

Tennis is a racket sport that is played either individually against a single opponent (singles) or between two teams of two players each (doubles). The most notable of these early professionals were the American Vinnie Richards and the Frenchwoman Suzanne Lenglen. The world's oldest annual tennis tournament took place at Leamington Lawn Tennis Club in Birmingham in 1874. This was three years before the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club would hold its first championships at Wimbledon, in 1877. The first Championships culminated in a significant debate on how to standardise the rules.

Lawn tennis in the US, 1887 In the United States in 1874, Mary Ewing Outerbridge, a young socialite, returned from Bermuda with a sphairistike set. She became fascinated by the game of tennis after watching British army officers play. She laid out a tennis court at the Staten Island Cricket Club at Camp Washington, Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York. The first American National championship was played there in September 1880. An Englishman named O.E. Woodhouse won the singles title, and a silver cup worth \$100, by defeating Canadian I. F. Hellmuth. There was also a doubles match which was won by a local pair. There were different rules at each club. The ball in Boston was larger than the one normally used in New York. On 21 May 1881, the oldest nationwide tennis organization in the world was formed, the United States National Lawn Tennis Association (now the United States Tennis Association) in order to standardize the rules and organize competitions. The US National Men's Singles Championship, now the US Open, was first held in 1881 at the Newport Casino, Newport, Rhode Island. The US National Women's Singles Championships were first held in 1887 in Philadelphia. Tennis doubles final at 1896 Olympic Games Tennis also became popular in France, where the French Championships date to 1891, although until 1925 they were open only to tennis players who were members of French clubs. Thus, Wimbledon, the US Open, the French Open and the Australian Open (dating to 1905) became and have remained the most prestigious events in tennis. Together, these four events are called the Majors or Slams (a term borrowed from bridge rather than baseball). Lawn tennis in Canada, c. 1900 In 1913, the International Lawn Tennis Federation (ILTF), now the International Tennis Federation (ITF), was founded and established three official tournaments as the major championships of the day. The World Grass Court Championships were awarded to Great Britain. The World Hard Court Championships were awarded to France; the term "hard court" was used for clay courts at the time. Origins of the modern game Augurio Perera's house in Edgbaston, Birmingham, England, where he and Harry Gem first played the modern game of lawn tennis Between 1859 and 1865, Harry Gem, a solicitor, and his friend Augurio Perera developed a game that combined elements of racquets and the Basque ball game pelota, which they played on Perera's croquet lawn in Birmingham, England. Louis X of France was a keen player of jeu de paume ("game of the palm"), which evolved into real tennis, and became notable as the first person to construct indoor tennis courts in the modern style. Louis was unhappy with playing tennis outdoors and accordingly had indoor, enclosed courts made in Paris "around the end of the 13th century". And the World Covered Court Championships for indoor courts were awarded annually; Sweden, France, Great Britain, Denmark, Switzerland and Spain each hosted the tournament. At a meeting held on 16 March 1923 in Paris, the title "World Championship" was dropped and a new category of "Official Championship" was created for events in Great Britain, France, the US and Australia – today's Grand Slam events. The impact on the four

recipient nations to replace the "world championships" with "official championships" was simple in a general sense: each became a major nation of the federation with enhanced voting power, and each now operated a major event. The invention of the first lawn mower in Britain in 1830 is believed to have been a catalyst for the preparation of modern-style grass courts, sporting ovals, playing fields, pitches, greens, etc. This reinstatement was credited by the efforts of then ITF president Philippe Chatrier, ITF general secretary David Gray and ITF vice president Pablo Llorens, with support from International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch. In June 1316 at Vincennes, Val-de-Marne, and following a particularly exhausting game, Louis drank a large quantity of cooled wine and subsequently died of either pneumonia or pleurisy, although there was also suspicion of poisoning. This is where "lawn tennis" was used as the name of an activity by a club for the first time. In *Tennis: A Cultural History*, Heiner Gillmeister reveals that on 8 December 1874, British army officer Walter Clopton Wingfield wrote to Harry Gem, commenting that he (Wingfield) had been experimenting with his version of lawn tennis "for a year and a half". In December 1873, Wingfield designed and patented a game which he called sphairistike (Greek: σφαίριστική, meaning "ball-playing"), and which was soon known simply as "sticky" – for the amusement of guests at a garden party on his friend's estate of Nantclwyd Hall, in Llanellidan, Wales. According to R. D. C. Evans, turfgrass agronomist, "Sports historians all agree that [Wingfield] deserves much of the credit for the development of modern tennis." In 1968, commercial pressures and rumours of some amateurs taking money under the table led to the abandonment of this distinction, inaugurating the Open Era, in which all players could compete in all tournaments, and top players were able to make their living from tennis. The four Grand Slam tournaments (also referred to as the majors) are especially popular: the Australian Open, played on hardcourts; the French Open, played on red clay courts; Wimbledon, played on grass courts; and the US Open, also played on hardcourts. History Main article: History of tennis Predecessors Painting from Cremona; end of the 16th century Jeu de paume in the 17th century Historians believe that the game's ancient origin lay in 12th-century northern France, where a ball was struck with the palm of the hand. The comprehensive rules promulgated in 1924 by the ILTF have remained largely stable in the ensuing 80 years, the one major change being the addition of the tiebreak system designed by Jimmy Van Alen. With the beginning of the Open Era, the establishment of an international professional tennis circuit, and revenues from the sale of television rights, tennis's popularity has spread worldwide, and the sport has shed its middle-class English-speaking image (although it is acknowledged that this stereotype still exists). The original forms of tennis developed in France during the late Middle Ages. The modern form of tennis originated in Birmingham, England, in the late 19th century as lawn tennis. It had close connections both to various field (lawn) games such as croquet and bowls as well as to the older racket sport today called real tennis. It was not until the 16th century that rackets came into use and the game began to be called "tennis", from the French term tenez, which can be translated as "hold!", "receive!" or "take!", an interjection used as a call from the server to his opponent. An epitaph in St Michael's Church, Coventry, written c. 1705, read, in part: Here lyes an old toss'd Tennis Ball: ?Was racketted, from spring to fall, ?With so much heat and so much hast, ?Time's arm for shame grew tyred at last. The analogous competition for women's national teams, the Fed Cup, was founded as the Federation Cup in 1963 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the

founding of the ITF. In 1954, Van Alen founded the International Tennis Hall of Fame, a nonprofit museum in Newport, Rhode Island. The success of the event was overwhelming, and the IOC decided to reintroduce tennis as a full-medal sport at Seoul in 1988. International Tennis Hall of Fame at the Newport Casino, Newport, Rhode Island The Davis Cup, an annual competition between men's national teams, dates to 1900. Some tournaments were held in Belgium instead