



## Does Wimbledon increase consumer spending on tennis product? The NPD Group thinks not

**With Wimbledon 2008 just around the corner (the tournament starts on June 23), the media hype surrounding British hopefuls such as Andy Murray is cranking up a gear. The reality is that Andy Murray is our best and only hope of reaching the last 16, but he's had a very mixed bag of results so far this year. That won't stop media speculation and expectation though, as we all see him having much more of a chance of winning the title than former British number one, Tim Henman.**

The lack of top-flight professional tennis players in this country would most likely lead some to think that consumer spending in Britain on footwear and apparel strictly for playing tennis would be relatively small compared to other European countries. The strength in depth across Europe far outweighs Britain and shows no sign of slowing.

### Important market

On a global level, tennis is a very important market and NPD's Global Estimate for 2006\* reports that spending on tennis products amounts to over \$5.5billion (€4.1billion), with Europe, the US and Asia all contributing a similar amount to the total. This estimation includes tennis footwear used for

sport as well as tennis-inspired leisure footwear, tennis apparel used for sport as well as tennis inspired leisure apparel, plus equipment, including tennis racquets.

Within Europe, the UK represents one of the larger countries when it comes to overall spend on tennis-related products at over \$280 (€207million). This figure includes both footwear and apparel products manufactured for playing tennis and leisure usage, as well as equipment.

Utilising NPD's consumer panel services, Britain remains a key European market for money spent on footwear and apparel used solely for tennis. Among the big five European countries (Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain), just under €250million is spent on specific tennis use footwear and apparel. Great Britain is the second largest country when it comes to spend at around €65million (26%), just behind Germany (see Fig 1). In Britain the split between footwear and apparel is approximately 60/40, whilst in Germany a greater proportion is spent on apparel.

### Sales surge

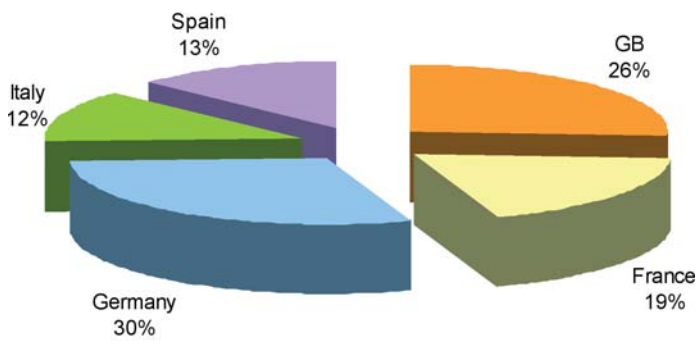
Statistics show a surge in tennis sales in the summer months, but is this generated by Wimbledon? The trends would







**Fig 1: Sports Footwear & Apparel Used For Tennis  
Percent of Value Spend Per Country**



suggest not, as most buying takes place in the early part of the summer prior to the tournament. Certainly more people are made aware of tennis because of Wimbledon, but club members will have already been playing throughout the year, with more players dusting off the racquet cobwebs as the warmer weather arrives in April and May.

Furthermore, schools only introduce tennis into the curriculum in the terms either side of the summer holiday, while recreational players utilising publicly available courts will also be turning out as the warmer weather arrives. All this happens before Wimbledon, as does the purchasing of tennis-related product.

Wimbledon still plays an important role in promoting the game and getting youngsters interested in the sport in Great Britain. We just need a few more top-ranking players to help attract more young people to the sport at an early age. ↗

\*NPD Global Estimate provides a market size estimate globally, by continent, by key country, by sport and by footwear/apparel/equipment. The 2007 report will be available in June 2008. For further information on this, or the NPD consumer panel service, contact a member of the NPD Group sports team on 01932 355580.

