

Why is Novak Djokovic unbeatable in Australian Open Finals?

Story:

Novak Djokovic, the 32-year-old Serbian, won his record-extending eighth Australian Open title and 17th Grand Slam crown on Sunday February 2nd in Melbourne. He has never lost an Australian Open Final, so I decided to look why he is so dominant. There was one constant stat where he always performed better than his opponent it was his "Second Serve Win %" that was consistently superior. The second serve is one of the fundamentals of the game of tennis that separates the champions from club players. It can be the greatest asset or the most damaging liability to all who play the game with serious intent. There is an old truism that you are only as good as your second serve, that your second serve is the cornerstone of your confidence. Typically, the tennis second serve is hit when a player misses the first serve, leaving them one chance to hit a serve before a double fault is given. So to avoid a double fault the player serves a kick serve which is slower and safer thus giving the control of the game to the opponent and suddenly now it is the opponent's point to lose.

On the other hand, people have said that Djokovic's second serve doesn't look like a second serve. It is not exactly a first serve and certainly not a typical second serve, it in fact is a hybrid of the two. According to various coach's analysis Djokovic's second serve is in fact a slice serve. Djokovic overcame this disadvantage and won more than 50% of his second serves in all the AO finals. Also throughout the 2020 tournament Djokovic has had better second serve win % than all his opponents which served as a key factor in defending his title (this conclusion is backed by data from Infosys).

Design Rationale:

To show this story I chose to go with the simple column graph. The column graph clearly shows the comparison between the second serve win % of Novak Djokovic vs his opponents over all the finals he has played at the Australian Open. The viewer can easily see that Djokovic's second serve win % is far better than his opponents.

I have chosen the background of my static visualization to be a picture of Djokovic so that even if the viewer does not follow tennis religiously, he/she can see his face and mentally picture who the statistics are talking about. The Australian Open logo on the top-left corner emphasizes that this story is limited to the AO tournament. Since the background image is dark the font color is kept white so it stands out and is easy to read. Since the color blue is usually associated with winners I have chosen to represent Djokovic's second serve win % with blue color. His opponent's second serve win % is represented using Orange as it complements blue nicely. The legend on the left clearly shows the color associated with a player. Numerical win % is also displayed onto each bar so as to make it more readable. The text below AO logo "NO.1 VAK" tries to tell viewers that Djokovic currently holds the world no 1 rank in men's single category. The text on the bottom helps laymen understand why winning second serve is important.

Conclusion:

I think my visualization clearly explains the story "Why is Novak Djokovic unbeatable in Australian Open Finals?" because it shows a trend which holds true in all the Finals Djokovic has reached and won.