



2024 WORLD DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP OF COURT TENNIS

APRIL 24 - 28, 2024

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



April 24, 2024

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Racquet Club of Chicago. We are honored that our city and club have been chosen to host this event, and we are delighted to open our doors to members, guests, and friends of the tennis community from around the world. Since the early days of its sporting history, Chicago has hosted 16 World Series (baseball), 14 U.S. Opens (golf), 6 PGA Championships, 6 Stanley Cups (hockey), 4 World Squash Championships, 2 Davis Cups, 1 Ryder Cup, 1 World Cup, 11 World Rackets Championships (at the Racquet Club, of course), and now as of this week, its first Court Tennis World Championship.

This event is the culmination of an outstanding renaissance of court tennis in our city. After the Racquet Club's founding in 1922, court tennis enjoyed almost 20 years of active play before the court went out of use during the Second World War. Since the court's restoration in 2012, Chicago has resumed its place as an enthusiastic member of the United States and global court tennis communities.

Court tennis doubles, played at the highest level, is one of the most exciting spectator sports. These eight players assembled are not only some of the best at their craft; they are some of the greatest ever to play the game. We hope you will enjoy an outstanding week of athletic competition and sportsmanship, camaraderie, and fun.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack'.

Jack Brown, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan'.

Jonathan Lewis, World Doubles Chairman

Tournament Schedule

Wednesday, April 24: Semi-finals, Day 1

- 4:30pm Steve Virgona & John Lumley v. Rob Fahey & Nick Howell
Opening Four Sets (Best of Nine)
- To Follow Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm v. Ben Taylor-Matthews &
(~ 6:30pm) Bryn Sayers
Opening Four Sets (Best of Nine)
- 4:30pm- Opening Cocktail Party, Player's Lounge
6:30pm

Thursday, April 25 : Semi-finals, Day 2

- 4:30pm Steve Virgona & John Lumley v. Rob Fahey & Nick Howell
Remaining Sets
- To Follow Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm v. Ben Taylor-Matthews &
(~ 6:30pm) Bryn Sayers
Remaining Sets
- 8:00pm Thursday Night Buffet, Main Dining Room

Friday, April 26

No matches

Saturday, April 27: Finals, Day 1

- 2:00pm World Championship Final
Opening Four Sets (Best of Nine)
- 7:00pm World Championship Dinner (Black Tie), Main Dining Room

Sunday, April 28 : Finals, Day 2

- 11:00am- Racquet Club Traditional Brunch
1:00pm
- 1:30pm World Championship Final
Remaining Sets
- To Follow Presentation of the World Doubles Championship Trophy

Player Biographies

Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm (#1)

Camden Riviere is currently the number one ranked player in the world, defending World Doubles Champion, and current World Singles Champion. He is making his eighth World Doubles appearance and has won 4 World Doubles titles, along with 29 Grand Slam Doubles titles (3 Australian Opens, 6 British Opens, 6 French Opens, and 14 US Opens). Originally from Aiken, South Carolina, Cam is now the Touring Professional at Westwood Country Club in Vienna, VA.

Tim Chisholm is currently the number seven ranked player in the world and defending World Doubles Champion. He is making his ninth World Doubles appearance and has won 5 World Doubles titles, along with 26 Grand Slam Doubles titles (2 Australian Opens, 5 British Opens, 4 French Opens, and 15 US Opens). Originally from Ohio, Tim is currently the Racquets Director at the Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo Park, NY.

Rob Fahey & Nick Howell (#2)

Rob Fahey is currently the number four ranked player in the world. He held the title of World Champion for 22 straight years and a total of 26 years during his career. He is making his twelfth World Doubles appearance and has won 6 World Doubles titles, along with an impressive 41 Grand Slam Doubles titles (15 Australian Opens, 13 British Opens, 6 French Opens, and 7 US Opens). Originally from Hobart, Australia, Rob now plays out of the Oratory Real Tennis Club in Woodcote, England.

Nick Howell is currently ranked number three in the world. He is making his third World Doubles appearance. He has won 5 Grand Slam Doubles titles (3 Australian Opens and 2 British Opens). Originally from Bordeaux, France, Nick is currently the Head Professional at the Aiken Tennis Club in Aiken, SC.

Steven Virgona & John Lumley (#3)

Steven Virgona is currently the number six ranked player in the world. He is making his twelfth World Doubles appearance and has won 6 World Doubles titles, along with 31 Grand Slam Doubles titles (9 Australian Opens, 8 British Opens, 8 French Opens, and 6 US Opens). Originally from Melbourne, Australia, Steve is the Tennis Professional at the Racquet Club of Chicago in Chicago, IL.

John Lumley is currently the number two ranked player in the world. He is making his fourth World Doubles appearance. He has won 8 Grand Slam Doubles titles (2 Australian Opens, 2 British Opens, and 4 French Opens). Originally from Maidenhead, England, John is currently the Head Tennis Professional at the Racquet Club of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, PA.

Ben Taylor-Matthews & Bryn Sayers (#4)

Ben Taylor-Matthews is currently ranked number five in the world. He is making his ninth World Doubles appearance. He has won 3 Grand Slam Doubles titles (2 French Opens and 1 US Open title). Originally from Bridport, England, Ben is currently the Head Tennis Professional at the Bristol Tennis Club in Bristol, England.

Bryn Sayers is currently the ninth ranked player in the world. He is making his seventh World Doubles appearance. He has won 2 Grand Slam Doubles titles (1 Australian Open and 1 British Open). Originally from Hayling Island, England, Bryn is the Senior Tennis Professional at the Queen's Club in London, England.

Past Championships

2001

Middlesex University
London, England

Winners: Julian Snow & Tim Chisholm
Finalists: Steve Virgona & Ruaraidh Gunn

2005

Cercle du Jeu de Paume de Fontainebleau
Fontainebleau, France

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Dave Woodman & Neil Roxburgh

2009

Seacourt Tennis Club
Hayling Island, England

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Bryn Sayers & Ricardo Smith

2013

Société Sportive du Jeu de Paume et Squash
Paris, France

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm

2017

Prested Hall
Essex, England

Winners: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm
Finalists: Rob Fahey & Ricardo Smith

2022

Jeu de Paume de Bordeaux
Bordeaux, France

Winners: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm
Finalists: John Lumley & Steve Virgona

2003

Hobart Tennis Club
Hobart, Australia

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Tim Chisholm & Josh Bainton

2007

Tennis and Racquet Club of Boston
Boston, United States

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm

2011

Royal Melbourne Tennis Club
Melbourne, Australia

Winners: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona
Finalists: Julian Snow & Ben Taylor-Matthews

2015

The Tuxedo Club
Tuxedo Park, United States

Winners: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm
Finalists: Rob Fahey & Steve Virgona

2019

Hobart Tennis Club
Hobart, Australia

Winners: Camden Riviere & Tim Chisholm
Finalists: Rob Fahey & Nick Howell

2024

Racquet Club of Chicago
Chicago, United States

A (Very Brief) History of Court Tennis

Court tennis, “real tennis” in the United Kingdom, “royal tennis” in Australia, and “jeu de paume” in France, is the world’s original ball and bat game. The origins of court tennis have been traced all the way back to the fertility rites of the Egyptians and Persians. As long ago as 450 B.C., Herodotus referred to tennis. However, the game of today began to take shape many centuries later as a pastime of monks and other ecclesiasts in France. In the formative period of the game, it was played outdoors, and the ball was struck with the hand (the racquet not being introduced until the early 1500’s) – hence its name, “jeu de paume” (game of the palm).

The game in the open air was being played at least as early as the 12th century, but the introduction of “paume” into towns marked changes in the game, leading to much wider appeal. Walled-in courts were built in the latter part of the 14th century and appear to have evolved from rooms of various shapes in many types of structures – cathedrals, cloisters, chateaux, castles, moats, and even cowsheds. Relics of these medieval structures can be found in the modern court.

As the game grew in popularity, it was no longer only the game of bishops, priests, and monks, but it became the pastime of monarchs and the aristocracy around them. Tennis achieved its greatest vogue in England during the reign of the Tudors. In France, the game also flourished in the 1500s and 1600s (with 1,800 courts in Paris alone), and it was the pastime of all classes in Germany, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands, among other countries. However, the French Revolution and downfall of the monarchy and aristocracy almost ended the game in France, and in England, the game was played only by the upper classes.

In the United States, the game was played at least as early as 1659, owing to the discovery of an ordinance written by Peter Stuyvesant as governor of New York, prohibiting the playing of tennis during religious services on a day of fasting and prayer. Courts are now in use in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Tuxedo, Newport, Lakewood, Aiken, Washington, D.C., and most recently, at Sand Valley in Wisconsin, with another court under development in Charleston.

Court tennis is like a dynamic game of chess, combining the precision of billiards, the hand-eye coordination of lawn tennis, and the generalship and quick judgment of polo. Like lawn tennis, court tennis is played with racquets and balls on a court divided by a net, and the scoring is virtually the same in both games. However, the court, racquet, and ball all differ from those used in lawn tennis, and the rules of play are much more complex. Terms such as penthouse, dedans, tambour, grille, winning gallery, hazard, giraffe, railroad, chase the door, chase better than a half, chase more than a yard worse – describe strokes and features of play, and add to the mystery of the game.

In conclusion, it is the sum product of these marvelous and unique aspects of court tennis that have quite justifiably helped it earn the moniker, “the sport of kings, and the king of sports.”

History of the Racquet Club of Chicago

The idea of a racquet club for Chicago was conceived by a number of leading citizens and friends of the day, who eventually partnered to purchase a piece of property on the southeast corner of Dearborn and Schiller in 1922 with the intention of organizing a group of other prominent Chicagoans to build the club. By the early Fall of 1922, a committee of 21 began to recruit 400 resident members, and on November 5, 1922, wreckers began demolition of seven old houses at the Dearborn and Schiller site.

The Racquet Club of Chicago officially opened its doors to its members on Wednesday, July 9, 1924, almost 100 years ago. What greeted the members was extraordinary. For athletics, the Club offered a gymnasium, squash racquets courts (two North American singles and two doubles courts), a swimming pool, a Turkish bath department, complete with vapor room, scrub room, hot room, and therapeutic baths, a billiards room, a card room, a four lane bowling alley, two racquets courts, and a "real" tennis court, the last court designed by Joseph Bickley during the game's golden age of court building. There was an elegant dining room, oyster bar, library, sitting room, and several private function rooms, along with a total of 28 sleeping rooms for all to enjoy.

The Club flourished through the most of the 1920's, despite the fact that the country was under prohibition and no one could easily buy liquor - at least, not legally. However, certain members apparently found other ways to enjoy cocktails at the Club during that period. With the depression beginning in the early 1930's, the Racquet Club was hit almost immediately with a large number of resignations and struggled to survive, but creative measures were taken to keep the Club afloat. Thanks to hard work and dedication, the Club persevered, only to be again affected negatively when World War II began. During this time, the court tennis court fell into disuse and disrepair, and for the next six decades, the tennis court was used for members as a reimagined, if imperfect, venue for lawn tennis.

Throughout the ensuing decades, the Club continued to strengthen its membership and maintain its clubhouse. Over time, thanks to the persistent popularity of racquets and members who traveled to other clubs in cities like New York and Philadelphia where tennis had not only survived, but thrived, court tennis persisted in the imaginations of many prominent members, albeit in dormancy. Then in 2012, the Board of Governors made the decision to restore the tennis court to its original purpose. Since that time, thanks to the efforts and contributions of its governors, members, and professionals, the Racquet Club of Chicago has built one of the largest and most enthusiastic player groups in the country.

Today, the Racquet Club of Chicago remains one of the finest private clubs in the world, and the current membership continues to pursue the social and sporting traditions and passions of its founders with enthusiasm and vigor.

Partner Sponsors



The United States Court Tennis Association was created due to a shared passion and commitment for developing and expanding the game of court tennis. Its vision is to be the best governing body in the game of tennis, and USCTA aspires to bring tennis to people of all backgrounds across the country, fostering play with a positive spirit, and participating in programs that promote camaraderie and competition. The Racquet Club of Chicago is grateful to the USCTA for its support of the 2024 World Doubles Championship.



The United States Court Tennis Preservation Foundation has long supported the building of new courts, restoration of historic facilities, and rejuvenation of under-utilized courts through new programs and operational guidance. The Foundation has also partnered with USCTA to launch a comprehensive program in recent years to develop and improve the state of play among amateur players, including juniors, women, and promising professionals. The Racquet Club of Chicago is grateful to the USCTPF for its support of the 2024 World Doubles Championship.

World Championship Sponsors and Patrons

The Racquet Club of Chicago would like to thank its generous sponsors, patrons, supporters, and participants, without whom this weekend would not have been possible.

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Racquet Club of Chicago Professionals

John Cashman (Head Professional) Steven Virgona (Tennis) Conor Medlow (Rackets)

Tournament Support & Special Thanks

Chris Ronaldson (Ball Maker) Neil Mackenzie (Marker) Rob Whitehouse (Marker)
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