

ISSUE #1

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21

# EUROPEAN INDIVIDUALS



**TOP STORY: UPSETS  
GALORE IN THE WOMEN'S**

**MEET ELCKE MOLS**

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## KARA LINCOU

### A successful debut

**FOLLOWING A GOOD SHOWING AT THE WORLD GAMES, THE REUNION ISLAND BORN MADE IT THROUGH TO THE ROUND OF 16 FOR HER FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE EUROPEAN INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

### **Kara beat Tessa Ter Sluis (World No.117, hence 36 spots above her) in 5 games**

My legs were not feeling great at the beginning, perhaps partly due to the quick turnaround after the World Games and the fatigue from the travelling. The plan was to gain the upper hand as the match went on thanks to my defense, but it wasn't easy because she is very skillful. I think the key of the match was the fact that I remained calm, I improved in that area with all the important matches I played at university in the United States. In the fifth game, I tried to be safe when attacking and I managed to take a quick lead.

## **Kara will face World No.76 Saskia Beinhard in the round of 16 on Thursday morning**

*She is a very solid player, but I have a better chance than I would have had against someone like Tinne Gilis for example. I am going to prepare as well as I can, using video analysis: even if the players change over time, I find it to be a very useful tool, in particular to get used to the way your opponent moves and strikes the ball.*

## **Is it an advantage to play at home?**

*For sure! There were quite a lot of people in the stands, and I got goosebumps during the match hearing them cheering for me. On top of*



that, I have great memories in Chartres, that's where I won my first national title in U17 after getting close a few times. I was actually talking about it to the local press journalist who interviewed me, this win was a turning point in my career.

## **On Sunday, Kara will go back to the US to start her last year at uni.**

Yes, I have to go back to school (she laughs)! By the way, we are 3 players from Trinity in Chartres, Noa Romero, Hannah Chukwu and myself, we'd talked about it

beforehand and it's nice to be here together. After my studies, my plan is to start playing PSA for real, but I don't know yet whether I will be based in Europe or in the US, and if I will take a job on the side. I'm going to try and play a few PSA tournaments this season to improve my ranking, I know I have what it takes but the truth is it takes some time to climb in the rankings.



**Kara is one of the two local hopes in the round of 16 alongside French number 1 Mélissa Alves**

I used to live in the Reunion Island and then I moved to the United States so it's true that people know me less than other French players, and I've never played in the French Nationals. Therefore, this week I'm super keen on showing what I am capable of and that I deserved to be picked for the European Championships. One thing for sure, I will do everything I can to make it to the quarters!

*While the title contenders made light work of their opponents, some youngsters caused some damage on Wednesday.*



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## WOMEN'S DRAW

### The youngsters steal the show

In the previous pages, we told you about the 22-year old Kara Lincou's win over Tessa Ter Sluis, and in several other round of 32 matches some young players upset the odds... and their older opponents. 18-year old and World No.144 Karolína Šrámková vanquished England's Kiera Marshall (WR 80) after a 5-game match filled

with changes of momentum. "Surely it's a huge win for me," the Czech told us. "The end of the match was tense, and I managed to keep my composure. I can't wait for tomorrow, it's going to be a big battle against Jacqueline Peychar. She beat me in 5 games last week at the World Games, I think I know what I did



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wrong and I will do everything to reverse the result.” The other big upset came from 16-year old from Netherlands Renske Huntelaar (world ranked 220), who got the better of World No. 76 Enora Villard in 4 games. Elsewhere, 21-year old from England Olivia Besant (WR 161) took World No. 93 Cristina Gomez’s scalp.

Seeded 5/8, Saskia Beinhard (picture) had to dig deep to overcome the resilience of Breanne Flynn, and the German ended up winning in 5 games. As for the main favorites - Tinne Gilis, Nele Gilis-Coll, Mélissa Alves and Marta Dominguez - they were merciless and left very few points to their opponents.

*In the men's draw, 15 of the 16 seeds made it through to the next round, the only upset coming from Louai Hafez.*



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# THE MEN'S DRAW

**All the seeds prevailed... Almost**

In the round of 16 World No. 191 from Switzerland put up a huge fight against Frenchman Brice Nicolas (WR 83) and prevailed by a thread, 13-11 in the fifth after a match that kept the crowd in the edge of their seats. "It's my greatest win without a doubt, especially after saving one match ball," said the 22-year-old. "Last time we played

he chopped me up in a Satellite event in Rome. In the fifth game, I started cramping but the support from my teammates really helped. When I was looking at my coach I saw in his facial expression that I couldn't give up and I had to keep fighting until the very end!"



In the round of 16, Louai Hafez will face Hungarian Balasz Farkas, recently runner-up at the World Games. Even if some of them dropped a game here and there, such as Nicolas Mueller against young Ukrainian Dmytro Scherbakov (picture), the favorites were not really troubled on Wednesday in Chartres. Among them, there is obviously Victor Crouin, double title holder, but also his compatriot Baptiste Masotti, and Spaniard Iker Pajares. Things will start to heat up on Thursday, with the round of 16 and then the quarters on the glass court at the Halle Jean-Cochet.

# FRENCH CORNER (1)



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National coach Yann Menegaux describes Day 1 for the French female contingent as "a mixed one. Without Marie Stéphan's withdrawal, we would surely have had 3 players in the round of 16, alongside Mélissa Alves and Kara Lincou. Kara's win is satisfying even if we knew that she was capable of it. She will have a shot against Saskia Beinhart, we will do everything to help her win this match."

"Regarding Enora Villard, she told me it was an off day for her. Léa Barbeau played very well in patches but lacked consistency, while Ana Munos had a tough match against Emilia Soini but she wasn't able to bring the right energy on court."



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# FRENCH CORNER (2)



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“We came close to a full house in the men’s,” said national coach Mathieu Castagnet. “It’s a shame for Brice Nicolas, it was a very good match and it could have gone either way. The 5 other French players were expected to win and controlled their match. Things will start to heat up on Thursday, especially with the all-French clash Mekhalfi - Scianimanico. Edwin Clain has an interesting match against Raphael Kandra, who will want to bounce

back after his early exit at the World Games. This tournament may be early in the season but our players are well prepared. We have two potential medalists with #1 and 2 seeds Victor Crouin and Baptiste Masotti, but why not have 3 French medallists?”

# QUOTE OF THE DAY



***HAVE YOU SEEN THE LEVEL OF THE PLAYERS ON COURT TODAY? THE COACH MUST BE GOOD HERE!***

On Wednesday morning, the C'Chartres Squash coach Denis Bourret was jokingly trying to pretend that it was a regular day at the office and that all the European Championships entrants were club members!

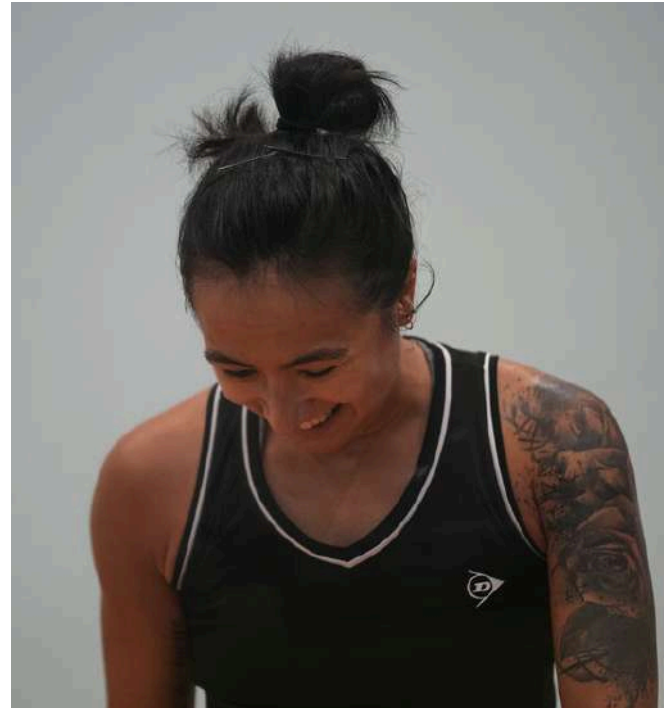


# FACTS AND FIGURES



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14 countries will be represented in the round of 16: France (7 players), Switzerland & Spain (4), Germany & Czech Republic (3), Belgium & Hungary (2), England, Austria, Croatia, Finland, Italy, Netherlands & Portugal (1). The diversity is much greater in the women's draw with 13 nations compared to 7 in the men's.



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If we include the 4 post-covid events (from 2022 to this year), 5 male players made it to the round of 16 on every occasion - Victor Crouin, Nicolas Mueller, Ivan Perez, Jakub Solnický and Raphael Kandra - while only one woman achieved the same thing, and it's Austrian Jacqueline Peychär.

**Tinne Gilis**

**VS**

**Hannah Chukwu**

Tinne Gilis (picture) is the overwhelming favorite of this match, but it'll be interesting to see if Hannah Chukwu can make the title holder's life difficult with her offense-based game. Last week at the World Games, the Hungarian was the only player to take a game off eventual winner Satomi Watanabe.



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## OUR ROUND OF 16 PICKS (WOMEN)

©Gerhard Nel



**Renske Huntelaar**

**VS**

**Franka Vidovic**

A few matches are very open, including the one between Franka Vidovic - who can become the first Croatian ever to make the quarters - while her opponent's country, the Netherlands, have not been represented at this stage since 2013...

**Toufik Mekhalfi**

**VS**

**Melvil Scianimanico**

This match has all the ingredients to be a big battle between two French prospects; separated by 10 spots in the world rankings, and both great retrievers. Their last clash, won by Melvil in April, lasted 83 minutes...



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## OUR ROUND OF 16 PICKS (MEN)

©Gerhard Nel



**Iker Pajares**

**VS**

**Viktor Byrtus**

This match is a bit like Gilis v Chukwu in the women's draw: Pajares is the clear favorite, but his opponent Viktor Byrtus (picture) can play great when he's on. He proved it taking out Raphael Kandra at the World Games and this match is a good test for the Czech player.



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## **MEET... ELCKE MOLS**

**THE YOUNGEST PLAYER IN CHARTRES WON HER FIRST ROUND BEFORE SURRENDERING TO  $\frac{3}{4}$  SEED MARTA DOMINGUEZ. WE CAUGHT UP WITH THE 16-YEAR OLD FROM NETHERLANDS WHO'S A TRUE SQUASH LOVER.**

### **Elcke, what do you make of Day 1?**

In round 1 (author's note, against Tamara Holzbauerová), the 3 games were close, I think I managed to be patient and stay mentally strong in the crucial moments. I'd already faced Marta Dominguez in the second round last year, I knew it would be very tough. There were good rallies and overall I am happy with my way I played.

### **How old were you when you started playing squash?**

Around 5 or 6, my brother who is older than me and who's participating in the European Championships was already playing. I loved it straight away, right from the start I played almost every day! It's very physical, but the mental aspect is also super important.

**Last season, you played in the European Team Championships in senior, U19 and U17, you must love playing for your country!**

*There is no such feeling! Besides, orange is my favorite color...*

**Recently, you won the U16 World Championship in racketlon, tell us a little bit about that?**

*I entered mostly it was held in the Netherlands and it was during off-season. I had no expectations, I went there to have fun mostly. I am not too bad at tennis and badminton, but I struggle in table tennis... I don't necessarily intend to do much more, my main goal is to become a professional squash player!*

**By the way, who are your favorite players on the tour?**

*I'd say the Gilis sisters. As it turns out, Nele and her husband Paul Coll train at my club. I haven't had the opportunity to hit with her, I guess I am not good enough yet but I hope I will be in a few years...*



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# WOMEN'S DRAW

Round of 16 August, 21	Quarters August, 21	Semifinals August, 22	Final August, 23
<div>[1] Tinne GILIS </div> <div>10am, ct. 1</div>			
<div>[17/32] Hannah CHUKWU </div>			
	2:40pm, glass court 		
<div>[17/32] Kara LINCOU </div> <div>10am, ct. 2 </div>			
<div>[5/8] Saskia BEINHARD </div>			
		7pm, glass court 	
<div>[17/32] Karolina SRAMKOVA </div> <div>10am, ct. 3 </div>			
<div>[9/16] Jacqueline PEYCHAR </div>			
	3:20pm, glass court 		
<div>[9/16] Cristina TARTARONE </div> <div>10am, ct. 5</div>			
<div>[3/4] Marta DOMINGUEZ </div>			
<div>[3/4] Mélissa ALVES </div> <div>10:40am, ct. 1</div>			
<div>[9/16] Ambre ALLINCKX </div>			
	4pm, glass court 		
<div>[17/32] Olivia BESANT </div> <div>10:40am, ct. 2 </div>			
<div>[5/8] Emilia SOINI </div>			
		5:20pm, glass court 	
<div>Renske HUNTELAAR </div> <div>10:40am, ct. 3 </div>			
<div>[17/32] Franka VIDOVIC </div>			
	4:40pm, glass court 		
<div>[9/16] Katerina TYCOVA </div> <div>10:40am, ct. 5</div>			
<div>[2] Nele GILIS </div>			



# MEN'S DRAW

Round of 16 August, 21	Quarters August, 21	Semifinals August, 22	Final August, 23
<div>[1] Victor CROUIN </div> <div>11:20am, ct. 1</div>			
<div>[9/16] David BERNET </div>			
<div>[9/16] T oufik MEKHALFI </div> <div>11:20am, ct. 2 </div>	5:40pm, glass court 		
<div>[5/8] Melvil SCIANIMANICO </div>		7:40pm, glass court 	
<div>[5/8] Balasz FARKAS </div> <div>11:20am, ct. 3 </div>			
<div>[17/32] Louai HAFEZ </div>			
<div>[9/16] Ivan PEREZ </div> <div>11:20am, ct. 5</div>	6:20pm, glass court 		
<div>[3/4] Nicolas MUELLER </div>			
<div>[3/4] Iker PAJARES </div> <div>12pm, ct. 1</div>			
<div>[9/16] Viktor BYRTUS </div>			4pm, glass court 
<div>[9/16] Edwin CLAIN </div> <div>12pm, ct. 2</div>	7:20pm, glass court 		
<div>[5/8] Raphael KANDRA </div>			
<div>[5/8] Rui SOARES </div> <div>12pm, ct. 3</div>		6pm, glass court 	
<div>[9/16] Jakub SOLNICKY </div>	8pm, glass court 		
<div>[9/16] Edmon LOPEZ </div> <div>12pm, ct. 5</div>			
<div>[2] Baptiste MASOTTI </div>			

# EUROPEAN INDIVIDUAL SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS



**CHARTRES**  
**20-23 AUG. 2025**



**HALLE JEAN-COCHET**  
**6 RUE JEAN MONNET**  
**21-23 AUG. 2025**

**C'CHARTRES SQUASH**  
**12 AVENUE F. MITTERRAND**  
**20-23 AUG. 2025**

