



Real Tennis Racket By Grays Of Cambridge

Sold



REF: 30596

Height: 67 cm (26.4")

Width: 19 cm (7.5")

Depth: 3 cm (1.2")

## Description

Vintage Grays Real Tennis Racket.

A good real tennis racket with original black stringing made by Grays of Cambridge. The ash frame in good condition with taped head and the characteristic offset or tilt-top shape. Racket decal 'Grays Cambridge, Made in England, Frame Only Made By Grays of Cambridge'.

H.J. Gray and Sons was founded in Cambridge by world rackets champion H.J. Gray in 1855 and soon built a reputation supplying rackets to University players such as Ranjitsinjhi and the future King Edward VII. Initially they were manufactures of Rackets for racquets, real tennis and lawn tennis. In 1929 they were listed as manufacturers of Lawn Tennis Rackets, Badminton Rackets, Racquet Rackets, Squash Rackets, and all Goods connected with Sports and Games. They were also distributors of the Hazell's 'Streamline' racket and later bought them out, they also merged with the world-renowned cricket bat business of L.J. Nicolls to create Gray-Nicolls.

'Real Tennis' is the original and oldest of all the racket sports and dates back many hundreds of years, and is sometimes called "the sport of kings" or Royal Tennis. The game has evolved from its early years and by the early part of the 19th Century its popularity was so that there were many hundreds of courts throughout Europe, but by the end of the 19th century with the introduction of 'Lawn Tennis' its popularity waned and many of the courts fell into disuse.

The real tennis racket is designed with a lop-sided head to help strike the ball when it is close to the corners of the court or the floor. The handles are longer in 'Real Tennis' than in 'Lawn Tennis' and have very tight strings to cope with the heavy cloth balls. Grays of Cambridge (UK) and Harrow Sports (USA) are the only two companies in the world still hand-crafting these racquets. The 'Real Tennis' court is asymmetrical with high walls and a ceiling. It is enclosed by walls on all four sides, three of which have sloping roofs, known as 'penthouses', various openings in the walls 'galleries' (from which spectators may view the game) and a main wall which has a kink in it (tambour).