

BRYAN BROTHERS AND SAM QUERREY HEADLINE FUNDRAISER

## Madisen's Match Serves Up All-Time Greats

WRITTEN BY BRIAN JOHNSON

**M**adisen's Match has matured into one of the most high-profile tennis fundraisers in south Florida.

This year, for their 10th Anniversary, Madisen's Match will feature Grand Slam doubles champions Bob and Mike Bryan as well as 2017 Wimbledon singles semifinalist Sam Querrey. The exhibitions will be played at the new Suncoast Credit Union Arena at Florida Southwestern State College on March 19, 2018.

"Our vision is to create a tennis festival for all of Southwest Florida with some of the biggest names in the sport," said Duane Chaney, a Raymond

James financial advisor who founded the fundraiser on behalf of his niece, Madisen, in 2009. "We want this to be the go-to event for tennis fans in the area. For those who can't make it over to the Miami Masters on the east coast, they can watch some of the best players in the world right here in Fort Myers."

"It's really been amazing," said Skip Leonard, the Chief Foundation Officer at Lee Health. "I've never seen a fundraiser with this type of trajectory, and we see this as just another starting point to grow it further to help Madisen and the thousands like her through her journey."

Funds go the Golisano's Children Hospital Cancer Center Fund of Southwest Florida. Go to [MadisensMatch.com](http://MadisensMatch.com)

to purchase tickets for the two-day tennis event.

Madisen's Match starts Sunday, March 18 with a "Grand Slam Gala & Auction" at Miromar Lakes Beach & Golf Club. Guests will have a chance to mix with current ATP players and former legends of the game as they enjoy a gourmet meal and bid for auction items, including box seats at the U.S. Open. The evening will be capped by a performance of the Bryan Brothers Band (the Californian twins are handy with guitars as well as tennis rackets). The signature auction item will be a 10-carat diamond tennis bracelet donated by Lily & Co Jewelry Gallery on Sanibel Island.

The tennis begins the following



**DEALMAKERS:** Skip Leonard and Duane Chaney worked together to bring some of the biggest stars in professional tennis to Fort Myers

morning with the Legends Tennis Camp. In groups of 6, club players from around the area will get the chance to hit with each of the celebrity pros and receive tennis tips ranging from stroke technique to doubles strategy.

Next is the Madisen's Match Pro-Am in which club players take a celebrity pro as a partner and play a series of matches together. The current roster of celebrity pros includes: the Bryan Brothers, Sam Querrey, Tom Gullikson, Mardy Fish, Robbie Ginepri, Luke Jensen, and Kathy Rinaldi.

The marquee match will be the 1st Annual Golisano Children's Hospital Tennis Classic at Suncoast Arena featuring the Bryan Brothers, Sam Querrey, Fish and Ginepri. It will be the first ever indoor tennis match of its kind in Southwest Florida. A special tennis court will be put down on the gymnasium floor of the stadium, which can accommodate up to 2,400 tennis fans. Chaney and Leonard hope a successful debut will set the table for future events such as a sanctioned Davis Cup or Fed Cup match.

The Tennis Classic will also be a return to tennis prominence for the City of Fort Myers. Not since Jimmy Connors played a key role in building the tennis facility at Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort has Fort Myers attracted such top tier tennis names. In the recent past, Naples has featured the Outback Champions Tour and the likes of John McEnroe and Jim Courier, but that event, held at Lely Resort, has since moved



**CENTRE COURT:** Sam Querrey defeated World No. 1 Andy Murray on the way to the Wimbledon semifinal *photo courtesy of FILA/Ray Giubilo*



**POWER GAME:** Sam Querrey hits a backhand during the 2017 U.S. Open, where he reached the quarterfinals

*photo courtesy of FILA/Ray Giubilo*



**TENNIS ROYALTY:** The Bryan Brothers are one of the best doubles teams of all-time



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out of state. The Tennis Classic now fills the void for SWFL tennis fans hungry for star power.

Chaney decided to start Madisen's Match after his niece was diagnosed with a brain tumor in 2009. One of his clients, former tour player Billy McGee, directed him to Naples resident and ATP Tour legend Tom Gullikson, who readily agreed to support the proposed cancer fundraiser. Tom won 10 ATP doubles titles with his twin brother, Tim, who went on coach all-time great Pete Sampras; Tim Gullikson died of a brain tumor in 1996.

The first event was held at West Bay in Estero, and included U.S. Open finalist and ESPN commentator Cliff Drysdale, French Open finalist Mikael Pernfors and French Open doubles champ Murphy Jensen. In 2011 Chaney moved the event to The Landings, where it grew into one of the most successful fundraisers in Fort Myers. Last year they raised over \$150,000, bringing Madisen's Match total from inception to \$650,000. The generosity of local residents and business sponsors have enabled them to purchase state of the art equipment such as chemotherapy, transport monitors, and games that are located in the Madisen's Match Activity Room at Golisano Children's Hospital.

The world of current and retired ATP stars is a small one, and word traveled quickly about the quality and integrity of Madisen's Match in sun-drenched Fort Myers. Chaney was introduced to major agent John Tobias, who in turn brokered the appearance of Mardy Fish last year.

The digital rolodex took another quantum leap forward when Chaney teamed up with Skip Leonard, who is connected with Team8's COO Kevin Callanan, among other prominent figures in the tennis management world. Leonard traveled to Seattle, Washington for the Match for Africa 4, an internationally-watched exhibition showcasing Federer and Microsoft's Bill Gates versus John Isner and musician Mike McCready. Leonard explored the possibility of bringing Federer, Juan Martin Del Potro and/or Grigor Dimitrov to Fort Myers, and got a behind-the-scenes look at how a major exhibition operates. He returned percolating with new ideas for Madisen's Match.

Leonard and Chaney batted around a number of scenarios for the 2018 Madisen's Match and finally came up with the winning shot: inviting the Bryan Brothers. After a series of discussions with Tobias and the brothers, they inked the deal, landing the greatest doubles team in ATP history for the event. Then it got better – Sam Querrey, the No.1-ranked American, agreed to come too. Querrey beat Andy Murray at Wimbledon in the quarterfinals and was very nearly in the championship round against Federer. The Bryan Brothers and Querrey will be stopping in Fort Myers after the Masters-level tournament in Indian Wells, CA and just before the Masters-level tournament in Key Biscayne, FL. ●