



# The Davis Cup: Celebrating 100 Years of International Tennis

*Richard Evans*

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"The Davis Cup offered me more immediate pleasure than almost anything else I accomplished in my career....I hope you enjoy this detailed history of a unique competition. Whether it is played at Kooyong or Casablanca, a World Group Final or a first round in the African Zone, Davis Cup offers tennis players the rare chance of experiencing the thrill of playing for your teammates and your country."--John McEnroe, from the *Foreword*

Back in Boston in 1900, they called it "Dwight's little pot," but very soon it turned out to be much more than that. Dwight Davis's idea of offering a silver bowl as a prize to be fought for each year between tennis-playing nations grew into one of the most recognized and keenly contested annual sporting competitions in the world. Beginning as a match between the United States and the British Isles at the Longwood Cricket Club, the Davis Cup has endured for one hundred years, modifying itself now and again, but essentially remaining what Dwight Davis always intended it to be: a means of nurturing healthy sporting relations between countries all over the globe.

In this lavishly illustrated history, Richard Evans, one of the world's leading tennis writers, chronicles not merely the matches that caught the imagination of millions but the extraordinary array of personalities who gave the Cup its luster and whose names are now engraved on its silver panels-- Anthony Wilding, the dashing New Zealander who rode from tournament to tournament on one of the first motorbikes, leaving a trail of broken hearts in his wake; Wilding's Australian colleague Norman Brookes, a taciturn man known as "the Wizard"; or Maurice McLoughlin, dubbed "the Californian Comet." There was Bill Tilden, arrogant, effete, and outrageous, who insisted on playing his own "sweet game" on and off the court and became a world superstar doing it. Or the Four Musketeers who held the Cup for France for six years before a handsome Englishman with the wrong accent-- at least for the snob-ridden 1930s-- came along to snatch it away. Fred Perry won the Cup for Britain three times, and now it has fallen to Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman to try to get it back.

The Harry Hopman dynasty, in which the legendary Australian coach produced a conveyor belt of champions-- from Frank Sedgman, Lew Hoad, and Ken Rosewall to Rod Laver, Roy Emerson, and John Newcombe-- was centered around Davis Cup triumph; and the story continues, through the turbulent years of Ilie Nastase and John McEnroe to Yannick Noah's successes for France in the 1990s.

The Davis Cup has quite a story to tell. And this book tells that story: an unforgettable sporting and social odyssey covering one hundred years.

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