

## Svetlana Kuznetsova, a prodigious decade with Academia Sánchez-Casal.

Russian tennis player Svetlana Kuznetsova returns to her hometown as the base for her training sessions, after her stay in Spain for the past 10 years, where she has formed and trained at the Academia Sánchez-Casal (AS-C) of Barcelona under the direction of Emilio Sánchez Vicario and Sergio Casal.

When she arrived at the age of 14, she wanted to become a professional tennis player. Coming from a family of athletes, her mother, Galina Tsareva, achieved six world sprint titles in track cycling, her brother Nikolai won the Silver Olympic medal in Atlanta '96 in team persecution and her father, Alexandr, is a renowned coach.

At that moment we had just begun the Academia Sánchez-Casal project and the first objective was for her to feel comfortable, improve her confidence without any short term demands and after two years at the Academy, at the age of 16, she became the number 1 junior player in the world.

At the age of 17 she began travelling with a team of Academy coaches, together with Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, with whom she won doubles' tournaments, learned discipline, strategy and how to become a professional player.

Her second great doubles partner was Martina Navratilova with whom she played during 2003 when they won 4 titles. It was during that time when Stefan Ortega would become her personal coach until the end of 2008, winning the US OPEN in 2004, 9 WTA Singles' tournaments, 13 doubles' tournaments, 3 Fed Cup with the Russian National team and one ITF tournament