

NET GAINS

Four winners on and off the court

By JUSTIN COPERTINO

Whether it's a backhand or a forehand, you've got to hand it to Jim Courier. He's followed up a remarkable tennis career on the court with an impressive tennis career off the court. One of the greatest tennis players of all time, the Florida native will be serving it up on May 21 for the first-ever indoor tennis event at the Office Depot Center.

Other players making a racket that day will be the world's most recognizable tennis star, Anna Kournikova; one of the most controversial and talented players of all time, John McEnroe; and Hall of Fame inductee Jana Novotna.

The Mercedes-Benz Classic, an InsideOut Sports and Entertainment event, will feature at least two singles matches and a mixed doubles match.

BIG JIM CASHES IN - \$50 Million in winnings

During his incredible 13-year career, Courier captured 23 singles titles and six doubles titles, and earned more than \$50 million in prize money and endorsements, while becoming the first American male to be ranked as world No. 1 since John McEnroe. He won back-to-back Australian Open singles championships in 1992-93 and back-to-back singles championships at Roland Garros in 1991-1992.

Courier, 34, was born in Sanford, Fla., and was first introduced to tennis while playing with his parents on public courts in his Central Florida community. At 14, Courier left home and enrolled in the Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy in Bradenton, Fla., fine-tuning his skills before turning pro at the age of 17.

After just two full years on the ATP tour, Courier captured his first major victory, defeating Andre Agassi in five sets at the 1991 French Open. That's when the world took notice. "I remember waking up the next day in Paris and realizing that my life had drastically changed," Courier told *Live On Stage*. "I can recall in the morning heading over to do a live shot for the 'Today Show' and 'Good Morning America' and at that time I knew things now were going to be different."

Today, Courier's game has moved from a French Open court to a New York City boardroom, where he is a founding partner of InsideOut Sports and Entertainment, actively marketing international and regional tennis events. "One of our goals at InsideOut is to bring highly competitive tennis with a contemporary feel to venues like the Office Depot Center, where fans will be exposed to a brand of entertainment they may see at a basketball game."

Courier still gets his playing fix by serving it up on the Champions Tour, where he finished No. 1 during his debut season in 2004. Off the court and outside the office, Courier also is heavily involved in several charitable endeavors, including his own, the Raymond James Courier's Kids Foundation, as well as programs that support the First Serve initiative.

VOLATILE, VERSATILE AND MUSICAL JOHN

John McEnroe stands as one of the most skilled and controversial players of all time. Brilliant shotmaking, competitive fire and a volatile temper have been his trademark since he first broke onto the tennis scene by making the Wimbledon semifinals as an 18-year-old.

During his 14-year professional career (1978-1992), McEnroe reached the No. 1 spot on the ATP charts 14 times, and was the No. 1 player on the ATP Tour four consecutive years (1981-1984). With seven major singles titles, 77 singles titles and 77 doubles titles, McEnroe's accomplishments are among the best ever. His 77 singles titles rank third all time behind only Jimmy Connors (109) and Ivan Lendl (94).

McEnroe's little-known ambition from the time he left the tour in 1992 was to become a rock star, something he rarely spoke about for fear of ridicule. He frequently dabbled on the guitar and gradually started learning from the likes of friends Eddie Van Halen and Eric Clapton. Shortly into his musical career, McEnroe met Patty Smyth, the singer of "The Warrior" fame.



CENTER stage

Featuring TENNIS STARS

JOHN McENROE

They fell for each other quickly and McEnroe soon named his band The Johnny Smyth Band.

ANNA KOURNIKOVA

The Johnny Smyth Band toured 15 countries over the course of two years, mostly playing in small clubs. On stage, the intensity that turned to rage on the court translated into dynamic charisma. In the fall of 1997, without warning or explanation McEnroe quit the band and months later married

Smyth in a private Maui ceremony. Today, McEnroe is one of the game's premier television analysts. His broadcasting career began at USA Network with some guest appearances while he was still playing. Recognizing his natural ability, the network signed him up to begin calling matches. As his career in the booth continued to prosper, deals with CBS and NBC soon followed.

WWW.ANNA.COM

Which came first: Anna or the Internet? Perhaps the most downloaded athlete of all time, Anna Kournikova constantly draws the attention of the national media and rabid fans. Although she has not played recently on the WTA Tour, her rock star status

JIM COURIER

ACCORDING TO JIM:

Career most memorable moment: Winning the final point for the Davis Cup title for the United States in 1992

Toughest opponent: Pete Sampras ("He has clipped me in several big matches.")

Favorite sport (other than tennis): Basketball

Tennis idol while growing up: Bjorn Borg

Favorite bands: Pearl Jam, U2, R.E.M.



ANNANOTES AND ANECDOTES:

- Parents sold their TV to buy Anna a tennis racket for Christmas when she was 5
- Defeated 4 consecutive Top 10 players in a 4-day period in 1998 in Key Biscayne, becoming the only female player to accomplish that feat
- Serve was clocked at 111 mph in Paris in 1998
- Guest-starred on "The Apprentice" with John McEnroe
- Made her movie debut as a motel manager in "Me, Myself & Irene"
- Dated hockey stars Pavel Bure and Sergei Fedorov, and is currently dating Enrique Iglesias
- Recently got a restraining order on a man who swam naked across Biscayne Bay in an attempt to get to her house. Cops cuffed the Mark Spitz wannabe and slapped several charges on him, including failure to just use a boat.

SURFING WITH ANNA

In perhaps the best intern assignment of all time, *Live On Stage* asked intern Josh Petro to research and rank the best Anna sites on the Internet. It resulted in a stunning turnaround in work ethic and dedication. Never have we seen someone put more heart and soul into an assignment. Here are the results:

1) www.Annaforever.com
The most complete Anna site on the web. Everything and anything about Anna is on this site. Close to 4,000 Anna images, a rotating video gallery and the most recent Anna news.

2) www.AnnaTime.com
All the great published Anna photos sorted by publication, slide shows, wallpapers and an applets section that takes Anna images to a whole new dimension.

3) Official website:
<http://www.kournikova.com/>
By Anna from Anna, that guarantees factual information about her. It's the best place for merchandise and message boards. Check out Anna commercials and access her online journal.

4) Russian Beauty
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~martenws/index.html>
Unique Anna-related material includes "Kiss Anna here" (provides a puckering Anna, screen cleaner not included); "Anna vs. Britney" (presents a beauty battle royale); "Anna at home" (features Anna in Miami).

5) www.MegaKournikova.com
Still under construction, but showing signs of future greatness. In-depth look at Anna's love life and "Top 10 photos" explaining Anna's popularity.



JANA NOVOTNA

ITF singles titles. Two years later she advanced all the way to the semifinals of Wimbledon. Off the court, she has appeared in *Sports Illustrated's* Swimsuit Issue, has been honored as *FHM's* "Sexiest Woman in the World" and in 1998 was included in *People* magazine's "50 Most Beautiful People."

Kournikova also is actively involved with numerous charities and launched akseven, a Miami-based company that will further expand philanthropic endeavors. Most recently she played in the InsideOut-produced "Serving for Tsunami Relief" tennis exhibition in Houston, along with other tennis stars such as Andy Roddick and McEnroe.

QUIETLY ONE OF THE BEST

In an extraordinary professional tennis career that spanned 12 years, Jana Novotna captured 24 singles titles, including the 1998 Wimbledon title. A superb serve-and-volley player, Novotna excelled in doubles play, earning 76 titles on the WTA Tour.

The Czech Republic native ranked No. 1 in doubles 11 times and won 12 major women's doubles championships, including two Australian Open titles, three French Open titles, four Wimbledon titles and three U.S. Open titles.

Novotna, who retired in 1999, became just the fifth female tennis player to cross the \$10 million mark in earnings. Kournikova turned pro in 1995 and captured two

continually keeps the paparazzi hopping. Kournikova exploded onto the tennis scene at the age 14, when she became the youngest player ever to win a Federation Cup match. She also won the prestigious Junior Orange Bowl, becoming the youngest player ever to win the 18-and-under division at that tournament. Kournikova turned pro in 1995 and captured two