

AFRICAN TENNIS

04 CAT Official Newsletter
January to April 2025



COTE D'IVOIRE OPEN 2
ELIAKIM COULIBALY CLAIMS FIRST ATP
CHALLENGER TITLE ON HOME SOIL

LES PETITS AS 2025

ZONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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OFFICIATING IN AFRICA

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AUTHOR
Confederation of African Tennis

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DESIGN
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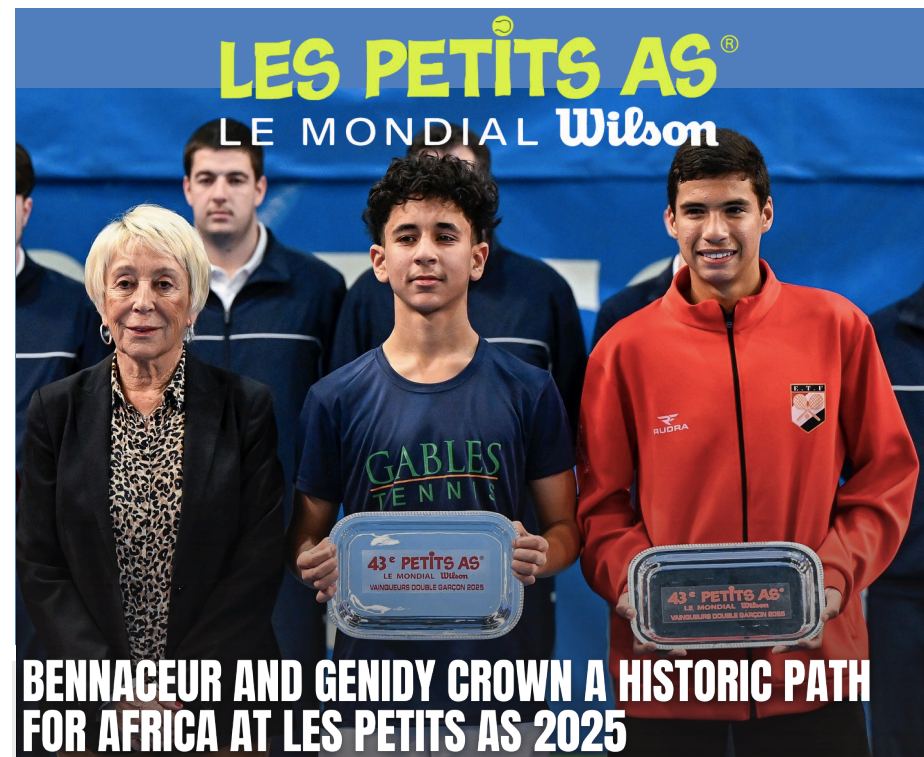
AFRICAN TENNIS



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NEWSLETTER



T

he 2025 edition of Les Petits As Le Mondial Wilson will be remembered as a breakthrough moment for African junior tennis. Tunisia's Leith Bennaceur and Egypt's Mohamed Genidy, both qualified from the inaugural Les Les Petits As Africa

Playoffs held in Casablanca, Morocco, went on to win the boys' doubles title in Tarbes, France, making history for their countries and for the continent.

This success story began months earlier, when the Confederation of African Tennis, in collaboration with the Fédération Royale Marocaine de Tennis and Top Five Management, hosted Africa's first-ever qualifying tournament for Les Petits As, held from 28 October to 1 November 2024 at the Moundir Tennis Academy, to compete for two places in the main draw of the prestigious French tournament.

At that event, Mohamed Genidy defeated Leith Bennaceur in the boys' final (6–2, 6–1), with both earning qualification for Les Petits As 2025.

In Tarbes, the African duo conquered the doubles

competition. Their journey culminated in a dramatic final against the French pair Samuel Dakessian and Mario Vukovic. After winning the opening set 6–3, Bennaceur and Genidy lost the second set in a tiebreak 6–7(7), and sealed victory with a dominant 10–5 match tiebreak.

Along the way, they navigated past several strong pairs, including a straight-sets semifinal victory against Nikita Berdin and Stefan Shangichev (6–3, 6–3), a tight quarterfinal win over Mohan Vedant (IND) and Yurii Stoliarov (UKR) (6–3, 5–7, 10–4), a tough second round against the Japanese pair Yamanaka Reita and Hotelier Lyoma (7–5, 7–6(3)), and a victory in the first round against the Australian pair Palombo Novak and Chan Aidan (6–4, 6–1). In the singles competition, Genidy reached the third round after two victories, while Bennaceur lost in the second round after one victory. However, Noor El Malt from Egypt and Saba Sahbani from Tunisia couldn't manage a win in the first round of the girls' main draw singles and doubles.

Congratulations to our representatives for an excellent tournament in Tarbes.



ITF/CAT AFRICAN JUNIOR INDIVIDUAL & TEAM'S CHAMPIONSHIP 14&U-16&U Eastern Zone

The 2025 ITF/CAT Eastern Zonal Championships took place in Nairobi, Kenya from 15 to 23 January. The event included both individual and team matches. A record of 101 players took part, 49 boys and

52 girls from ten countries: Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.

In the boys' 14 and under singles, Arck Muterampuhwe from Burundi won the title by beating Samuel Okello from Uganda 6-2, 7-5. Third place went to Uganda's Munguriek, who won 4-0, 4-1 against Rwanda's Niyibizi.

In the girls' 14 and under singles, Kenya's Ouko won the final against her teammate Gikunda with a score of 6-2, 6-4. Burundi's Kezakimana came third by beating Kenya's Ogamba 4-1, 4-1.

In the boys' 16 and under singles, Kenya's Bhandari won the final against Burundi's Igraneza 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-3. Uganda's Oweknimungu came third with a 4-0, 4-2 win over Kenya's Murage.

In the girls' 16 and under singles, Kenya's Kawira Peter won the title after beating her teammate Ahoya 3-6, 7-6(2), 6-4. Third place went to Kenya's Deschilder, who beat Burundi's Bebita Ishimwe 5-3, 4-0.

In the team events: Boys 14&U: Uganda finished first, Kenya second, and Burundi third.

Girls 14&U: Kenya took first place, Burundi second, and Ethiopia third.

Boys 16&U: Kenya won the title, Burundi came second, and Uganda third.

Girls 16&U: Kenya finished first, Burundi second, and Tanzania third.



Western & Cenral Zone

The city of Lomé, Togo, hosted the 2025 ITF/CAT Western and Central Zonal Championships from 11 to 19 January featuring both individual and team competitions. The competition brought together 90 players and 22 coaches from nine countries: Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, and Nigeria. The boys' categories featured 25 players in the 14&U and 26 players in the 16&U, while the girls' categories included 22 players in the 14&U and 17 in the 16&U.

In the boys' 14&U singles, Nigeria's Chukwudubem Amasian claimed the title with a hard-fought victory over Mali's Albechir Diarra, winning 4-6, 6-2, 11-9 in the final. Nigeria's Seyi Ebenezer Ogunsakin secured third place by

defeating Mali's Karamoko Kante 5-3, 4-2. The girls' 14&U final saw Cameroon's Olive Nguimbis triumph over Gisele Nika Honfoga from Benin in an exciting match, 7-5, 2-6, 12-10. Nigeria's Goodnews Eyinjoulwa Aina finished third after defeating Benin's Naomie Marette 3-5, 4-2, 10-6.

In the boys' 16&U singles, Daniel Ekango from Cameroon emerged victorious, defeating his compatriot Cedrick Ndinkwa 6-1, 6-1 in the final. Nigeria's Gbolahan Olawole clinched third place with a 4-2, 0-4, 10-4 win over Ghana's Samuel Aryettey. In the girls' 16&U final, Nigeria's Khadijat Elejo Mohammed took the title with a 7-5, 6-3 victory over Cameroon's Serena Laure Mekue. Togo's Winner Gakpo secured third place by defeating her compatriot Tolissa Jude S. Ayegnon 5-3, 4-0.



In the team events, the boys' 14&U category saw Nigeria finishing first, followed by Mali in second and Ghana in third. The girls' 14&U category had Nigeria in first place, Benin in second, and Ghana in third. Mali claimed the boys' 16&U title, with Nigeria finishing second and Burkina Faso third. In the girls' 16&U category, Cameroon took first place, Togo came second, and Nigeria finished third.

Southern Zone

The ITF/CAT Southern African Zonal Championships 2025 took place in Windhoek, Namibia, from 10 to 18 January 2025. The tournament, which included both individual and team competitions, brought together players and coaches from 11 countries: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho,

Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

A total of 105 participants competed in the event, supported by 21 coaches.

The boys' categories included 31 players in the 14&U and 23 players in the 16&U, while the girls' categories featured 26 players in the 14&U and 25 in the 16&U.

In the boys' 14&U singles, South Africa's Nicholas Kruger claimed the title after a victory over his compatriot Tristan Summers, winning 7-5, 4-6, 10-5 in the final. Zimbabwe's Devine Kaliofasi finished third, defeating Joel Badza, also from Zimbabwe, 7-5, 6-2. The girls' 14&U final saw another South African victory, with Lily Haley overcoming Leago Dube in a thrilling match, 3-6, 6-0, 10-7. Morakane Anabel Molaoa (RSA) secured third place

by defeating Zimbabwe's Claire Majeye, 4-6, 7-5, 10-2.

In the boys' 16&U singles, South Africa's HlUMANI KekenA emerged victorious, defeating his compatriot Eathan Pieber in the final 6-1, 3-6, 10-5. Jamie Roux claimed third place with a commanding 6-2, 6-0 win over Zimbabwe's Tendekai Musabaek. South Africa continued its dominance in the girls' 16&U, where Roxy Bredekamp won the title with a convincing 6-0, 6-0 victory over Jenna Theron in the final. Namibia's Mari Van Schalkwyk secured third place by defeating Zimbabwe's Channele Zhuwakini, 7-6(3), 7-5.

In the team events, held from 14 to 18 January 2025, South Africa won all four team events. In the boys' 14&U, South Africa defeated Zimbabwe 2-0 in the final, while Botswana claimed third place with a 2-0 victory over Madagascar. The girls' 14&U category saw a similar result, with South Africa beating Zimbabwe 2-0 in the final and Botswana securing third place after defeating Lesotho 2-1. The boys' 16&U final also featured South Africa and Zimbabwe, with the former prevailing 2-0. Botswana earned third place with a 2-1 win against Mozambique.

In the girls' 16&U, South Africa edged out Zimbabwe 2-1 in the final, while Namibia took third place after overcoming Madagascar 2-1. ■



BEZZA LINA

JAMJI AMINE

OGUNSAKIN PETER

BEZZA LINA

AJC 18&U

2025

AJC 16&U

T

he African Junior Championship 18 and under was held in Cairo, Egypt, from 27 January to 1 February 2025. The event was hosted by the Confederation of African

Tennis (CAT), with the support of the International Tennis Federation (ITF), in collaboration with the Egyptian Tennis Federation (ETF). The 2025 edition welcomed 59 players and 17 coaches representing 13 African nations: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. The tournament was marked by a high level of competition and excellent organization.

Below are the winners:

Boys' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Jamji Amine (Morocco)

Finalist & African Vice-Champion: Doig Connor (South Africa)

3rd Place: Allan Gatoto (Burundi)

Girls' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Bezza Lina (Morocco)

Finalist & African Vice-Champion: Zyk Jahnie (South Africa)

3rd Place: Sasha Natalie Chimedza (Zimbabwe).

Boys' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Bothma John & De Klerk Reuben (South Africa)

Finalists & African Vice-Champions: Doig Connor & Ngwenya Simphiwe (South Africa)

Girls' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Bezza Lina & Hadab Sofia (Morocco)

Finalists & African Vice-Champions: Ibrahim Jian & Tawila Judy (Egypt).

The trophy for the best nation was awarded to Morocco.

The closing ceremony was held in the presence of His Excellency the Ambassador of Morocco to Egypt, alongside Mr. Walid Samy, Secretary General of the Egyptian Tennis Federation, Mr. Amine Benmakhlouf, ITF/CAT representative, and various Egyptian officials, guests, and supporters of African tennis who attended to celebrate this important continental championship.

The Confederation of African Tennis extends its sincere appreciation to the Egyptian Tennis Federation for their exceptional hospitality and organization. Congratulations are in order to all participating nations, with special accolades to the winners for their remarkable achievements. ■

The African Junior Championship 16 and under took place in Cairo, Egypt, from 15 to 19 April 2025. Organized by the Confederation of African Tennis (CAT), with the support of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and in collaboration with the Egyptian Tennis Federation (ETF), the 2025 edition brought together 24 girls and 22 boys, accompanied by 14 coaches, representing ten African countries: Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Togo, Tunisia and South Africa. The event was a great success, both in terms of organization and sporting level.

Below are the winners:

Boys' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Ogunsakin Peter (Nigeria)

Finalist & African Vice-Champion: Raguin Ntungamili (Botswana)

3rd Place: Al Aouni Reda (Morocco)

Girls' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Bezza Lina (Morocco)

Finalist & African Vice-Champion: Zeina El Gerby (Egypt)

3rd Place: Benzaid Bicene (Tunisia)

Boys' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Raguin Ntungamili (Botswana) & Andriantefiharina Mirija (Madagascar)

Finalists & African Vice-Champions: Nacer Ghoul & Yacine Meghari (Algeria)

Girls' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Bezza Lina & Douyeb Yasmine (Morocco)

Finalists & African Vice-Champions: Seif Eldin Youssef Jana & Zeina El Gerby (Egypt)

The Team Trophy was won by Morocco, ahead of Egypt (2nd) and Tunisia (3rd).

The closing and awards ceremony was graced by the presence of Mr. Walid Samy, Secretary General of the Egyptian Tennis Federation, Mr. Amine Benmakhlouf, ITF/CAT representative, as well as several Egyptian officials and fans of African tennis who came to witness this key event.

The Confederation of African Tennis warmly thanks the Egyptian Tennis Federation for their kind hospitality and outstanding organization of this continental gathering, and congratulates all participants for their performance, with special recognition to the winners. ■

AJC NEWS

AFRICAN CHAMPIONS 2025

SELIMA BEN DHIA

MOHAMED GENIDY

AJC 14&U

AJC NEWS

The eight clay courts of the "Nairobi Club" in Kenya hosted the ITF/CAT African 14&U Clay Court Championship (AJCCC) from 24 February to 1 March 2025, which was

preceded by a "Warm-Up" Tournament held on the same courts from 19 to 22 February.

This first major event of the year for players aged 14 & Under, organized under the aegis of the Confederation of African Tennis (CAT) with the support of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and Tennis Kenya KLTA (TK), was a remarkable success, both in terms of participation of the best African athletes and the quality of organization.

32 girls and 31 boys, accompanied by 19 coaches and representing 15 countries, took part in the Championship, which was marked by North African dominance in both singles and doubles competitions.

Here are the winners:

Girls' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Selima Ben Dhia
Runner-up & African Vice-Champion: Saba Sahbani
3rd Place: Zineb Ouazzani Hassani

Girls' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Selima Ben Dhia & Saba Sahbani
Runners-up & African Vice-Champions: Melek Gamaoun & Emna Mathlouthi

Boys' Singles

Winner & African Champion: Mohamed Genidy
Runner-up & African Vice-Champion: Kamil Rhazali
3rd Place: Soulaïmane Jamji

Boys' Doubles

Winners & African Champions: Kamil Rhazali & Soulaïmane Jamji
Runners-up & African Vice-Champions: Mohamed Genidy & Abdellatif Mostafa.

The trophy for best team was won by Tunisia, ahead of Morocco (2nd) and Egypt (3rd).

Here are the 15 countries that took part in the 2025 CAJCTB: Algeria, Burundi, Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The Closing and Trophy Ceremony of the CAJCTB was marked by the presence of Ms. Wanjii Mbugua-Karani, Vice President of CAT, Mr James Kenani, President of Tennis Kenya, Mr Matthias Nalyanya, President of the Uganda Tennis Association, as well as several officials and Kenyan tennis fans.

CAT once again thanks Tennis Kenya for hosting and successfully organizing this major African youth event and extends its congratulations to all participants, especially the winners. ■

BEST NATION'S TROPHY 2025

MOROCCO, BEST NATION IN 2025

Morocco continues to set the standard on the continent, securing the Best Nation's Trophy for the seventh consecutive year in 2025.

Thanks to the consistent excellence of its junior players across multiple African championships, Morocco once again topped the rankings. Tunisia claimed the second spot, followed closely by Egypt in third.

This prestigious distinction is based on the overall performances recorded in the African Junior Championships across all age categories: The 18 & Under, 16 & Under, and the inaugural 14 & Under AJC, as well as bonus points from the second edition of the 14 & Under AJC hosted during the last quarter of 2024.

Only the top eight results in singles and doubles for each nation were considered, with a maximum of two results per age group and gender. ■

	NATION	SINGLES	DOUBLES	BONUS	TOTAL
1	 MOROCCO	1670	350	80	2100
2	 TUNISIA	1140	250	50	1440
3	 EGYPT	1040	260	120	1420
4	 SOUTH AFRICA	733	180		913
5	 NIGERIA	505	95		600
6	 ZIMBABWE	345	80		425
7	 ALGERIA	296	115		411
8	 BOTSWANA	268	80		348
9	 BURUNDI	171	60		231
10	 MADAGASCAR	88	80		168
11	 CAMEROON	126	30		156
12	 KENYA	96	30		126
13	 MOZAMBIQUE	31			31
14	 UGANDA	14	15		29
15	 NAMIBIA	10	15		29
16	 TOGO	21			21
17	 TANZANIA	9			9
18	 ANGOLA	8			8

BRAZZAVILLE CHALLENGER

C The Fédération Congolaise de Tennis (FCT) hosted the second edition of the Brazzaville Challenger from 17 to 23 February 2025. Held at the Académie de Tennis de Brazzaville, the tournament attracted several

international and African players and was run to high standards, reflecting the Federation's growing experience and ambition. The organizers received positive feedback from the ATP and from participating players.

The tournament's main draw featured many African players, such as Eliakim Coulibaly from Côte d'Ivoire, who reached the quarterfinals after two victories, over Maik Steiner from Germany (6-3, 1-6, 6-4) and Credit Chaiyarin in the second round (6-2, 1-0 ret.) before losing in the quarterfinal to the Bulgarian player Dinko Dinev (6-3, 3-6, 4-6). Other African participants included Alec Beckley and Nicholas Van Aken from South Africa, Paterné Mamata from Congo, Yassine Smiej from Morocco, and Samir Hamza Reguig from Algeria. None of them managed to advance to the second round.

The final was a French affair, with Geoffrey Blancaneaux, seeded 2, defeating top seed Calvin Hemery 6-3, 6-4 to claim the singles title. In doubles, the two African pairs Samir Hamza Reguig alongside Yassine Smiej and Alec Beckley alongside Eliakim Coulibaly exited in the quarterfinals. The Brazilian duo of Mateo Barreiros Reyes and Paulo André Saraiva dos Santos triumphed in the final, overcoming Blancaneaux and Maxime Chazal with a 6-4, 1-6, [10-6] victory.

The FCT's dedication to organizing this tournament for the second consecutive year highlights its commitment to fostering professional tennis in the Republic of the Congo. The successful execution of the event has solidified Brazzaville's position on the ATP Challenger Tour calendar and provided valuable opportunities for African players to compete at a high level in Central Africa. Congratulations to the players and to the organizers of this excellent event. ■



RWANDA CHALLENGER

The Rwanda Tennis Federation successfully organized two back-to-back ATP Challenger tournaments at the Kicukiro Ecology Tennis Club in Kigali: the Rwanda Challenger 1 from 24 February to 1 March 2025, and the Rwanda Challenger 2 from 3 to 9 March 2025.

Only one African player competed in the event. In the first week, Eliakim Coulibaly passed the first round with a victory over Polish player Daniel Michalski, 6-4, 6-4, before losing in the second round to Dutch player Max Houkes, 6-7 (6), 3-6.

Frenchman Valentin Royer, seeded third, clinched the title by defeating Slovakian qualifier Andrej Martin, 6-1, 6-2, in the final.

In the second week, Eliakim lost in the first round to Corentin Denolly from France, 4-6, 1-6, while Valentin Royer continued his impressive form, securing another straight-sets victory over Dutch alternate Guy den

MAJOR PROFESSIONAL TOURNAMENTS IN AFRICA

Ouden 6-2, 6-4, to claim back-to-back titles.

Congratulations to the Rwanda Tennis Federation, who ensured excellent playing conditions, strong coordination with the ATP, and a warm welcome to all players, staff, and guests. ■



GRAND PRIX HASSAN II

The 2025 edition of the Grand Prix Hassan II took place from 31 March to 6 April at the Royal Tennis Club in Marrakech, Morocco. This tournament is the only ATP 250 event held in Africa and is played on clay courts, with a total prize money of €596,035.

In the singles main draw, three Moroccan players participated: Younes Lalami Laaroussi, Eliot Benchetrit, and Taha Baadi. None of them managed to advance to the second round. In the final, Italy's Luciano Darderi won the title after a close match against top seed Tallon Griekspoor from the Netherlands. Both sets were decided by tiebreaks, and Darderi stayed focused to win 7-6 (3), 7-6 (4).

In doubles, Tunisian player and fourth seed Skander Mansouri, alongside his Croatian partner Ivan Dodig, lost in the first round to the Dutch pair Griekspoor and Stevens, 5-7, 4-6. The same outcome applied to Baadi and Lalami, as well as Benchetrit, who all exited in the first round. Czech players Petr Nouza and Patrik Rikl won their first ATP Tour title together, defeating the experienced top-seeded pair Hugo Nys (Monaco) and Édouard Roger-Vasselin (France) 6-3, 6-4.

The Fédération Royale Marocaine de Tennis continues to play an important role in promoting top-level tennis in the country. Thanks to their efforts, the tournament remains a key stop on the international calendar and a source of

pride for African tennis.

As a reminder, the Grand Prix Hassan II was inaugurated as an ATP Challenger event in 1984 and became an ATP Tour tournament in 1990. The tournament is entirely funded by Morocco's King Mohammed VI. It was relocated from Casablanca to Marrakech in 2016. Two Africans, both Moroccans, have won the singles title in their home country: Hicham Arazi in 1997 and Younes El Aynaoui in 2002. In doubles, three South African players have claimed the title: Piet Norval in 1993, David Adams in 1994, and Myles Wakefield in 2002. ■

SADA NAHIMANA MAKES HISTORY WITH BACK-TO-BACK W50 TITLES IN BUJUMBURA

Burundian tennis star Sada Nahimana has made history by winning back-to-back ITF W50 titles in Bujumbura

marking a significant milestone in her career and for Burundian tennis.

The first tournament, held from 24 to 30 March 2025 at the Entente Sportive de Bujumbura, saw Nahimana advancing to the final without dropping a set. Sada won her first match 6-2, 6-2 against France's Alyssa Reguer, then defeated another French player, Karine Marion Job, 6-3, 6-3, followed by a 7-6 (0), 6-2 victory over USA's Julia Adams in the quarterfinal. She then beat Ekaterina Kazionova 6-4, 6-1 in the semifinals, culminating in a decisive 6-1, 6-1 victory over Emiline Dartron from France in the final.

In the doubles, Sada, alongside her Indian partner Riya Bhatia, lost in the quarterfinal to the Dutch pair Demi Tran and Lian Tran, 3-6, 6-2, 10-12.



In the following week, Nahimana continued her impressive form. She secured a spot in the final after defeating Wozuko Mdlulwa from South Africa 6-0, 6-0 in the first round, then Merel Hoedt from the Netherlands 6-4, 6-3 in the second round, Poland's Monika Stankiewicz 6-3, 6-1 in the quarterfinal, and Jasmijn Gimbrere of the Netherlands 7-5, 6-2 in the semifinals. The final on 6 April saw Nahimana face France's Tiantsoa Rakotomanga Rajaonah. Nahimana clinched the title with a 6-3, 6-2 win.

Nahimana's consecutive triumphs mark a historic milestone, as she becomes the first player to win back-to-back W50 titles in Burundi since the country began hosting the tournament three years ago. Her success has ignited national pride.

The Burundi Tennis Federation's continued efforts in organizing and promoting such high-caliber tournaments have been instrumental in providing Sada with opportunities to compete at an elite level. Nahimana's success serves as an inspiration for aspiring athletes across the continent, highlighting the potential of African talent in the global tennis arena. Congratulations to Sada for her great achievements and to the Burundi Tennis Federation for hosting excellent events. ■



“

I've dreamed of this moment for a long time, and doing it at home in front of my people makes it even more special.

Eliakim Coulibaly

HISTORIC VICTORY FOR CÔTE D'IVOIRE AS ELIAKIM COULIBALY CLAIMS FIRST ATP CHALLENGER TITLE ON HOME SOIL

C

ôte d'Ivoire has officially etched its name in the history books of African tennis by hosting two consecutive ATP Challenger tournaments, the Côte d'Ivoire Open I and II—from 14 to 27 April 2025 in Abidjan.

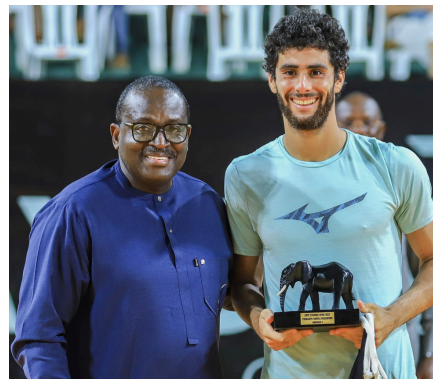
The first week wasn't good enough for the African players, with eight competing in the singles main draw. Tunisia's Aziz Dougaz, seed 1, lost in the second round to the Frenchman Florent Bax 4-6, 4-6. South Africa's Philip Henning lost in the same round to Giles Hussey from the UK 4-6, 3-6. Taha Baadi, from Morocco who received a wild card for the event, lost in the second round to Danil Glinka from Estonia 5-7, 6-7 (1) after overcoming Eliakim Coulibaly from Côte d'Ivoire in the first round 7-5, 4-6, 6-4. However, Kris Van Wyk from South Africa, Aziz Ouakaa, and Moez Echargui from Tunisia couldn't manage to pass to the second round and all lost in the first round. In doubles, the best performances were by Ivorian players: Myko Yohann Himad Kouame alongside his French partner Benoit Paire, and Eliakim Coulibaly alongside his partner Robin Bertrand, both of whom reached the quarterfinals.

Overall, the Côte d'Ivoire Open I featured high-level tennis, with Thailand's Maximus Jones winning the singles title after overcoming former top-50 player Ričardas Berankis in the final 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. The Australian Matt Hulme, alongside Dutch player Thijsen Loof, claimed the doubles title with a 7-6 (3), 6-4 victory over Clément Chidekh and Jody Maginley in the final.

The second week, Côte d'Ivoire Open II, culminated in an all-African final between local hero Eliakim Coulibaly and Tunisia's top seed Aziz Dougaz. In a mammoth encounter, Coulibaly defeated Dougaz 6-7 (3), 6-4, 6-4, clinching his first ATP Challenger title in front of an ecstatic home crowd. The three-hour battle was played in a packed stadium with an electric atmosphere. Coulibaly showed grit and composure, breaking Dougaz's serve twice in the decisive set to earn a historic win.



TOP STORY OF THE QUARTER



five strong wins, including a comeback victory against Dominik Palan (CZE) in the final. The success in Maputo was an early indication of Coulibaly's growing confidence and competitive edge.

FIRST ATP CT DOUBLES TITLE FOR TUNISIA'S AZIZ OUAKAA

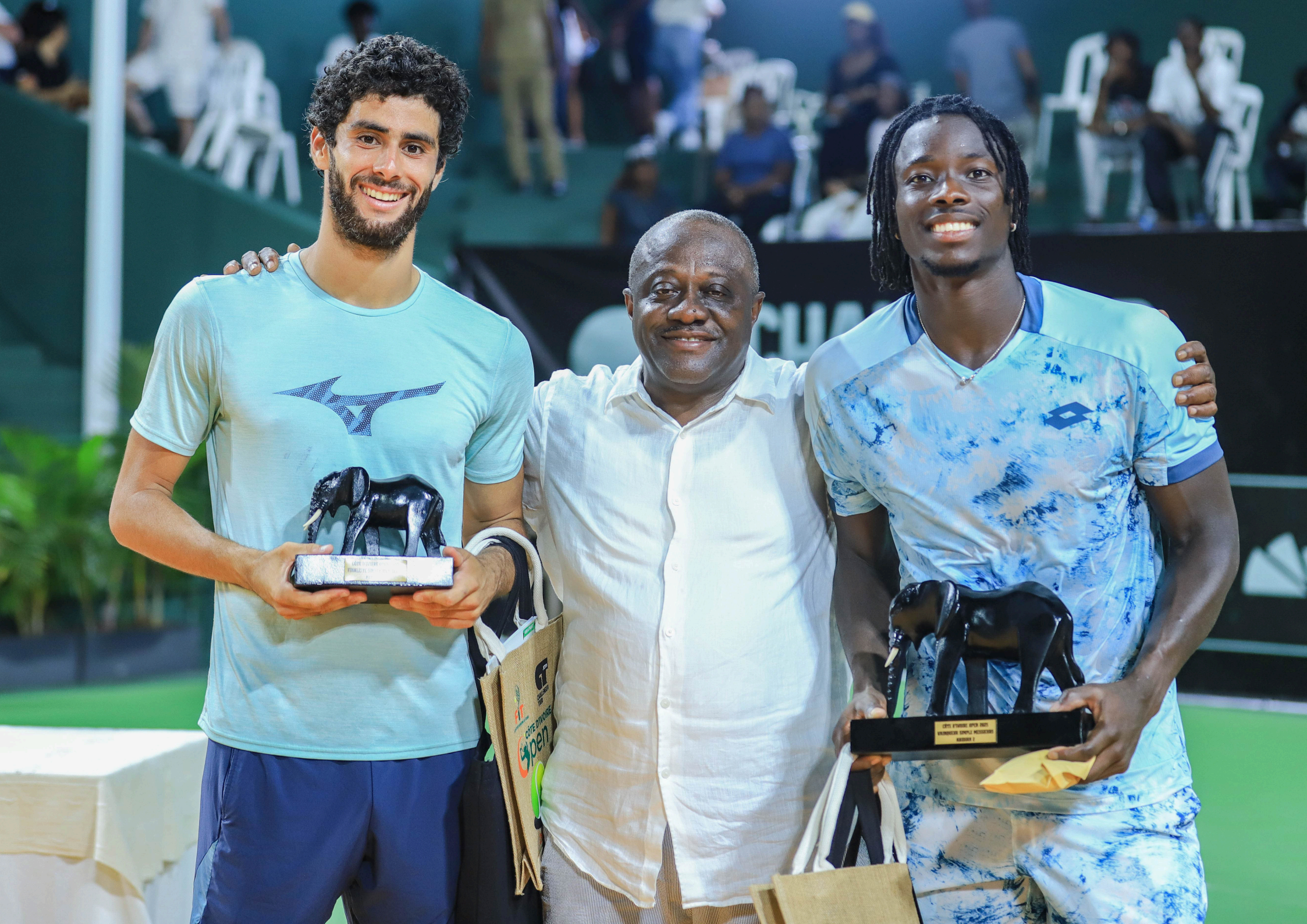
While Coulibaly claimed the spotlight in singles, Tunisia's Aziz Ouakaa also left a strong mark on the tournament by capturing the doubles title alongside France's Constantin Bittoun Kouzmine. The duo delivered a stellar performance throughout the week, culminating in a 7-6 (5), 7-5 win in the final over Aleksandre Bakshi (GEO) and S D Prajwal Dev (IND). Their road to the title included a first-round victory against Vadym Ursu (UKR) and Damien Wenger (SUI) 4-6, 6-3, [10-5], a thrilling quarterfinal win over local favorite Coulibaly and his partner Taha Baadi 6-7 (4), 6-2, [10-8], followed by a straight-sets semifinal victory against the Indian pair, seeded 3, Sai Karteek Reddy Ganta and Adil Kalyanpur 6-3, 6-4. For Ouakaa, this marked his first ATP Challenger doubles crown and added to his growing résumé, which already includes 15 ITF doubles titles.

By hosting two ATP Challenger events and witnessing one of their own rise to the top, Côte d'Ivoire has opened a new chapter for tennis in West Africa, a region that is clearly ready to embrace and nurture world-class talent. Congratulations to all the players for their outstanding performances and to the organizers for delivering two exceptional tournaments that will be remembered as a turning point for African tennis. ■

"A very good match against Eliakim. I'm really happy that he's the one who won the tournament. I think having two Africans in the final is great for our continent. It shows that we have the level to produce top tennis players. Côte d'Ivoire is setting an example by organizing such tournaments, and I hope other countries will follow," said Aziz Dougaz at the end of the match.

This Challenger triumph follows Coulibaly's first M25 title, which he won just a few months earlier at the ITF World Tennis Tour event held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 5 to 10 November 2024. Invited by the International Tennis Federation and the Confederation of African Tennis and as part of the 2024 GSPDP/ITF/CAT 17 & Over Touring Team, Coulibaly delivered





RECAP OF THE AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE DAVIS CUP 2025 WORLD GROUP I & II

DAVIS CUP®

The Davis Cup returned between 31 January and 2 February 2025, with three African nations, Tunisia, Egypt, and Togo competing in the World Group I Playoffs, and six African nations, Benin, Zimbabwe, Morocco, South Africa, Nigeria, and Namibia competing in the World Group II Playoffs.

In the World Group I Playoffs, Tunisia hosted Ukraine at the Cité Nationale Sportive El Menzah in Tunis and managed to clinch a ticket to World Group I after a 3-2 victory. In the first singles match, Aziz Dougaz lost to Vitaliy Sachko 3-6, 7-6 (6), 3-6. Tunisia came back into the tie with a win by Moez Echargui over Oleksandr Ovcharenko, 7-6 (1), 6-2, before securing a second point in the doubles, thanks to the pair Aziz Dougaz and Aziz Ouakaa, who overcame the Ukrainian duo Oleksii Krutykh and Vitaliy Sachko 6-3, 6-4. Ukraine equalized the tie thanks to Oleksandr Ovcharenko, who defeated Aziz Dougaz 6-2, 6-2, taking the match to the decisive final singles. Moez Echargui sealed Tunisia's qualification by beating Vitaliy Sachko 7-5, 6-1. Tunisia will now face Sweden in the World Group I tie from 12 to 13 September in Gothenburg.



Egypt came close to qualifying but narrowly missed out, losing 3-2 to Greece in a tie played at the Ace Tennis Club in Athens. Mohamed Safwat started strong and claimed a win for Egypt, 6-2, 6-2 against Christos Antonopoulos. In the second match, Greece equalized through Stefanos Sakellariadis, who beat Karim Maamoun 6-1, 6-2. Egypt closed the first day with a second point, winning the doubles as Mohamed Safwat and Fares Zakaria triumphed 7-6 (5), 7-6 (6).

On the second day, Greece came back strong with two decisive singles wins. Stefanos Sakellariadis defeated Safwat 6-4, 3-6, 6-2 to level the tie, and Aristotelis Thanos secured Greece's qualification with a 6-0, 6-3 win over Amr Elsayed. Egypt is thus relegated to World Group II and will face Togo in Lomé in an all-African tie in September 2025.

Togo could not secure qualification in its tie against India, losing 4-0 at the DLTA Complex in New Delhi. Togo dropped all three matches on the first day: Liova Ayité Ajavon lost to Sasikumar Mukund 2-6, 1-6; tThomas Yaka Kofi Setodji fell to Ramkumar Ramanathan 0-6, 2-6; and the doubles

team of M'lapa Tingou Akomlo and Hod'abalo Isak Padio lost 2-6, 1-6 to N. Sriram Balaji and Rithvik Choudary Bollipalli. In the fourth match, Isak Padio lost to Karan Singh 2-6, 3-6. The fifth match was not played. Congratulations to Tunisia for qualifying to World Group I, and hard luck to Egypt and Togo.

In the World Group II Playoffs, Benin clinched a historic first ever qualification to World Group II with a 3-2 win over Latvia in a tie held at the Sofitel Marina Hotel in Cotonou. Benin lost the first match, with Alexis Klégou falling to Robert Strombachs 5-7, 6-4, 3-6. Patrick Agbo Panzo quickly equalized by beating Daniels Tens 6-3, 6-2. Benin then took the lead in the doubles, with Prince Gandonou and Alexis Klégou defeating Aleksandrs Sotikovs and Robert Strombachs 6-3, 6-3.

Latvia opened the second day strongly, with Strombachs equalizing again via a 6-1, 6-1 win over Panzo. However, Sylvestre Monnou clinched the decisive point for Benin in an electric atmosphere, winning 6-3, 6-3 over Daniels Tens. Benin will now travel to Lithuania in September, aiming for another historic achievement.





In an all African tie, Zimbabwe hosted Morocco at the Harare Sports Club. Morocco claimed a 4-0 victory. Taha Baadi earned the first point for Morocco over Courtney Lock 6-2, 6-4. Eliot Benchetrit added a second with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Ethan Sibanda. In doubles, Benchetrit teamed up with Younes Lalali Laaroussi to beat Lock and Ronan Mtisi 6-1, 6-1, securing qualification. On day two, Karim Bennani added a fourth point, defeating Sibanda 6-4, 6-3.

Morocco returns to World Group II and will face South Africa in September. Zimbabwe, meanwhile, will compete in Africa Group III, also to be held in Harare.

At the Groenkloof Tennis Club in Pretoria, South Africa hosted Nigeria and secured a 3-1 win to qualify for World Group II. Philip Henning

opened with a 6-1, 6-1 win over David Ekpenyong. Nigeria responded through Christopher Bulus, who beat Alec Beckley 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4). South Africa took the doubles point with Henning and Beckley defeating Canice Abua and Michael Emmanuel 6-0, 6-3. On day two, Henning sealed the tie with a 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-4 win over Bulus.

South Africa will now face Morocco in September, while Nigeria will compete in Africa Group III in August.

Namibia hosted Hong Kong at the Central Tennis Club in Windhoek and narrowly lost 3-2. Connor Henry Van Schalkwyk won the opening match against Chun Hun Wong 4-6, 6-4, 6-1. Codie Van Schalkwyk then lost to Coleman Wong 5-7, 5-7.

Hong Kong secured the doubles point, winning 7-6 (6), 7-5 over Jean Erasmus and Connor Van Schalkwyk. On the second day, Connor Van Schalkwyk narrowly lost 6-7 (2), 6-7 (8) to Coleman Wong. Codie won the final match 7-6 (2), 6-4 against Tsz Fu Wong. Namibia will also compete in Africa Group III in August.

Congratulations and good luck to all the African teams in the upcoming ties. ■



MOROCCO HOSTS 2025 AFRICAN QUALIFICATION FOR WHEELCHAIR TENNIS WORLD TEAM CUP

From 18 to 22 February 2025, the city of Rabat, Morocco, hosted the African Qualification event for the BNP Paribas World Team Cup, the most prestigious international team competition in wheelchair tennis.

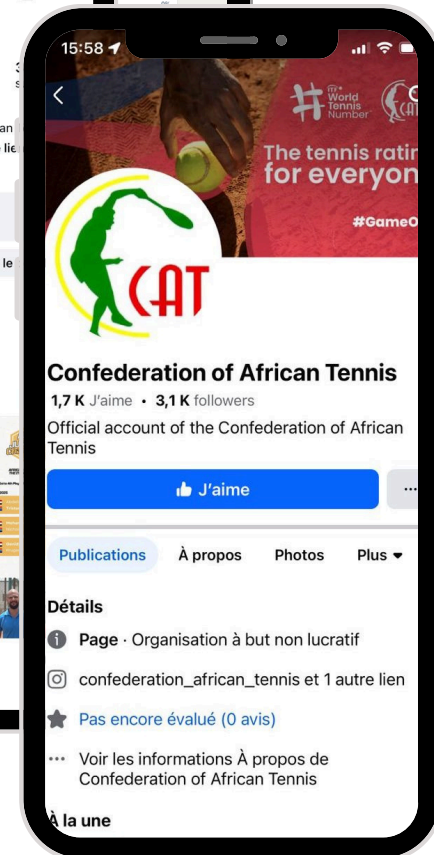
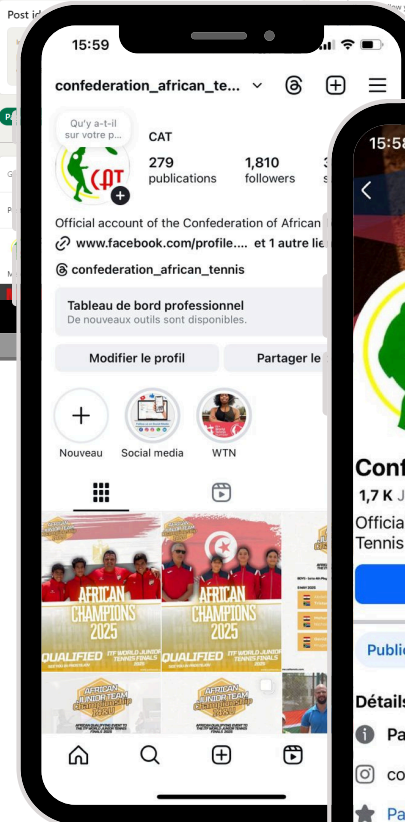
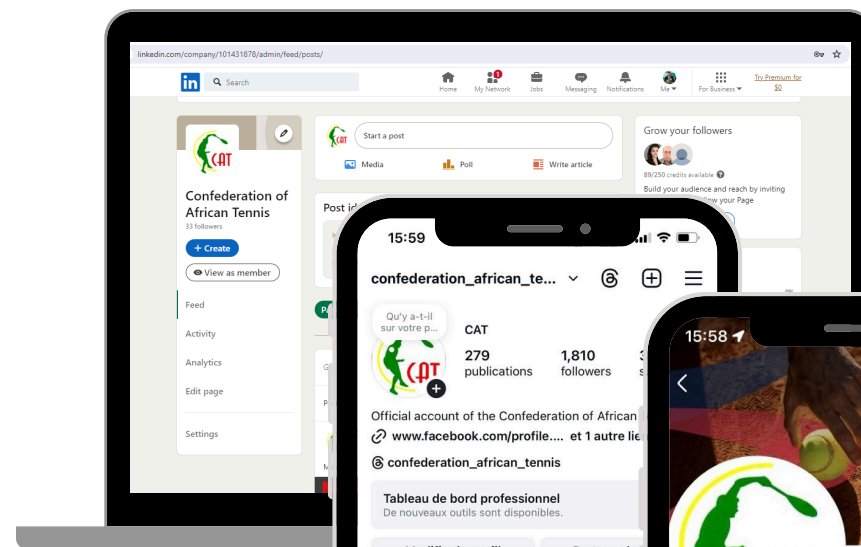
The event brought together top teams from across the continent, all competing for a spot in the World Team Cup Finals, which will take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from 6 to 11 May 2025.

The nations that took part in the competition were Morocco, Egypt, Ghana, Mauritius, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Tanzania. As the host nation, Morocco delivered outstanding results in both the men's and women's competitions. In the men's event, the Moroccan team, composed of Lhaj Boukartacha, Said Himam and Fouad Boughnim, won all of their matches without

dropping a single point. They defeated Rwanda and Kenya 3-0 in the group stage, followed by another 3-0 victory over Ghana in the semi-finals. In the final, Morocco maintained their dominance with a 3-0 win against Egypt, claiming their fourth African qualification title since 2016. However, Ghana's men's team made history by securing the bronze medal. Players Bernard Yawson and Daniel Laryea led the team to a 3-0 win over Kenya in the third-place match. Their success was celebrated by Ghana's Ambassador to Morocco, Her Excellency Mrs. Charity Gbedawo, who praised their determination and team spirit while Rwanda clinched fifth place with a 3-0 victory over Mauritius. In the women's event, Morocco was represented by Najwa Awane and Samira Benichi, both gold medallists at the

African Para Games, alongside Ibtissam Battar. The Moroccan team won all of their matches in straight sets. The only close contest came in the doubles match against Nigeria, where Morocco prevailed in a match tie-break 6-4, 4-6, 11-9. This marks Morocco's second regional women's title after their first in 2020. Moreover, Tanzania finished in the second place with three victories over Egypt 3-0, Kenya 2-1, and Nigeria 2-1 while Kenya clinched third place with two victories over Egypt 3-0 and Nigeria 2-1 who finished fourth with a 3-0 win over Egypt.

With their victories in Rabat, Morocco's men's and women's teams have officially qualified for the 2025 BNP Paribas World Team Cup Finals in Antalya.



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A NEW GENERATION OF CERTIFIED TENNIS OFFICIALS EMERGES ACROSS AFRICA

The development of tennis officiating in Africa took a major step forward in 2025 with the successful organization of four officiating schools across the continent: In Pretoria (South Africa), in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Mohammedia (Morocco), and Windhoek (Namibia).

Led by experienced ITF instructors and supported by national tennis federations, these programs contributed to the growth of a new generation of certified officials.

ITF White Badge School – Pretoria

The first ITF Officiating School in Africa for 2025 took place in Pretoria, South Africa, from 20 to 24 February. This White Badge School covered both Referee and Chair Umpire certifications, bringing together 23 officials, 7 referees and 16 chair umpires, from 13 African countries.

At the conclusion of the program, 16 officials successfully passed their assessments and earned their White Badge certification, including 4 referees and 12 chair umpires.



The school was conducted by a team of highly respected ITF instructors, including Damien Dumusois from France, James Keothavong from Great Britain, Timo Janzen from Germany, and Wayne McKewen from Australia.

The 12 chair umpires who earned their White Badge are Oussama Charawandi from Tunisia, Anas El Mekkaoui from Morocco, Wael Harami from Algeria, Omar Kamal from Egypt, Kesketswe Ketletseng from Botswana, Essau Khondowe from Zimbabwe, Khanyisile Mahlaela from South Africa,

Ferdinand Melatagui Djuatio from Cameroon, Kyle Minnies from South Africa, Muriel Mogale from South Africa, Nixon Oduor from Kenya, and Moses Ofori from Ghana. The four referees who achieved certification are Enia Matamisa from Zimbabwe, Nancy Muli from Kenya, Mookteshwar Sharma Ramchurn from Mauritius, and Samira Woodman from South Africa.



ITF White Badge School – Abidjan

The second ITF White Badge Officiating School in Africa for 2025 was held in Abidjan from 23 to 27 April. Organized by the Fédération Ivoirienne de Tennis, this school focused exclusively on the Referee module and brought together 14 participants from 8 African countries. Twelve officials successfully passed the course and earned their ITF White Badge certification. Notably, this session welcomed participants from Eritrea and Rwanda who had been unable to attend earlier sessions.

The course was conducted by ITF instructors Alison Lang (GBR) and Vuk Nikolic (SRB). The newly certified White Badge Referees are: Assouan Komla Eric David (CIV), Boughaba Meriem (TUN), Dahi Mahmoud (EGY), Danjuma Bitrus (NGR), Edili Joseph (NGR), Hizem Mohamed Moataz (TUN), Ismael Ahmed (EGY), Kolsi Akram (TUN), Lag Rachid (MAR), Ngurusu Desire (RWA), Ogunshola Folashade (NGR), and Tesfayesus Senai (ERI).

These White Badge School represent another significant step in strengthening officiating standards in African tennis, providing opportunities for officials to develop and gain recognition at an international level.



Bachtobji Souha (TUN), Ben Ghaouia Neder (TUN), Braham Yassine (TUN), Chikh Bled Sihem (ALG), Fetni Fakheddine (TUN), Gam Sirine (TUN), Kajam Naima (MAR), and Ziad Abdelouahed (MAR).

In Southern Africa, the Namibia National Officiating School was held in Windhoek from 16 to 19 April. Organized by the Namibia Tennis Association, this course focused on the General Officiating Module and attracted 23 participants, including 8 female officials, a strong commitment to gender inclusion in tennis officiating.

Led by instructor Gaone Poane (BOT), the course covered topics such as Introduction to Officiating, Rules of Tennis, Line Umpiring, and Chair Umpiring. The participants also received practical training during the ongoing ITF WTT Junior events in Windhoek.

These Schools represents a crucial step forward in the development of tennis officiating in Africa. It equips local officials with knowledge and practical skills needed to support both national and international events. Additionally, it strengthens the capacity of National Associations to independently officiate and host professional tennis competitions promoting sustainability, self-reliance, and contributing to a clear career pathway for aspiring officials, one of the main objectives for Africa officiating Strategy. ■

ITF Green Badge School – Mohammedia

In Mohammedia, Morocco, the first ITF Green Badge Officiating School of the year took place from 23 to 27 April. Hosted by the Fédération Royale Marocaine de Tennis, the school welcomed 11 participants from 3 countries and focused on the Chair Umpire module. Eight officials successfully earned their ITF Green Badge certification. The school was led by ITF instructors Anis Ressaissi (TUN), Damien Dumusois (FRA), and Emna Cassimon Chahed (FRA). The newly certified Green Badge Chair Umpires are:



LOOKING AHEAD

AFRICAN TENNIS

NEXT ISSUE: SEPTEMBER 2025

DATES

TOURNAMENT

JUNE

14-17	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1
18-21	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2
22-25	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1
26-29	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2

LOCATION

BOTSWANA
BOTSWANA
ALGERIA
ALGERIA

JULY

14-19	AJTC 16&U	
20-23	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1	TBC
24-26	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2	TBC
29-1 AUG	12&U TEAM - NORTH	
30-2 AUG	12&U TEAM - EAST	

CAIRO- EGYPT
KENYA
KENYA
ALGERIA
TANZANIA

AUGUST

3-6	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1	TBC
7-10	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2	TBC
10-14	12&U TEAM - SOUTH	
17-20	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1	
21-24	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2	
24-27	14& CIRCUIT LEG 1	
28-31	14& CIRCUIT LEG 2	

TUNISIA
TUNISIA
TBA
ZIMBABWE
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ALGERIA
ALGERIA

SEPTEMBER

15-20	AJCHC 14&U
21-25	MASTERS 14&U

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