



What's the Buzz?

Welcome to the B-Hive!

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When you think about the French Open, clay courts immediately come to mind. How did clay come into play?

In 1880, Willie Renshaw (seven time Wimbledon singles champion, bested only by Roger Federer) lived in the south of France. Willie used ground-up terra cotta (clay pots) to protect his grass courts from the scorching sun and grueling play. While not nearly advanced as today's courts at Stade Roland Garros, Renshaw discovered that playing on a completely clay surface was easier on the joints and offered longer rallies. Winning required the ability to slide on the clay, along with stroke mastery. Think topspin (Rafael Nadal, 89% wins), backhand slice (Steffi Graff, 90% wins), and drop shots (Chris Evert, 95% wins, making her The Queen of Clay).

Learn about USCTDP pros' favorite pros, tournaments, and strokes [here](#).



Celebrating
40 Years of
Inspiration



Locally, you can play on clay at Frick Park, in Pittsburgh's East End.

If you make the trek into the City, remember "Extra-Duty" tennis balls tend to pick up more clay because they have thicker felt, making them heavier and slower. Better to use tennis balls marked as "Regular Duty" or "Soft Court."

The most popular shoes for playing on clay have a herringbone pattern in the soles. Smaller grooves pick up less clay as you play.



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