

ISSUE 3

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23

EUROPEAN INDIVIDUALS



**TOP STORY: MASOTTI, IT'S
CRAZY!**

**THE GILIS SISTERS
WILL FIGHT FOR GOLD**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 **Top story**
Masotti, it's crazy!

7 **Victor Crouin**
through to the final
without a fight

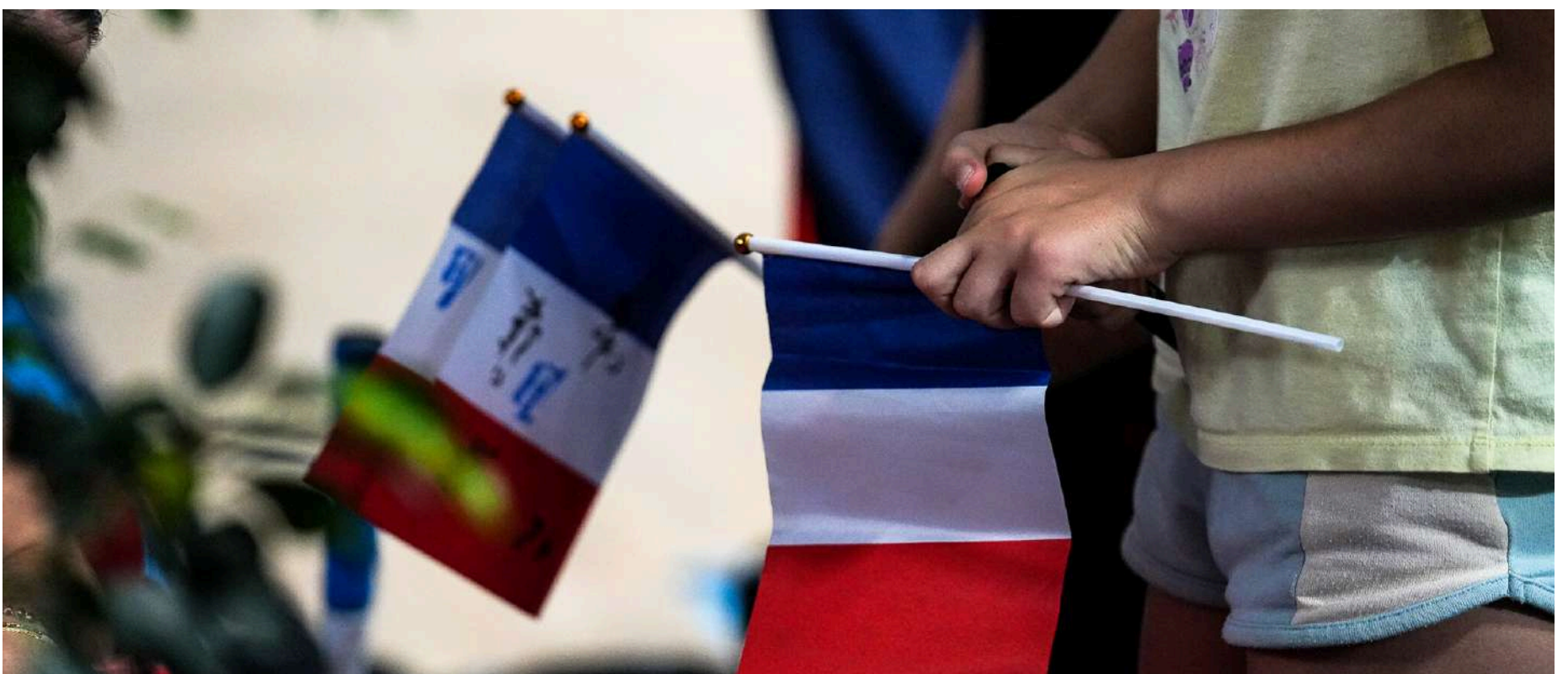
8 **The Gilis sisters**
will fight for gold

10 **French corner**
Day 3 from the
coaches

12 **It's final day**
Match preview

16 **Meet**
Edwin Clain

18 **The draws**
Women's and men's



©noemiedrills



©noemiedrills

MASOTTI, IT'S CRAZY

AFTER A VERY INTENSE 91-MINUTE BATTLE AND SAVING ONE MATCH POINT, BAPTISTE MASOTTI SENT HALLE JEAN-COCHET INTO RAPTURES BEATING IKER PAJARES, 12-10 IN THE FIFTH. WE CAUGHT UP WITH THE WORLD NO. 17 BEFORE SATURDAY'S FINAL AGAINST VICTOR CROUIN.

Baptiste, you've had big wins in your career, such as against Mostafa Asal and Joel Makin, where does this one stand?

It wasn't my best squash, I know I can play better than that, especially at the start. On the other hand, I am proud how I handled things mentally. I was down 1 game and 7-4, in this kind of situation I often tend to let the second game slip away and then try everything I can to come back but with no margin for error. Sometimes it can work, but not too often.

It seems you managed to change your mental pattern then, and you were very strong in this area throughout the whole match.

I guess the work done with my mental coach is paying off. Things such as

fist pumps after a big rally or taking some energy from the crowd, it's important but you need to pick your moments. I know myself, I tend to get overexcited and then I go overboard, but not today.

The match lasted over 90 minutes and intensity was high, would you say you are already in great shape early in the season?

At the same stage last year, I lost in the quarters against Iker and I injured my calf, so in comparison it's going much better! During the summer, I didn't do many physical sessions off court. However, I played a lot of squash in Prague, especially with Mohamed ElShorbagy, and I feel fit and ready. When I saw that I took the upper hand physically in the fifth today, it was very satisfying. Even if Iker is coming off a tough season, he's been a consistent player over the years on the tour. But today I felt calm, it was like I knew I was going to win. There are plenty of areas to improve in my game, but the most important thing is that I know in which direction I want to go.

©noemiedrills



You mentioned Prague, that's where you have been based for a few months.

I'd reached a point where I felt like I was no longer improving. I am not criticizing the way the national centre in Aix-en-Provence works, but let's not forget I was very young when I got there, it's been 12 years and I simply needed a change of scenery. So when I found out that my girlfriend (author's note: World No. 8 Sivansagari Subramaniam from Malaysia) was moving to Prague, I saw that as a sign. I feel good overthere, my life is more structured and I am very happy with the work we do with Joan Lezaud and Grégory Gaultier. I'd say that everything is coming together nicely.

What are your mid-term goals?

I'd like to come back to the World top 15, but above all stay there and in order to do that I need to be more consistent. It's not easy because there is a lot of strength in depth on the tour right now, the top 50 is very solid and even beyond, look at what young players like Melvil or Toufik are producing. I feel like that being added to the olympics has been a boost for a lot of players, with this goal in mind everyone is committing even more than before to improve.



©noemiedrills

You're 30 years old, do you sometimes think that you've wasted a little time?

Not at all, we all have our own journey and I see myself as a player who'll peak late in his career. I don't feel worn out at all, maybe I won't play at 39 like Miguel Rodriguez but I think I still have 5 or 6 good years ahead of me."



Iker Pajares' quote

"In the fifth game, I had huge blisters on both feet, I put myself in survival mode but it wasn't enough. Of course, I'm very disappointed to lose this match but on the other hand I enjoyed the battle a lot. With Baptiste we're very good friends, we've known each other since juniors and it's great to see that we're growing together on the world tour."

*The semifinal
between
Victor Crouin
and Nicolas
Mueller
should have
been the final
part of the
show but it
was
unfortunately
cut very
short...*



©noemiedrills

VICTOR CROUIN TO THE FINAL

without a fight

It seemed like an ordinary lunge to the front, but the Swiss - who was up 9-6 in the first game - immediately stopped and knew his calf had gone. Something rather incredible must be underlined: according to squashinfo, which gathers most of the squash events, Nicolas Mueller had never retired during his entire career and he'll turn 36

on Sunday! Victor Crouin wished him a speedy recovery during his post-match interview and for the Frenchman it's a rather weird way to make it through to a final but no doubt he'll know how to put that aside and focus on the all-French affair coming up on Saturday (see pages 14-15).

*Like in 2022,
the final will
be a family
affair between
the sisters
Tinne Gilis
and Nele Gilis-
Coll.*



©noemiedrills

THE GILIS SISTERS WILL FIGHT for gold

For the crowd at Halle Jean-Cochet, the day began with the clash between World No. 14 Nele Gilis-Coll and WR#20 Mélissa Alves. The Frenchwoman got off to a flying start, having a lot of success with her attacks. But little by little, the Belgian weaved her web, and all she needed was an opportunity to close out a first

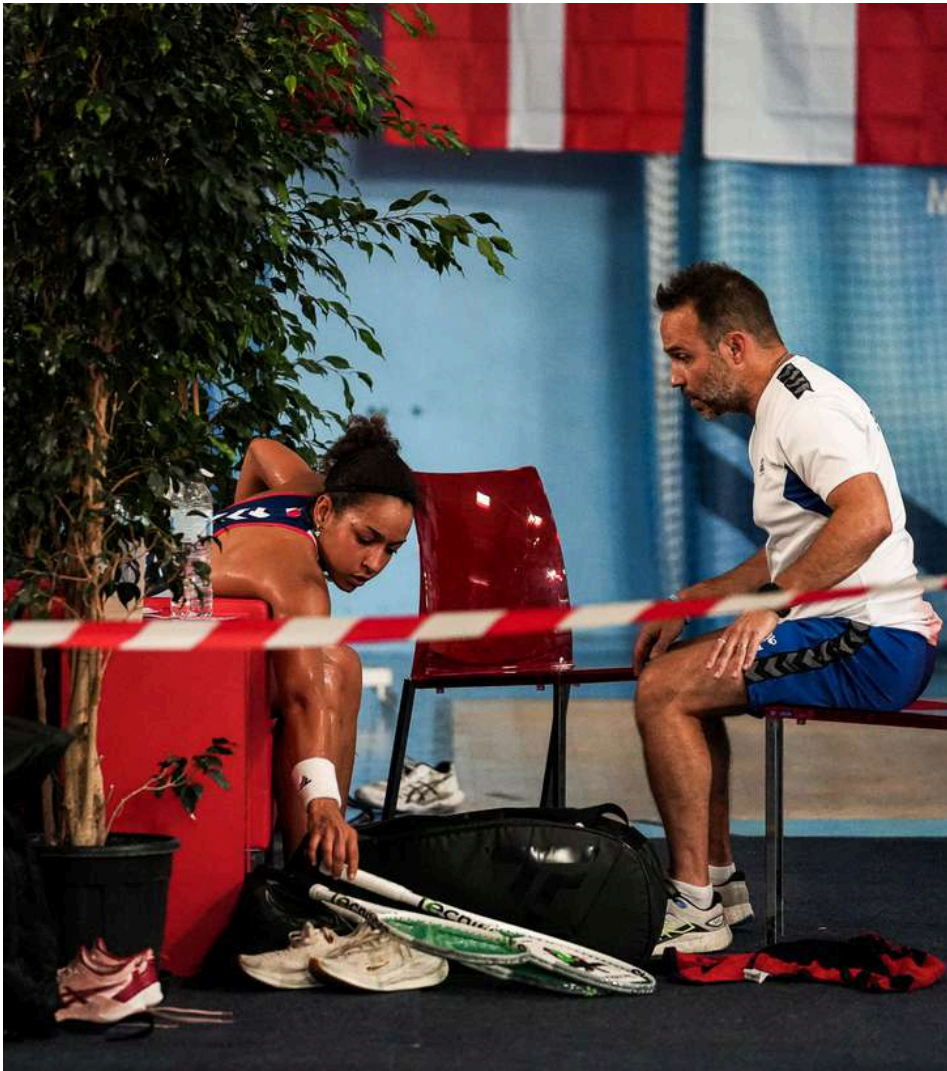
game which the French Guiana surely needed to win to maximize her chances. She kept on matching the Belgian for most of the second game, but the mountain was too hard to climb for a player who spent a good part of the summer getting her body fixed and who only started getting back on court a few days ago.



©noemiedrills

In the second semifinal, World No. 58 Marta Dominguez started the match fearlessly and she deservedly won the first game against #1 seed and World no. 7 Tinne Gilis. It came down to the business end of the third game, and at 9-all the Belgian relied on all her experience to close it out and fly to the finish line. “I never felt comfortable on court today, but all credit to Marta who played a great match,” she said during her post-match interview. “It’s close to my bedtime now (laughs), all I want is to have dinner and get some rest for tomorrow’s final.”

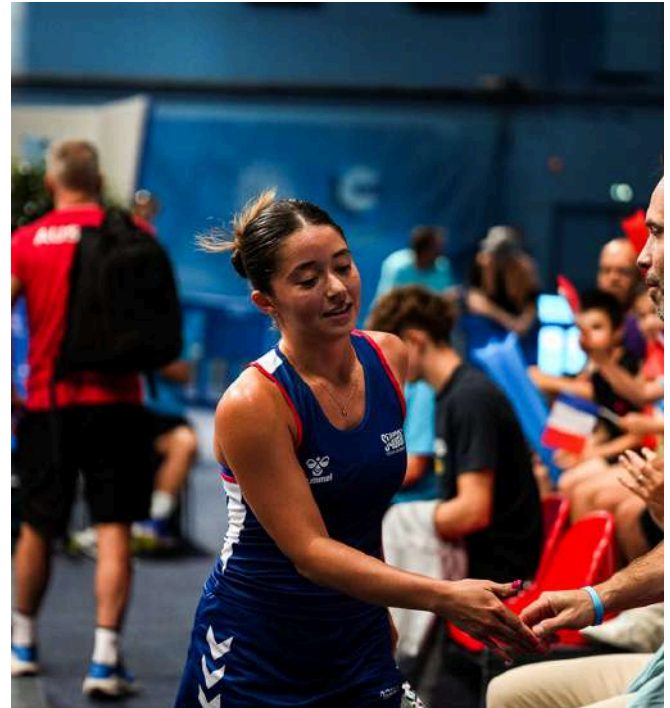
FRENCH CORNER (1)



©noemiedrills

National coach Yann Menegaux looks back on Mélissa Alves' semifinal and Kara Lincou's win in the 5-8 plate.

"The result may be frustrating for the crowd but is rather expected because Mélissa only started training on court a few days ago. Taking that into account, I feel like there is a lot of positive to take out of the match. I feel like she's been adding new layers to her game and we know fully well what we need to work on. Motivation won't be an issue tomorrow, we



©noemiedrills

are in France and there's a medal at stake. Kara kept the momentum going against Jacqueline Peychar. She has an usual game in the women's tour, especially with her hold that causes trouble to her opponents. She still has a good match to play against Franka Vidovic, finishing 5th would be great!"

FRENCH CORNER (2)



©noemiedrills

Reaction from national coach Mathieu Castagnet after the men's semifinals.

"The least we can say is that we had two very different scenarios... I know all about calf injuries and I'm sorry for Nicolas Mueller. It's also a little strange for Victor because he'll be coming to the final almost not having played the day before. As for the other match, I truly loved it. It makes me realize I am old now because when I see these guys battling on court I feel like they are



©noemiedrills

superhuman, but I forgot I used to be as crazy as them (laughs). (author's note: Mathieu was renowned for his fighting spirit). Baptiste was very composed on court and you could tell he was enjoying the fight, I'd like to see him like that for a whole season! Having an all-French final is great, especially at home...

It's final day

The French crowd would have loved Mélissa Alves to upset the odds, but it didn't happen and we'll have the anticipated women's final between two players who have been sharing the four titles in the post-covid era. We are talking about Tinne and Nele Gilis (who also bears the name of her husband Paul Coll).



©noemiedrills

[1] Tinne Gilis vs [2] Nele Gilis-Coll

3pm

©noemiedrills



Even if you have been facing each other from a very young age, playing your sister in the final of a continental championship is a special experience and handling emotions will be a key factor in this showdown. Since November 2024, 27-year old Tinne has overcome her older sibling in the world rankings but 29-year old Nele says she's willing to return to the top 4 after a season₁₂ plagued with injuries.



©Open de Nantes

The women's final in facts and figures

- 👉 It'll be the fifth meeting between the two sisters in the championships. Nele won the first three between 2016 and 2018, but Tinne won the 2022 final in Hamburg.
- 👉 All type of events combined, squashinfo is listing 19 meetings - surely there were more, for example in national tournaments in Belgium - and the older sister Nele leads by a big margin, 17-2. Tinne had managed to end to the losing streak with two successive wins in 2022, but she lost the next four matches since then.
- 👉 They will face for the third time in France, and the two first times it was already in a final: at the Annecy Open in 2022 which Tinne won, and a few months later at the Open de France in Nantes with an opposite result (picture).

It's final day

Like in the women's, things went according to seedings and we'll have seeds #1 and 2 in the final. We did expect double title holder Victor Crouin to make it to that stage, however Baptiste Masotti had a very strong opponent on his way in the like of Iker Pajares and he overcame the Spaniard in brilliant fashion.



©noemiedrills

[1] Victor Crouin vs [2] Baptiste Masotti

4pm

©noemiedrills



Following on from his gold medal at the World Games, Victor is the favorite of this match and is as fresh as a daisy after playing less than a game on Friday. It's quite the opposite for Baptiste who was on court for 91 minutes in his semifinal, but if he's recovered well and shows the same determination as against Iker Pajares, the Niort-born certainly has what it takes to make this final an hard-fought affair.



©PSA

The men's final in facts and figures

- 👉 The love story continues between Victor Crouin and the Individual European Championships. He'll feature in the final for the fourth time in four showings, and his win tally is now 16 in 17 matches in the event - his only loss came in the 2022 final against Nicolas Mueller.
- 👉 Baptiste Masotti is the last French player who beat Victor Crouin, it was in the semi-final of a national tournament in Valenciennes in July 2022. Since then they met 3 more times and Victor won all of them.
- 👉 Coincidentally, one of these matches was a final and was also played in Chartres, it was at the French Nationals in 2023.



©noemiedrills

MEET EDWIN CLAIN

EDWIN CLAIN IS HAVING A GOOD WEEK AND HE'LL TRY TO FINISH FIFTH ON SATURDAY. IT WOULD BE A GREAT WAY TO KICK OFF A SEASON OF CHANGE, SINCE HE'LL BE MOVING FROM AIX-EN-PROVENCE TO BRISTOL, ENGLAND.

On Friday, Edwin beat Portugal's Rui Soares in 4 games.

To be honest I didn't think I'd play as well as I did today. I didn't sleep well after the emotional rollercoaster on Thursday, winning in the round of 16 against Raphael Kandra and then losing to Iker Pajares. He was just too good, it made me realize the difference compared to players ranked around 60 in the world.

Edwin is currently sitting at 82 in the world ranks.

I think I had a good second part of the 2024/25 season, with several wins against higher-ranked players. I've reached a stage in my career where I know myself better as a player. What drives me is improving my game on

a daily basis and discuss with the coaches to pinpoint the things I am doing well as well as those I need to get better at.

New beginnings

In a few days, I will leave the National Centre in Aix-en-Provence to move to Bristol. I'll be starting a master's degree in sports psychology, and I would like to do another one afterwards in fitness training. In my family, education has always been very important, and I felt like I needed a change in my life. As far as squash goes, I'm going to train with John Walton, and I'm also going to do some coaching to earn money because life is very expensive overthere. The goal is to climb in the world rankings and give as few lessons as possible (he laughs).


One last push on Saturday.

Finishing fifth in the European Championship would be a great result but it'll be tough against Balasz Farkas. He's the type of player I hate to play, very unpredictable, a bit like Noor Zaman whom I played recently. But in fact, it's a great challenge to try and find solutions.



©noemiedrills

WOMEN'S DRAW

Round of 16 August, 21	Quarters August, 21	Semifinals August, 22	Final August, 23
<div>[1] Tinne GILIS </div> <div>11-3, 11-9, 11-2</div> <div>[17/32] Hannah CHUKWU </div>	<div>[1] Tinne GILIS </div> <div>11-2, 11-3, 11-5</div> <div>[17/32] Kara LINCOU </div>	<div>[1] Tinne GILIS </div> <div>7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-2</div>	<div>[1] Tinne GILIS </div>
<div>[17/32] Kara LINCOU </div> <div>11-9, 11-4, 4-11, 11-9</div> <div>[5/8] Saskia BEINHARD </div>	<div>[9/16] Jacqueline PEYCHAR </div> <div>11-9, 11-8, 11-3</div> <div>[3/4] Marta DOMINGUEZ </div>	<div>[3/4] Marta DOMINGUEZ </div>	
<div>[17/32] Karolina SRAMKOVA </div> <div>11-6, 11-7, 12-14, 3-11, 11-7</div> <div>[9/16] Jacqueline PEYCHAR </div>	<div>[3/4] Mélissa ALVES </div> <div>11-3, 11-3, 11-6</div> <div>[5/8] Emilia SOINI </div>	<div>[3/4] Mélissa ALVES </div> <div>11-9, 11-7, 11-5</div>	<div>[2] Nele GILIS </div>
<div>[9/16] Cristina TARTARONE </div> <div>11-5, 11-8, 11-9</div> <div>[3/4] Marta DOMINGUEZ </div>			
<div>[3/4] Mélissa ALVES </div> <div>11-8, 11-5, 11-0</div> <div>[9/16] Ambre ALLINCKX </div>		<div>[3/4] Marta DOMINGUEZ </div>	
<div>[17/32] Olivia BESANT </div> <div>11-3, 11-1, 11-7</div> <div>[5/8] Emilia SOINI </div>	<div>[17/32] Franka VIDOVIC </div> <div>11-5, 11-4, 11-5</div> <div>[2] Nele GILIS </div>	<div>[2] Nele GILIS </div>	
<div>Renske HUNTELAAR </div> <div>11-5, 7-11, 10-12, 11-8, 11-3</div> <div>[17/32] Franka VIDOVIC </div>			
<div>[9/16] Katerina TYCOVA </div> <div>14-12, 11-8, 11-3</div> <div>[2] Nele GILIS </div>			



3pm, glass court



MEN'S DRAW

Round of 16
August, 21

[1] Victor
CROUIN 

11-2, 11-7, 11-3
[9/16] David
BERNET 

[9/16] Toufik
MEKHALFI 

11-3, 11-5, 11-5

[5/8] Melvil
SCIANIMANICO 

[5/8] Balasz
FARKAS 

11-3, 11-9, 11-6

[17/32] Louai
HAFEZ 

[9/16] Ivan
PEREZ 

5-11, 12-10, 11-5, 11-8

[3/4] Nicolas
MUELLER 

[3/4] Iker
PAJARES 

12-10, 11-5, 5-1 ab.

[9/16] Viktor
BYRTUS 

[9/16] Edwin
CLAIN 

11-6, 5-11, 11-6, 11-8

[5/8] Raphael
KANDRA 

[5/8] Rui
SOARES 

8-11, 14-12, 11-7, 11-9

[9/16] Jakub
SOLNICKY 

[9/16] Edmon
LOPEZ 

11-9, 11-5, 11-7

[2] Baptiste
MASOTTI 

Quarters
August, 21

[1] Victor
CROUIN 

11-7, 11-9, 11-5

[5/8] Melvil
SCIANIMANICO 

[5/8] Balasz
FARKAS 

11-6, 6-11, 13-11,
10-12, 11-9

[3/4] Nicolas
MUELLER 

[3/4] Iker
PAJARES 

11-2, 11-6, 11-6

[9/16] Edwin
CLAIN 

[5/8] Rui
SOARES 

11-7, 11-3, 8-11, 11-7

[2] Baptiste
MASOTTI 

Semifinals
August, 22

[1] Victor
CROUIN 

7-9, ab.

[3/4] Nicolas
MUELLER 

[3/4] Iker
PAJARES 

6-11, 13-11, 8-11,
11-5, 12-10

[2] Baptiste
MASOTTI 

Final
August, 23

[1] Victor
CROUIN 



4pm, glass court



[2] Baptiste
MASOTTI 



[3/4] Iker
PAJARES 

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

