

# The Need for Speed

A classic tennis brand comes back to the future

BY RICHARD PAGLIARO

Remember the days when Gustavo Kuerten romped through Roland Garros with gangly grace, wearing Diadora clothes and shoes while exuding charisma the way most players shed sweat? Guga cultivated one of the coolest looks of his era. He's in the Hall of Fame now, but the brand he helped make famous is back with a new line of tennis shoes.

The red, black and white Diadora Speed Pro Wi 5 IV AG is a relatively light shoe built for the agile player who places a premium on maneuverability and fast feel on court. Diadora's double-action midsole is designed to both soften shock on impact and provide increased flexibility when players push off. A unique "uni-tongue" design—the tongue is fully attached to shoe—padded heel and off-set lacing system are built for a secure fit to prevent the feet from floating in the shoe during

play. The OrthoLite insole is removable; Diadora says its anti-bacterial treatment of the lining minimizes foot odor. The outsole features deep treads providing riveting traction, with reinforced rubber strengthening high-stress areas. An abrasion-resistant toe cap is added to safeguard toe draggers.

"I've never worn a tennis shoe with this type of design and was worried that the fit might be impacted negatively," one 4.0 male weartester said in reference to the snug, stable fit created by the uni-tongue design. "But they were never loose and molded to my feet comfortably."

Available domestically at Holabird Sports, the Speed AG may rouse your desire for a running rally, with its "Air Mesh" upper contributing to the shoe's light weight and breathability. Weartesters reported no break-in time and wore the shoes on court right out of the box. The Speed Pro AG won't make you run faster, but it may well make your feet feel quicker on court. "It's a very light shoe, with ample ventilation," one male weartester said. "You can only blame yourself if you're too slow while wearing these kicks."

\$137.50; [holabirdsports.com](http://holabirdsports.com)

