

MONTE-CARLO SQUASH CLASSIC LE MAG'

ISSUE #5 - NOVEMBER 14, 2025



FOCUS

***ALVES & MICKAWY
MEET IN THE FINAL***

TOP STORY

ZEINA MICKAWY TO THE WIRE

THE EGYPTIAN BEATS TORRIE MALIK 14-12 IN THE FIFTH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MONTE-CARLO
SQUASH CLASSIC
2025



03 TOP STORY
Zeina Mickawy to the wire

07 THE OTHER SEMIFINAL
Alves powers through

09 FOCUS ON THE FINAL
We preview the Alves v Mickawy match

11 PIC OF THE DAY
Love and support

12 WELCOME IN MONACO
The people behind the scenes

14 SELF-PORTRAIT
On the other side of the mirror

What a battle between Zeina Mickawy and Torrie Malik, especially in a nail-biting fifth game tiebreak. The Egyptian edged through 14-12 and is back in the final in Monaco, eight years later...

ZEINA MICKAWY TO THE WIRE

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REMEMBER 2017

Aged 19, Mickawy had beaten three higher-ranked players – Coline Aumard, Nele Gilis and Rachael Grinham – before losing in the final to Donna Urquhart (photo below). “It’s crazy to find myself in the final again here, eight years later! I remember it very well, I had some huge battles that year. It’s my favourite tournament, Monaco is beautiful and the hospitality is great. And yes, I think you tend to play better when you’re feeling good somewhere...”



©Monte-Carlo Squash Racket

A ROUGH SPELL

Zeina had broken into the top 20 at 20 y.o., but things didn’t go as well after that. “Covid happened, then I’ve had chronic injuries and a loss of confidence. It’s not completely sorted, but I’m on the right track.”

A FINAL AMONG FRIENDS



©Fersenn Sherkan

“Melissa and I know each other very well, she’s come to Egypt many times and we often train together. She is very strong physically, so I’ll do my best to recover and I hope we’ll have a good final.” And guess what, Zeina and Mélissa had been sharing a room since the beginning of the week, but they parted ways on Thursday evening...

SURVIVOR

If you've been following the tournament from the start, you know that Zeina Mickawy saved seven match balls – in a row – in the rd of 16 against Madison Lyon. She added another one, at 12-11 for Torrie Malik in the fifth game. Reaching the final after being one point away from exiting in two different matches is unusual, to say the least!

A LEGEND AS A COACH

Those who follow Ramy Ashour on Instagram may have noticed that he posted a story after the match to congratulate Zeina, because the former three-time world champion is her coach. "One day, I was playing at his club, and we ended up hitting together. One thing led to another, he gave me more and more advice and became my coach. What more could I ask for? He's the best, he went through everything and knows squash inside out. I'm proud to be the first player he's coaching, and for now I'm the only one!"



©Fersen Sherkann



ALVES POWERS THROUGH

The #1 seed put an end to Millie Tomlinson's run in Monaco with a comprehensive straight game win. Mélissa Alves heads into the final in peak condition, aiming to reclaim the title she won in 2022.

[1] Mélissa ALVES  bt [7] Millie TOMLINSON : 3-0 (11-2, 11-4, 11-7)



“Last year I won three Copper events, and the girls nicknamed me the “Copper Queen.” In a career, it’s good not to just play the big tournaments where you often only get through one or two rounds. In the smaller ones, you have the opportunity to string a few wins, knowing that it’s not easy to be the favourite. I don’t want to remain the “Copper Queen” for the rest of my life though, although it means I can come back to Monaco (she laughs). The goal is to become “Bronze Queen”, “Silver Queen”, “Gold Queen”, etc. Even though I’m happy to be fresh for the final, both against Lauren in the quarters and Millie, it looked easy but I had to play with a lot of intensity. That said, reaching the final without losing a game sends a strong message to your opponent.” **Mélissa Alves**

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FOCUS ON THE FINAL

09

[1] **Mélissa ALVES** 🇫🇷 **vs** [2] **Zeina MICKAWY** 🇸🇩
🕒 **FRIDAY, 7PM**



➡ It's a second year in a row the final will feature two players who've reached that stage before. This situation has only occurred three times in 28 events in Monaco.

➡ Time spent on court this week: Mélissa Alves 80 minutes, Zeina Mickawy 136 minutes

➡ Record at the Monte-Carlo Squash Classic: Mélissa Alves 9 wins, 4 losses (69%), Zeina Mickawy, 8/2 (80%).

➡ Ratio in PSA finals: Alves 11 out of 15 (73%), Mickawy 3/8 (37%)

➡ Mélissa Alves has never been beaten when seeded No. 1 in a PSA tournament – 5 events, 5 titles.

[1] Mélissa ALVES 🇫🇷 vs [2] Zeina MICKAWY 🇪🇬
🕒 FRIDAY, 7PM



- ➡ Mickawy won their first meeting at the 2020 ToC (3-1), Alves took her revenge a few weeks later in Chicago (3-2) before winning again in five games at the 2022 World Championships (picture).
- ➡ Zeina Mickawy (ranked 27 in the world) will move up one or two spots depending on the result, while Mélissa Alves will remain at 19.
- ➡ Both players will compete in the Hong Kong Open (Platinum) in December, while Mélissa Alves also has a Silver tournament in the same country just before that.

PIC OF THE DAY

11

Melissa Alves' mother and her best friend are in Monaco, providing invaluable support for the Frenchwoman...

©Fersen Sherkann



We ask the Monte-Carlo Squash Racket Club team to tell us about themselves in a humorous way.

Nicknames? I have a few: Baldox and number 4, because that was my position on the team for a long time. We also call Natalia Moustikos.

Any anecdotes? During a European championship in Lithuania, our luggage got lost, and we had to borrow everything we needed on the first day... **Anne Baldoni**

One day, we got off court after winning a doubles match, and Arnaud Baldoni said to all of us, “well I won, I played well, didn’t I?”. We’ve been teasing him constantly about it since then... I also remember the time when Sébastien did an impression of a player from the club who had a mishap—I won’t say who and what it was



From left to right: Yves Tastet (club’s director), Sébastien Dassonville (vice-president), Anne Baldoni (president), Michel Ballerio, Camilia Zerbo, Loïc Ruchon, Natalia Berrin (treasurer), Christophe Ballerio.

Missing: Arnaud Baldoni (secretary general) - ©Fersen Sherkann



Anne Baldoni - ©Fersen Sherkann

but his performance was amazing and we were laughing ourselves to tears.

Highest temper? We are all pretty calm, but there's someone outside of the committee who can sometimes get a little nervous (he looks at Yves Tastet laughing)... **Loïc Ruchon**

Tasks? Everyone has one or several areas he's good at, Natalia is good with numbers and is in charge of accounting, Christophe

works in the legal sector, Loïc is our IT guy, my son Arnaud takes care of catering etc.

Projects? We have many, and we are lucky enough to be fully supported by the Government of Monaco. What we care the most about is the kids, they are the most important thing in a club. **Anne Baldoni**

What's truly enjoyable is that the committee is made of people who have the same vision and are not afraid of questioning themselves.

Yves Tastet

AUTOPOTRAIT

JÉRÔME ELHAÏK

Usually, I am the one asking the questions. But I got tricked by the tournament referees, Vincent Brygo and Joaquim Rissetto, who decided to put me through the other side of the mirror. On top of that, I had to write the article myself!

©Fersen Sherkann



Jérôme, can you tell us about yourself, what were you doing before Squash News?

I am 47 and I live in Evreux, Normandy. I had several lives before squash. I have a PhD in chemistry and I used to be a translator. I became a squash reporter by chance 10 years ago, thanks to Jacques Fontaine, president of the French Squash Federation at the time and who gave me the opportunity to work with them.

What are the biggest challenges in your job?

I would say none: sport is what I love the most and having a job that doesn't feel like one is priceless. There is some financial uncertainty when you are self-employed, that can be complicated at times but it's a choice.

Why squash?

I like the fact that this sport goes against the grain of today's world, where people tend to go for the easy option. In squash, if you don't work very hard you have no chance of succeeding. Besides it's a very friendly community, we pretty much all know each other.

Who are your favourite active players, male and female?

I'll leave the French players out of the equation, there are many I like both on and off court but since I mainly write about them I prefer

to remain neutral. Outside of France, I'd say Youssef Ibrahim, who I think is the most exciting to watch and Olivia Weaver for her attitude on court.

Have you ever tried to speak slower?

It's funny because when I have a mic in my hand, for example when commentating on matches, I can force myself to speak slowly. As a result, people around me have asked me why I don't make this effort on a daily basis...



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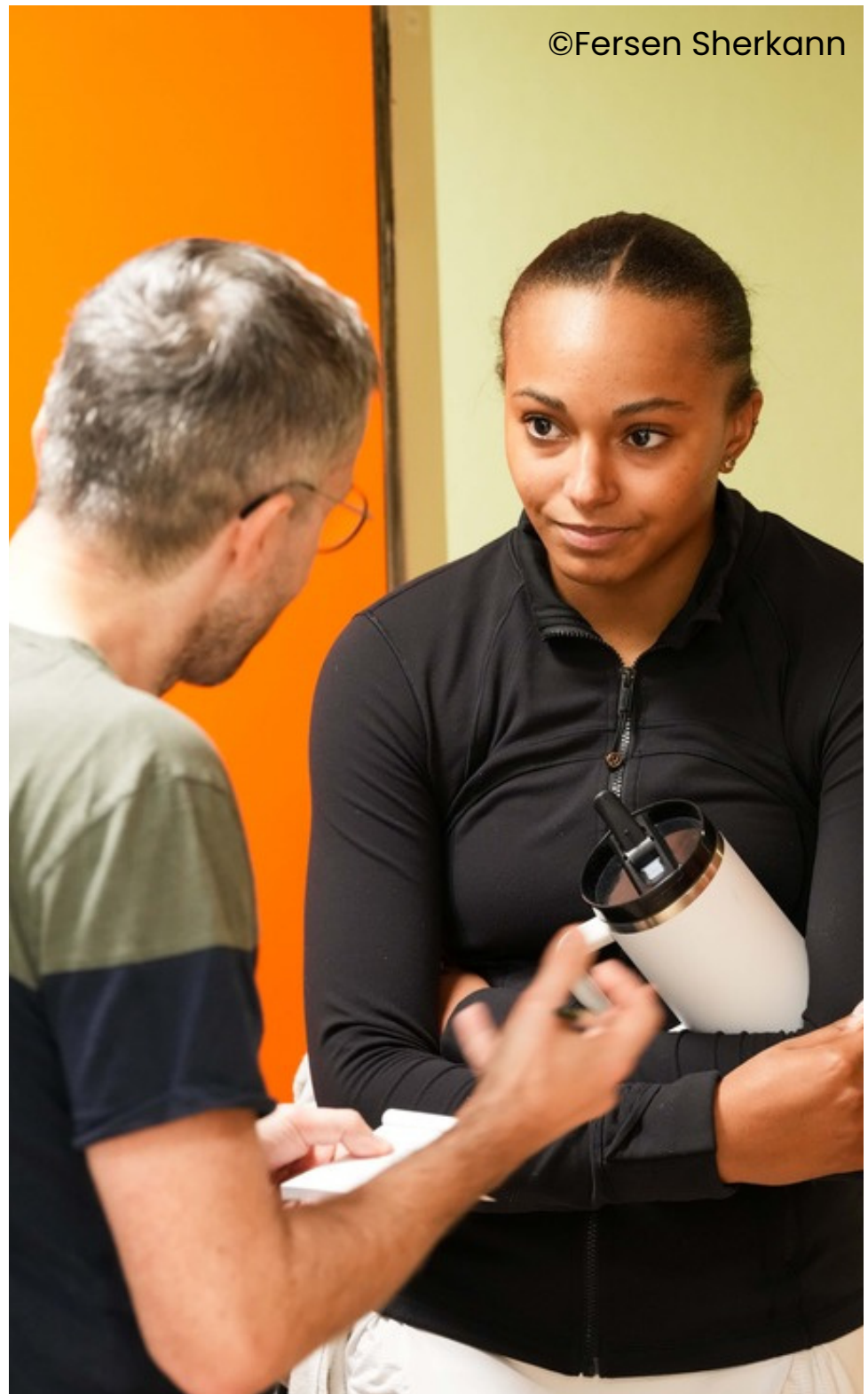
What's your perfect night?

It definitely involves sport: whether working on a squash tournament, playing a game of soccer tennis – which is my sport – or watching a football match in a bar with friends, or even in the stands if possible.

Which player would you have liked to interview?

I've had the privilege of interviewing squash legends such as Ali Farag, Grégory Gaultier, Raneem El Welily, Therry Lincou, etc. The one I'd like to ask

questions to is Ramy Ashour: I was lucky enough to watch him play live once at the 2013 World Team Championships in Mulhouse, and that was the only time I thought to myself, "this guy was born to play squash." He seems to have a rather unique way of thinking. Besides, he talks about as fast as I do, so I think we'd get along well!



MONTE CARLO CLASSIC 2025 (COPPER, \$32,500)

Round of 32 November, 10	Round of 16 November, 11	Quarterfinals November, 12	Semifinals November, 13	Final November, 14
Breanne FLYNN  11-9, 11-9, 12-10 [9/16] Nadia PFISTER  [9/16] Au Yeong WAI YHANN  11-9, 11-9, 13-11 [WC] Kara LINCOU 	[1] Mélissa ALVES  11-5, 11-4, 11-3 Breanne FLYNN  [WC] Kara LINCOU  11-7, 11-5, 11-6 [8] Lauren BALTAYAN  [7] Millie TOMLINSON  11-5, 9-11, 11-7, 11-6 Asia HARRIS  11-9, 11-9, 9-11, 14-16, 12-10 [9/16] Y. JADISHKUMAR  [9/16] Enora VILLARD  11-9, 11-9, 11-6 Sofia MATEOS 	[1] Mélissa ALVES  11-7, 11-7, 11-6 [8] Lauren BALTAYAN  [7] Millie TOMLINSON  9-11, 11-7, 11-5, 2-11, 11-4 [4] Alicia MEAD  [3] Torrie MALIK  11-3, 11-6, 11-8 [9/16] Kaitlyn WATTS  [9/16] Saskia BEINHARD  11-6, 7-11, 11-6, 11-2 [2] Zeina MICKAWY 	[1] Mélissa ALVES  11-2, 11-4, 11-7 [7] Millie TOMLINSON   [3] Torrie MALIK  12-10, 9-11, 9-11, 11-8, 14-12 [2] Zeina MICKAWY 	[1] Mélissa ALVES  7pm
Katerina TYCOVA  11-3, 11-8, 12-10 [9/16] Alison THOMSON  [9/16] Kaitlyn WATTS  11-5, 11-4, 11-5 Sarah CARDWELL 	[3] Torrie MALIK  11-9, 11-8, 11-9 Katerina TYCOVA  [9/16] Kaitlyn WATTS  8-11, 11-4, 11-1, 7-11, 11-9 [5] Emilia SOINI  [6] Jessica VAN DER WALT  14-12, 11-1, 11-6 [9/16] Saskia BEINHARD  [9/16] Madison LYON  9-11, 5-11, 11-7, 12-10, 11-4 [2] Zeina MICKAWY 			

L'ÉLITE MONDIALE DU SQUASH FÉMININ

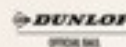
28^{ÈME} MONTE-CARLO SQUASH CLASSIC



10-14 NOVEMBRE 2025 - STADE LOUIS II



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