

Pete Sampras

Growing up in Palos Verdes, California, Pete started playing tennis at the age of seven and grew up idolizing the play of the great Rod Laver. By age 11, Pete would have the chance to practice with his idol.

Under the tutelage of early coach Pete Fischer, Pete made a name for himself as an up-and-comer star while competing in the juniors against the likes of David Wheaton, Andre Agassi, Jim Courier, and Michael Chang. Fischer would play an instrumental role in Pete's future success by switching his backhand from a two-handed to a one-handed, and by turning Pete into a serve-and-volleyer from a baseline player.

Pete joined the professional tour at the age of 16 in 1988, won his first pro tournament on February 12, 1990 at Philadelphia, and reached the # 1 ranking for the first time in his career on April 12, 1993. Pete has gone on to win more Grand Slam titles (14) – Wimbledon (7); U.S. Open (5); and Australian Open (2) – than any other men's player in tennis history, including his idol, Rod Laver. Pete has held the year-end # 1 ranking for a record six consecutive years (1993-1998).

Pete has won many awards during his career including: the Jim Thorpe Tennis Player of the Year in 1993; ATP Player of the Year from 1993-1997; U.S. Olympic Committee "Sportsman of the Year" in 1997; Voted # 1 player in history in 1997 by 100 current and former players, journalists, and tournament directors to mark the 25th anniversary of the ATP; Named GQ magazine's Individual Athlete Award for Man of the Year in 2000; and was voted #48 in the Top 50 Greatest North American Athletes of ESPN's SportsCentury. Pete was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2007.

Pete retired from the professional tour in 2002 however continues to play selected exhibitions, including a series of matches with current # 1 player Roger Federer in Asia and recently at Madison Square Garden in New York City in front of a sold out crowd of 19,000 plus.

Pete was born the third of four children to Sam and Georgia Sampras on August 12, 1971 in Washington, D.C. Although Pete receives most of the headlines, tennis definitely runs in the Sampras family. Pete's sister, Stella won the 1988 NCAA Doubles title while at UCLA, and she is now the head coach of the women's tennis team at UCLA which won the 2008 NCAA National Championship. Pete's brother, Gus runs Pure Sports Management Group, a company founded by Pete in 2007. Pete's younger sister, Marion is a mother of three living in Los Angeles.

Pete and actress Bridgette Wilson married on September 30, 2000 and have two sons, Christian and Ryan. They currently reside in Thousand Oaks, California.