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Special issue

M O N T E - C A R L O

SQUASH CLASSIC MAGAZINE



Present and future
of the Classic

The tournament
in pictures

Tesni Murphy

A CONVERSATION
WITH THE WINNER



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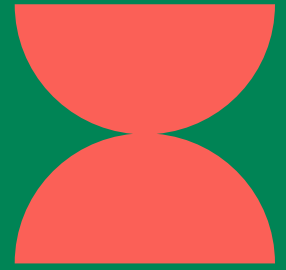


LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Winner of the Monte Carlo Squash Classic 2024, Tesni Murphy is a breath of fresh air on the tour. In a time where sports bodies - and media - want athletes to fit in a box and refereeing to be governed by technology, the Welshwoman stands out with her game based on brain rather than power, as well as her sense of humour on and off the court.

Runner-up in 2018, Murphy added her name into the incredible list of the Monte Carlo Squash Classic winners. The tournament, which is not far from celebrating its 30th edition, may not be a "major", but this year's confirmed once more it's an iconic event on the calendar. We can't wait to see what the future has in store in Monaco...

Jerome Elhaik



 Fersenn Sherkan

The Monte Carlo Classic is special, and so is this year's winner

A CONVERSATION WITH TESNI MURPHY

BY JÉRÔME ELHAÏK

 Fersenn Sherkan

The winner of the 2024 MC Classic is not the tallest player on tour but her squash IQ is second to none



FEELING AFTER MATCH BALL?

“You mean the two I lost? Joke aside, I was so happy and it’s a nice feeling to win an event I’ve loved playing over the years. It was a close final throughout, which came down to SJ hitting a few

crucial tins while I managed to stay solid.”

GOALS THIS SEASON

“Last few seasons have been up and down for me, with some health issues. I’ve played a lot of matches recently, it was the goal playing smaller events.

“I am happy with the way I dealt with the pressure of being one of the top seeds in Monte Carlo.”



It's easy to play against a top 5 girl in the 1st round of a major because you have nothing to lose. But when you are one of the top seeds in a tournament like Monaco there's more pressure and I am happy with how I dealt with it. I don't know why but I've been moving very well on court lately (she laughs). I want to take things step by step, coming back into the top 20 was a goal of mine so now why not aim for top 10.”

TODAY'S TEZ COMPARED TO 10 YEARS AGO?

“I'd say it's probably close. The difference is, when you are younger you have less pressure and responsibilities. Now I think about things like will I win more titles, and worry about the future after my career. Good thing is, I managed to double my title tally in one day! Seriously, when I started I didn't manage to win the small events and then it was all about going up in the rankings.

The tour is so strong these days, it's incredibly hard to win a tournament..."

A UNIQUE STYLE

"Nobody told me to play like this, it was my choice.

I've always been shorter than my opponents and didn't really train physically when I was young.

Sometimes I tried to play a more basic game but it did not suit my personality.

Actually I admire players who are very strong

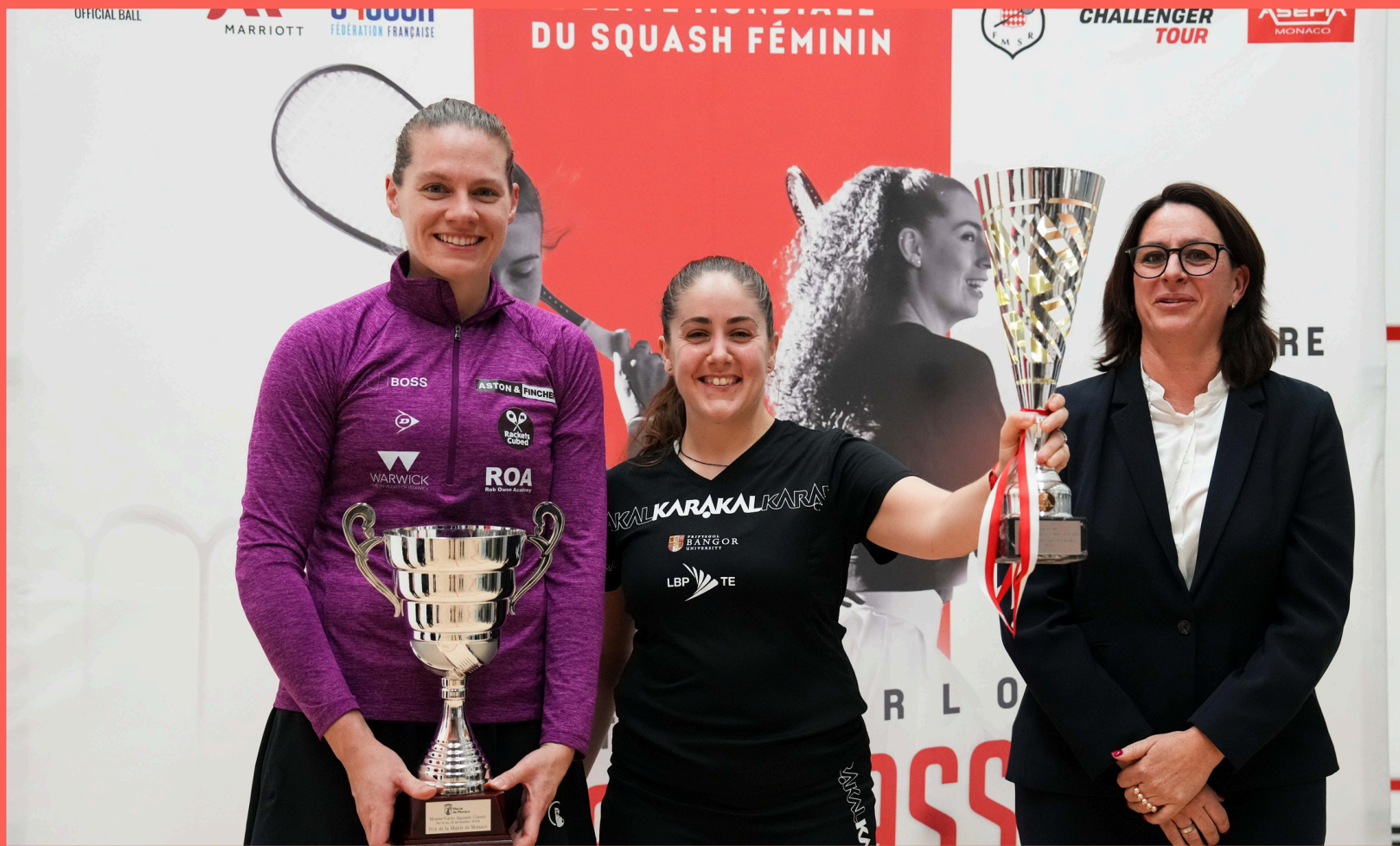
physically, and the beauty of squash is the contrast of styles. When two attacking players face each other, it's often terrible to watch (she laughs)! As for having a game that other players might struggle with, it's no use if they end up beating me..."

GAME CHANGER

"I'd been looking for the right coach for some time, and when Alison Waters announced her retirement



"The Olympics? I am someone who tend not to plan too far ahead."



I knew it was her! She brought enjoyment back into my game, all our sessions are very hard but also a lot of fun. Her game was very different to mine, which is great because I can take some of her shots – for example the crosscourt kills. I still love learning, and never stop trying new things. We don't have

enough female coaches at the top level, Al has been through everything and faced most of my opponents as a player. We are also very good friends, and in order to keep things going smoothly we choose to have a very open relationship. I've always said things as I felt them anyway..."

MONTE CARLO CLASSIC


AT A GLANCE

A few takes from this year's tournament

Tesni Murphy is the first Welshwoman to win in Monte Carlo. Thanks to this title, she overtook Sarah-Jane Perry and is now 18 in the world - her best ranking in a year.


First



 Fersenn Sherkan

140



 Fersenn Sherkan

Sarah-Jane Perry goes out of the top 20 and it's the opportunity to acknowledge that she'd remained in it for 140 consecutive months, since April 2013! It was the longest streak among active players, ahead of current No.1 Nour ElSherbini.


MONTE CARLO CLASSIC

AT A GLANCE

Back after a serious knee injury, former World No.10 Joshna Chinappa surprised herself reaching the semis. The 38-year old Indian climbed from 314 to 160 in the rankings!


Comeback



 Fersenn Sherkan

No double



 Fersenn Sherkan

Lucy Turmel did not manage to become the fourth lady to retain her title after Sarah Fitzgerald (1996-97), Natalie Grinham (2006-07 and 2011-2012) and Laura Massaro (2008-09).


- 6 The Monte Carlo Squash Classic is the 6th biggest ladies event of the 2024/25 season in Europe in terms of prize money.

MONTE CARLO CLASSIC AT A GLANCE

Mélissa Alves, Énora Villard, Lauren Baltayan and Élise Romba all lost their first match and it was the first time since 2017 there was no French interest in the quarters.


Year off



 Fersenn Sherkan

Breakthrough



 Fersenn Sherkan


Sister of 2022 runner-up Rana Ismail, Hana Ismail was impressive in Monaco. After a busy start to the season, the 19-year old Egyptian will now take a break to devote herself to her studies.

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The Classic is among the oldest tournaments on the tour, and the only one who's been on every year apart during covid! For example, the British Open was not held in 2010 and 2011.

PRESENT AND FUTURE

BY JÉRÔME ELHAÏK

 Fersenn Sherkan



We caught up with Mélanie Flachaire, president of the Monte Carlo Squash Racket Club who's also going to take over Bruno Fissore at the head of the Federation.

MONACO LIKE THE PLAYERS AND VICE-VERSA

“It was great to see some former top 10 players who had not been coming in Monaco for a while. When they say they love it here, I do think they mean it. Obviously the setting is a factor, as well as the weather for British players (she laughs), and we do everything we can so that they feel comfortable.

Most of the time they travel alone on the tour, so I think they appreciate the camaraderie here. Lucy Turmel could have left after losing in the semis but insisted on staying for the closing dinner, and Joshna Chinappa came too. When Patrick Rubino was the tournament director we used to go to dinner with all the players during the week, and I would like to do it again in the future.”

“When players say they love the tournament I do think they mean it.”



A SPECIAL EVENT

“We’d looked into it with Philippe Signoret a while ago, the Monte Carlo Squash Classic is the second oldest tournament in Europe after the British Open. We know that we are iconic event on the calendar, and that’s probably why someone like Joshna Chinappa wanted to come at least once before ending her career. Having hosted 27 editions means something, it’s the result of all the work of the team as well as the continued support of the government.

Monaco is a country where sport is very important, and who wishes to host international events.”

TRANSITION

“I wasn’t aware that Bruno Fissore was going to announce he was leaving the presidency during the prize ceremony, he took me by surprise and it was quite emotional. He’s got a lot of connections in Monaco which was very helpful for us, and I’ll do my best to do as well as he did. Unfortunately I don’t play squash anymore, but

I love the sport and I'll try and work on new things. Politics are also important because sport is not only about what's going on on court."

THE FUTURE OF THE CLASSIC

"In the last 3 years we've been trying to grow, especially in terms of communication. We intend to go further, but that doesn't happen overnight. Patience is one of my core values: we can dream of a

glass court, but if it ends up being a one-off thing it's not worth it. If we have to settle for a 50k and don't host the best players in the world, so be it. The goal is also to make squash more visible and unite the club members around this event. There was a great turnout during the final (author's note: around 100 people), among them people we are not used to seeing, I believe that after the Olympics people want to discover new sports..."



MEMORIES

SOME OF THE BEST SHOTS FROM FERSENN SHERKAN

On court



Hana Ismail



Yann Menegaux & Énora Villard



Alicia Mead

MEMORIES

On court



Emilia Soini

MEMORIES

Off court



Hana Ramadan



Fersenn Sherkann



The crowd of the Monte Carlo Squash Classic

MEMORIES

Off court



The four semifinalists (Lucy Turmel, Sarah-Jane Perry, Tesni Murphy et Joshna Chinappa) at the after tournament dinner

MEMORIES

Behind the scenes



Romain Suire



Lucy Turmel



Coach Yves Tastet looking after the kids from the academy during the final

MONTE CARLO CLASSIC 2024 - THE DRAW

Round of 32 (11 nov)	Round of 16 (12 nov)	Quarterfinals (13 nov)	Semifinals (14 nov)	Final (15 nov)
<p>Ali LOKE (WAL) 11-9, 11-9, 11-4</p> <p>[9/16] Élise ROMBA (FRA) 11-9, 11-5, 11-4</p> <p>[9/16] Alison THOMSON (SCO) 11-9, 11-5, 11-4</p> <p>Hayley WARD (RSA)</p>	<p>[1] Sarah-Jane PERRY (ENG) 11-3, 7-11, 11-6, 11-3</p> <p>Ali LOKE (WAL)</p> <p>Hayley WARD (RSA) 11-5, 11-3, 11-9</p> <p>[7] Emilia SOINI (FIN) 11-5, 11-3, 11-9</p> <p>[6] Alicia MEAD (ENG) 11-4, 12-10, 11-7</p> <p>[9/16] Lowri ROBERTS (WAL) 7-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-2, 11-5</p> <p>[9/16] Joshna CHINAPPA (IND) 11-8, 11-4, 11-5</p> <p>Katerina TYCOVA (GER)</p>	<p>[1] Sarah-Jane PERRY (ENG) 11-7, 11-4, 11-4</p> <p>[7] Emilia SOINI (FIN) 11-5, 11-4, 11-3</p> <p>[6] Alicia MEAD (ENG) 11-5, 11-4, 11-3</p> <p>[9/16] Joshna CHINAPPA (IND) 4-11, 11-5, 11-9, 9-11, 11-7</p> <p>[3] Tesni MURPHY (WAL) 11-5, 11-5, 11-8</p> <p>[9/16] Saskia BEINHARD (GER) 11-5, 11-5, 11-8</p> <p>Tanvi KHANNA (IND) 11-7, 11-8, 11-5</p> <p>[5] Hana RAMADAN (EGY) 11-7, 11-8, 11-5</p> <p>[8] Énora VILLARD (FRA) 11-6, 11-6, 3-11, 13-11</p> <p>[9/16] Hana ISMAIL (EGY) 11-4, 9-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-7</p> <p>[2] Lucy TURMEL (ENG) 11-6, 11-5, 11-6</p>	<p>[1] Sarah-Jane PERRY (ENG) 11-8, 11-7, 4-11, 14-12</p> <p>[9/16] Joshna CHINAPPA (IND) 11-9, 11-9, 12-10</p> <p>[3] Tesni MURPHY (WAL) 11-9, 11-9, 12-10</p> <p>[3] Tesni MURPHY (WAL) 8-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-7</p> <p>[2] Lucy TURMEL (ENG) 11-4, 9-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-7</p>	<p>[1] Sarah-Jane PERRY (ENG)</p> <p>Winner</p> <p>[3] Tesni MURPHY (WAL) 11-9, 11-9, 12-10</p> <p>[3] Tesni MURPHY (WAL)</p>



