PADEL WORLD SUMMIT

ONE YEAR ON

THE START-UP STORIES

SPORTAI

Insights from Barcelona

An independent publication by Sweetspot Communications

SWEETSPOT COMMUNICATIONS

BACKGROUND

The Padel World Summit 2025 in Barcelona saw a new take on the start-up zone following the inaugural event in Malaga.

Featuring just 20 selected companies, over the course of the three days, they were the focal point of the Innovation Arena.

Each was given 15 minutes to present their business and its potential game-changing product, that would deliver real impact to padel as it grows across the globe.

But what happened next?

The One Year On project, from Sweetspot Communications, is an opportunity for those companies to tell their story in their own words of the past 12 months – ahead of the third Padel World Summit, again in Barcelona.



THE START UP STORY

BY SPORTAI CEO
LAUREN PEDERSEN

SportAI uses computer vision and machine learning to deliver objective technique and tactical analysis, giving players, coaches, facilities, federation, retailers and gear brands instant data-driven insights worldwide.

What's changed since last year is the scale at which that mission is being delivered - and the calibre of people now backing it.



THE SUMMIT 2025

When SportAI last walked the floor of the Padel World Summit in 2025, the Oslo-based sports-tech company was in its infancy. Twelve months later, the picture looks strikingly different.



PARTNERSHIPS

Since the 2025 Summit, SportAI has been building out its partner ecosystem at pace. Key partnerships now include MATCHi - the world's fastest-growing racket sports network with over 1 million users, 3,000 venues, and 17,000 courts across 30 countries - as well as Save My Play, a leading US court-mounted camera system deployed across thousands of racket sports facilities.

MATCHi
PLAY MORE

SPORTAI | Save My Play

SWEETSPOT COMMUNICATIONS

FUNDING

$5.7M

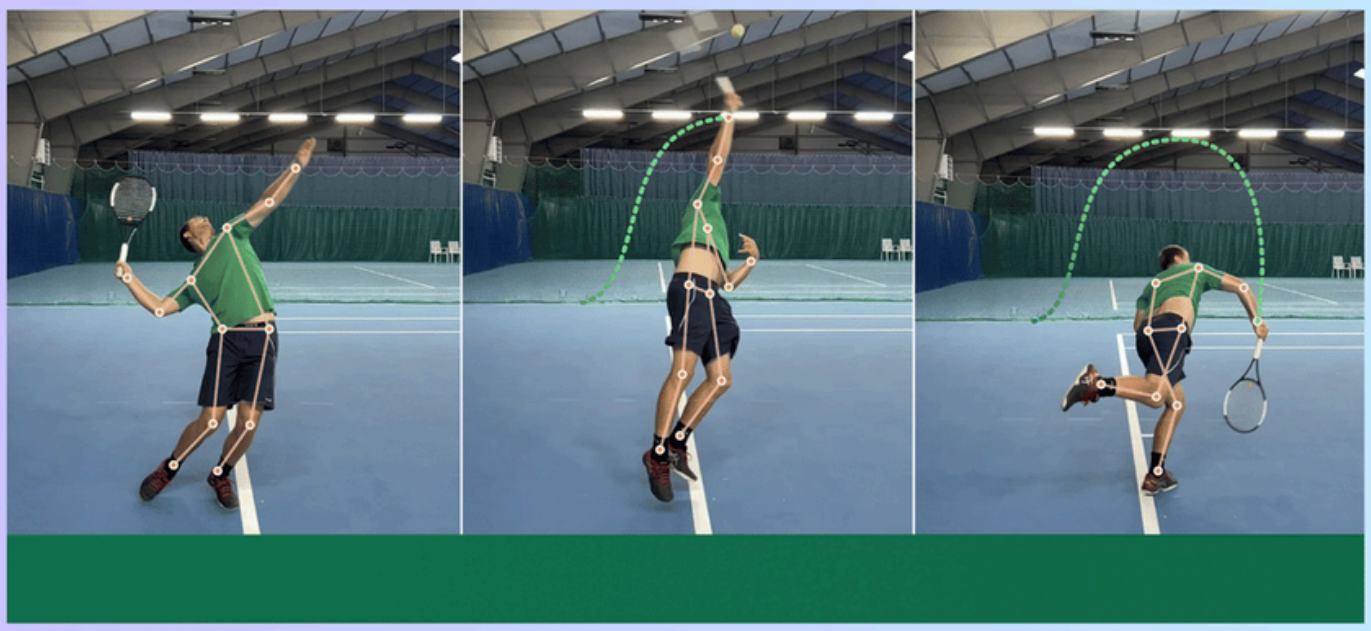
RAISED

The headline from the past 12 months is capital. In November 2025, SportAI closed an oversubscribed $3M funding round with participation from Norwegian investment fund Altitude Capital and global tennis star Casper Ruud (below).



The round also brought in Endre Holen - the former Head of McKinsey's Global Tech & Media sector, invested in the round and joined SportAI as Chairman - bringing seven years of board experience at Hudl, the leading sports video analysis platform used by over 315,000 teams globally. Additional participants included US professional soccer player Alejandro Bedoya and TRK Group Founder Trond Riiber Knudsen. The company has now raised $5.7M to date.

RECOGNITION



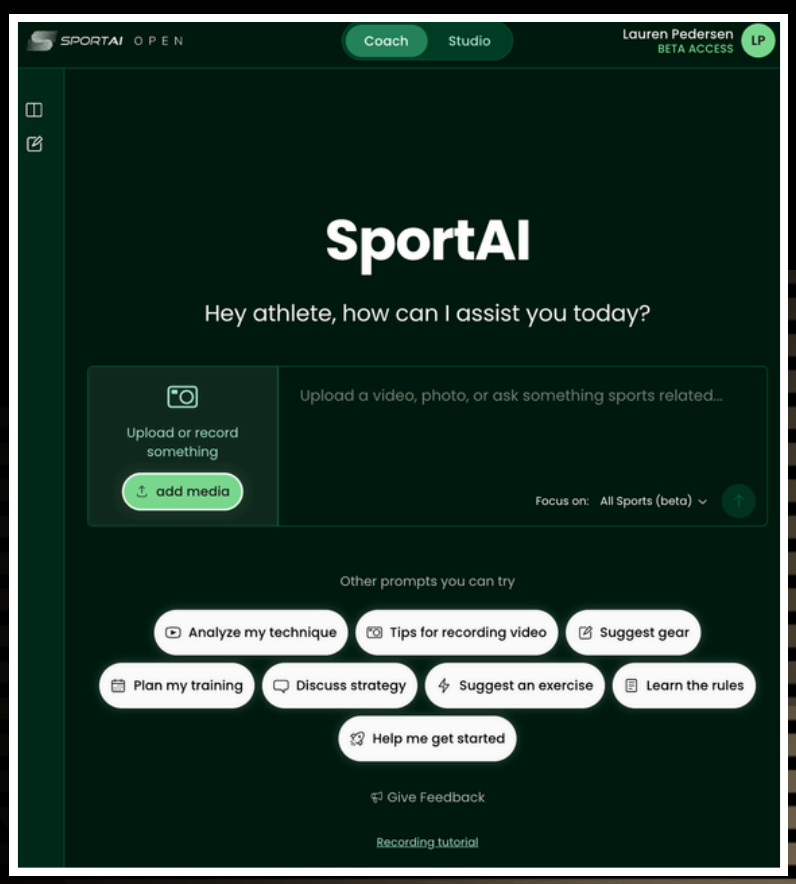
TIME MAGAZINE - BEST INVENTIONS 2025

Perhaps the most visible signal of SportAI's arrival came in autumn 2025. SportAI earned a Special Mention on TIME's list of Best Inventions of 2025, recognised for using computer vision, biomechanical analysis, and machine learning to help athletes analyse technique - improving coaching, player development and equipment recommendations. For a two-year-old company, being named alongside the world's most innovative technology products is a statement of intent.

THE FUTURE

EXPANDING BEYOND PADEL

While padel remains central to SportAI's story - and a key reason for being in Barcelona - the company has deliberately expanded its sport coverage. The technology now covers tennis, padel and pickleball.



SPORTAI OPEN - BETA

Beyond the B2B platform, SportAI has also launched SportAI Open in beta - a direct-to-consumer product bringing elite-level technique analysis straight to individual coaches and athletes' smartphones.

WHAT'S NEXT

The new funding is earmarked for expanding SportAI's international rollout and strengthening technical development. SportAI is positioning itself as the technology layer that democratises professional-grade analysis accessible to players, coaches, facilities and the wider industry.

CONTACT

https://sportai.com/

https://sweetspotcommunications.co.uk

Email: lee@sweetspotcommunications.co.uk

Sweetspot Communications has been at the forefront of the padel media industry since 2023. It benefits from 27 years of sports communications experience by founder Lee McLaughlan, a CIPR Accredited PR Practitioner.

The company offers the sector a refreshing and personal approach to padel communications and has worked with numerous padel clients across the world.

Sweetspot Communications is a member of the well-respected International Padel Media Association and Padel Relations.

The One Year On project is independent of the Padel World Summit.
Images: Sweetspot Communications / Padel World Summit / SportAI