pro nicknamed 'Rato', Maria Esther Bueno and Doctor Alvin Crawford on court

All photos by Footsport



HALL OF FAME VISITS SAO PAULO, 8 March 2012

Maria was pleased to welcome International Tennis Hall of Fame delegates, Chris Clouser and Mark Stenning, to her home town of Sao Paulo for the purpose of announcing the induction of fellow Brazilian Gustavo 'Guga' Kuerten into the Class of 2012.

Guga was a former world number one player and a three-time major tournament champion, having captured French Open titles in 1997, 2000, and 2001.

The announcement of Guga's induction was made at the offices of Banco do Brasil, a long-time sponsor of the tennis champion, with Brazilian media gathered alongside representatives from government and business leaders, as well as tennis industry leaders, including, of course, Maria Esther who is a Hall of Famer herself.



The nineteen Grand Slam winner was inducted in 1978 and recently received her ITHOF ring at the US Open in New York.

The 2012 Induction Ceremony will be held at the International Tennis Hall of Fame on July 14, 2012 in Newport, Rhode Island in the United States.



"During my career in tennis I was fortunate to have many victories, but the Hall of Fame induction is a special one," said Guga.

"I was inspired by lots of great tennis players, like Maria Esther Bueno and Thomas Koch, two of the biggest Brazilian tennis players, and I have also always greatly admired Hall of Famers including Borg, McEnroe, Sampras, and Agassi. To be honoured in the same category as those great players is amazing."

He continued: "Probably one of my greatest accomplishments was being able to get Brazilians excited about tennis, and to elevate attention for Brazil as a tennis nation. I'm so happy to be able to celebrate this honour here in Brazil with the people who supported my career, and I look forward to the induction celebration in the

United States in July."

Kuerten, 35, has been elected in the Recent Player Category. Additional members of the Class of 2012, previously announced, include Spanish tennis great Manuel Orantes, in the Master Player Category; tennis administrator and promoter Mike Davies in the Contributor Category; and Randy Snow, who has been elected posthumously in the Recent Player Category for his accomplishments as a wheelchair tennis player.

"King of the clay courts, Guga was one of the most popular players of his era, and he achieved tremendous success during a time when some of the greatest players in history were active, including Hall of Famers Andre Agassi, Pete Sampras, and Michael Chang," said Christopher Clouser, Chairman of the International Tennis Hall of Fame & Museum.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Enshrinee Nominating Committee of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, I extend sincere congratulations to Guga on this well-deserved honour. We look forward to celebrating with him and all of the Class of 2012 inductees in July."

With Guga's 1997 win at Roland Garros, he became the first Brazilian to win a major singles title since Hall of Famer Maria Esther Bueno's 1966 US Nationals victory.

In 2000, Kuerten became the first South American to finish No 1 in the history of the ATP World Tour rankings (since they began in 1973).

"I am very pleased for Guga," said Maria Esther.

"I know how much this recognition from the Hall of Fame has meant to me over the years and I'm sure he is very honoured to be included in the roll of champions there.



"Apart from his playing career, Guga has done so much through his Institute in Florianapolis to help disabled people and help with social activities. He deserves the recognition."

Inductees to the International Tennis Hall of Fame are elected in the categories of Recent Player, Master Player and Contributor. Kuerten has been elected to the Hall of Fame in the Recent Player Category.

The Class of 2012 Induction Ceremony will be hosted on July 14 at the International Tennis Hall of Fame & Museum in Newport.

ALMAGRO WINS THIRD BRASIL OPEN TITLE, Sao Paulo, 20 February 2012

Maria reports after commentating on the Brasil Open 2012 for TV Globo / SportTV:



"I spent last week at the Complexo Desportivo Constância Vaz Guimarães, a new sports stadium in Ibirapuera, here in Sao Paulo, where the Brasil Open was held, and what a fantastic venue that is.

Seating around 11,000 people to watch play on a specially laid indoor clay court, it really showcased this event to full effect and attracted a lot of attention.



The tournament was moved from Costa do Saupe, up in the north of Brazil where it was played since 2001, for its first appearance here and the organisers, Koch Tavares, made the right decision because it attracted massive crowds all week and has been a huge success.

We got some great tennis from a draw that included several popular Spaniards, such as Fernando Verdasco and Juan Carlos Ferrero, and Argentines David Nalbandian and Carlos Berlocq.

The top seeds were Nicolas Almagro and Giles Simon from France, while the draw included all the top Brazilians headed by Thomaz Bellucci.

Simon was an early casualty, losing to Nalbandian, who then fell to Italy's Fillipo Volandri in three tight sets.

Volandri made it through to the final with a convincing three set win over our local favourite Bellucci.

Spain's Nicolás Almagro was wild-carded into the event and seems to like playing in Brazil because he won the event twice before, when it was played in the hot, humid conditions up north, but this time on clay, indoors, we wondered if he could produce that kind of form again.

He found his way through the draw with wins over Victor Hanesco, Berlocq and another Spaniard Carlos Ramos and then produced his best form to defeat Volandri in three close sets in the final on Sunday.

I enjoyed my work in the commentary box with the SportTV team and the tennis was mostly competitive throughout, which makes the job so much easier and more exciting for all of us watching.

Congratulations to the organisers for a fine show."

MARIA'S TAKE ON THE AUSSIE OPEN, Sao Paulo, 31 January 2012

"Like everyone, I watched the Australian Open with interest, often late in the night because of the time difference between Melbourne and Sao Paulo.

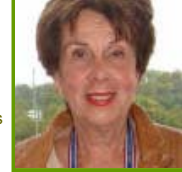


It has been a tournament to remember, particularly in the late stages when the top four men in the world came through and we saw some of the best tennis possible. Three great matches to determine the winner.

I am always sorry to see Roger [Federer] lose but there is no shame in his loss to Rafa [Nadal].

They have had some amazing matches and we all remember that incredible final at Wimbledon in 2008, which many thought was the best of all time.

Roger started playing perfect tennis before Rafa found his range and it turned into a real match.



Rafa is amazing how he never gives up, always fights and keeps his game face in place whatever is happening to him on the court. He deserved to win his place in the final.

In the other semi, Novak Djokovic faced Andy Murray in a battle that lasted nearly five hours and was so finely balanced that for most of the time it was hard to pick a winner.

In the end Djokovic had the edge at the end of the fifth set and looked totally exhausted. We all wondered how he could recover to take on Rafa in two short days.

Murray is being coached by Ivan Lendl and there certainly has been a change in his on-court presence. Sometimes in the past he has allowed himself to get distracted but his focus against Djokovic was amazing, as was his physical strength.

He has reached the semis at four successive Grand Slams and can hold his head up for narrowing the gap on Djokovic.

To see the top four in the world reaching the closing stages of a Grand Slam shows they are well ahead of the rest of the pack. They showed extraordinary physical fitness as well as determination.

To Djokovic's credit he looked sharp from the start of the final, as did Rafa, and little did we realise that this was to become a contest that would go down to the wire.

It had everything and broke about all the records. Many are saying this match surpassed the 2008 final in every way – drama, duration and physicality.

Again Djokovic found the focus and the stamina to outlast Rafa and to clinch an epic five-setter that went on for nearly six hours.

Many people who do not normally watch tennis got interested in this one and are still talking about the match, days after.

Djokovic is on his way to a personal Grand Slam having won at Wimbledon and the US Open last year and his eyes set, no doubt, on Roland Garros.



Can anyone stop him? Both Nadal and Murray came so close so the rivalries are going to be something to watch over the coming weeks and months.

Congratulations also to Victoria Azarenka, who won the women's singles with an impressive win over Maria Sharapova.

There has been some controversy over Caroline Wozniacki's status as the number one player in the world, a position she has held for some 67 weeks but has now lost as she drops to fourth in the women's rankings.



It is good to see the winner of a major take the top spot, and Victoria looks like she is enjoying being there.

She has all the weapons and an interesting personality. Like many, though, I'd like to see her drop that annoying noise she makes when she hits the ball. It really is not necessary and irritates spectators. It must be very annoying to play too, unless you are Sharapova who is like an echo.

Can Caroline fight her way back? I hope so because it makes the women's game so much more interesting with good rivalries. Maybe this is just what she has needs to help her win a first big title.

They had record crowds and wonderful tennis in Australia. All well worth watching from my point of view."



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