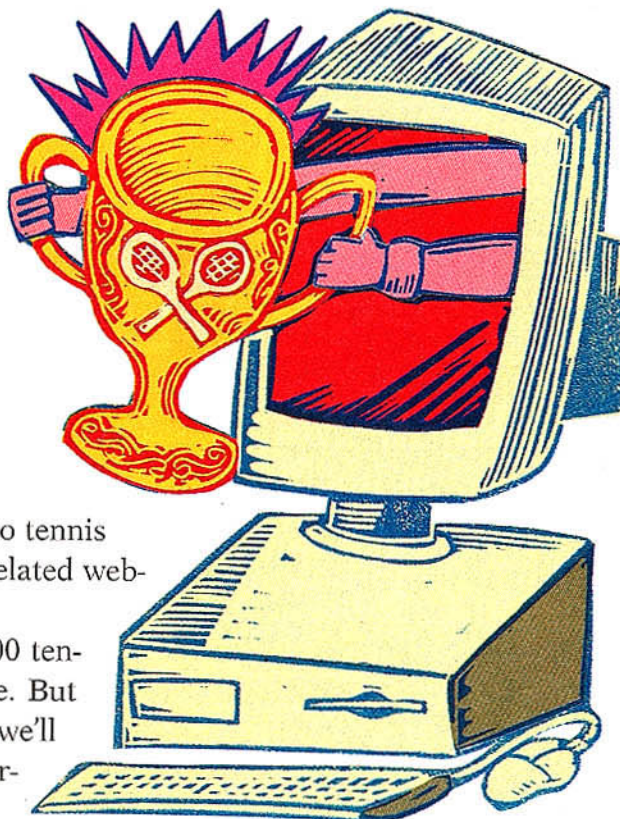


'Net roundup

The best tennis sites on the worldwide web

BY CHRIS NICHOLSON



Life moves fast on the internet. A couple of years ago tennis was scarce on the web; today there are so many tennis-related websites that a comprehensive review is nearly impossible.

We spent more than 50 hours surveying more than 600 tennis websites. Be warned: There's a lot of junk out there. But there are a lot of hot spots, too. On the following pages, we'll guide you through a site-seeing tour of the best that cyberspace is offering to tennis fans.

We gave priority to sites that not only offer valuable information and services, but also make best use of the medium, such as video, audio and interactive features. Priority also went to sites that download quickly (no one should have to wait five minutes for a graphics-heavy page to download from an overcrowded server) and whose features actually worked when we tried to access them (nothing's more frustrat-

Tennis links

Links pages provide menus of links to other pages. Just click on the page you want and it sends you there. Most websites contain links to other related sites. Links are the optimal way to "surf" the net. Here are some of the best we found:

199.245.21.2/TennisLinks

This page's stated goal is to provide links to every tennis page on the internet. They've netted so many links that they had to categorize and divide them onto 12 different pages.

blue.oit.gatech.edu/~cs30/TennisWeb.html#Tour

Links to sites for more than 120 pro and junior tournaments, 17 tennis periodicals, 69 players, more than 50 equipment manufacturers and distributors, and 40-plus camps and clubs. Also, sites for tennis organizations, tennis software, tennis travel agents, charities and nonprofit organizations.

www.tennisw.com/tweb/tweb02.htm

Links to hundreds of player and fan sites.

Grand Slam sites

Each Grand Slam has an official home page that puts you as close to the tournament as you can get without a ticket—and each site sells tickets, too. The official sites for each of the Grand Slams are slick and professional, but the U.S. Open's and Wimbledon's (both produced by IBM) are the most well rounded.

During the fortnights, you can click onto live match scores and post-match interview transcripts.

Fans and independent companies also dedicate unofficial home pages to the Grand Slam events. These autonomous sites sometimes offer a more honest and less biased insight into the major tournaments.

Australian Open www.ausopen.org/index.html

Offers a merchandise store, live "cybercasting" of the tournament and a lot of information on the Australian players.

French Open www.frenchopen.org

Live coverage of pro and junior matches and a great explanation of how this live computer technology works. Opt for English or French versions.

Wimbledon www.wimbledon.org

Includes a London-time clock to help you track match times and a set-to-music introduction from four-time champion Pete Sampras.

U.S. Open www.usopen.org

Monitor action at Arthur Ashe Stadium with 24-hour cameras, or visit Mac's Court, where you can hear John McEnroe's match previews.



ing than a bug). And although the web is truly worldwide, we only reviewed sites written in English.

The major tennis organizations have home pages that offer all the expected services. The Davis Cup website keeps statistics on every participating nation, even Tunisia and Cyprus. The USTA's site informs you of its programs and helps you reach its sectional offices, which also have their own websites. The ATP Tour's site lists updated rankings long before you'll see them anywhere else. The Corel WTA Tour's site maintains (somewhat) current biographies on hundreds of its players.

And if you want to learn how many three-set doubles matches Ines Gorrochategui won in 1989, there's a site for that, too; but you'll have to venture farther into the web—to a fan's site—to find it. Fans have built countless home pages in reverence to players as obscure as Gorrochategui and as popular as Pete Sampras.

Of course, Sampras has his own site, too—one that he and his management are responsible for. Building a website is an easy and inexpensive means for players to interact daily with their fans without interrupting their hectic schedules. Unfortunately, few players have realized this.

The internet excels in news coverage, and tennis-specific news is no exception. Aside from the excellent coverage by several major sports networks' home pages, the Tennis Information site provides links to tennis stories from newspapers and news wires in every region of the world and written in more than a dozen languages. If that's not immediate enough, more than 100 tournaments

General tennis

Many websites try to be the "single source for tennis on the web." Many fail for various reasons (instruction is written by unqualified writers, photos and/or video are either ignored or not used well, etc.). But there are a few sites that compile a thorough package of services.

www.tennisserver.com

An insider's look at the pros, video and book store, free newsletter, equipment tips, full text of The Rules of Tennis & The Code, unconventional instruction column, a photo archive and more. Best all-around tennis site.

www.tennisw.com

Free software, including video tennis games, personal match stats and tournament organizers. Best feature is the downloadable sound clip of John McEnroe's famous "You cannot be serious!" tirade. Also has an international e-mail directory for tennis businesses, organizations and players of all levels.

www.tennisone.com

Boasts a comprehensive list of U.S. tennis facilities; access information on your area by clicking on a map.

Services

These types of sites are the pride of the internet because they're practical and many can exist only in the online medium.

www.interlog.com/~john13/vcoach/vcoach.htm

Designed by a former top-ranked Canadian junior, the Virtual Tennis Coach tests your knowledge of tennis strategy.

www.travelbase.com/activities/tennis

On a U.S. map, click where you'd like to vacation and this site lists nearby tennis resorts and their phone numbers.

www.sportsladders.com/tennis

Worldwide 650-member tennis ladder maintains local and world rankings, tracks personal statistics and helps arrange matches.

www.ultranet.com/~tennis

The Tennis Matchmaker manages a 3,000-person database of U.S. players looking for matches in their area or while on vacation.

www.advantage-tennis.com

View and/or purchase photos of your favorite tennis stars.

If you want to buy a racquet from 1892, the web isn't the most prolific market. But there are a couple of sites that do a classy job of showing the classic side of the game.

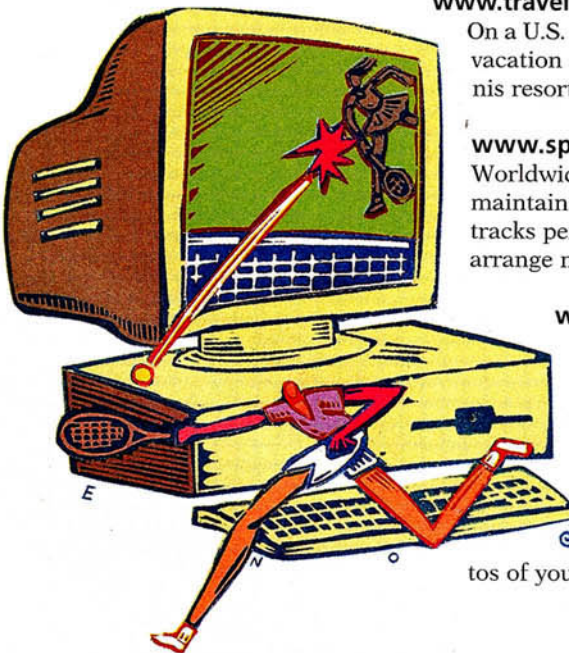
Antiques & Collectibles

www.partbook.demon.co.uk/index.htm

An online catalog from Tennis Collectibles, an English company that sells memorabilia and old books and magazines.

www.usatt.org/rackets

View this private collection of tennis antiques and art. Includes historical notes, photos and the unique opportunity to spend a lot of money to buy the collection.



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net roundup

maintain websites—most provide live updates of match scores, and several offer video of the action, too. But aside from using different photos, too many tournament sites (accessible through the links pages listed on page 60) look exactly the same. Big-money tournaments backed by high-profile sponsors should be able to afford to hire consultants to develop unique home pages.

If you're curious about the technology of tennis equipment, the internet can help. All the major manufacturers—including Prince, Wilson and Head—provide websites where you can find product catalogs and information on upcoming releases. We couldn't list all the manufacturers' websites, so to be fair we didn't list any (they are also accessible via the links pages). The tennis industry could use computer technology better: The internet has become a marketplace where secure credit-card transactions abound, but relatively few tennis manufacturers let you order their goods through their websites.

Once you've satisfied your equip-



Official player sites

Often produced by a player's management company, these sites feature biographies, messages from the players and their tournament schedules. An easy way for players to communicate with their fans, there should be more sites like these.

Michael Chang

www.mchang.com

Chang's instruction tips, family photos and memorabilia.

Yayuk Basuki www.perspektif.net/yayuk

Track Basuki's current ranking and read "original daily news translated from official Indonesian press releases."

Pete Sampras www.sportsline.com/u/sampras

Try to return Sampras's serve in his "Tennis Challenge" game.

Unofficial player sites

This is where to go to discover what color skirt Amy Frazier wore at the 1995 Canadian Open. Usually maintained by fans, unofficial player sites offer gossip news, message boards and amateur photos. Many of these hundreds of sites are unprofessional and aesthetically disappointing, and the sources of information often are questionable. But there also is the occasional page designed by a fan who is dedicated and skilled. Almost all the pros, even the most obscure, have a fan site dedicated in their name.

web.idirect.com/~coetzer

Many, many, many photos of Amanda Coetzer.

209.75.40.56

A tribute to Mirjana Lucic, it's one of the most becoming, complete fan sites on the internet.

Andre Agassi: users.ids.net/agassi

Amy Frazier: www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/medschool/students/gstein/Frazier

Ines Gorrochategui: www.epix.net/~bknizer/ines.html

Martina Hingis: martina.simplenet.com

Patrick Rafter: www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Field/1204/index.html

Monica Seles: www.geocities.com/Colosseum/7491/index.html

ment needs, the internet can help you find a game through several websites that maintain rosters of other game-seekers around the world. Through the World Wide Tennis Ladder site, a Massachusetts man found three new tennis partners: two from Russia and one who lived five houses down the street. And the Tennis Matchmaker page manages a database of more than 3,000 tennis players willing to play with anyone who lives or vacations near their homes.

If you'd like to play a game of cybertennis, options are available. In Tennis Worldwide, you can download free tennis video games, including one where your opponent celebrates with jumps and fist-pumps after winning. Or enter the worldwide Fantasy Tennis league by submitting your 10-member "team" of players you pick to perform well at Grand Slam events.

To access these internet sites even faster, connect to TENNIS magazine's home page at www.tennis.com, and click on the "Net Roundup" button. There, you'll find our own links to the best websites in tennis. 🎾

Miscellaneous

www.dreamleague.com/tennis

In this worldwide "fantasy tennis" face-off, play each of the Grand Slams by picking a team of 10 players. Your results are based on the total points won by your selected "team." Keeps a championship role of past winners.

www.aaii.oz.au/staff/darren/SRI

Alternative pro rankings maintained by a fan who uses probability mathematics to determine the strength of wins.

www.nfwf.org

The official site of the National Foundation of Wheelchair Tennis includes rules, player profiles, rankings, tournament information and links to sites where you can learn about purchasing equipment.

www.tennismarket.com

Online pro shop provides a search-by-keyword index to its inventory and the ability to buy equipment online.

Tennis News and Information

News is one of the internet's most popular applications. Computer users can access information on events literally minutes after they've happened, whether it's hard news, stock-market fluctuations or scores from tennis matches. News archives are available, too, as is information on local amateur tournaments and college teams.

www.mindspring.com/~csmith/TennisNews.html

Tennis News in the form of links to the best news sites and the official sites of every major tennis organization. Also the best source for college tennis information, including links to the sites of American college tennis teams.

www.tennisinformation.com

A database of tournament draws from amateur events in the U.S.

www.asapsports.com/archives.html

Archives of sports interviews (including tennis) from major and minor sporting events as far back as 1992.

www.mindspring.com/~csmith/TennisFAQ.html

Answers to tennis FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), including rule explanations, statistics more than two decades old, information on tennis injuries and more.

OTHER ESSENTIAL ADDRESSES

www.daviscup.org

www.atptour.com

www.corelwtatour.com

www.nuveentour.com

www.worldteamtennis.com

www.usta.com

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