



Federação Portuguesa de Ténis

On the 21st of June 2008, the Portuguese Tennis Federation (FPT) celebrated the first year of the implementation of the “Play and Stay” program, commemorating the simultaneous launch with the ITF the 21st of June 2007. The event took place in the National Stadium, Lisbon, same site where the launch was held in 2007.

With this event, the FPT entered the phase 2 of the program in Portugal. Victor Cabral, Head of Coaches Education and National Coordinator of the Program, explains:

“The first stage was a time of passing the message to the coaches; the Education Department of the FPT (Departamento de Formação) integrated the “Play and Stay” concept in most of its teaching events; in 2007 alone, the Education Department organized five level 1 Coach Courses, two level 2 and one level 3, where the coaches experienced the concept; one of the courses was in Angola, where the program was the main event; also “Play and Stay” was the main topic in different level 11 Coach Update events (mandatory, in the Portuguese system of Coaches Education); School Tennis was also a priority, with 8 events based totally in the “Play and Stay” concept; the Iberian Tennis Symposium, organized in conjunction with the Spanish Tennis Federation (RFET), was dedicated to “Play and Stay”; already, in 2008, we have organized seven Coaches Courses and seven Coaches Updates, along with four School Tennis Events.”



*Nuno Marques and other coaches with Miguel Crespo at the level 3 Course in February 2008
and the opening ceremony of the Iberian Symposium in November 2007*

With this intense work structure the FPT managed to make most of the coaches in Portugal aware of this concept in only one year. But the application of the methodology in the clubs moves slowly as it encounters some soft but relentless resistance from club managers, parents and club users, all very keen to a conservative view of tennis. Lots of good programs and projects can grind to a halt with the continuous impact of this natural resistance to change. Enter phase two!

“Knowing the conservative nature of tennis clubs in general, we are now going to help the coaches to implement the program in their clubs. The key is to provide direct help in the club, promoting the availability of the materials (balls, nets, leaflets, DVDs) locally, talking to parents and club managers, staging demos in clubs and so on. To do this in an effective way, the FPT signed a partnership with Nuno Marques (to the date, the Portuguese player with the best ATP ranking ever) to be the ambassador of the program, in commemoration of the first year of the program. The idea is that Nuno will go to the clubs promoting the concept, with the supervision and support of the Education Department. We will start a certification program of clubs, supporting clubs who use the “Play and Stay” concept in their classes” assures Victor Cabral.



The President of the FPT and Nuno Marques signing of the partnership protocol

Nuno Marques, former 86th ATP, is very enthusiastic about the program: “I am really very motivated with this program. We are totally identified and believe in it. We are going to try and infuse a new dimension to it and, using the media to a great length, making it reach everyone. I have great confidence in the Education Department and the professionals working in the FPT and I am amazed by the great work they have done so far. That was the main reason that made me want to join them in this program.”



Presentation of the program by Victor Cabral and Nuno Marques, while kids play on red and orange courts in the background

The event organized in the 21st of June marked the signature of the partnership between Nuno Marques and the FPT for the implementation a media projection of “Play and Stay” in Portugal. The organization invited coaches, young kids who played with the progressive balls (red and orange), and also a lot of top players from other sports, soccer, rugby, judo, etc. who provided some very interesting moments playing with the different balls, and giving a positive feedback to the program.



Players from other sports about to play on red court and former Davis Cup Captain José Vilela with the coaches from de Education department of FPT