# **WOMEN’S DOUBLES + MIXED DOUBLES**

In my final heading, I chose to merge my subheadings of my favorite women’s doubles and mixed doubles team into one heading together. When I showcased my players’ main headings on how their playing styles helped them reach multiple finals without dropping a set, some of those tournaments were when those players didn’t get pushed into a tiebreak beyond the 7-5 set scoreline. Serena, Djokovic, Nadal, and Sharapova soared to that occasion umpteen times. I was interested to find out if this ability was possible in either women’s doubles, mixed doubles, or both. Given how Serena, Djokovic, Nadal, and Sharapova were the only four players to do it, I knew it was going to be difficult. If only four singles players could do it, the possibility of doubles teams being able to do it was slim to none. But based on how it turned out, we did have three teams [two women’s, one mixed] accomplish this standard beautifully!

**CASEY DELLACQUA (AUSTRALIA)/SLAVA SHVEDOVA (KAZAKHSTAN)**

**2015 FRENCH OPEN [RUNNERS-UP] RESULT**

1. Chan Chin-Wei (CHINESE TAIPEI)/Lauren Davis (USA) 6-1 6-2
2. Alizé Cornet (FRANCE)/Madga Linette (POLAND) 6-2 6-1
3. Caroline Garcia (FRANCE)/Katarina Srebotnik (SLOVENIA) 6-1 6-1
4. Michaëlla Krajicek (NETHERLANDS)/Barbora Strýcová (CZECH REPUBLIC) 6-3 7-5
5. Katya Makarova (RUSSIA)/Elena Vesnina (RUSSIA) 6-3 6-2
6. Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA)/Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC) 3-6 6-4 6-2

Dellacqua and Shvedova formed a unique partnership with their playing styles. Dellacqua is a baseline player. She can hit her lefty forehand down-the-line and her backhand directly crosscourt. She can also put spin and angles on her groundstrokes. Meanwhile, Shvedova has efficient groundstrokes and proficiency at the net. The Australian-Kazakh duo played their best tennis in their semifinal match against Makarova and Vesnina. Makarova and Vesnina were the favorites to take home the title. But experience helped Dellacqua and Shvedova win this match in two sets. Shvedova won two Grand Slam titles with King in 2010 at Wimbledon and the US Open. When Shvedova and King won Wimbledon, they faced Vesnina and Zvonareva. Taking that final into account, Shvedova knew exactly what to expect from Vesnina. As a result, Dellacqua and Shvedova earned the lone break of the first set in the eighth game and two breaks in the fifth and seventh games of the second set. As it turns out, Serena also faced this same exact scenario when she won the 2017 Australian Open without dropping a set, especially in her quarterfinal match against Konta. Since Konta is an aggressive baseliner with flat, quick, angled, sharp, powerful groundstrokes, it was easy to believe that she would push Serena to three sets. But since Konta is someone that Venus faced before, Serena reached out to Venus to get tips on what to expect in the match. Luckily, it worked out and Serena got the job done in straight sets.

**Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA)/Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC)**

**2016 MIAMI OPEN [CHAMPIONS] RESULT**

1. Sloane Stephens (USA)/Madison Keys (USA) 6-4 6-2
2. Daria Kasatkina (RUSSIA)/Elena Vesnina (RUSSIA) 6-3 6-2
3. Andrea Hlaváčková (CZECH REPUBLIC)/Lucie Hradecká (CZECH REPUBLIC) 7-5 6-3
4. Xu Yifan (CHINA)/Zheng Saisai (CHINA) 6-2 6-1
5. Tímea Babos (HUNGARY)/Slava Shvedova (KAZAKHSTAN) 6-3 6-4

Mattek-Sands and Šafářová formed a superb partnership. Mattek-Sands plays a versatile, all-court style with speed, determination, skill, and agility. Meanwhile, Šafářová plays left-handed with a high topspin forehand. This helped them inflict the ongoing drought at the 2016 Miami Open. An ongoing drought means that since a specific edition of a tournament, neither a singles player nor doubles team has been able to successfully reach a final without dropping a set. I first witnessed this when Dellacqua and Shvedova accomplished the feat at the 2015 French Open. I initially only believed that it was common with singles players. But, once Mattek-Sands and Šafářová followed suit at the 2016 Miami Open, I eventually realized that it was popular in doubles too.

**GABY DABROWSKI (CANADA)/ROHAN BOPANNA (INDIA)**

**2017 FRENCH OPEN [CHAMPIONS] RESULT**

1. Jessica Moore (AUSTRALIA)/Matt Reid (AUSTRALIA) 6-0 6-1
2. Chloé Paquet (FRANCE)/Benoît Paire (FRANCE) 6-3 6-2
3. Sania Mirza (INDIA)/Ivan Dodig (CROATIA) 6-3 6-4
4. Andrea Hlaváčková (CZECH REPUBLIC)/Édouard Roger-Vasselin (FRANCE) 7-5 6-3
5. Anna-Lena Grönefeld (GERMANY)/Robert Farah (COLOMBIA) 2-6 6-2 11-9

Dabrowski is an all-court player with touch shots. Meanwhile, Bopanna has a serve-oriented game. He uses his serve to set up points. He is also proficient at the net with his sharp reflexes. The mixed doubles edition of the 2017 French Open was my favorite. Even though I was born and raised in the US, Canada and India are two countries that each have their own equal, symmetrical places in my heart. Since my birthday is on Canada’s national holiday, Canada Day, I always root for Canadian athletes. Even though I wasn’t familiar with Indian athletes as much as I was with the American and Canadian folks, I still decided to support Dabrowski and Bopanna, because India is the country where my family is from. Dabrowski and Bopanna yielded 21 games in four matches. Grönefeld and Farah broke in the third and seventh games of the first set. When Grönefeld and Farah broke in the third game of the second set, the German-Colombian duo were on their way to winning their first Grand Slam title in two sets. But Dabrowski and Bopanna broke in the fourth, sixth, and eighth games. Then, the Canadian Indian duo took home the title in a match tiebreak. Seeing two women’s and one mixed doubles team reach two Grand Slam finals on two different surfaces without dropping a set beyond the 7-5 set scoreline is a vivid success in tennis history. It’ll be hard for me to pick a favorite between those two tournaments. But I’ll call it a tie!