



Council of International Lawn Tennis Clubs

Gabriela Sabatini Accepts 2017 CQS Jean Borotra IC Sportsmanship Award

The Council of International Lawn Tennis Club is delighted to award the 2017 CQS Jean Borotra IC Sportsmanship Award to Gabriela Sabatini.

The Award recognises outstanding sportsmanship throughout an individual's playing career, which is consistent with the objectives and spirit of the now 40 International Clubs (ICs), as well as with a dedication to developing and encouraging participation in tennis across the world.

Gabriela is a hugely deserving recipient of this prestigious award. Throughout her extremely successful playing career, she was known both on and off the court, no matter what the situation, for her kind, polite, respectful and genuine personality. Gabriela even said of herself that she should "perhaps be a little more aggressive on the court". It was her graciousness and kind-heartedness, along with her natural elegance, which won over the hearts of world.

Since her retirement from the professional game, her contribution to many charitable projects highlight what a fantastic ambassador Gabriela is for both sport and for her country.

Gabriela is ambassador of the *Fundación Argentina Contra el Cancer* (FACEC), which promotes awareness and protection against breast cancer. (FACEC was founded, and is presided over, by Roman Rostagno, distinguished physician, former member of Argentina's Davis Cup Committee, and a member of the IC of Argentina.)

Gabriela has dedicated herself, especially, to supporting female athletes and to gender equality throughout the world.

Gabriela is also working on campaigns for UNICEF, UNESCO and the Special Olympics, as well as privately supporting education projects. The *Fundación Baccigalupo*, which has been helping underprivileged children through sport for over 10 years, is another of Gabriela's special interests.

When the IC of Argentina hosted the South American qualifying rounds of the Compass IC Worldwide Junior Challenge in 2007, and again in 2015, Gabriela hosted IC Philanthropy tennis clinics alongside both events for underprivileged youngsters.

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Recently, Gabriela was selected as a role model for the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games. Such role models must exemplify the Olympic values both on and off the sporting field. Accepting the role, Gabriela said: "Sport has provided me with tremendous opportunities throughout my life and I want to help inspire a new generation of players".

On the court, Gabriela's talent for the game was demonstrated early, when she became the youngest player to win the Orange Bowl in Miami, at the age of only 13. At 14, she won the French Open Under 18 Girls singles title and was the Junior World No. 1. A year later, in 1985, and still only 15, she became one of the youngest players ever to reach the semi-finals of the French Open.

Gabriela went on to win 27 titles throughout her tennis career, including the US Open in 1990, and two Masters titles, in 1988 and 1994. She reached No. 3 in the world and won the Wimbledon doubles title with Steffi Graf in 1988. She was a 15 times Grand Slam semi-finalist, a US Open finalist in 1988, a Wimbledon finalist in 1991, and an Olympic silver medallist in 1988. It was her consistency at the very top of the game which was particularly impressive. She spent 10 consecutive years in the Top 10 in the world, with six of them in the Top 5; and this was at a time when many other 'legends of the game' - Martina Navratilova, Steffi Graff and Monica Seles - were playing.

Most importantly, and especially for this award, she was a true competitor and sportswoman both on and off the court - a great role model for women tennis players throughout the world. She was inducted into the Tennis Hall of Fame in 2006.

Gabriela retired at the age of 26 and is now a business woman (she has her own lines of perfume). She still spends a significant amount of time giving back to tennis and loves doing sport herself as it allows her "to keep her feet on the ground".

We are thrilled that Gabriela has accepted the 2017 CQS Jean Borotra IC Sportsmanship Award. We will be presenting it to her during the second week of The Championships at the All England Lawn Tennis Club in July 2018.

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