

A COMMERCIAL UNION  
GRAND PRIX EVENT

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JUNE 17th-22nd 1974

# The John Player Tennis Tournament

PROGRAMME 25p



**Message from the Chairman and Managing Director  
of John Player and Sons**



The 1974 John Player Tennis Tournament heralds a new stage in the relationship between competitors, organisers and sponsors in top-class tennis. The recent five-year agreement to hold a Grade AA tournament in the week before Wimbledon means that the leading figures in men's tennis will be playing in front of British spectators for three consecutive weeks each year.

I know that everyone involved welcomes the continuity which this arrangement brings to the game.

With £40,000 at stake, this year's John Player event is one of Europe's five leading tournaments, and, after Wimbledon, the most valuable in Britain. Not surprisingly, it has brought the world's best players to Nottingham — the Association of Tennis Professionals having guaranteed that their members would turn out in strength.

I would like to say a special thank you to the Notts. LTA, the tournament organisers. In the past eight years, the Association has gained a great deal of experience in running senior tennis tournaments supported by John Player. The enthusiasm and expertise which the committee and members have brought to this year's event, have not, therefore, surprised us.

The Park can expect a record number of spectators to enjoy some of the finest tennis ever seen in Britain. It remains for me to wish the players the best of luck.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G.A. Iden'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

G.A. Iden, Chairman and Managing Director,  
John Player and Sons.

## A Brief History of the Tournament

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By Frank Eggins

It is hard to realise that less than a decade has passed since John Player and Sons first became involved with a tournament which has been in existence for close on a century. In those brief years of sponsorship, this venerable tournament has not only been rejuvenated, but has also left behind all the more out-dated attributes of a lazy garden-party saunter, to leap now to the forefront of the English tennis scene, second only, and inevitably, to Wimbledon.

Sponsorship seems now so much a part of the sporting scene that it is not always remembered that The L.T.A. allowed it in tennis only as recently as 1964. Player's first became involved in 1966. The scale of their support, both financial and otherwise — such, for instance, as the production of this programme — has increased annually ever since.

The milestones stand out. In 1968 came the advent of truly 'open' tennis with the abolition of the old categories of professional and amateur. In 1970 the Notts. tournament staged, virtually for the first time in this country, a Round Robin event with four invited men tennis players competing for a first prize of £1,000. The success of this innovation caused it to be repeated, this time with ladies, in 1971. The popularity of the event in spite of what was (until 1972) the worst tournament weather for many years led to the following year's development — a Round Robin for both men and ladies, with the same top prizes in both events.

Then in 1973 the Notts. tournament took its place in the Commercial Union Grand Prix circuit, and John Player spared no expense and the Committee shirked no task which might help to ensure its success. That the cost and hard work were justified is proved by the latest move toward a five year agreement starting in 1974 which places the tournament in the highest category of national and international events.

It all seems a far cry from the first Notts. Tennis Tournament held in 1887 at Trent Bridge, which continued to stage the event for the next twelve years, although the adjoining Notts. Castle C.C. ground was also used. Then in 1899 it moved to its present home in The Park in the centre of the City of Nottingham, where it has continued each year uninterrupted except by the two World Wars.

In those years there have been many notable local winners, beginning with the two members of the redoubtable Snook family who took the Singles titles in that opening year. Then there was C.P. Dixon, considered by many to have been the finest English Doubles player of all time, twice Doubles Champion (with H. Roper Barrett) at Wimbledon, twice a Singles finalist there, and a member of the team which beat Australia to regain the Davis Cup for the British Isles in 1912. The current President of Notts. L.T.A., Eric Attewell, won in 1932. In 1956 it was the turn of former Davis Cup player Tony Pickard, now Great Britain's Davis Cup captain and the Notts. Tournament Director.

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## A Brief History of the Tournament

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Among the ladies the outstanding name is surely that of Miss Freda James, later Mrs. Hammersley, certainly the finest Notts. woman player ever, twice Wimbledon Doubles Champion (with Kay Stammers) and a regular member of the Wightman Cup team of her day. More recently, in 1969, came another familiar British name, Mrs. Janes — still perhaps better known to us as Christine Truman. In 1963, the last year before sponsorship, Miss Darlene Hard of the United States beat Brazil's Miss Maria Bueno before what was then a record Saturday crowd. Another popular winner among the ladies was Miss Judy Tegart (now Mrs. Dalton) in 1968, the same year that she was runner-up at Wimbledon.

But then the Tournament has always attracted more than just local interest, building up to the international best of players who are here this year. In 1966, when Ion Tiriac of Rumania won the title, he was accompanied to Nottingham by a little-known young man on his first overseas tour — his compatriot and long-time Doubles partner, Ilie Nastase. And for those with long tennis memories, the famous names stretch right back into the past — A.W. Gore, three times Wimbledon Champion, H.L. Doherty, who held that title for five successive years and, in the increasingly international atmosphere of recent years, a host of Davis Cup players.

So it has gone on over the years, with many others who contributed to a valuable degree — our first sponsors, Mansfield Brewery Co., the Civic patrons and those others listed elsewhere in this programme who provide financial help; the willing voluntary helpers; the citizens of Nottingham and surrounding districts, who support tennis both indoors and out in increasing numbers.

Not least, of course, do we welcome the competitors themselves, from many parts of the world, old friends and new, whom it is a pleasure to meet and watch for a few brief days every year.

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## Events in the 1974 John Player Tennis Tournament

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### 1) GENTLEMEN'S SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP

PRIZE MONEY	£
Winner	7,000
Runner-up	3,500
Losing semi-finalists	1,850
Losing quarter-finalists	950
3rd round losers	500
2nd round losers	250
1st round losers	150

The winner will also receive the John Player Tennis Trophy

### 2) GENTLEMEN'S DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP

PRIZE MONEY	£
Winners	1,400 per pair
Runners-up	700 per pair
Losing semi-finalists	350 per pair
Losing quarter finalists	200 per pair
2nd round losers	100 per pair
1st round losers	50 per pair

The winners will also receive the John Player Tennis Trophy

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kennings	—for the provision of courtesy cars throughout the tournament
British Red Cross Society	—for providing first aid services
The Dunlop Sports Company	—for the provision of all tennis equipment.
Redgate Table Waters	—for the provision of soft drinks at the umpires' chairs.
The Nottingham Boys High School and The Frank Weldon Comprehensive School, Carlton	—for the provision of ball boys throughout the tournament
The Whiteley Electrical Radio Company Limited	—for the provision of acoustic telephone hoods

## Modern Tennis

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As we watch some of the world's finest tennis players in action in this John Player tournament, it is hard to imagine that only a few short months ago, this star-packed event was simply not 'on'. Such has been the changing face of lawn tennis in the 12 months since the last John Player tournament, that no one in their right senses could have envisaged a competition of this calibre, with £40,000 in prize money, and costing thousands more to present and stage-manage, being played in this country the week before Wimbledon, or at least, anywhere outside London. But Nottingham, and John Player and Son, have pulled it off against the odds, and the results of their endeavours we shall see in a feast of tennis this week.

But let me recap the events of the past year, a momentous one so far as lawn tennis is concerned, and I mean on the political front, rather than in a playing sense.

It began of course, with the now famous, or infamous, boycott of Wimbledon by members of the Association of Tennis Players — in effect, the players' trade union, to which nearly all the world-class stars belong. The first rumblings of the players' discontent were heard at this tournament exactly a year ago, but it was still one of the saddest moments of my tennis writing life when I stood beside the Wimbledon referee, Capt. Mike Gibson, on that fateful day and struck out the names of 82 Wimbledon defaulters.

I simply did not think it could happen. It did, however, and, the world noted, Wimbledon survived for the second successive year without its stars.

At the same time, I was far more concerned at the threat imposed by World Team Tennis, another American invention, which threatened to kill completely the summer tournament scene as we know it in Britain, if not the rest of Europe.

Here was the advent of the Inter-City League, with 16 towns in America holding the franchises and aiming to sign the best players in the world they could entice with big money guarantees. Their schedule was to run from May until the end of August, with time off for Wimbledon. It is easy to see how this new venture has ruined many British tournaments to say nothing of the Davis Cup in Europe. They did not succeed in getting all the top players they wanted, but sufficient to take the guts out of tournament tennis this side of the Atlantic.

I firmly believe that the International Lawn Tennis Federation, the world's governing body in the sport, did not crack down hard enough or soon enough to stop the threat of WTT from ruining the European season. They made noises off stage about suspending any player who signed for WTT, but far from that, they did a deal with the American organisation, virtually for a sanction fee of £20,000, which allowed the new set-up to get off the ground on May 6th. The ILTF laid down four guiding principles, but so far, there is no evidence that any have been adhered to, certainly not that appertaining to the release of Davis Cup players, either with or without financial penalty imposed by the American teams.

The delay, almost unavoidable, in the announcement of the 1974 details of the Commercial Union Grand Prix, of which this tournament is part, did not help the situation, for by the time they were released, most players who intended joining WTT, whether threatened with suspension or not, had already done so.

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## Modern Tennis (Continued)

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As far as Nottingham was concerned, however, two slim rays of light loomed on the horizon. First, the WTT schedule left clear the week immediately prior to Wimbledon, and the Grand Prix committee had allocated to Britain one grade AA event.

After much deliberation, the Notts LTA, with the solid backing of their sponsors, John Player, stepped in to secure the tournament for the Midlands. Indeed, they went further, signing an agreement with ATP for the next five years with an escalating prize structure over that period depending on the amount of inflation.

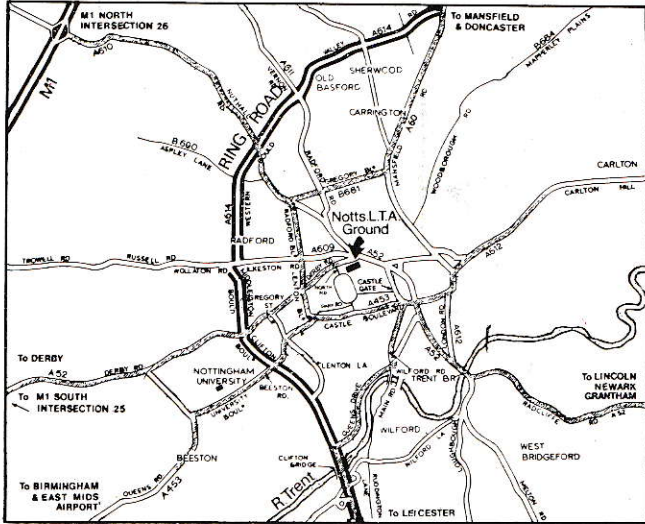
Such an agreement is unique in lawn tennis history, but I am sure other sponsors will try to follow suit, for the trend in modern lawn tennis is swinging well away from the original.

What is certain, of course, is that players are demanding, and in most instances, getting, ever increasing amounts of prize money. But in return, sponsors must expect to receive guarantees from those who represent the tennis players. There must be genuine effort on the courts, and no sharp practices off it. Those who put up such substantial amounts of money have the right to expect one hundred per cent co-operation in presenting their tournaments. If it is otherwise, then the major commercial firms will pull out of tennis sponsorship and place their money elsewhere. Then all players, good, bad and indifferent, will be pegged back to the same level, and the game will lose all the impact it has gained over the past few years. But all these are political problems, and not really the concern of the spectator. They are here to enjoy the matches only the star players can provide. I am sure the standard will be worthy of such an outstanding tournament.

By Dennis Cunnington, Press Association Lawn Tennis Correspondent

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**ENTRANCES, GRANDSTANDS AND GROUND AMENITIES**

