



GODS OF TENNIS Premieres Tuesdays, July 23-August 6 on PBS, PBS.org and the PBS app

Three-Part Series Revisits the Golden Age of Tennis When Superstars Billie Jean King, Bjorn Borg, Martina Navratilova, Arthur Ashe, Chris Evert and John McEnroe Changed the Game Forever

ARLINGTON, VA; June 20, 2024 – **GODS OF TENNIS** revisits the 1970s and '80s, a golden age of tennis when players including Billie Jean King, Arthur Ashe, Chris Evert, John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg and Martina Navratilova became worldwide superstars both on and off the court. Framed through the world-famous Wimbledon tournament and featuring archival footage from some of their greatest matches plus exclusive new interviews, the three-part series explores how these iconic players not only revolutionized the game of tennis but dared to challenge the establishment and fight for social change. Produced by BBC2 and Mindhouse, **GODS OF TENNIS** premieres on Tuesdays, July 23-August 6, 2024, 9:00 – 10:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS, [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS app](#).

Episode 1: “Billie Jean King and Arthur Ashe” (July 23)

They were unapologetic mavericks who revolutionized the once-tranquil game of tennis. “Sports are a microcosm of society,” says King. “It reflects what’s going on in the world.” And in the 1970s and '80s, the movement for gender and racial equality was on the move. It’s 1975 and two tennis greats — Billie Jean King and Arthur Ashe — aim to win Wimbledon titles and change the world in their own ways. Having dominated the women’s game for years, winning several Wimbledon Championships, King continues the fight for equal prize money and equal treatment for women in sport. Ashe, who had grown up in segregated Virginia, uses his platform to shine a light on racial inequality, particularly in South Africa, which is still under apartheid. In his thrilling final game against Jimmy Connors, Ashe solidifies his place in tennis history by becoming the first Black player to win the men’s singles title at Wimbledon.

Episode 2: “Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe” (July 30)

In the 1981 Wimbledon men’s final, crowds flock to see two tennis superstars face off. The rivalry between sex symbol Bjorn Borg and tabloid bad boy John McEnroe is the fiercest the men’s game has ever seen. Borg brings a new glamour to center court and is regularly mobbed by screaming fans. He quickly dominates the men’s game but is soon challenged by a young upstart from New York, John McEnroe. With little respect for the staid institution of Wimbledon, McEnroe clashes with the umpires and his explosive outbursts become legendary. Their showdowns in the Wimbledon finals of 1980 and 1981 are among the most memorable matches in men’s tennis, but their

sporting prowess brings intense media scrutiny. And while McEnroe's antics infuriate the press and the Wimbledon hierarchy, it's the calm and collected Borg who struggles to cope.

Episode 3: “Martina Navratilova and Chris Evert” (August 6)

It's 1990, and Martina Navratilova — Czech-born but representing the USA — has the chance to become the most decorated singles player in Wimbledon history. Her beloved rival, Chris Evert, is considered America's sweetheart, yet she is Navratilova's most formidable opponent, with a reputation for incredible mental toughness. This episode explores their intense rivalry, but at the heart of the story is Navratilova's search for acceptance as both a player and a gay woman, culminating in a drive to become the winningest player ever to grace Wimbledon's Centre Court.

GODS OF TENNIS will stream simultaneously with broadcast and be available on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the PBS app, available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO.

GODS OF TENNIS is produced by Mindhouse Productions, with BBC Studios handling global distribution. Arron Fellows and Nina Davies are the Executive Producers. Simon Draper is the Series Director.

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