

The History of Seiko Super Tennis

Period: From Sep 5 (Tue) to Oct 15 (Sun)

Venue: The Seiko Museum Ginza

Chapter 1. The Tennis Boom and the Birth of Seiko Super Tennis

Japan has experienced two so-called tennis booms in the past. The first tennis boom occurred around 1958 to 1959, after Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko met during a tennis tournament at Karuizawa and subsequently married. As a result, tennis courts and tennis schools became widespread across the country.

In 1975, Kazuko Sawamatsu and Ann Kiyomura won the women's doubles at Wimbledon, sparking a second tennis boom. The streets soon became full of young people sporting the "tennis look" with rackets in hand, and men and women of all ages could be seen practicing tennis by hitting tennis balls against concrete walls. With the booming economy at the time, numerous international and domestic competitions were held in Japan, and in response to the demand for "bigger tournaments," the Seiko

Super Tennis tournament was started in 1978 (organized by the Japan Professional Tennis Association, with Seiko as the title sponsor). The total prize money was \$200,000, and the stunning lineup of celebrity competitors who, other than those recommended by the organizer, were all ranked within the top 50 in the world, caused a frenzy of excitement among tennis fans in Japan and spurred the tennis boom.

The Japanese tennis boom:
Mothers swinging rackets
Taken in Fukuoka Prefecture, 1978
(From The Yomiuri Shimbun)

Japan's first official Super
Grand Prix: Eager Japanese
fans lined up day after day.

The 1981 Tournament:
The crowd at the entrance to
the stadium

The final tournament,
held in 1995:
The stadium is filled to
capacity.

Chapter 2. That Star Has Arrived! 18 Years of Wild Enthusiasm

Seiko Super Tennis was held over the course of a week in mid-October every year from 1978 to 1995. Its venues included the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium and Yoyogi National Stadium. Next to the Grand Slam, it was the second biggest official event of the Men's International Professional Tennis Council (MIPTC). The events were broadcast by TBS, a sponsor of the tournament, who televised the semi-finals and finals in prime time. Japanese tennis fans were enraptured by the performances of superstars such as Jimmy Connors (USA), Björn Borg (Sweden) and John McEnroe (USA).

List of winners: The Great Champions

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1978 (1st): | Borg 6-3, 6-4 Teacher | Björn Borg becomes the first champion. |
| 1979 (2nd): | Borg 6-2, 6-2 Connors | Borg defeats his rival to achieve his 2nd victory. |
| 1980 (3rd): | Connors 6-1, 6-2 Gullikson | Jimmy Connors returns with a vengeance to seize victory. |
| 1981 (4th): | Van Patten 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 Edmondson | Vincent Van Patten wins with a divine performance. |
| 1982 (5th): | McEnroe 7-6, 7-5 McNamara | "Mac" becomes the new champion, just as promised. |
| 1983 (6th): | Lendl 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 Davis | Returning after 4 years, Ivan Lendl blazes to victory. |
| 1984 (7th): | Connors 6-4, 3-6, 6-0 Lendl | Connors achieves his 105th career win. |
| 1985 (8th): | Lendl 6-0, 6-4 Wilander | Lendl demonstrates the true power of a champion. |
| 1986 (9th): | Becker 7-6, 6-1 Edberg | Boris Becker crushes Edberg with his powerful play. |
| 1987 (10th): | Edberg 6-7, 6-4, 6-4 Lendl | Edberg demonstrates brilliant tennis. |
| 1988 (11th): | Becker 7-6, 6-4 Fitzgerald | Even while uncharacteristically off his game, Becker seizes victory. |
| 1989 (12th): | Krickstein 6-2, 6-2 Steeb | The return of Aaron Krickstein. |
| 1990 (13th): | Lendl 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 Becker | Lendl lets out a shout of victory. |
| 1991 (14th): | Edberg 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 Rostagno | Edberg shows the pride of a champion. |
| 1992 (15th): | Lendl 7-6, 6-4 Holm | The seasoned Lendl claims the title for the 4th time. |
| 1993 (16th): | Lendl 6-4, 6-4 Martin | Lendl wins in a dramatic tournament. |
| 1994 (17th): | Ivanišević 6-4, 6-4 Chang | With his strong will and steady technique, Goran Ivanišević becomes the new champion. |
| 1995 (18th): | Chang 6-3, 6-4 Philippoussis | Michael Chang, a popular tennis star in Asia, becomes the last champion of the tournament. |

A table selling tournament
souvenirs

Daily television broadcasting

A press conference held before
the final tournament in 1995

Japan Professional Tennis Association

The Japan Professional Tennis Association is a group of tennis professionals, including both professional coaches and professional tennis players.

The JPTA conducts various activities for the promotion of tennis, such as seminars, junior training, and tennis clinics, enabling high-quality professional coaches and professional players to work together to convey the wonders of tennis.

Special exhibition by
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