# Joao Lucas Reis da Silva: our first active gay tennis player



Brazilian tennis player Joao Lucas Reis da Silva has publicly identified as gay, becoming the first active professional male tennis player to come out. The announcement followed a heartfelt birthday post on Instagram dedicated to his boyfriend, Guilherme Sampaio Ricardo, which gained considerable traction online.

The 24-year-old athlete, who achieved a career-high ranking of 204th in November 2023, clarified to BBC Sport that his coming out was not an unexpected revelation for those close to him. "This wasn't the time I came out. I came out before that. About five years ago I told my parents, friends, coaches and players who I train with," Reis da Silva explained. He acknowledged the significance of the post to a wider audience, stating, "But I understand a lot of people who don't know me didn't know that. So the post was a big thing and created a big buzz."

Despite his decision to share his personal life with the public, Reis da Silva indicated that becoming a trailblazer was not his intent. He reflected, "I didn't know I was the first [active player to come out publicly]. It wasn't my goal to do that, or to inspire people. I'm not an activist, I'm just a tennis player who is gay. But if more men's players came out as a result, that would be great."

Historically, tennis has presented an intriguing dynamic regarding sexual orientation. The sport has seen many female players, both past and present, openly identify as gay. Icons such as Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova have not only been pioneers in the sport but have also championed LGBT rights, serving as beacons for younger generations. Reis da Silva remarked on this distinction, saying, "The gay women's players are used to having someone before them - like Billie Jean and Martina. They have these people who are out and I think it means it is easier for them to talk about their own sexuality."

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%C3%A3o_Lucas_Reis_da_Silva> - Corroborates Joao Lucas Reis da Silva's personal life, career, and his public identification as gay.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%C3%A3o_Lucas_Reis_da_Silva> - Provides details on his career-high ATP singles and doubles rankings and his tournament victories.
* <https://www.coretennis.net/tennis-player/joao-lucas-reis-da-silva/89713/ranking.html> - Supports his current and historical ATP rankings, including his season highs and lows.
* <https://www.tennisexplorer.com/player/reis-da-silva/> - Confirms his current and highest ATP singles and doubles rankings, as well as his playing style and tournament results.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%C3%A3o_Lucas_Reis_da_Silva> - Details his early life, training, and the impact of his coming out on his relationships and career.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billie_Jean_King> - Provides context on Billie Jean King's role as a pioneer for LGBT rights in tennis.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martina_Navratilova> - Supports the historical context of female tennis players who have openly identified as gay and championed LGBT rights.
* <https://www.coretennis.net/tennis-player/joao-lucas-reis-da-silva/89713/ranking.html> - Corroborates his participation in various tournaments and his performance over the years.