

# tennis matters



**Wheelchair Tennis**  
South Africa

**Edition 1** Quarter 1, 2013

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## Event Calendar

**Airports Company South Africa Gauteng Open – ITF Series 1 Event**  
Lakeview, Benoni, Gauteng  
3 – 7 April

**Airports Company South Africa, SA Open, ITF Super Series Event**  
Ellispark, Johannesburg  
9 – 13 April

**Airports Company South Africa Open Future Level,**  
University of Johannesburg  
22 – 25 June

**ACSA Open 2013 – ITF Future Level**  
Soweto, Johannesburg  
27 – 30 June

**Airports Company South Africa Eastern Cape Open – ITF Future Level**  
Port Elizabeth, EC  
23 -26 September

**Airports Company South Africa Strand Open – ITF Grade 3**  
Strand, Cape Town 5 – 8 December

## Farewell to a Great Player

It is with a sadness we share Sydwell Mathonsi's retirement from wheelchair tennis. He has had a successful career, and helped to put SA on the Wheelchair Tennis World Map, for that we thank you.

We wish Sydwell all the best in his new endeavours and know that he will realize his dreams and keep inspiring.

## Paralympic Wrap Up



Team SA at the London 2012 Paralympics and Lucas Sithole SA's wheelchair tennis ace, ranked no.6 internationally. Photos : Wessel Oosthuisen. SASCOC

*It is with great pride and joy that we congratulate Kg Montjane, Lucas Sithole, Evans Maripa and Sydwell Mathonsi on their achievements at the London 2012 Paralympics. Well played, you are true champions.*

Sydwell Mathonsi faced the very experienced world number 18, Stephen Welch in the first round of the Men's draw. Despite putting up a good fight he could not convert the match, and lost 2-6, 7-6(8), 1-6 to the American.

Evans Maripa had a brilliant first round match in which he beat Mohammed Qasim HAMDAN from Iraq in a straight sets victory 6-0 6-1. In the second round Maripa drew the world number 16 Frederic Cattaneo from France, a former top 10 player. Experience was once again the key and Maripa succumbed 6-1 6-4.

Lucas Sithole moved to a career best world ranking of no.6 just before the games, and was unlucky to draw the world no.1 David Wagner(USA) in the 1<sup>st</sup> round. The 1<sup>st</sup> set was taken comfortably by Wagner however he had to work extremely hard in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to defeat Sithole, and claim the match 2-6, 5-7.

Kg Montjane (see photo right) won her 1<sup>st</sup> match 7-5, 6-2 against Lola Ochoa the top Spanish player. Kg then faced Jiske Griffioen, the world no.3 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. Despite an injury, Kg played with guts and determination, forcing Griffioen to take over 90 minutes to win their 1<sup>st</sup> encounter 6-2, 6-2.



## WTSA's Golden Girl achieves "Another First"



Kgogthatso Montjane, SA's no.1 ladies wheelchair tennis player, ranked no.10 internationally was one of only 8 women in the world invited to participate in the first Grand Slam tournament of 2013 – the Australian Open Wheelchair Championships 23-26

By participating in the event, Kg made history. She is the first and only wheelchair tennis player from the African continent invited to play in a Grand Slam event. This is not KG's only first. In 2012 she was the 1<sup>st</sup> African wheelchair tennis player to be nominated for IPC Athlete of the month and the 1<sup>st</sup> African wheelchair tennis player to be invited to compete in the esteemed World Singles and Doubles Masters. It is clear that the sky is the limit for this phenomenal, steadfast and inspiring athlete.

**Congratulations Kg, you are a true inspiration!**

## A Salute to Some Rising Stars



South Africa's Juniors at the Junior Masters; Mariska Venter, Gift Lekhanyane and Thato Tsomole

The 2013 Cruyff Foundation Junior Masters took place in Tarbes, France, 24 – 27 January 2013. Only the world's top 12 juniors players – eight boys and four girls – were invited to play in this premier event with SA contributing 3 of the world top 12 players; **Mariska Venter, Gift Lekhanyane, Thato Tsomole and coach Rene Plant.**

**Results: Thato Tsomole** played the world no.1 & defending champion Alfie Hewett, Carlos Anker of the Netherlands and Martin de la Puente of Spain. Although he was comfortably defeated in all 3 matches, it was the first time he was exposed to this level of play, and showed true character.

**World No. 2 ranked junior Gift Lenkganye** was paired up against Hussein Hamid Hel of Iraq, Chris Herman of USA & world no.3 Nico Langmann from Austria. Gift posted the only 3 set match of the tournament, was defeated in all three matches.

**Mariska Venter** played Diede de Groot of the Netherlands where she was defeated 6-2, 6-4 but recovered well, and posted the first win for the South African delegation beating Polina Shakirova of Russia 2-6, 6-4, 6-2. Mariska then faced two time champion Angelica Bernal from Colombia in the finals but lost 6-3, 6-3.

"Although we did not play for any of the titles, or walk away with either trophy, it was a proud achievement for WTSA to have one quarter of the world's top junior in our camp. We believe we have the talent, have the players, and have the programmes. I am sure we will dominate this and other junior events in time. Congratulations to our juniors, you did us proud.." Karen Losch

## Women Qualify for BNP World Team Cup



Seated: Lettica Venter (Coach), Rose vd Meer  
Standing: Mabel Mankgele, Thando Hlatshwayo

The BNP World Team Cup African Qualification tournament took place 17-20 January 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya where SA's women's team wheeled away with the trophy for a second year running. This superb performance has earned the ladies a place in the BNP Paribas World Team Cup that will be held in May 2013 in Antalya, Turkey.

South Africa not only walked away with the title of the best Woman's Wheelchair Tennis nation in Africa, but completed the event without dropping a set in any of their singles or doubles rubbers.

Congratulations Ladies! We wish you success at the BNP World Team Cup in May 2013.

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## 2012 A year of Aces



- ✓ Four of the country's players qualified on merit and participated at the London 2012 Paralympics ; **Lucas Sithole, Kgothatso Montjane, Evans & Sydwell Mathonsi**
- ✓ We were one of 3 countries to have players represented in all 3 divisions at the Paralympics
- ✓ South Africa currently has an astonishing 60 players on the world ranking, surpassed only by Japan
- ✓ We have 2 players ranked in the top 10 players in the World – Kgothatso Montjane & Lucas Sithole
- ✓ 2 Juniors were invited to participate in the World Junior Masters 2012 – **Mabel Mankgele & Giff Lekganyane**
- ✓ Three Juniors, **Thando Hlatshwayo, Sean de Hilster, and Mariska Venter** were invited to the Junior Development Camp in Belgium
- ✓ Our Men's Team won silver in World Group II at the BNP World Team Cup, and is now ranked in the top 16 men's teams globally
- ✓ Our Junior and Quads teams finished in the top 4, & top 6 teams globally, qualifying for merit for the 2013 World Team Cup.
- ✓ We hosted the Johan Cruyff Development Camp for Africa, a series of regional Future Stars camps & tournaments aimed at the beginner level players and 2 national camps for the Young Stars – players below 16 years of age.
- ✓ WTA hosted over 30 regional tournaments this year
- ✓ There are over 45 active development centres across South Africa where coaching is provided each week
- ✓ Two of its players were finalists for SA's 'sportsman / woman of the year with a Disability' – Kgothatso Montjane & Lucas Sithole
- ✓ WTA has 2 coaches on the ITF Global Coaches Commission – Holger Losch & Craig Fairall
- ✓ WTA were invited to show our skills to, and have lunch with His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent
- ✓ WTA had 2 players playing a curtain raiser doubles with 2 top able bodied juniors at the recent Williams Sisters visit
- ✓ Celebrated **International Disability on Day 3 Dec**, where Wheelchair Tennis players were joined by able bodied players from the Davis and Fed Cup squads, along with a number of celebrities. -**5FM's DJ Euphonik and Thomas Msengana**, e.tv Club 808 presenter **DJ Mo Flava** and **Jack Parow**

## WTA Regional Camps & Clinics

WTA has several regular development clinics and camps country wide, introducing the wonderful sport of Wheelchair Tennis to new aspiring athletes. If you are interested in trying the game of wheelchair tennis please contact Siyabulela Nkachela WTA Community Programmes and Media Manager, cell: 082 679 3772 or email Siya@tennis.co.za.

## ITF Ranking

18 Feb. 2013

ITF Name RSA

### Mens Singles

27	Maripa, Evans	1
38	Mathonsi, Sydwell	2
81	Els, Leon	3
91	Marsh, Marshall	4
110	Tshipuke, Ishmael	5
125	Lekhanyane, Gift	6
151	Ramphadi, Donald	7
208	Ramokoatsi, Frank	8
209	Selepe, Patrick	9
213	Vuma, Benito	10

### Mens Doubles

31	Maripa, Evans	1
49	Mathonsi, Sydwell	2
66	Els, Leon	3
77	Marsh, Marshall	4
115	Gwija, Mayenzeke	5
137	Makwela, Tsepo	6
143	Lekhanyane, Gift	7
148	Selepe, Patrick	8
155	Ramokoatsi, Frank	9
173	Tshipuke, Ishmael	10

### Womens Singles

10	Montjane, Kgothatso	1
39	van der Meer, Rose	2
69	Mankgele, Mabel	3
78	Venter, Mariska	4
89	Fuma, Sipokazi	5
94	Hlatshwayo, Thando	6
101	du Toit, Celia	7
110	Dhladhla, Thandeka	8
119	Gxumisa, Noma-Afrika	9
131	Shai, Letaba	10

### Womens Doubles

12	Montjane, Kgothatso	1
51	van der Meer, Rose	2
66	Mankgele, Mabel	3
73	Hlatshwayo, Thando	4
84	Venter, Mariska	5
89	du Toit, Celia	6
118	Dhladhla, Thandeka	7
129	Fuma, Siphokazi	8
134	Shai, Letaba	9
142	Makaya, Thethiswa	10

### Quads Singles

7	Sithole, Lucas	1
50	Dlamini, Bongani	2
52	Mathebula, David	3
63	Gallant, Fernando	4
66	Kekai, Steven	5

### Quads Doubles

10	Sithole, Lucas	1
49	Kekai, Steven	2
58	Dlamini, Bongani	3