



## *Accompanying the champions around the world.*

### *An interview with Fritz Borchert, who devoted 30 years of photography to Squash.*

*By Lao Meng*



Eberhard Artur Borchert, German, better known as Fritz since 1965 when he moved to England (it is easier for English friends call him Fritz). Run a successful bakery/catering business with his English wife till retirement in 2005. Started photography as autodidact since the age of 12 and then dedicating his photography carrier to Squash for more then 30 years.

Now he spends most of his time following PSA and WISPA tournament, or managing his Web-site ([www.squashinternational.com](http://www.squashinternational.com)).

Squash Corner: You have been photographing squash tournaments around the world for more then 30 years. Can you tell us how did your "squash photographer" carrier start ?

Fritz: In the early 80ties a Squash-boom began in Germany, initiated by top-Professional players from the mother-land of Squash England, which spread later through out Central Europe. A founder member of the first Squash publication in Germany "The Squash player", I supplied tournaments reports first from England, then from further a field. Quickly I realised the lack of useable Squash pictures. The challenges, in absence of Glass-courts to produce them, were enormous and equally were the costs.





The great demand of good Squash Photographs fuelled by the new Squash-boom, resulting that I soon supplied up to seven Publication through Europe with reports and pictures, as well as working for my main Publication as International Editor of Squash Player (GER) ( later Squash time).

More recently, the emergence of Digital Cameras, brought fresh impetus (and renewed challenges) to my work in Squash photography. But sadly also, the new trend to Websites contributed greatly to the demise of the Squash magazines worldwide.

Squash Corner: Do you think that beside the professional commitment to your job there is some kind of special linkage which keeps you “magnetically” orbiting around squash for so long time ?

Fritz: After such long time of involvement with squash on one side and the fresh challenges to produce good pictures every time when attending a tournament, makes the job still interesting. I am very fortunate, that I am now well know and will often be invited by the tournament organizers and therefore can reduce my costs, as the payment for squash pictures is very small in most cases.

Squash Corner: Glass courts, especially thank to the small “shooting windows” on the front wall, finally opened squash to photography. But many professional and amateur photographers still feel that it is very difficult to make good squash photos. What are in your opinion the main challenges in photographing squash?



Fritz: Squash is a very fast Sport. As it is played indoors or under cover, the light levels



are often very varied, that means also, you need the best lenses (and Cameras) you can afford to cope with the fast moving ball and the given light.

It also demands constant concentration over a long period of time (matches last often over 70 and 80 minutes). The huge experience obtained over the years, is of course very beneficial.

Only practice makes perfect, try your local Squash Club first.

Squash Corner: Among all the champions you met and portrayed in your pictures, who do you think was the most "difficult" subject and who the most "photogenic" ? And could you suggest some names for a "Miss Squash" nomination ?

Fritz: I have had no difficulties with any of the previous champions. I often travel with them, stay at the same hotels, we see each other many times at the big contests, it's a bit like "joining" together the tournaments, so I have always had very good contact and relations to them.

My clear favorite for Miss Squash is without question the present Champion Nicol David. She makes very good photographs, constantly smiling, on and off the court, or at least keeping always a kind of nice and warm expression, even when strongly focused on the battle.



Squash Corner: Even if in the last couple of years it seems that squash is again increasing in popularity around the world, it is still quite neglected by media. Don't you think that "beautiful" squash photography could play a stronger role in promoting squash presence on



newspapers and magazines ?

Fritz: I certainly think so. Even if as a minor-sport it is not popular in the news on newspapers, the space of the magazines could more often take advantage of good Squash pictures.

Squash Corner: The bid for the inclusion of new sports in the 2016 Olympic Games will be decided this year. Good quality squash photography could probably help in some way to reach this historical goal. What kind of changes could the inclusion of Squash in the Olympic Games bring to squash professional photography ?



Fritz: Yes, good quality Squash photography could help to enhance the bid for Olympic status. The beauty of squash pictures could greatly support the written text and demonstrate what a great sport Squash is. As an Olympic Sport, Squash would receive more funding, greater recognition and more publicity and hence a greater need for professional squash pictures.

Squash Corner: You probably have not been to China yet. Is it possible to meet you at the next China open which will be held in Shanghai this autumn ?

Fritz: I have not yet been to China, but I really would like to visit China. This will be very difficult to achieve, as it is of course a question of costs. I have in the past been several times to Hong Kong, at that time sponsored via the organizers by Cathay Pacific. More recently this source has dried up. Hopefully in future more attention from media and institutions will widen the market of Squash photography.

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