



Līga Dekmeijere



Written by [Krista White](#) in [Pro Tennis](#)

Age: 30

Hometown: Riga, Latvia

Top rankings for Doubles: 54

Most treasured accomplishments: 3rd Round French Open in Doubles, Viña Del Mar WTA winner, Finalist at Charleston WTA.

Bucket list: Triathlon

Krista White: When did you decide to become a professional tennis player?

Līga Dekmeijere: I never did. I was raised to be a professional athlete. My dad introduced me to tennis at the age of 6. From the first time on court with my dad, tennis became a daily routine.

KW: What was one of the first signs of success for you?

LD: My first sign of success came at age 12. But this came after moving to Germany and training hard for several years away from Latvia. In Germany, I only had time for tennis and school. Having left my country outside of the top 10 for my age, I returned to Latvia to win the National Championship without dropping more than 3 games in a set.

KW: What's are some keys to achieving success in professional tennis?

LD: I think the hard work and strict disciple required for tennis success can shape a very determined attitude. From a young age, I knew what discipline and responsibility was. And one of the big differences between me and the other kids that I knew was that I put a lot more effort and hours into training than they did.

KW: How important has your family been in your success?

LD: I had people around me that believed in me. While hard work gives you an edge, it is not everything. I had my family supporting me from the very beginning. My family was not rich, but we were goal-minded. If my dad had not been as dedicated to my success as he was, I would have never gone pro.

KW: What was it like as a junior player for you?

LD: We had a minivan and a little bit of cash for gas and some food. Traveling to tournaments as a junior was not like it is as a professional. But it taught me survival skills. A lot of times we slept in the car, dressing and showering in gymnasiums or camp rest stops. Rarely did we stay in a hotel.

KW: What is the most important thing you have learned from playing on the professional tour?

LD: The most important thing that I have learned from playing tennis: fair play and respect. I see cheating in a match as stealing. As a pro, every point counts, every point could mean the match. Take unfair advantage of your opponent in order to win a match and you've cheated them of money they could've earned that was really theirs. By playing fair, you gain people's respect and you shape integrity in yourself. And that's very important in life and becoming a better person.