



The Story of the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge

Hands across the net, friendship across the ocean

By Julian Tatum



Hands across the net, friendship across the ocean



The International Lawn Tennis Club (known as the 'IC') was founded in 1924 with a view to improving relationships between countries that had been at war with each other. International tennis matches, played in the spirit of fairplay and sportsmanship, were to be the catalyst. That spirit is still the same today.

The IC has grown and there are now 40 countries around the world which have an International Club. Matches are arranged between countries by and for players (all unpaid volunteers) of all ages who have represented their country in an officially recognised team.

A 'Council' of International Clubs coordinates the activities of all ICs worldwide, and it also orchestrates matches and events, one of which is for juniors: the 'IC 16 and Under Worldwide Junior Challenge'.

The Council's website is at www.ictennis.net

This is the story of the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge and we hope you enjoy reading about it.



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**Worldwide IC Junior
Challenge**

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The International Lawn Tennis Club Council's Worldwide Junior Challenge Trophy



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Foreword by IC Council President **Frank Sedgman**



The establishment of the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge had its beginnings in a discussion between the late Athol Tills of the IC of New Zealand and myself in 1996.

It was felt that the juniors of both countries were not getting enough international match play and to improve the games of both boys and girls they needed international competition where they represented their countries.

At the time there were not very many international junior team events in the under-16 years category and both clubs felt that for our countries to compete with the talented youngsters who were being produced by other countries they needed quality match play.

The Australian IC was fortunate enough to secure some sponsorship for three years from Jayco Caravans in 1997. Dennis Dahl, who was President of Tennis South Australia and a partner in the firm of Price Waterhouse Coopers, also came on board with sponsorship and said he would increase it if we included two Asian teams to compete against the Australia and New Zealand teams. New Zealand Funds were also significant sponsors.

The Council of ICs heard about this initiative which inspired Julian Tatum, on the Council's Executive Committee, to set the wheels in motion to organise the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge between the winners of Regional Challenges on different continents.

Sponsorship was crucial and Julian did an excellent job in obtaining much-needed funds to give juniors of various countries the chance to make their mark on the tennis world.

This event is important to the IC family worldwide and to aspiring junior players everywhere, and I am delighted to give it my wholehearted support.

Frank Sedgman

Frank Sedgman



*The winning Spanish team of the first
Compass European Junior Challenge*

The Story of the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge

By Julian Tatum

In the beginning...

It was in Paris, in 2003, at an Executive Committee meeting of the Council of International Clubs that an idea occurred to me which would help to change the future image of the International Club.

The late Athol Tills of New Zealand was recounting how he had arranged an informal practice for the young players in New Zealand with Frank Sedgman's Australian juniors, because they had no opposition at home. This was later formalised as the Trans-Tasman Cup and played for annually from 1997.

The thought that formed in my mind was to take Athol's basic idea and play a junior tournament on each continent, with the winners playing each other in a final somewhere special.

This coincided with the fact that, at the time of our meeting in Paris, the Council's Executive Committee were concerned about various aspects of the image of the IC, particularly related to its age profile.

Firstly, the IC needed to correct the image that many had of it: that we were an organisation with a gradually ageing fraternity, which just played matches among ourselves. This was not an accurate image, but nevertheless one with which we were being labelled.

Secondly, some ICs had not fully appreciated that they could give juniors experience of court craft, social skills and other cultures, by including them in adult teams to play in international matches.

Thirdly, a junior event could help ICs taking a serious interest in the development of the junior game to foster closer relationships with their respective Federations and this could only be a good thing.

My first thought was an obvious one: how can we finance it?

Although I considered the idea to be viable, I did not put it forward until later, when I thought I had secured the financing.

A very large event-organising company, to whom I made the first of what was going to become a sequence of 27 other presentations asking for sponsorship, promised me that they would support this new worldwide event.

The initial sponsorship promised was £250,000. Unfortunately, they were later to withdraw their offer, but not before I had floated the idea, obtained IC Council support, and started to go ahead with arrangements for the first year of Regional Challenges. It was therefore necessary to continue the search for a sponsor with some urgency, while simultaneously setting up the project on a worldwide basis.

The format started, as it has continued, with the Regional Challenges one year and the Worldwide Finals the next.

The reasons for this were both financial and organisational, as I felt each would work better spread over two years.

The target was to be 16 years-and-under juniors, because they seemed to have been forgotten as far as international competition was concerned. There already existed quite a few 18-and-under International Tennis Federation (ITF) tournaments and it was felt important to try to provide a staging post between 14-year-olds and 18-year-olds. Unfortunately, the ITF does not sanction points being awarded in any tournaments other than 18-and-under ones, so they are not awarded for the IC Junior Challenge.

As there are no junior members of any IC in the 16-and-under age group, ICs would be required to liaise with their Federations to nominate team members. This would be a valuable interaction for both.



Captains are allowed on court to help their players



"Hands across the net ..."

The project therefore addressed the three stated aims of:

- improving the image of the IC
- encouraging ICs to give juniors international match experience
- encouraging ICs to engage with their respective Federations.

Of course, there were many sceptics who said it would never work, that the IC organisation was too unwieldy to coordinate a competition which would involve so many volunteers in organising the Regional Challenges. But I had more faith in our IC members, having been a member of the IC since 1973 and having met so many brilliant organisers. I was not about to be too shy in asking for a few favours!

In fact, as soon as the Australian IC heard about my idea they immediately invited the IC of Great Britain to send a team to play in their Trans-Tasman Cup event to get a feel for their competition.

So in 2004 Anthea Stewart led an IC of GB team of 16-year-olds on an Australian tour to play three under-18 ITF tournaments, followed by the Trans-Tasman Cup, which was played at White City Tennis Club, Sydney. By this time, it had been expanded to include Japan and either Malaysia or China, in alternate years.

It was a very successful tour. One of the GB team, Chris Eaton, won the Adelaide ITF 18-and-under (and took those ITF points), which produced a step-change in his playing standard. He later won the Stella Artois Junior event at The Queen's Club in London and became a successful doubles player on the ATP Tour.

So from my office (a converted bedroom in my house) and with the help of Paul Hutchins, former GB Davis Cup captain and the then-Assistant Secretary and Development Officer of the Council, I wrote, on behalf of the IC Council, to all the IC Secretaries and Presidents, grouped by their continent, to ask them to stage a Challenge.



Tournament Director Paul Hutchins (left) and our first Referee, Andrew Jarrett (right)



Doubles action at Vincennes

Slightly to my surprise, I received offers immediately from three ICs to do so: the IC of Uruguay for a South American Challenge, The Bahamas IC for a North American/Caribbean Challenge and the IC of Australia for an Australia/New Zealand Challenge.

Europe followed, and Paul Hutchins agreed to be Tournament Director of the European event which, with the agreement of the IC of France, would be held at Tennis Club de Vincennes in Paris where French IC member Michel Berge was the head coach.

This event was to provide the format for future Challenges around the world.

The Challenges are played on a 'round-robin' basis, so that no one gets knocked out early. This means they all have both singles and doubles matches throughout the event. Fifty per cent of juniors get knocked out in the first round of ITF tournaments and that can be pretty discouraging and give them limited match play experience.

At IC events all the teams stay in the same place and eat meals together, and there are great opportunities for social interaction – all part of the IC's 'hands across the net, friendship across the ocean' approach.

As a result, many juniors make life-long friends at these events.

All drawn matches are decided by a mixed doubles 'Champions tie-break', so that 'tennis' decides the winners, as opposed to some mathematical formula, which is sometimes the case in other junior events. This has proven to be a great innovation: it brings enormous excitement to players and supporters alike when scores are level. And it is often the first time these young players have played a mixed doubles match, especially one in an international match.

The IC Junior Challenge is a unique junior event in that it has boys and girls on the same team, competing for each other – and the youngsters seem to like that.

So, everything was in place (except the sponsorship – see page eight) and the Junior Challenges started becoming a regular feature of the international IC calendar from 2005 onwards, to the extent that most ICs in the world have now participated in the event.

But the essence of the IC is that the off-court activities and friendships formed are as much a part of the event as the competitive tennis. This was to become one of the many life lessons imparted by the IC to juniors who take part. We set out to ensure that players all over the world appreciated this; and they did, as you will see from some of the reviews and emotive images that follow.



Sponsorship

Meanwhile, I continued to seek appointments with managing directors and chairmen of public companies with whom I had direct or indirect contacts, until one day I was in the office of Sir Francis Mackay, who was then-chairman of the FMc catering group. FMc cater for the Wimbledon Championships, rugby at Twickenham and many other prestigious events. I was able to pose him a simple question: "Your company makes a great deal of money out of tennis and sports events in general, but do you actually put very much back?" He agreed that they did make their profits from sporting events, and perhaps they could give something back. "In that case," I said, "I have the very thing!"

After detailed discussion of my proposal, he agreed to sponsor the IC European Junior Challenge and I later gave them the naming rights for the first six-year cycle. This was the birth of the 'Compass European IC Junior Challenge'. (FMc was later incorporated into the Compass Group.)

IBM Consulting/PwC sponsored the first Australasian Junior Challenge, also in 2005, as well as the Worldwide Finals. Both events were held at Homebush, the venue for the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Compass' involvement and sponsorship has grown over the years. It was renegotiated in 2011 for a further six-year cycle.



Compass are the IC's largest sponsor and we are immensely grateful to them for their continued financial help. Their sponsorship continues to support the Compass European IC Junior Challenge. It also enables us to give the members of the winning teams a subsidy for their airfares to the Worldwide Finals – and this is critical to the success of the event, because of the huge cost of the international flights required from all over the world.

In Asia/Oceania, Europe, South America, Africa and North America/Caribbean, IC countries take it in turns to host the Regional Challenges. These are paid for by the host countries, and by any sponsorship they can obtain locally, plus a grant from the IC Council.



Barcelona 2009

Reviews

Team members share their thoughts on the Worldwide IC Junior Challenge.

“Playing against all the teams was a really good experience. I made some friends on all the teams (Barbados, The Bahamas and Mexico). I had a great experience and lots of fun, on and off the court. I am really looking forward to going to England and playing more tennis!” Raveena Kingsley, USA

“The whole experience of going to Canada to represent my country, The Bahamas, was one of the best trips I have ever gone on. Although my individual play was not all successful, the experience itself taught me that it is not always about winning. It’s about enjoying your time while playing on the court, learning from your mistakes, making new friends that could last a lifetime and just having clean fun.”

Danielle Thompson, The Bahamas

“It was an incredible week and I’ll remember it for the rest of my life. Playing on Wimbledon’s grass courts has always been a dream of mine and you made my dream come true. I’m honoured to be able to say that I’ve played at Wimbledon. It was an amazing week and a life-changing experience.”

Jan-Louis Maritz, S Africa

“I feel as though it was a wonderful experience and I never knew that the IC was such an active club. One of the main aspects of the competition that I enjoyed was that it wasn’t just a ‘competition’, but also a social event that allowed me to interact and meet new people from other countries and other cultures. Also this event allowed me to focus on certain things that I needed to work on in my game which was very beneficial.”

Christian Cargill, The Bahamas

“It was great how we got to coach at the clinic and teach the little kids. I think I learned just as much as they did. It felt great to give back to the community and bring a smile to the kids’ faces. There was great competition and the director, Kit Spencer, was amazing. I thought the whole experience was worthwhile and something I would love to experience again.”

Evan Zhu, USA

“There isn’t a worse feeling than letting team members down; however, there isn’t a better feeling than sharing success with team members. The first day of The Bahamas, it was almost like we had two teams representing USA: the boys and the girls. As time passed, the bonds became stronger and so did our trust among each other. By the last match, we were competing as one team which gave us a huge advantage over the opposing team.” Brian Tsao, USA

The Development of Disadvantaged Kids

Since the juniors who play in these events are being totally financed by sponsorship in one form or another, it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to remind them that they are, in so many ways, extremely privileged.

The youngsters taking part in the events are not usually drawn from the very top echelon of juniors. At the very top, the players receive substantial grants and/or sponsorship from their Federations to compete in tournaments all over the world, and



An under-privileged kids' clinic in Adelaide

their calendars are busy. The players who compete in the IC Junior Challenge are often those who struggle to get finance for international competition. They are, however, players who, with a bit of help, may end up developing into even better performers than their higher-ranked friends.

But for the IC this isn't just about making them better players; we also think it is important that the youngsters should understand that it is good to 'put something back into the game' and not just keep taking out.

To that end, whenever we run an IC Junior Challenge anywhere in the world, we also include a clinic for the disadvantaged.

The first of these, now very successful, clinics was run at Pilará, Argentina, before the South American Junior Challenge in 2007. This happened to be staged at former US Open champion Gabriela Sabatini's home club and she ran the clinic, together with the youngsters competing in the South American Challenge.

Simply by taking part in running the clinics, the juniors realise, without having to be told, how privileged they are themselves. For some of them it will be the first time they have put something back into tennis and this can be very satisfying for them, as well as for the disadvantaged kids.

Images opposite

- 1.** 2014 Clinic at Wimbledon
- 2-5.** Scenes from the 2009 clinic in Brazil
- 6.** Adelaide clinic 2012
- 7.** Gabriela Sabatini gives a clinic in Argentina in 2007





2005 Regional Challenges

The first ever **Compass European Junior Challenge** was played at TC de Vincennes in Paris, France. Teams took part from Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain. The event was won by Spain, who were not able to send a team to the Worldwide Finals, so runners-up France qualified.

The **Australasian Junior Challenge** was played at the Olympic Park, Homebush, Sydney, Australia. Teams took part from Australia, Japan, Malaysia (not an IC country) and New Zealand. The event was won by New Zealand; the runners-up were Australia.

The **South American Junior Challenge** was played in Montevideo, Uruguay. Teams took part from Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. The event was won by Uruguay; the runners-up were Argentina.

The **North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge** was played at Breezes Resort in Nassau, The Bahamas. Teams took part from The Bahamas, Canada, Mexico and the USA. The event was won by Mexico; the runners-up were the USA.



Top left: The Danish team took part in the first European Junior Challenge.

Left: Competitor serving at Vincennes



Top: The 2006 finalists at Sydney in 2006. **Above:** Pat Rafter receives the Council of International Club's Jean Borotra CQS Sportsmanship Award from Frank Sedgman during the Finals

2006 Worldwide Finals

The event was played at the Olympic Park, Homebush, Sydney, Australia.

CONTENDERS

France: Runners-up in the Compass European Junior Challenge

Mexico: Winners of the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge

New Zealand: Winners of the Australasian Junior Challenge

Australia: Runners-up in the Australasian Junior Challenge and host country

Uruguay: Winners of the South American Junior Challenge

Winners: New Zealand

Runners-up: France



Above: The Albinea competitors and coaches. Top: Action from the Compass European Junior Challenge in Albinea

2007 Regional Challenges

The Compass European Junior Challenge was played at Circolo Tennis Club in Albinea, Italy. Teams took part from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The event was won by Italy; the runners-up were Great Britain.

The North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge was played in Mexico City, Mexico. Teams took part from The Bahamas, Canada, Mexico and the USA. The event was won by Mexico; the runners-up were the USA.

The South American Junior Challenge was played at Pilará Tennis Club in Argentina. Teams took part from Argentina, Brazil, Chile (which is now an IC country but wasn't at the time) and Uruguay. The event was won by Argentina; the runners-up were Uruguay.

The Australasian Junior Challenge was played at the ASB Stadium in Auckland, New Zealand. Teams took part from Australia, Japan and New Zealand. The event was won by Japan; the runners-up were Australia.

The Asian Junior Challenge was played at the Delhi LTA Centre in New Delhi, India. Teams took part from India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Uzbekistan (not an IC country). The event was won by Uzbekistan; the runners-up were India.

South Africa were the winners of the **African Nations Cup**, which the Council adjudicated would guarantee their qualification for the 2008 Worldwide Finals provided that Regional Challenges were held in the future.



Top: Action from the 2014 Worldwide Finals at the ASB Stadium in Auckland

2008 Worldwide Finals

The event was played at the ASB Stadium in Auckland, New Zealand.

CONTENDERS

- Great Britain:** Runners-up in the Compass European Junior Challenge (required to make up the numbers from seven to eight teams)
- Italy:** Winners of the Compass European Junior Challenge
- Japan:** Winners of the Australasian Junior Challenge
- Mexico:** Winners of the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge
- New Zealand:** Host country
- New Zealand 2:** Replacements for Argentina who, because of a pilots' strike at Buenos Aires airport, could not get on their flight
- South Africa:** Winners of the African Nations Cup (run on roughly the same lines as the Junior Challenge)
- Uzbekistan:** Winners of the Asian Junior Challenge

Winners: New Zealand

Runners-up: South Africa



2009 Regional Challenges

The Compass European Junior Challenge was played at the Valldoreix Tennis Centre near Barcelona, Spain. Teams took part from Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Norway, Ireland, Italy, Russia, Spain and Sweden. The event was won by Germany; the runners-up were Great Britain.

The South American Junior Challenge was played in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Teams took part from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay. The event was won by Brazil; the runners-up were Argentina.

The North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge was played in Florida, USA. Teams took part from The Bahamas, Canada, Mexico and the USA. The event was won by the USA; the runners-up were The Bahamas.

The Asia-Pacific Junior Challenge was played at the Delhi LTA Centre in New Delhi, India. Teams took part from India, Nepal (not an IC country) and Singapore. The event was won by India; the runners-up were Singapore.

Top: Barcelona girls' doubles and the artistically designed week's programme. **Above:** Doubles pair in the 2009 Compass IC European Junior Challenge in Barcelona



Top: Local dancers saved from the Sri Lankan tsunami perform for the juniors. **Above:** Action from the 2010 New Delhi Worldwide Finals

2010 Worldwide Finals

The event was played at the R.K.Kanna Stadium in New Delhi, India.

CONTENDERS

Germany: Winners of the Compass European Junior Challenge

Great Britain: Runners-up in the Compass European Junior Challenge

India: Winners of the Asia-Pacific Junior Challenge

India B: Replacements for Brazil who could not raise a team to compete in the finals

New Zealand: Holders

USA: Winners of the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge

Winners: Great Britain

Runners-up: Germany

Great Britain beat Germany in a mixed doubles 'Champions tie-break' to decide the final match and the 2010 Worldwide Junior Challenge.



2011 Regional Challenges

The Compass European Junior Challenge was played at Tennis Club 2000 Academia in Bucharest, Romania. Teams took part from Germany, Great Britain, Luxembourg and Romania. The event was won by Germany; the runners-up were Great Britain.

The South American Junior Challenge was played in Montevideo, Uruguay. Teams took part from Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. The event was won by Argentina; the runners-up were Uruguay.

The North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge was played in Toronto, Canada. Teams took part from The Bahamas, the USA, Mexico and Canada. The event was won by Canada; the runners-up were The Bahamas.

The Asia/Oceania Junior Challenge was played at the Changi Beach Club in Singapore. Teams took part from India, Japan, Singapore Red and Singapore White (two teams to make up the four teams required). The event was won by India; the runners-up were Japan.

The African Junior Challenge was played at the Gauteng East Tennis Complex in Benoni, South Africa. Teams took part from Botswana (not an IC country), South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia (not an IC country). The event was won by South Africa; the runners-up were Zimbabwe.



Above and left: Action from the *Compass European Junior Challenge* in Bucharest



Top: Competitors wear Pat Cash headbands in Adelaide. **Above:** A South African player in action in the 2012 Worldwide finals

2012 Worldwide Finals

The event was played at Memorial Drive Tennis Centre in Adelaide, Australia, as part of the World Tennis Challenge, which was supported by Tennis South Australia and the South Australian Government.

CONTENDERS

Argentina: Winners of the South American Junior Challenge

Australia: Host country

Germany: Winners of the Compass European Junior Challenge

India: Winners of the Asia/Oceania Junior Challenge

South Africa: Winners of the African Junior Challenge

USA: Replacements for Canada who could not raise a team. The USA were third in the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge but the only country in the Challenge able to get a team to travel to Adelaide

Winners: South Africa

Runners-up: Argentina

It is interesting to note that two of the South African girls, Ilse Hattingh and Lynn Kiro, went on to represent South Africa in the Fed Cup.



2013 Regional Challenges

The Compass European Junior Challenge was played at the Circolo Tennis Club in Albinea, Italy. Teams took part from Austria, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden, Spain and Russia. The event was won by Italy; the runners-up were Spain.

The Asia/Oceania Junior Challenge was played at Estolle Tennis Club in Chiba, Japan. Teams took part from Australia, Japan, Pakistan and Singapore. The event was won by Japan; the runners-up were Australia.

The North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge was played at the National Tennis Centre in The Bahamas. Teams took part from Barbados, The Bahamas, Mexico and the USA. The event was won by the USA; the runners-up were Mexico.

The South American Junior Challenge was played at Club de Golf Valle Escondido in Santiago, Chile. Teams took part from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. The event was won by Argentina; the runners-up were Chile.

The African Junior Challenge was played at Ellis Park in Johannesburg, South Africa. Teams took part from Botswana (not an IC country), Mauritius (not an IC country), South Africa and Zimbabwe (no longer an IC country). The event was won by South Africa; the runners-up were Zimbabwe.



Top: Competitors and recipients of the disadvantaged clinic in the South American Junior Challenge in Chile. **Above:** Tuition from a competitor in the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge in The Bahamas



Top: Alexis Canter of Great Britain.
Above: Disadvantaged clinic at Wimbledon

2014 Worldwide Finals

The event was played on the Championships grass courts at Wimbledon.

CONTENDERS

Argentina: Winners of the South American Junior Challenge

Great Britain: Host country

Italy: Winners of the Compass European Junior Challenge

Japan: Winners of the Asia/Oceania Junior Challenge

South Africa: Winners of the African Junior Challenge

USA: Winners of the North American and Caribbean Junior Challenge

Winners: USA

Runners-up: Argentina



Top: Nicolas Bacella of Argentina. **Above:** Eden Richardson of Great Britain

Top: Evan Zhu and Brian Tsao of USA. **Above:** Richard Thongoana Jnr of South Africa

The tenth anniversary Junior Challenge has now been concluded and we were lucky enough to be able to play it on The Championship's grass courts, at Wimbledon, the home of tennis, by kind permission of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club and the standard of tennis was the highest so far.

All the competitors had a great week and they learned about the

ideals of the IC – sportsmanship and fair-play both on and off the court. The Finals were a wonderful example of these words in action and I am sure the juniors also made many friends for life during the week.

It is hoped that players will be either keen to be accepted as Junior Associate Members of their ICs and/or at a later stage in their playing careers, they will be invited to take up full IC membership.



The Future

The IC 16 and Under Junior Challenge has developed its own momentum and become a permanent fixture in the IC calendar. It is in the safe hands of our many IC volunteers all over the world and the world-wide coordinator.

We sincerely hope that our main sponsor, The Compass Group, who have been so important in making the event such a success over the last ten years, will continue supporting the IC.

Meanwhile, arrangements are already in place for regional Challenges per continent, to be played in 2015, in Spain, USA, Argentina, Singapore and S Africa. The winners will play the Final in 2016 at one of the most

beautiful tennis clubs in the world, the Monte Carlo Country Club.

During the last ten years of Junior Challenges more than 600 juniors, their coaches and their Federations learned invaluable life lessons as exemplified by the IC's motto: **'Hands across the net, friendship across the ocean'** and IC youngsters who have been involved in the Junior Challenge clinics for disadvantaged children are likely to remember the experience forever.

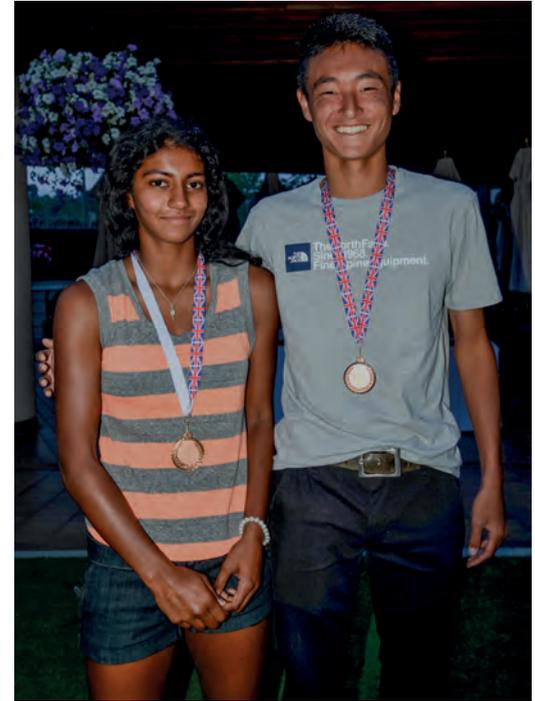
We look forward to celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Junior Challenge in 2024, which coincidentally will be one hundred years since the IC was founded.



2006: *Laura Agulier Abunza and Victor Rodriguez Garza of Mexico*



2013: *Renata Zarazua of Mexico and Andrew Symmonds of Barbados*



2014: *Raveena Kingsley of USA and Haru Fukushima of Japan*

The Worldwide IC Junior Challenge Sportsmanship Awards

During the IC Junior Challenge Worldwide Finals every two years, there is the possibility for two outstanding players to be rewarded for their excellent sportsmanship and their demonstrable 'fairplay'. The prizes are not always awarded and to win one is not only a fantastic achievement, but also shows precisely the ethic prevailing in the International Club.

This year was no exception and Captains were asked to nominate players from other teams to establish a short list from which the Referee and Tournament Director chose their 2014 winners.

Pictured are some of the recipients over the years, together with the 2014 winners.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, a big thank you to the late Athol Tills of the New Zealand IC who gave me the original inspiration for a Worldwide IC Junior Challenge. Without him this would not have happened.

Secondly, I have always appreciated the excellent support and encouragement before and during the IC Junior Challenge project of the two incumbent IC Council chairmen, Barry Weatherill CBE and Peter McQuibban OBE.

The Compass Group have supported the IC Junior Challenge financially since its inception and were given the naming rights to the European Junior Challenge in 2005. Not only have they provided the finance for the European Junior Challenge every two years and airfare subsidies for the finalists every other year, they have staged dinners and provided lunches for many of the other Challenges around the world.

My thanks to all at the Compass Group for their magnificent support during the last 10 years of financing the European Junior Challenge. They have been the rock on which we have built the tournament worldwide and we are immensely grateful to them. Without their continued support this event would not be possible.



Thank you also to all the IC member volunteers who have staged Challenges on all five continents during the last 10 years. It has been a great IC team effort. I hope you have had as much pleasure in seeing these events come to fruition as I have. Virtually every IC has been represented by the 600-plus youngsters who have taken part so far.

To the many clubs who have staged either Regional Challenges or the Worldwide Finals, we are extremely indebted to you all. Thank you.

I have been sent many images from around the world, some of which have been used to illustrate this booklet. There are too many photographers to thank individually, but I thank you collectively and hope you will enjoy seeing your images in print.

Thanks to Kit Spencer who took over the day-to-day running of the event in 2010, enabling me to concentrate on securing continued sponsorship and prime tournament venues.

To all the competitors, I hope you have enjoyed the experience and that you will tell your friends about the IC. We hope that at some time in the future, you will want to become members of your country's IC.

I firmly believe that the IC Junior Challenge has broadened the education and life skills of the juniors who have taken part and given them all a sense of what is possible. Long may it continue!



About the author



Julian Tatum retired in 1999 from Michelin Tyre plc as a senior executive, after a career of 36 years.

He represented Suffolk County for 20 years during this period and served on the Suffolk LTA. He has won several national doubles titles and represented Great Britain at international veteran level in various age groups.

He was invited to become a member of the All England Lawn Tennis Club in 1971 and served on the Committee of Management for 12 years after his retirement. While on the committee he started the All England Club's 'Wimbledon Junior Tennis Initiative' (a local community project), which has put a racket in the hand of more than 150,000 local youngsters, and wrote a book about its first 10 years.

He was invited to become a member of the International Lawn Tennis Club of Great Britain in 1973 and served on the committee for 26 years.

In 2001 he was seconded to the Council of International Clubs and was later elected a full member of the Council, responsible for Events and Player Liaison, where he has served for 10 years.

In 2003 he had the idea of establishing the IC Worldwide Junior Challenge and this publication is designed to record the highlights of its first 10 years.

His hobbies include photography (Licentiate of the Royal Photographic Society), IT, golf and family. He is married with two children and three grandchildren. He is an Honorary Member of the ICs of France, Mexico, Belgium, Uruguay, USA, Spain, New Zealand, The Bahamas, Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, India and Hong Kong.



Hands across the net, friendship across the ocean



An IC Council publication
www.ictennis.net

