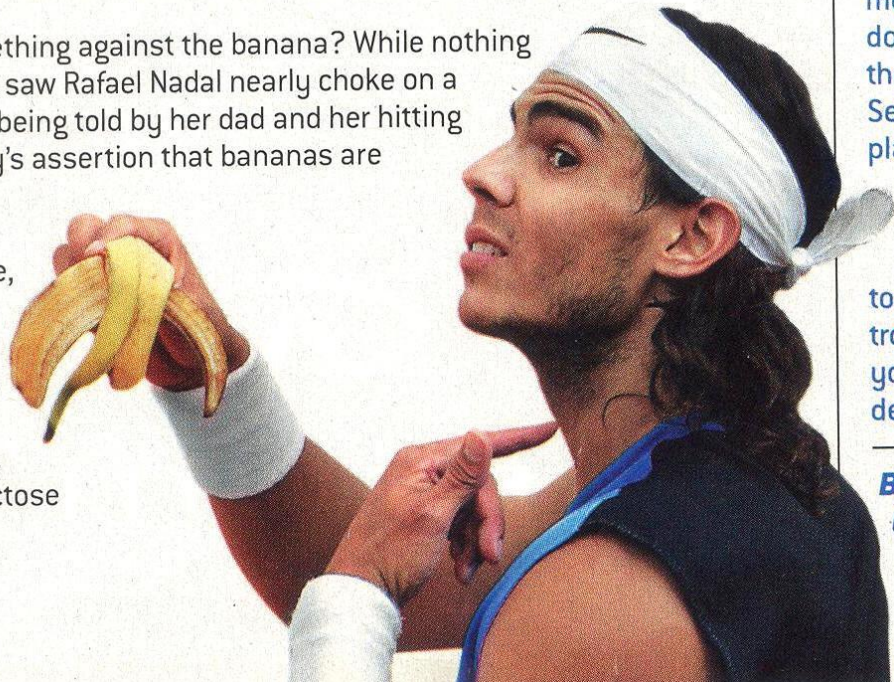


BANANA BASHING

Does tennis have something against the banana? While nothing happened in 2007 to tarnish its reputation, the year before saw Rafael Nadal nearly choke on a piece of the fruit, while Maria Sharapova drew criticism for being told by her dad and her hitting partner when to eat one. Now this year comes Andy Murray's assertion that bananas are "pathetic" and that downing one during changeovers does nothing for a player's energy. Unfortunately for Chiquita lovers, the Scot isn't entirely wrong, according to Page Love, a nutritionist and consultant to the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour. "Any straight fruit product does take a little longer to digest because of the fructose content," Love says. "If a player is determined to use whole or real food, I would suggest a bite of banana with a salty, easy-to-digest grain, like a pretzel stick, so he or she wouldn't have straight fructose going into their system." That peels away that myth.—J.L.



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