

# Racquet Technic Racket & String Newsletter

## **Spring 2006 (April-June)**

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Racket and String news from Racquet Technic. This is the beginning of a new tennis season unless you are reading this in Australia or New Zealand. This should mean that most people will be starting to play outside and join the others who do that all year-round. You will probably be interested in any changes to rackets and strings, and I hope you find something of interest in the following items.

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### **Tennis Rackets**

There was a recent review in the German Tennis Magazin of 20 rackets. The type of rackets tested would probably be most suitable for club and team players. There were three recommended rackets which were Tecnifibre T-Feel 305, Wilson N Pro and Yonex Nano Speed RQ-7. These were all in a quoted price range of €170 to €200 which is about £120 to £140 but would probably be cheaper from one of the many mail order dealers. There are obviously another 17 rackets that were tested, and some of them will be very close in performance to the winners. You should use the results only as a starting point and investigate models that meet your requirements.

### **String News**

The previous edition of the newsletter mentioned that Wilson will distribute the Luxilon range of strings in 2006. These are the popular Big Banger range which is used by a number of top players. I recently received a new brochure from the distributors of Wilson Strings in the U.K. with the range of Luxilon strings. Stringers may have to order these strings from a new source, but it is unlikely that players will be affected by this change.

I have recently obtained a Badminton string from RAB which is a U.K. company. The name of this string is Flexifusion Plus, and it is claimed to be a top

performance string. This product will be tested, and further information will be in the next newsletter.

## **Grips**

The new Wilson catalogue shows the strings and grips that their sponsored players use. Most of them appear to use the Pro Overgrip which is white and is popular because it is used by these sponsored players. An alternative grip with similar properties is the Kirschbaum Touch-it Ultra which is also white and lower cost which should make it interesting to some people.

## **Product Reviews**

This section contains more details about products than is included under the news items. The news item normally shows only general information about a new product.

## **Racket-Ball**

There has been a fairly large increase in players for this sport, and this new section provides them with some information about rackets and strings.

### **Rackets**

I have recently been testing a Wilson nLite model. There is one feature of this racket that is not apparent from the advertisements. This is that the strings extend inside the full length of the handle. I am not sure if this offers any real advantage, but it makes restringing the racket interesting. A restring takes longer because of this feature, and there would normally be an extra charge for this. The performance of the racket is good, and will be liked by some players and not by others. It has a head-heavy balance which is preferred by some players.

### **Strings**

There are no new strings being tested currently for Racket-Ball. The best advice is to use a thin string (1.25 mm) as this should give good control and response. You will probably find there is some string movement in the racket. This is a problem that many Racket-Ball players find, and some strings are better than others in this respect.

## **Squash**

There is no further news about squash rackets or strings at present. There will always be new rackets introduced each year, but there is very little that can be changed in the design of squash rackets.

## **Tennis**

This is the most popular section, and there is a larger choice of products.

### **Rackets**

These are mentioned under Product News for this edition. Further notes will be added as they become available.

### **Strings**

The Kirschbaum strings are slowly becoming more popular. They offer good performance and much improved durability for most players. There is a good range available, and the prices are reasonable. The Touch Turbo is the most popular, but I expect the new P2 to be used by more players this year. This is because it offers very good performance at a lower price. This brand of strings is available in the U.K. from Racquet Technic.

## **Grips & Accessories**

Almost every racket and string brand has their own range of grips and accessories. It is obviously a valuable source of income for these companies. Many players have their favourite grip which shows most people like to have a choice. Some of these products including any new ones will be featured in

the newsletter.

The Wilson and Kirschbaum grips are mentioned at the beginning of this newsletter. These are very thin grips, which increase the size of the handle by only a small amount. They both have a tacky surface which of course helps to stop the racket movement. The disadvantage is that they will need to be replaced more frequently. You would only select this type of grip if performance is more important than the cost.

## **Tension Tester ERT 300**

Players and racket stringers need to know the tension of strings in rackets. They should have some method of checking the tension to help them decide when a restring is needed. The best method is to use a tester called the Tensometer which measures the tension electronically. The latest model is the ERT 300 and is now expected to be introduced in Summer 2005.

The new ERT 300 was introduced at the end of 2005, and there was an initial report in the last newsletter. This showed there were some variances compared to the original ERT 1000 model. The tests continue with various brands of rackets, and the differences will become known later in the year. The previous advice can be used for the present time, .

The price seems to be of concern to some people. I certainly received one enquiry where the person thought they were expensive. The cost for a racket stringer is about £0.20 per restring for a total of 150 rackets per year. A player could find the product expensive, but I know there are some players who have purchased them.

## **Clothing**

The range of Maier-Sports clothing is available in the U.K. from Racquet Technic. This is mainly outdoor clothing, but is also suitable for general wear. A range of ladies clothing is available under the at.one brand name. This is a division of Maier-Sports.

The new ranges of clothing for Spring and Summer have arrived. One new type is the Nordic Fitness range which is designed for this new sport. As with most products, it should be suitable for other uses. The fast drying properties should make it suitable for running or racket sports. You can find further details on the website and download a newsletter.

## **Stringing Notes**

This section includes items about stringing that should be of interest to players and stringers. This depends to a certain extent on receiving questions.

Each year it is useful to review the strings that were popular the previous year. The main change seen for 2005 was the increase in the players who selected the Kirschbaum Touch Turbo string. There are always players who try durable strings such as Polyester, but some of them prefer a string with a better response. This is the advantage with Touch Turbo, as it gives a good response and durability. I expect more players to transfer to this string in 2006

## **Stringing Associations**

Are you a racket stringer or thinking of becoming one? You will probably have questions or want to learn more about stringing rackets. One solution is to join one of the Stringers Associations. The best known is probably the USRSA (United States Racket Stringers Association) and has been around for a long time. Membership includes an annual stringers manual and monthly magazine.

There are also European and U.K. organisations which have some advantages. If you would like details of the U.K. group, please send me an e-mail and I will forward your enquiry to them.

## **Racket Notes**

Most players have some questions about their rackets, and they will almost certainly be of interest to other readers. If you have any questions about rackets or strings, please send them by e-mail.

The length of a racket can influence the performance. Most professional players still use the standard length of 27 inches/685 mm. They find that this gives them the correct amount of control. Rackets are available in longer lengths and are popular with many players. A length of 27.5 inches/698 mm seems to be one of the most popular.

The only way to find out which length is most suitable, is to try different ones and see whether they improve your game.

## **Local Stringers**

If you have a local restringing service, you usually need to promote the service to local players. Some players who use your service will tell others, but one of the best methods to find new customers is by some form of advertising. There are several options, but one low cost method is by having an entry on the Racquet Technic website stringers section.

You can look at the existing pages to see the normal information that is provided. You can also test the site shows up in searches. Type "Racket Stringer" in a search on Google which is the most popular search engine. You should also try "Racket Stringer ABC" where ABC is the area in which you live. This will show you how many stringers can be found in your local area.

Please contact me for details of this service.

## **Website**

You can find advice here about selecting strings, rackets and a range of accessories. There is also information about the products available from Racquet Technic.

There are two sites. These are the original Racquet-Technic site plus the Your-Racquet site, which is mainly for information about tennis equipment.

The sites are <<http://www.racquet-technic.co.uk>> and <<http://www.your-racquet.co.uk>>

The combined number of visitors to these sites is an average of over 3,500 per month. Some of these will be from search engines indexing the site, but there is still a large interest in the topics covered. There are visitors from most countries including the U.S.A., Australia, Japan and Europe.

New for 2006

A new site is being prepared for Kirschbaum strings as there is an increasing amount of interest in this range of strings. The location is <[www.Kirschbaum-strings.co.uk](http://www.Kirschbaum-strings.co.uk)> and there is information added regularly.

## **Newsletter Information**

The newsletter is starting from the beginning of 2006 sent every three months. It is suitable for racket sports players and stringers. There is in each issue information about strings, accessories and equipment.

The newsletter is now also available from the website. You simply follow the links and can download a copy as a pdf file. You will need Adobe Reader to view it. This is installed on most computers, or you can download a free copy from <[www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)>

There was an average of over 250 downloads per month of the newsletter between October and December 2005.

New readers are invited to be included on the circulation. Please send a request to <newsletter@racquet-technic.co.uk> and enter "Subscribe Newsletter" in the subject.

The next issue will be sent to arrive by the end of June 2006.

## **About Racquet Technic**

The people who receive this newsletter are a mixture of stringers and players who are interested in racket sports products. The main aim is to provide information about existing and new products that are available for players of racket sports. All the main brands are covered, including some products from Racquet Technic.

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