

Racquet Technic Racket & String Newsletter

Autumn 2006

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Racket and String news from Racquet Technic. It is now the time of year when people play indoors or under floodlights, but it is Spring in other parts of the world. This means there is always interest in tennis products, but other readers are thinking more about badminton, squash, or racket-ball.

This edition of the newsletter will, as usual, try to keep you informed about some products that should be of interest to all racket sports players.

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Tennis Rackets

There have been some interesting developments with rackets recently. The Austrian company Head has introduced a range of ladies rackets which are being promoted by Steffi Graf, which could prove to be a success. Another Austrian company Kneissl has introduced a range of rackets, promoted by Thomas Muster. They may sell some in Austria, but I doubt there will be much interest elsewhere. The NEOXX rackets are now being promoted as a Carving Racket, which could be popular with a limited number of players

The general situation with rackets has not changed. The quantities sold are much reduced, and companies are introducing a few new models. There are none that offer any really new features as almost everything had been tried. It is possible that someone will develop an interesting model, we will all have to wait and see what happens.

Badminton Rackets

The Yonex brand of rackets is very popular, and players are always trying to save some money. There are apparently many inferior copies of the rackets that are available. There is a warning on the Yonex website to this effect. If you are offered a racket at less than half the normal price, you should

be very suspicious. A racket is not good value if it breaks the first time you use it, and this does happen with some of these copies.

String News

There was a test of lower cost tennis strings in the German Tennis Magazin (August) for this years string review. These were all polyester strings, which provide good durability in thinner gauges at a reasonable price. All the strings tested have advantages and disadvantages as you would probably have guessed anyway. The usual problem with polyester strings are that they do not provide a good response. It was good to see that the Kirschbaum P2 received a good result in this category.

There are many available strings made from polyester. Players who break strings frequently want low cost strings, but other players prefer a better response from their strings. The Kirschbaum P2 is suitable for players who want a low cost string, combined with above average performance.

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.

Squash

There is no new information for this edition.

Tennis

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

Rackets

The new Babolat oversize racket was to be available from September in the U.K. but I have not seen any yet. This model is the Pure Drive 107 and looks quite interesting from the specification. It will be interesting to see the reviews when they appear in the tennis magazines, as they are bound to do quite soon.

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.

How popular are white grips? Since they were introduced by Wilson a couple of years ago, many professional players use white overgrips. They expect many club players to also use them, and I am fairly sure that they will.

Are they any better? Probably not, but some people suggest that they give a better grip. These white grips could become more popular than the blue Tournagrip that have been used by many players for several years.

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 available.

Many stringers who enquire about the ERT 300, seem surprised at the cost. This is understandable in certain respects, but the cost deserves further consideration. Anyone who strings an average of four rackets a week, would have completed a total of 1000 rackets over five years, The cost of checking the tension of the strings is about 12 pence per racket.

This piece of test equipment combined with the stringing machine, is an essential piece of equipment. The cost should be included in the charge for stringing a racket. The real problem is that most racket stringers do not charge the correct price for their service.

Kirschbaum News

This section will include any interesting notes about the Kirschbaum range of strings and grips, which are available from Racquet Technic.

The most popular string at the moment is Touch Turbo, but the new P2 is becoming more popular. The Spiky string is being tested which could be a popular choice, as it has a slightly textured surface.

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.

There are some interesting changes planned for clothing next year. A new brand of running clothing TAO Technical-Wear is to be added to the range. There are of course, new styles and colours in the Nordic Fitness range from Maier-Sports.

You can see information about clothing on the Racquet Technic website, although the new styles will not be shown for some time. There is also a separate newsletter for clothing which includes some pictures and sketches of the clothing range. This can be downloaded from the website. Please use the following link for clothing information

[<www.racquet-technic.co.uk/spcl/spcl_intro.html>](http://www.racquet-technic.co.uk/spcl/spcl_intro.html)

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.

One of the most popular searches on the Racquet Technic website is for string gauge. A few notes could be useful if you would like to know more about this subject.

A thinner gauge usually gives better response and control. This is because the string "grips" the ball more on contact. It is normally a fact that a thinner string has low durability.

This would normally mean that thinner strings were not suitable for the large number of players who break strings frequently. This is not the case with some of the modern strings which can provide good durability in a thinner gauge.

You can always look at this subject on one of the websites. You will find information about the usual gauges of strings that are available. If you cannot find the information you want, please enquire by e-mail.

Racket Notes

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

There have been a few new rackets introduced recently, but the reviews have not yet been seen. This should change in the next few weeks when the reviews begin to appear in various publications. This means that you will have to wait until the next issue of the newsletter for details.

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.

A stringing workshop is to be held in October, but you will probably be too late to attend this one. These workshops are held throughout the year, with details being available from the UKRSA.

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.

There appears to be very little demand for this service from stringers. There are, however, many searches/visits to this section of the website. Perhaps racket stringers do not need new customers, or possibly they are not really operating a very professional service. Whatever the reason, it is likely that this section of the website will close later this year.

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 three sites. These are the original Racquet-Technic site plus the Your-Racquet site, which is mainly for information about tennis equipment. A new site <www.kirschbaum-strings.co.uk> was added earlier this year. This is for the range of Kirschbaum strings which are mainly designed for durability combined with performance.

The sites are

<<http://www.racquet-technic.co.uk>>
<<http://www.your-racquet.co.uk>>
<www.kirschbaum-strings.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.

Change for 2006

A new section was added to the Kirschbaum site recently. This covers string tension, which is always a popular subject. There are already visitors to this section showing how much interest there is in this topic.

Newsletter Information

The newsletter is now sent three times a year. 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>

There is an average of over 200 downloads per month of the newsletter.

The next issue of the newsletter is planned to be issued in February 2007.

About Racquet Technic

The people who receive this newsletter are a mixture of racket 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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