  

When “consistency” comes to mind, what occurs to me? Do I think of myself doing Zumba seven days a week on my living room floor? Or could it be when I get my office work done every single day? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, consistency is the quality of staying the same, even at different times. I think that definition is a smooth fit in the sport of tennis.

In tennis, the Grand Slam tournaments are four important yearly events. They offer ranking points, strength, size of field, and “best of” sets. The women play best of three sets, while the men play best of five. The Australian Open is in mid-January, the French Open in late May into early June, Wimbledon in June-July, and the US Open from August–September. Each of these four Grand Slams are played over a two-week period. The Australian and United States Opens are played on hard courts, French Open on clay, and Wimbledon on grass. Outside of the Grand Slams are the ATP [Association of Tennis Professionals] and WTA [Women's Tennis Association] tours. The ATPis the main body for the men’s professional tennis tour. The WTA is the main body of women’s professional tennis. My favorite matches are from the Grand Slams and other tournaments on the ATP/WTA tours. I will either analyze all the matches from a player’s run in a tournament, or I will focus on certain matches from specific rounds.

# **2010 WIMBLEDON – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

23-time Grand Slam Champion Serena Williams (USA) is a baseline player. Her game is built around taking direct control of rallies with her powerful, stable serve, return of serve, and forceful groundstrokes from both her forehand and backhand. Her forehand and double-handed backhand are the most powerful shots in the women’s game. Her serve is the greatest in women’s tennis history, because she constantly projects great pace and placement with it. Her serve is also lethal because of her ability to constantly place powerful shots with great accuracy. She is a strong volleyer, as she can finish points off at the net. She possesses a powerful overhead and clever touch at the net. Many people think that she is only an offensive player. But she is also strong in defense. This helped her win the title without dropping a set:

1. Michelle Larcher de Brito (PORTUGAL): 6-0 6-4
   1. 15 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 47 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors
2. Anna Chakvetadze (RUSSIA): 6-0 6-1
   1. Nine aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 27 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors
3. Dominika Cibulková (SLOVAKIA): 6-0 7-5
   1. 19 aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 38 winners
   4. Nine unforced errors
4. Maria Sharapova (RUSSIA): 7-6[11-9] 6-4
   1. 19 aces
   2. Five double faults
   3. 31 winners
   4. 17 unforced errors
5. Na Li (CHINA): 7-5 6-3
   1. 11 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 21 winners
   4. Six unforced errors
6. Petra Kvitová (CZECH REPUBLIC): 7-6[7-5] 6-2
   1. Seven aces
   2. Three double faults
   3. 19 winners
   4. 14 unforced errors
7. Vera Zvonareva (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-2
   1. Nine aces
   2. Three double faults
   3. 29 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors

Larcher de Brito is a baseline player with strong groundstrokes and movement. In this match, Serena received serve. Serene broke in the first, third, and fifth games. This was followed by another break in the first game of the second set.

Chakvetadze is a baseline player, whose game is defense. Her strengths are speed, court coverage, shot selection, anticipation, and footwork. Her forehand and backhand are hit with depth. But she can also hit her backhand with slice. Her fitness allows her to extend rallies until she creates an opportunity to hit a winner. Her best groundstroke shots are her forehand and backhand, both down the line. But her weaknesses are confidence and nerves. Chakvetadze held only once in the sixth game of the second set. Then, Serena successfully served out the match in the seventh game.

Cibulková forms her game with enthusiasm and pace between points. She has an aggressive playing style with speed and power. Her speed lets her produce groundstrokes with her forehand and shots with her backhand. Her aggressive shots produce winners in long rallies. She can embark on long rallies with her drop shots. Her strength creates quickness to reach and return shots. The Slovakian pushed Serena hard. But she was unable to create any break points in the match. In the first set, Serena whitewashed Cibulková when she broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first 11 games. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Cibulková. Cibulková was serving to force a second-set tiebreak **AND** stay in the match. In the 12th game, Cibulková won her first service point before Serena won the next two points. Cibulková won her next two service points and was one point away from forcing a second-set tiebreak. But instead of being forced to a second-set tiebreak, Serena won the last three points of the match with two return winners and a forehand error from Cibulková.

Sharapova is an aggressive baseline player with power, depth, and angles on her shots. She has good speed around the court with her height. Her greatest asset is her mental toughness and competitive spirit. But her weakness is her serve, as her shoulder injury caused the effectiveness on her serve to plummet. This causes patchy first serves and high numbers of double faults. In the first set, Serena broke in the third game. Then, Sharapova broke in the fourth game. Serena saved four set points and claimed the first-set tiebreak. In the second set, Serena broke in the third game.

Li is an aggressive baseline player. Her game is formed on quick reflexes, athleticism, and powerful groundstrokes. Those components help her achieve precision, placement, and depth. Her crosscourt forehand is her favorite shot because she can hit it with great accuracy and pace. She also has an exceptional backhand down-the-line. But her weaknesses are confidence and serve. She is prone to streaky, erratic with unforced errors and double faults. Serena received serve in this match. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first 10 games. In the 11th game, Li raced out to triple game point. But she dropped serve when she lost six straight points with two forehand errors, two consecutive double faults, and a forehand volley error. This let Serena serve for the first set in the 12th game. In the 12th game, Serena missed her first service point. But she won her last four service points to secure the first set. Her stats in the first set revealed that she crushed 13 winners to only five unforced errors and faced zero break points. Things could have tough for Serena if Li held to love in the 11th game. If that were the situation, then Serena would need to hold in the 12th game to force a first-set tiebreak. But Serena did an excellent job of taking advantage of Li’s dip in form when she won six straight points from triple game point in the 11th game. In the second set, Serena broke in the fifth, seventh, and ninth games to claim the match.

Kvitová has quick, well-placed serves. As a lefty, she executes the shot perfectly by targeting the backhand, then moves forward to end the point. She is also noted for her exceptional timing. With her forehand, she takes the ball early to create down-the-line winners. With her slice, she can keep the ball low and performs the shot better on her backhand. Thanks to her height, she can make up for speed by playing close to the baseline. But her high-risk game and aggressive playing style can accumulate lots of unforced errors in matches. She struggles against players, who extend points to the point that she feels she needs to hit a winner. She can also break down physically due to her opponent’s court coverage, stability, and patience. In the first set, Kvitová broke in the fifth game. But Serena broke in the eighth game. In the first-set tiebreak, Serena won the first four points before Kvitová won the next three points. Then, Serena won the next two points to give herself three set points. Kvitová saved the first two. But Serena closed out the first-set tiebreak on her third set point opportunity. In the second set, Serena broke in the fifth and seventh games.

Zvonareva has a phenomenal backhand and can win points with down-the-line and cross-court winners with that wing. She also creates angles and hits defensive high topspin shots. She uses her body to create pace. But her weaknesses are her mental game, forehand, and serve. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first seven games. Then, Serena broke Zvonareva in the eighth game. In the ninth game, Serena raced out to triple set point before Zvonareva pegged her back to deuce. Then, Serena won her last two service points of the set. In the second set, Serena broke Zvonareva in the first and fifth games. She did not face a single break point in the match.

# **2011 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Serena was away from the tour for 11 months. This caused her ranking to plunge to 175. But, she returned back to the top 32 of the WTA rankings after she booked her place in her first Grand Slam final since Wimbledon 2010:

1. Bojana Jovanovski (SERBIA): 6-1 6-1
   1. Four aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 22 winners
   4. 10 unforced errors
2. Michaëlla Krajicek (NETHERLANDS): 6-0 6-1
   1. 10 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 25 winners
   4. 10 unforced errors
3. Victória Azárenka (BELARUS): 6-1 7-6[7-5]
   1. 12 aces
   2. Four double faults
   3. 39 winners
   4. 24 unforced errors
4. Ana Ivanović (SERBIA): 6-3 6-4
   1. Nine aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 16 winners
   4. 14 unforced errors
5. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (RUSSIA): 7-5 6-1
   1. Six aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 26 winners
   4. 23 unforced errors
6. Caroline Wozniacki (DENMARK): 6-2 6-4
   1. 11 aces
   2. Four double faults
   3. 34 winners
   4. 34 unforced errors

Wozniacki’s playing style is based on anticipation, movement, quickness, footwork, and speed. She anticipates serves with footwork. Her two-handed backhand is her best weapon. She can turn defense into offence when she uses the backhand down-the-line. Her defensive playing style labels her a counterpuncher. But her forehand is weak because it lacks depth, power, and speed. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth, sixth, and eighth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the third and 10th games. With this win, Serena dropped only 29 games in six matches.

# **2012 BANK OF THE WEST CLASSIC – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Bank of the West takes place in Stanford, CA. It is the first tournament of the US Open Series. The US Open Series is a series of North American tennis tournaments that lead up to the US Open. In this edition of the tournament, Serena won the title without dropping a set:

1. Nicole Gibbs (USA): 6-2 6-1
2. Chanelle Scheepers (SOUTH AFRICA): 6-4 6-0
3. Sorana Cîrstea (ROMANIA): 6-1 6-2
4. Coco Vandeweghe (USA): 7-5 6-3

Serena faced Vandeweghe in an all-American WTA final on home soil. Vandeweghe has a strong serve in her aggressive playing style with a heavy forehand. She is efficient at the net and can move forward to shorten the rallies. But her weakness is movement. In the first set, Serena broke in the second and fourth games. Vandeweghe broke in the third, fifth, and seventh games. But Serena broke in the 10th game. In the 12th game, Serena won Vandeweghe’s first service point before Vandeweghe won the next three points. But instead of being forced to a first-set tiebreak, Serena won the last four points of the set. In the second set, Serena broke in the fourth game. When Serena served for the match in the ninth game, she lost her first service point. But she won her last four service points of the match.

# **2012 SUMMER OLYMPICS – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Summer Olympics is an international multi-sport event. They are normally held once every four years. The Games were first held in 1896 in Athens, Greece. In 2012, they were hosted in London. In that edition, Serena won her maiden Olympic gold medal without dropping a set:

1. Jelena Janković (SERBIA): 6-3 6-1
   1. Eight aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 20 winners
   4. 11 unforced errors
2. Urszula Radwańska (POLAND): 6-2 6-3
   1. Eight aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 26 winners
   4. 16 unforced errors
3. Zvonareva: 6-0 6-1
   1. 12 aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 32 winners
   4. Eight unforced errors
4. Wozniacki: 6-0 6-3
   1. Six aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 30 winners
   4. 17 unforced errors
5. Azárenka: 6-1 6-2
   1. 16 aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 33 winners
   4. Five unforced errors
6. Sharapova: 6-0 6-1
   1. 10 aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 24 winners
   4. Seven unforced errors

Serena was in blistering form in her quarterfinal match against Wozniacki. In the first set, Serena broke in the second, fourth and sixth games. In the second set, Wozniacki secured her first hold of the match in the second game. Then, Serena broke in the fourth game. When Serena served for the match in the ninth game, Wozniacki won Serena’s first service point with a crosscourt backhand winner. But Serena won her last four service points with an ace and three service winners.

# **2013 BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Australian Open series is a group of tune-up tournaments that lead up to the Australian Open. The Brisbane International is the first tournament in the Australian Open series. It is held at the Queensland Tennis Center in Brisbane. Serena first played at this tournament in 2012. She won her opening match against Jovanovski before she withdrew from the tournament with a left ankle injury. But one year later in 2013, she won the title without dropping a set:

1. Varvara Lepchenko (USA): 6-2 6-1
   1. Five aces
   2. Three double faults
2. Alizé Cornet (FRANCE): 6-2 6-2
   1. Five aces
   2. Zero double faults
3. Sloane Stephens (USA): 6-4 6-3
   1. Five aces
   2. Two double faults
4. Pavlyuchenkova: 6-2 6-1
   1. Nine aces
   2. One double fault

Pavlyuchenkova uses an all-court game with powerful groundstrokes. She owns a good serve that combines power, with accurate placement. But she does tend to be risky with her second serve, which leads to a high number of double faults. In this match, Serena broke in the sixth and eighth games of the first set. Then, she broke in the second and fourth games of the second set.

# **2014 BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Serena won the title for the second straight year to become the **FIRST** woman to successfully defend her title at the event:

1. Andrea Petkovic (GERMANY): 6-4 6-4
2. Cibulková: 6-3 6-3
3. Sharapova: 6-2 7-6(9-7)
4. Azárenka: 6-4 7-5

Azarenka is an aggressive baseline style with mobility. She has a strong backhand and return game. The aggression lets her hit groundstrokes and low-risk winners.Her return game helps her blend defense and offense together. While she has a strong serve, double faults do creep into her game. Serena received serve in this match. In the first set, Serena broke in the seventh game. In the second set, Serena broke Azárenka in the first game. Azárenka broke in the fourth and sixth games. Then, Serena broke in the seventh game. In the 10th game, Serena lost her first two service points. But she recovered to win four straight service points. Then, Azárenka dropped serve in the 11th game. In the 12th game, Serena won her first two service points before Azárenka won the next point with a cross-court backhand winner. Then, Serena blasted down two service winners to claim the match. When Serena lost her first two service points in the 10th game, it appeared that Azárenka would force a third set. But after Serena won four straight service points, the chances of a third set occurring became slim. From her opener in 2013 to the championship match in 2014, Serena became the **ONLY** woman to win the title two consecutive years in a row **WITHOUT** dropping a set both times. Her perfect streak was 16 sets won and zero sets lost.

# **2014 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Serena originally had a tough draw. She was slated to face Ivanović in the quarterfinals and Kvitová in the semifinals. But ironically, her tricky draw ended up softening out to an easy one. After Ivanović and Kvitová lost in the second and third rounds respectively, the upset bug bit the dust for the top 10 women. Eventually, Serena was the highest seed and lone former champion left in the tournament. She won the title without dropping a set:

1. Taylor Townsend (USA): 6-3 6-1
2. Vania King (USA): 6-1 6-0
3. Lepchenko: 6-3 6-3
4. Kaia Kanepi (ESTONIA): 6-3 6-3
5. Flavia Pennetta (ITALY): 6-3 6-2
6. Ekaterina Makarova (RUSSIA): 6-1 6-3
7. Wozniacki: 6-3 6-3

Pennetta possesses an elegant playing style with sharp shots. In this quarterfinal match, Serena staged a breathtaking recovery. In the first set, Pennetta broke in the first and the third games. But Serena won six straight games when she broke in the fourth, sixth, and eighth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the fifth and seventh games. Her stats were clean with seven aces, three double faults, 31 winners, and 19 unforced errors.

Serena plummeted Wozniacki in the championship match. In the first set, Serena broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games. Then, Wozniacki broke in the third and fifth games. Wozniacki was only able to hold once in the eighth game. When Serena served for the first set in the ninth game, Wozniacki won Serena’s first service point. But Serena efficiently won her last four service points of the set. In the second set, Serena broke in the first and ninth games to win the title.

# **2015 FRENCH OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES + WOMEN’S DOUBLES**

Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC) plays left-handed with a two-handed backhandand possesses a high topspin forehand. Her timing lets her project powerful groundstrokes. She has a dangerous return that can hit winners. This helped her reach her first Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

1. Pavlyuchenkova: 7-6[8-6] 7-6[11-9]
2. Kurumi Nara (JAPAN): 6-2 6-0
3. Sabine Lisicki (GERMANY): 6-3 7-6[7-2]
4. Sharapova: 7-6[7-3] 6-4
5. Garbiñe Muguruza: 7-6[7-3] 6-3
6. Ivanović: 7-5 7-5

Ivanović is an offensive baseline player with an aggressive playing style. Her forehand is her primary shot because it had countless power. But her backhand, movement and net play are her weaknesses. Her cross-court backhand lacks depth to trouble her opponents. In this match, Šafářová received serve. In the first set, Ivanović broke in the second game. But Šafářová broke in the ninth and 11th games. In the second set, Šafářová broke in the third and 11th games.

Casey Dellacqua (AUSTRALIA) and Slava Shvedova (KAZAKHSTAN) formed a unique partnership with their playing styles. Dellacqua has a strong lefty forehand and can put spin on the ball at an angle. Meanwhile, Shvedova has efficient groundstrokes and proficiency at the net. This helped them reach their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

1. Chan Chin-Wei (CHINESE TAIPEI)/Lauren Davis (USA): 6-1 6-2
2. Cornet/Madga Linette (POLAND): 6-2 6-1
3. Caroline Garcia (FRANCE)/Katarina Srebotnik (SLOVENIA): 6-1 6-1
4. Krajicek/Barbora Strýcová (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 7-5
5. Makarova/Elena Vesnina (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-2

The Australian-Kazakh duo played their best tennis in their semifinal match against Makarova and Vesnina. Makarova is an all-court player, who uses power and angles to set up passing shots. She is known for her left-handed slice serve, which often puts her opponents out of their comfort zones. She hits powerfully on with aggressive groundstrokes. Her cross-court forehand is a powerful finishing shot. Meanwhile, Vesnina has an all-court game. But her game is more offensive at the baseline. She can control rallies with her groundstrokes. The Russians were the heavy favorites to win this match. But I think 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, I deem that Shvedova knew what to expect from Vesnina. In the first set, both teams traded service holds for the first seven games. Then Dellacqua and Shvedova broke in the eighth game and successfully served out the first set to love in the ninth game. In the second set, the Australian-Kazakh duo broke the Russians twice and efficiently served out the match in the eighth game.

# **2015 WIMBLEDON – WOMEN’S DOUBLES**

Martina Hingis (SWITZERLAND) and Sania Mirza (INDIA) formed a unique partnership with their playing styles. Hingis is an all-court player with an intelligent, crafty game. She has movement, anticipation, point construction, shot selection, and court coverage. Meanwhile, Mirza is an offensive player with powerful groundstrokes. Her main strengths are her forehand and volleying skills. This helped the Swiss-Miss Indian duo reach their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

1. Zarina Diyas (KAZAKHSTAN)/Zheng Saisai (CHINA): 6-2 6-2
2. Francesca Schiavone (ITALY)/Kimiko Date-Krumm (JAPAN): 6-0 6-1
3. Medina Garrigues/Arantxa Parra Santonja (SPAIN): 6-4 6-3
4. Dellacqua/Shvedova: 7-5 6-3
5. Raquel Kops-Jones (USA)/Abigail Spears (USA): 6-1 6-2

The Swiss-Miss Indian duo faced Makarova and Vesnina in the championship match. In the first set, Makarova and Vesnina broke Hingis and Mirza in the first and 11th games. Then, Hingis and Mirza won the second-set tiebreak. In the final set, Makarova and Vesnina broke in the third game. But Hingis and Mirza broke in the ninth and 11th games.

# **2015 US OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

20-time Grand Slam Champion Roger Federer (SWITZERLAND) is an all-around player with speed, fluid style, and exceptional shot making. He is a baseline player. But he is also comfortable at the net as a volleyer. He effectively performs rare elements, such as the SABR [Sneak Attack by Roger, a half-volley attack on an opponent’s second serve]. He is known for his movement and footwork, which lets him run around shots. He also has great variety with his forehand because he can hit it with topspin and pace. This helped him reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Leonardo Mayer (ARGENTINA): 6-1 6-2 6-2
   1. 12 aces
   2. Five double faults
   3. 29 winners
   4. 13 unforced errors
2. Steve Darcis (BELGIUM): 6-1 6-2 6-1
   1. 11 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 46 winners
   4. 25 unforced errors
3. Philipp Kohlschreiber: 6-3 6-4 6-4
   1. Five aces
   2. Four double faults
   3. 27 winners
   4. 26 unforced errors
4. John Isner (USA): 7-6[7-0] 7-6[8-6] 7-5
   1. 15 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 55 winners
   4. 16 unforced errors
5. Richard Gasquet (FRANCE): 6-3 6-3 6-1
   1. 16 aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 50 winners
   4. 21 unforced errors
6. Stan Wawrinka (SWITZERLAND): 6-4 6-3 6-1
   1. 10 aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 29 winners
   4. 17 unforced errors

Federer’s run set him up with a final with 18-time Grand Slam Champion Novak Djokovic (SERBIA). Djokovic is an aggressive baseline player with deep, powerful groundstrokes. He is a great mover with quickness, court coverage and defensive ability. In the first set, both players traded breaks in the third and fourth games. Then, Djokovic broke Federer in the seventh game. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first 11 games. Then, Federer broke in the 12th game to claim the second set. Just like the first set, the third set started off in the same fashion. Then, Djokovic broke in the ninth game. In the fourth set, Djokovic broke Federer in the first and seventh games. Then, Federer broke in the ninth game. Despite the loss, Djokovic paid his respect to Federer. “I have a tremendous respect for Roger, an incredible record. Coming on court knowing you are playing against probably the best player in the game adds a little bit more pressure. I knew he was going to be aggressive. It was an incredible evening for me.”

# **2015 WTA FINALS – WOMEN’S DOUBLES**

The WTA Finals is played at the end of the year for the top-ranked players. To qualify for the WTA Finals, players compete in WTA tournaments and the four Grand Slams. Based on their results, they earn points on their ranking on the Race to the WTA Finals. The top eight singles players and doubles teams qualify for this event. The players participate in a round-robin format in two groups. The winners and runners-ups of each group advance to the semifinals. Hingis and Mirza secured the top spot when they won the US Open, Guangzhou, Wuhan, and Beijing. At the WTA Finals, they won all their matches in straight sets to claim the biggest title of their careers:

**ROUND-ROBIN**

1. Kops-Jones/Spears: 6-4 6-2
2. Hlaváčková/Lucie Hradecká (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 6-4
3. Tímea Babos (HUNGARY)/Kristina Mladenovic (FRANCE): 6-4 7-5

**SEMIFINALS**

Angel Chan (CHINESE TAIPEI)/Latisha Chan (CHINESE TAIPEI): 6-4 6-2

**FINAL**

Garbiñe Muguruza (SPAIN)/Carla Suárez Navarro (SPAIN): 6-0 6-3

Babos has aggressive playing style with slices and drop-shots. With her height and power, her strength is her serve. Meanwhile, Mladenovic employs an all-court playing style. She can hit her forehand with topspin. Her backhand is also solid, because she utilizes it as a slice to change the pace in a rally. She can approach the net to finish points in singles more frequently. She uses her volleys, backhand slice and drop shots, to create variety in her game. Her movement around the court is incredibly good, because of her height and footwork. But her weaknesses are mentality and serve. She finds it difficult to cope with pressure and her second serve is a hardship. In this match, Hingis and Mirza received serve. In the first set, Hingis and Mirza broke in the ninth game. This was followed by another break in the 11th game of the second set.

# **2016 AUSTRALIAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Serena won the Australian Open in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2015. But one year later, she dropped only 26 games in six matches, her 45 aces outnumbered 10 double faults and she had no more than three double faults per match:

1. Camila Giorgi (ITALY): 6-4 7-5
   1. Nines aces
   2. Two double faults
2. Hsieh: 6-1 6-2
   1. Seven aces
   2. Three double faults
3. Daria Kasatkina (RUSSIA): 6-1 6-1
   1. Six aces
   2. Zero double faults
4. Margarita Gasparyan (RUSSIA): 6-2 6-1
   1. Three aces
   2. One double fault
5. Sharapova: 6-4 6-1
   1. 12 aces
   2. Three double faults
6. Aga Radwańska: 6-0 6-4
   1. Eight aces
   2. One double fault

Giorgi is a baseline player with an aggressive playing style and powerful groundstrokes. Her strongest groundstroke is her backhand, with which she can hit winners from any position. She hits the ball with persistent power and is one of the hardest hitters. She can generate extreme angles with her forehand and backhand. She can accumulate winners. But her serve is erratic because she tends to take risks on her second serve. In this match, Serena received serve. In the first set, Serena broke in the third game and fifth games. Then Giorgi broke in the sixth game. In the second set, Serena broke in the 11th game.

Aga Radwańska has the nicknames of “The Magician” and “Ninja” because she can pull off challenging shots with smoothness. Her game is based on variety, mobility, and anticipation. She uses this style to construct rallies.  Her primary weapons include slices and lobs. She can also drop in place to return or redirect a low ball by using an overhead backhand on defense. But her main weakness is that she lacks power in her serve. Her second serve is slow and susceptible to attack. Her shots lack diffusion on court and pose almost no threat to power hitters. This costed her in her semifinal match against Serena. In this match, Serena received serve. In the first set, Serena broke Aga Radwańska in the first, third and fifth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the third game. Aga Radwańska broke in the sixth game. But Serena broke in the ninth game.

# **2016 BNP PARIBAS OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The BNP Paribas Open is held in March at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden in Indian Wells, CA. The tournament is played on hard courts. The singles main draws have 96 players in a 128-player grid. The top 32 seeded players get a bye [a free pass] from the first round into the second round. Serena won Indian Wells in 1999 and 2001. She chose not to participate at the tournament for the next 14 years. She returned to the tournament in 2015 and reached the semifinals before she withdrew from the tournament. One year later in 2016, she won all her matches in two sets to book her place in the finals:

1. Laura Siegemund (GERMANY): 6-2 6-1
2. Yulia Putintseva (KAZAKHSTAN): 7-6[7-2] 6-0
3. Kateryna Bondarenko (UKRAINE): 6-2 6-2
4. Simona Halep (ROMANIA): 6-4 6-3
5. Aga Radwańska: 6-4 7-6[7-1]

Putintseva has an aggressive forehand shot as a baseline player. In the first set, Serena dropped serve in the third and 11th games. But she dominated first-set tiebreak. In the second set, Serena broke Putintseva in the first, third, and fifth games.

In her semifinal match against Aga Radwańska, Aga Radwańska broke Serena in the first game of the first set. But Serena broke in the eighth and 10th games. In the second set, Serena broke in the second game. Aga Radwańska broke in the fifth and 11th games. Then, Serena broke in the 12th game. In the second-set tiebreak, Aga Radwańska earned the first minibreak on the first point. But Serena won seven straight points.

# **2016 ITALIAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Italian Open is held in Rome, Italy. It is a tune-up tournament for the French Open. Serena said her favorite surface is clay because it gives her time to set up her shots. 13 of her 73 WTA titles came on this surface. She also won three French Open titles in 2002, 2013, and 2015.

1. Friedsam: 6-4 6-3
   1. Seven aces
   2. Two double faults
2. Christina McHale (USA): 7-6[9-7] 6-1
   1. Seven aces
   2. Three double faults
3. Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUSSIA): 6-2 6-0
   1. Five aces
   2. Three double faults
4. Irina-Camelia Begu (ROMANIA): 6-4 6-1
   1. Four aces
   2. Two double faults
5. Madison Keys (USA): 7-6[7-5] 6-3
   1. Four aces
   2. Two double faults

Serena became the **ONLY** woman to recently win this title without dropping a set. In five matches, she scorched down 27 aces. Her 27 aces were twice as many as 12 double faults.

# **2016 WIMBLEDON – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Angelique Kerber (GERMANY) was born right-handed but plays left-handed. She is a baseline player with speed and footwork. Her counterpunching style lets her extend rallies and hit low-risk winners. Her forehand is dangerous because she can hit it with disguise and speed. Her backhand creates power and sharp angles. This helped her reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Laura Robson (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-2 6-2
2. Lepchenko: 6-1 6-4
3. Carina Witthöft (GERMANY): 7-6[13-11] 6-1
4. Misaki Doi (JAPAN): 6-3 6-1
5. Halep: 7-5 7-6[7-2]
6. Venus Williams (USA): 6-4 6-4

Halep is an aggressive baseline player with solid defense and court coverage. She uses speed and anticipation to set up shots. In the first set, Kerber held to love in the first game. Then, both players traded breaks for the next eight games. Halep held in the 10th game and Kerber held to love in the 11th game. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Halep. Halep was serving to stay in the set **AND** force a first-set tiebreak. Halep lost her first service point, then won the next two points. But Kerber won the last three points of the set. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first five games before they traded breaks for the next four games. Halep held in the 10th game. In the 11th game, Kerber lost her first service point. But she won four of the next five points. The 12th game was another **MUST-HOLD** game for Halep. Halep was serving to force a second-set tiebreak **AND** stay in the match. Halep lost her first service point. But she won the next four points. Halep earned the first minibreak on the first point. But Kerber won five of the last seven points of the match.

Serena’s older sister, Venus, has an all-court game. Her powerful groundstrokes have topspin. Her height gives her a long arm span, which lets her reach any ball while set at the net. Kerber received serve in this match. In the first set, Kerber broke Venus in the first, third, fifth, and seventh games. Venus broke in the second, fourth, and eighth games. When Kerber served for the set in the 10th game, she lost her first service point. But she won four of her last five service points of the set. In the first game of the second set, Venus won her first two service points. But Kerber won eight straight points. When Kerber served out the match in the 10th game, she lost her first service point. But she won the last four points of the match to set up a championship match with Serena.

I chose to write about the final between Serena and Kerber. When Serena lost to Kerber in the 2016 Australian Open final, she sprayed 46 unforced errors and won less than 50% of her points at the net. But fortunately, she brilliantly turned that match around and successfully avenged her loss to Kerber. She was sharper and more prepared for Kerber’s game plan. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first 11 games. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Kerber. Kerber was serving to stay in the set **AND** force a first-set tiebreak. But instead of facing a first-set tiebreak, Serena broke in the 12th game to claim the first set. In the seventh game of the second set, Serena won her first service point before Kerber won the next two points. Serena won her next service point. Then, Kerber earned herbreak point of the match. But instead of losing serve, Serena edged ahead with two back-to-back aces and forced a backhand error from Kerber. After she missed her sole break point opportunity in the seventh game, Kerber dropped serve in the eighth game. Then, Serena efficiently served out the match to love in the ninth game. With this victory, Serena became a 22-time Grand Slam champion alongside Steffi Graf (GERMANY). Her seven Wimbledon titles in 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2015, and 2016 extended her perfect winning streak on grass to 49 wins and zero losses. When she was asked about her 22nd Grand Slam title victory in an interview with The Tennis Channel, she was calmer and composed. “I thought I learned a valuable lesson, which I thought I learned at 18. But now I learned I cannot think about that. I have to do the best that I can.” After Serena tied Graf, I feel she was able to play more relaxed tennis, moving forward.

# **2016 ROGERS CUP – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Rogers Cup is held in Canada. The event alternates between Montreal and Toronto. In even-numbered years, the men’s tournament is held in Montreal, while the women’s tournament is held in Toronto, and vice versa in odd-numbered years. Before 2011, it was held during separate weeks in the July–August period. But now, the two competitions are held in the same week in August. The Toronto tournament is held at the Aviva Centre, while the Montreal tournament is held at the IGA Stadium. This event rotates each year between Montreal and Toronto. In the 2016 edition, Djokovic won the title without dropping a set:

1. Gilles Müller (LUXEMBOURG): 7-5 7-6[7-3]
2. Radek Štěpánek (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-2 6-4
3. Tomáš Berdych (CZECH REPUBLIC): 7-6[8-6] 6-4
4. Gaël Monfils (FRANCE): 6-3 6-2
5. Kei Nishikori (JAPAN): 6-3 7-5

I chose to focus only on the first set of Djokovic’s second-round match against Müller. Müller has a powerful left-handed serve. Djokovic received serve in this match. In the first set, the first 10 games went on serve. In the 11th game, Müller lost his first service point before he won the next two points. But Djokovic won three straight points to break Müller and effectively served out the first set in the 12th game. I was captivated by this first set, as Serena **ALSO** won the first set against Li in her 2010 Wimbledon quarterfinal match in this **SAME EXACT** manner. But the only difference was how each of these players broke in the 11th game and positively served out the first set in the 12th game.

# **2016 CONNECTICUT OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Connecticut Open is the final tournament of the US Open Series. It is held at the Cullman-Heyman Tennis Center in New Haven, CT. Aga Radwańska won this title without dropping a set:

1. Jeļena Ostapenko (LATVIA): 7-5 6-1
2. Kirsten Flipkens (BELGIUM): 6-1 6-4
3. Kvitová: 6-1 6-1
4. Elina Svitolina (UKRAINE): 6-1 7-6[7-3]

Ostapenko is an all-court player with an aggressive playing style. Her forehand and backhand have power and depth. She can finish points quickly with groundstrokes or volleys. She can move opponents around by changing direction. When she puts an opponent in a weak position, she can end the point with a cross-court forehand, down-the-line backhand, swinging volley, or drop shot. But her weaknesses are unforced errors and double faults. Aga Radwańska received serve in this match. In the first set, Aga Radwańska broke in the second and 11th games. This was followed by three more breaks in first, third, fifth and seventh games of the second set.

Flipkens is an all-court player with a strong serve and all-around game. She can make up for her height and physical strength with her forehand, serve, quickness and swiftness. Her trademark shot is her backhand slice and she often plays serve-and-volley. This gave her the nickname of “Flipper”. In the first set, Aga Radwańska broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games. Then, Flipkens broke in the third game. In the second set, Aga Radwańska broke in the first and ninth games.

Aga Radwańska was in vintage form her semifinal match against Kvitová. The Polish star broke in the second and fourth games of the first set. This was followed by three more breaks in the first, third, and seventh games of the second set.

Svitolina is a defensive baseline player. Her strengths are movement, footwork, speed, stamina, and anticipation. She can turn defense into offense and her groundstrokes are hit with significant moderate power. Her backhand is her strongest weapon. Her movement allows her to hit difficult shots while on the run. But her weakness is volleying at the net. This costed her in the championship match against Aga Radwańska. In the first set, Aga Radwańska broke in the second and fourth games. In the second set, Svitolina broke in the second, eighth, and 10th games. But Aga Radwańska saved two set points on her serve in the 12th game and dominated the second-set tiebreak.

# **2016 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Kerber exhibited stamina and adapted a sense to play with freedom. She relied on accuracy and recovery to pull herself through each match. This helped her reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Polona Hercog (SLOVENIA): 6-0 2-0
2. Mirjana Lučić-Baroni (CROATIA): 6-2 7-6[9-7]
3. Cici Bellis (USA): 6-1 6-1
4. Kvitová: 6-3 7-5
5. Roberta Vinci (ITALY): 7-5 6-0
6. Wozniacki: 6-4 6-3

Vinci is known for her proficiency, ability at the net, and ruthless use of the backhand slice. She has excellent movement and sense of the court. Because of her backhand slice, powerful forehand and court coverage, her game is often compared to Graf. In the first set, Vinci broke in the first, fifth, and ninth games. But Kerber broke in the second, sixth, 10th and 12th games to claim the first set. In the second set, Kerber broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games to seal the match.

# **2017 AUSTRALIAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Kerber had a breakthrough 2016 season when she won two Grand Slams [Australian Open and US Open] and a silver medal at the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. After Kerber won the US Open, she became the number one player in the world.

Serena played eight tournaments and won two titles. She ended the year as number two in the world with 38 wins, six losses, and a winning percentile range of 84%. At the 2015 US Open, Serena endured a shocking three-set semifinal loss to Vinci. During that time, she was trying to complete a Calendar Slam by winning all four Grand Slams in the same year. But when Serena kicked off her 2016 US Open campaign, Pam Shriver (USA), a former tennis player and current ESPN tennis broadcaster, made a bold statement. “She will feel so much less pressure than last year because she won Wimbledon and tied Graf”. Even though Serena lost in the semifinals, she was still positive! “I kept telling myself ‘Serena, you have 22. It is not that bad!’”. Coming to think of that though, I agree with her! She was at peace with herself after she won her 22nd Grand Slam title. When she withdrew from the WTA Finals to heal her left knee and shoulder injuries, she ironically was all smiles in her announcement video on Twitter! I never saw this in her before, but I knew that her 2017 season was going to be easier than her 2016 one was!

After Serena withdrew from the WTA Finals, Kerber secured the year-end world number one ranking. The German won all her matches in the round-robin stages and semifinals to progress to the championship match. But after Cibulková defeated Kerber in straight sets for the title, I could tell that the tide was about to take a turn. In 2016, Serena was under pressure when she was the runner-up at the Australian Open and French Open. But that pressure was off after she won Wimbledon. Once Kerber lost to Cibulková though, it was her turn to now deal with the same pressure that Serena struggled with.

At the 2017 Australian Open, Kerber was the world number one, top seed, and defending champion. But she did not display the same form as she did in her 2016 season. Her forehand became unreliable and her game plan turned out to be predictable. Consequently, her title defense ended with a fourth-round straight-set loss to Vandeweghe.

Serena’s 2016 US Open semifinal loss was described as a shocking one. But I consider that loss as shocking if she were **STILL** stuck on 21 Grand Slam titles **AND NEVER** tied Graf. Based on her 2016 US Open semifinal loss, there was uncertainty on whether Serena would claim her 23rd Grand Slam title at the 2017 Australian Open. But I feel that she came into the tournament with **MORE** confidence [she **TIED** Graf’s record **AND** had the elusive 22nd Grand Slam title **UNDER HER BELT**] **AND LESS** pressure [she was the number two seed and defending only finalist points]. In seven matches, she dropped only 39 games and she won the title without dropping a set:

1. Belinda Bencic (SWITZERLAND): 6-4 6-3
2. Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 6-4
3. Gibbs: 6-1 6-3
4. Strýcová: 7-5 6-4
5. Jo Konta (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-2 6-3
6. Lučić-Baroni: 6-2 6-1
7. Venus: 6-4 6-4

Bencic can hit powerful groundstroke winners. She can also turn defense into offense with cross-court shots down the line. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth and 10th games to win the first set. In the second set, Serena broke in the second and fourth games. Then, Bencic broke in the sixth game.

Serena faced Šafářová in a rematch of the 2015 French Open final. In the first set, the first seven games went on serve. Then, Serena broke in the eighth game. In the ninth game, Serena lost her first service point. But she won the last four service points to claim the first set. In the second set, the first six games went on serve. Then, Serena broke in the seventh game.

Gibbs is a baseline player with a powerful forehand. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth and sixth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the third, seventh, and ninth games.

Strýcová has depth with a variety of shots. She has great hands at the net. Her slices and drop shots are also effective. In the first set, Strýcová broke in the first, third, and seventh games. But Serena broke in the second, fourth, eighth, and 12th games to claim the first set. In the second set, Serena broke in the fourth and 10th games to seal the match.

Konta has an offensive baseline playing style. She can play with fast, flat groundstrokes. She creates sharp angles and hit winners from any position on court. Konta was predicted to push Serena to a third set and cause an upset against the American. But one important factor came in Serena’s favor. Before Serena and Konta faced off, Konta faced Venus twice in 2016 and won both those head-to-head meetings. Taking those two head-to-head meetings into account, I believe that Venus gave some excellent tips to Serena to win this match in two sets. As a result, Serena shook off the rust, snapped her A-game into place, and crushed the Brit in a straight-set victory.

Serena was slated to face the same woman, who defeated her in the 2016 US Open semifinals, Karolína Plíšková (CZECH REPUBLIC). Plíšková has an aggressive playing style with her serve and groundstrokes. Her serve has pace, power, and precision. She usually generates high first serve percentages and aces. But her weaknesses are movement and footwork. Even though she was a tournament favorite, she lost to Lučić-Baroni in a three-set quarterfinal match. As a result, Serena’s path to a 23rd Grand Slam title became smoother. Lučić-Baroni is an aggressive baseline player with a strong forehand. Serena received serve in this match. In the first set, Serena broke in the third and fifth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the third, fifth, and seventh games to claim the match. Lučić-Baroni only held in the first and seventh games of the first set and the first game of the second set. The Croatian had only 10 winners to 23 unforced errors. Fortunately for Serena though, she kept her stats clean with zero breaks points faced, 14 winners, and 10 unforced errors.

After Venus won a three-set semifinal match against Vandeweghe, Rod Laver Arena got treated to a first-class All-Williams final. In this match, Serena received serve. In the first set, Serena broke in the first and third games. Venus broke in the second and fourth games. Next, Serena broke in the seventh game. In the second set, Serena broke in the seventh game. With this win, Serena became the oldest Grand Slam champion, won two Grand Slams [Australian Open and Wimbledon] seven times, and regained the world number one ranking from Kerber.

# **2017 DUBAI TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS – WOMEN’S DOUBLES**

The Dubai Tennis Championships is held yearly at the end of February. Hlaváčková started a fruitful partnership with Shuai Peng (CHINA). Hlaváčková’s game has an attacking style, while Peng plays two-handed on both sides. This helped them reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2014 CHINA OPEN**

1. Anabel Medina Garrigues (SPAIN)/Shvedova: 7-5 6-2
2. Chuang Chia-Jung (CHINESE TAIPEI)/Olga Govortsova (BELARUS): 6-3 6-2
3. Jarmila Gajdošová (AUSTRALIA)/Ajla Tomljanović (AUSTRALIA): 6-4 7-5
4. Alla Kudryavtseva (RUSSIA)/Anastasia Rodionova (AUSTRALIA): 6-1 6-4
5. Cara Black (ZIMBABWE)/Mirza: 6-4 6-4

**2016 AEGEON OPEN**

1. Nicole Melichar (USA)/Alicja Rosolska (POLAND): 6-2 6-4
2. Angel Chan/Latisha Chan: 6-2 7-6[7-3]

**2017 SHENZHEN OPEN**

1. Nina Stojanović (SERBIA)/Zhu Lin (CHINA): 6-4 7-5
2. Jelena Janković (SERBIA)/Kateřina Siniaková (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 6-3
3. Natela Dzalamidze (RUSSIA)/Veronika Kudermetova (RUSSIA): 6-4 6-2
4. Raluca Olaru (ROMANIA)/Olga Savchuk (UKRAINE) 6-1 7-5

**2017 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

1. Misaki Doi (JAPAN)/Nara: 6-1 7-6[7-1]
2. Karin Knapp (ITALY)/Mandy Minella (LUXEMBOURG) 6-3 6-2
3. Andreja Klepač (SLOVENIA)/María José Martínez Sánchez (SPAIN): 6-2 6-0
4. Makarova/Vesnina: 7-5 7-6[7-5]
5. Garcia/Mladenovic: 7-6[7-4] 6-2

Hlaváčková and Peng lost the Australian Open final. But they rebounded in colossal fashion in Dubai. They won all their matches in straight sets to book their place in the finals:

1. Liang Chen (CHINA/Yang Zhaoxuan (CHINA): 7-5 6-2
2. Minella/Anastasija Sevastova (LATVIA): 7-5 6-2
3. Latisha Chan/Hingis: 6-4 6-2
4. Angel Chan/Shvedova: 6-1 6-3

# **2017 FRENCH OPEN – MIXED DOUBLES**

When I wrote about the 2015 editions of the French Open and Wimbledon, something unique struck my mind. Two women’s doubles teams each reached their first Grand Slam finals without losing a set **OR** facing a tiebreak. The **SAME EXACT** factor occurred in this tournament. Gaby Dabrowski (CANADA) is an all-court player with touch shots. Meanwhile, Rohan Bopanna (INDIA) has a serve-oriented game, where he uses his big serve to set up points. Neither of these players won a Grand Slam title in their careers. But they reached their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

1. Jessica Moore (AUSTRALIA)/Matt Reid (AUSTRALIA): 6-0 6-1
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault
2. Chloé Paquet (FRANCE)/Paire: 6-3 6-2
   1. Two aces
   2. Zero double faults
3. Mirza/Ivan Dodig (CROATIA): 6-3 6-4
   1. Six aces
   2. Two double faults
4. Hlaváčková/Roger-Vasselin: 7-5 6-3
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault

The Canadian Indian duo dropped only 21 games in four matches and their 18 aces outfoxed four double faults. In the championship match, Dabrowski and Bopanna were on the ropes against Anna-Lena Grönefeld (GERMANY) and Robert Farah (COLOMBIA). Dabrowski and Bopanna were broken twice in the first set and once in the third game of the second set. But instead of losing the match in straight sets, Dabrowski and Bopanna broke in the fourth and eighth games to force a match tiebreak. Then, the Canadian Indian duo saved two championship points in the match tiebreak to claim their first Grand Slam title as a team. Dabrowski said, “You never know where the journey will take you, but it feels amazing.” Bopanna also agreed. “When you play with partners, you get to understand each other. I think that helped us also today coming through those close matches.”

# **2017 BB&T ATLANTA OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Atlanta Open is played in Atlanta, usually during July or August. It is a tune-up tournament in the US Open Series. Isner has a powerful, reliable serve. He delivers huge serves when it matters most. Because of his playing style, he wins a great majority of his service games. This helped him win the title without dropping a set:

1. Vasek Pospisil (CANADA): 6-3 6-4
   1. Ten aces
   2. One double fault
2. Lukáš Lacko (SLOVAKIA): 7-5 6-4
   1. 13 aces
   2. Zero double faults
3. Müller: 6-4 6-2
   1. 15 aces
   2. Five double faults
4. Ryan Harrison (USA): 7-6[8-6] 7-6[9-7]
   1. 23 aces
   2. One double fault

Lacko has a baseline playing style. He has flair shots with lobs and drop shots. But his aggressive game can come unglued with unforced errors. Isner received serve in this match. In the first set, Isner broke Lacko in the 11th game. In the ninth game of the second set, Lacko won his first two service points. But Isner won four straight points to break.

# **2018 AUSTRALIAN OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES + MIXED DOUBLES**

Federer was in vintage form at the Australian Open. His positive ratios in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced errors categories helped him reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Aljaž Bedene (SLOVENIA): 6-3 6-4 6-3
   1. 11 aces
   2. Three double faults
   3. 41 winners
   4. 32 unforced errors
2. Jan-Lennard Struff (GERMANY): 6-4 6-4 7-6[7-4]
   1. 15 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 36 winners
   4. 22 unforced errors
3. Gasquet: 6-2 7-5 6-4
   1. 10 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 42 winners
   4. 30 unforced errors
4. Márton Fucsovics (HUNGARY): 6-4 7-6[7-3] 6-2
   1. Six aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 34 winners
   4. 28 unforced errors
5. Berdych: 7-6[7-1] 6-3 6-4
   1. 13 aces
   2. Five double faults
   3. 61 winners
   4. 30 unforced errors
6. Hyeon Chung (SOUTH KOREA): 6-1 5-2
   1. Nine aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 24 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors

Marin Čilić (CROATIA) is a baseline player with huge serves and powerful groundstrokes. He and Federer treated Rod Laver Arena to a five-set marathon final. In the first set, Federer broke in the first and third games. In the second set, all 12 games went on serve into a tiebreak. Čilić won the second-set tiebreak with a minibreak. In the third set, Federer broke in the sixth game. In the fourth set, Federer broke in the first game. But Čilić broke twice in the sixth and eighth games. Then, he successfully served out the set to love in the ninth game. In the fifth set, Federer broke Čilić in the second game. Despite the loss, Čilić’s brave fight earned praise from Federer. “He’s professional. He is very much the same regardless of whether he wins or loses. I like that attitude.”

Dabrowski started a successful partnership with Mate Pavić (CROATIA). Pavić has quick reflexes and comfort at the net. He also has a powerful lefty serve. This helped them reach their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set **OR** losing serve:

1. Lizette Cabrera (AUSTRALIA)/Alex Bolt (AUSTRALIA): 6-3 7-5
   1. Seven aces
   2. Two double faults
2. Demi Schuurs (NETHERLANDS)/Jean-Julien Rojer (NETHERLANDS): 6-1 6-3
   1. Six aces
   2. Two double faults
3. Johanna Larsson (SWEDEN)/Matwé Middelkoop (NETHERLANDS): 6-3 7-6[7-0]
   1. Three aces
   2. One double fault
4. Makarova/Bruno Soares (BRAZIL): 6-1 6-4
   1. Three aces
   2. Zero double faults

In four matches, Dabrowski and Pavić crushed 19 aces. Those 19 aces were outnumbered by only four double faults. Dabrowski and Pavić faced Babos and Bopanna in the championship match. In the first set, Babos and Bopanna broke in the fourth and eighth games to claim the first. In the second set, Dabrowski and Pavić broke in the seventh game. In the match tiebreak, Babos and Bopanna struck a forehand winner to earn the first championship point. But Dabrowski and Pavić calmly struck two consecutive aces and a forehand return winner to claim the title.

# **2018 STUTTGART OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

The MercedesCup is played on grass. It is held at the Tennis Club Weissenhof in Stuttgart. Milos Raonic (CANADA) has a powerful, accurate serve. His serve helps him use an all-court style. This helped him reach the Stuttgart Open final without dropping a set **OR** losing serve:

1. Mirza Bašić (BOSNIA): 7-6[10-8] 6-2
   1. 15 aces
   2. Four double faults
2. Fucsovics: 6-2 6-4
   1. 19 aces
   2. Two double faults
3. Berdych: 7-6[7-2] 7-6[7-1]
   1. 22 aces
   2. Three double faults
4. Lucas Pouille (FRANCE): 6-4 7-6[7-3]
   1. 19 aces
   2. Two double faults

# **2019 BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Lesia Tsurenko (UKRAINE) is a devoted player. Her powerful style gives her extra power to help her dominate the court. This helped her play the cleanest tennis to reach the biggest final of career without dropping a set:

1. Mihaela Buzărnescu (ROMANIA): 6-0 6-2
   1. Two aces
   2. Two double faults
2. Kimberly Birrell (AUSTRALIA): 6-4 6-3
   1. Five aces
   2. Three double faults
3. Anett Kontaveit (ESTONIA): 7-5 6-3
   1. Two aces
   2. One double fault
4. Naomi Osaka (JAPAN): 6-2 6-4
   1. Six aces
   2. Two double faults

Kontaveit has a fascinating playing style. She utilizes strokes that help her strike winners. She can adjust pace with a backhand slice or change direction in a rally. She is known for her speed at the baseline, which lets her hit running forehands. This part of her game came together when she started her successful coaching partnership with Nigel Sears (GREAT BRITAIN). In this match against Kontaveit, Tsurenko received serve. In the first set, Kontaveit broke Tsurenko in the eighth game. But Tsurenko broke in the ninth and 11th games. In the second set, Tsurenko broke in the first and ninth games to claim the match.

Osaka is an aggressive baseline player. She has superb raw power on her forehand and serve. While she can use her power to hit a high number of winners, her key to success is to be able to win long rallies. But this playing style shockingly betrayed her against Tsurenko, especially in this match. In this match, Tsurenko received serve. In the first set, Tsurenko broke in the first and seventh games. This was followed by another break in the first game of the second set. Tsurenko’s first-serve percentage was 76%, her six aces outnumbered two double faults, and she saved both break points that she faced in the second set. When Tsurenko was asked about this win, her honesty said it all. “I was nervous, but in general, I’m really happy with my performance. The key was to stay aggressive, serve well, and give good direction on serve. I knew if I made a mistake on serve, she will kill it. I was focused on every point and thought about every shot like it is an important one.”

Tsurenko dropped only 23 games in four matches. This set her up with a championship match against Karolína Plíšková. Even though Tsurenko lost a three-set final after suffering a left ankle injury, her level of tennis was still boundless. Her six aces outbalanced only two double faults and she broke Karolína Plíšková four times out of six break chances.

# **2019 AUSTRALIAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES + MEN’S SINGLES**

From the end of 2017 throughout 2018, Halep was world number one when she was a finalist at the 2018 Australian Open and champion at the 2018 French Open. But the pressure of defending her runner-up points at the 2019 Australian Open took a toll on her. Serena sent the Romanian packing her bags in a fourth-round three-setter. Thanks to that result, Halep lost the world number one ranking.

Kvitová won Wimbledon in 2011 and 2014. Two years later during the off-season in 2016 going into the 2017 season, she was attacked during a break-in at her home by a robber, shortly before Christmas. During the break-in, she suffered injuries to her dominant left hand. The doctors said she may never be able to play tennis again. But she overcame the obstacles to return to the sport. She was able to reach her first Australian Open final without dropping a set:

1. Magdaléna Rybáriková (SLOVAKIA): 6-3 6-2
2. Begu: 6-1 6-3
3. Bencic: 6-1 6-4
4. Amanda Anisimova (USA): 6-2 6-1
5. Ashleigh Barty (AUSTRALIA): 6-1 6-4
6. Danielle Collins (USA): 7-6[7-2] 6-0

Collins has a fierce, aggressive playing style. She has a powerful serve and strong groundstrokes. Her strengths are her serve, inside-out forehand, and backhand down the line. She also possesses strong volleying skills. This lets her hit winners from any position on court. While her style lets her hit a high number of winners, she can come unglued with unforced errors. In the first set, Collins broke in the fifth game. But Kvitová broke in the sixth game. Then, the Czech claimed the first-set tiebreak. In the second set, Kvitová broke in the first, third, and fifth games. This was her first Grand Slam final outside of Wimbledon. When asked about her run in the tournament, her honesty said it all. “It means everything. Finally, I made it deep here at this major and I will enjoy the final. Whatever happens I am already incredibly happy.” Things could have been tricky for Kvitová if she had dropped the first set against Collins. But she found her best tennis of the match in the tiebreak. “The first set was very tight, I was also nervous, and I couldn’t fully swing. But I’m glad that my game from previous matches arrived in the tiebreak and second set.”

I also chose to write about the championship match between Kvitová and Osaka. Kvitová and Osaka **NEVER** faced each other **AND** this was the **FIRST EVER** head-to-head meeting between these two players. But they treated Rod Laver Arena to a thrilling three-set final. In the first set, both players traded service hold for all 12 games. Then, Osaka won the first-set tiebreak with a double minibreak. In the second set, Kvitová broke in the second game. Then, Osaka broke in the third and fifth games. Afterwards, Kvitová broke in the 10th and 12th games to clinch the second set. In the third set, Osaka broke in the third game. The Japanese player replaced Halep as world number one. Kvitová also returned to the number two spot on the WTA rankings.

20-time Grand Slam Champion Rafael Nadal (SPAIN) was born right-handed but plays left-handed. He has a forceful, baseline game with heavy topspin groundstrokes, stability, quick footwork, and relentless court coverage. This makes him an aggressive counterpuncher. With his athleticism and speed, he is an exceptional defender, who can construct winning acts from shifty positions. This helped him reach the final without dropping a set:

1. James Duckworth (AUSTRALIA): 6-4 6-3 7-5
2. Matthew Ebden (AUSTRALIA): 6-3 6-2 6-2
3. Alex de Minaur (AUSTRALIA): 6-1 6-2 6-4
4. Berdych: 6-0 6-1 7-6[7-4]
5. Frances Tiafoe (USA): 6-3 6-4 6-2
6. Stefanos Tsitsipas (GREECE): 6-2 6-4 6-0

Tsitsipas is an aggressive baseline and all-court player. He can hit powerful groundstroke winners with his forehand. His forehand can finish points off the first serve. He uses topspin to pull opponents off court. His favorite shot is his one-handed backhand. But he is weak in returning against players with strong serves on their backhand. Tsitsipas overpowered Federer in a fourth-round four-setter, where he saved all 12 break points that he faced. But the young Greek star was no match for the Spaniard. Nadal received serve in this match. In the first set, Nadal broke in the third and seventh games. This was followed by a break in the ninth game of the second set. These two sets were mesmerizing, as Tsurenko **ALSO** won her 2019 Brisbane International semifinal match against Osaka with this **SAME EXACT** score. But the differences were the service breaks and number of break points faced. In the third set, Nadal broke in the first, third, and fifth games. When Nadal served for the match in the sixth game, he lost his first service point. Then, he won the next two points. Tsitsipas won the next two points to earn his lone break point. But Nadal won the last three points of the match with a backhand volley dropshot and two backhand errors from Tsitsipas. His clean stats were five aces, zero double faults, 30 winners, and 14 unforced errors.

Nadal’s run in Melbourne set him up with a championship match against Djokovic. Even though Nadal lost to Djokovic in straight sets, Djokovic still praised Nadal for his run. “Rafa was in great form, he hadn’t dropped a set the entire tournament. He played some of his best tennis on hard courts.”

# **2019 MIAMI OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Miami Open is held at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL. Following Indian Wells, Miami is the second event of the “Sunshine Double”. The Sunshine Double is two hard-court tournaments in the United States at the beginning of the season. Isner won all ten sets he played in this tournament. In five matches, he crushed 100 aces, which outnumbered nine double faults. He only lost serve once in the third round and twice in the semifinals:

1. Lorenzo Sonego (ITALY): 7-6[7-2] 7-6[9-7]
   1. 20 aces
   2. Three double faults
2. Albert Ramos-Viñolas (SPAIN): 7-5 7-6[8-6]
   1. 16 aces
   2. Two double faults
3. Kyle Edmund (GREAT BRITAIN): 7-6[7-5] 7-6[7-3]
   1. 18 aces
   2. One double fault
4. Bautista Agut: 7-6[7-1] 7-6[7-5]
   1. 25 aces
   2. One double fault
5. Félix Auger-Aliassime (CANADA): 7-6[7-3] 7-6[7-4]
   1. 21 aces
   2. Two double faults

Auger-Aliassime has an all-court style and strong forehand. In the first set, Auger-Aliassime broke in the seventh game. Then, Isner broke in the 10th game. In the second set, Auger-Aliassime broke in the sixth game. But Isner broke in the ninth game. Even though Isner lost to Federer in the championship match, the American earned praise from Federer. “John is a great player and person. He has an amazing serve. I am a big fan of his game. He had a tough match against Felix. That was an awesome performance by him.”

# **2019 MADRID OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Madrid Open is a professional tournament, held in Madrid, in early May. The tournament is traditionally played on a red clay surface. The event was played on blue courts in the 2012 tournament edition. But it was switched back to traditional red clay since then.

Kiki Bertens (NETHERLANDS) has a crafty playing style with variety. Her forehand has topspin, which puts the opponent behind the baseline. She can also hit slices and drop shots. This helped her become the first woman to win the title without dropping a set:

1. Siniaková: 6-3 6-2
2. Ostapenko: 6-4 6-3
3. Sevastova: 6-1 6-2
4. Kvitová: 6-2 6-3
5. Stephens: 6-2 7-5
6. Halep 6-4 6-4

Stephens is an all-court baseline player. She can turn defense into offense. Her forehand is her best weapon and she can run around her backhand to play her forehand. But this style betrayed her. Bertens received serve against Stephens in this match. In the first set, Bertens broke in the first and fifth games. In the second set, Stephens broke in the sixth game. Then, Bertens broke in the seventh game. In the 10th game, Bertens saved triple set point. Then, she broke in the 11th game.

Halep was the heavy favorite to win the title. In her run, she won four sets without losing a game. But her three-set semifinal win against Bencic was a two-hour battle. Fortunately for Bertens though, she spent less time on court and had an earlier finish in her semifinal win against Stephens. The earlier finish gave her the opportunity to squeeze in recovery as much as possible. Bertens received serve in this match. In the first set, Halep broke in the fourth and sixth games. But Bertens broke in the fifth, seventh, and ninth games. In the second set, Bertens broke in the first and fifth games. Halep broke only once in the fourth game. Bertens dropped only 35 games in six matches to claim the biggest title of her career.

# **2019 FRENCH OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Markéta Vondroušová (CZECH REPUBLIC) displayed the best performance of her career at this tournament. Her signature shot is her drop shot. She has a crafty playing style and utilizes a variety of shots. Her game has lengthy, strategic rallies, where she uses her left-handed topspin forehand. Aside from playing drop shots, Vondroušová also excels in her return game. This helped her reach her first Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

1. Wang Yafan (CHINA): 6-4 6-3
2. Anastasia Potapova (RUSSIA): 6-4 6-0
3. Suárez Navarro: 6-4 6-4
4. Sevastova: 6-2 6-0
5. Petra Martić (CROATIA): 7-6[7-1] 7-5
6. Konta: 7-5 7-6[7-2]

Martić employs an aggressive, all-court, game with variety. Her groundstrokes are powerful with topspin. She is proficient at hitting her backhand with slice and can add in the dropshot. As a result, she disrupts baseline rallies. She is a strong volleyer, due to her doubles experience, and is as comfortable at the net as she is at the baseline. Martić can extend the rallies as a counterpuncher. She possesses a unique game, containing a range of shots. Martić won all four head-to-head meetings against Vondroušová. But Vondroušová edged through two tight sets. In this match, Vondroušová received serve. Vondroušová broke in the fifth game. Martić broke in the sixth and eighth games. But Vondroušová broke in the ninth game. In the 12th game, Martić had triple set point on Vondroušová’ serve. But Vondroušová saved all three set points to force a first-set tiebreak. From triple set point down, Vondroušová won 12 of the next 13 points to claim the first-set tiebreak. In the second set, Vondroušová broke in the second, sixth, and 11th games to seal the match.

In her semifinal match against Konta, Vondroušová staged a stunning recovery. In the first set, Konta broke in the first game. Then, Vondroušová broke in the fourth game. Next, Konta broke in the fifth game. But Vondroušová bravely saved all three set points and broke Konta in the 10th game when the Brit served for the first set. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Konta. Konta was serving to stay in the set **AND** force a first-set tiebreak. In the 12th game, Konta lost her first service point before she won her next two service points. But Vondroušová clinched the final three points of the set. In the second set, Konta broke in the third game. But Vondroušová broke in the 10th game. The 12th game was another **MUST-HOLD** game for Konta. But this time, Konta was serving to stay in the match. The second set went into a tiebreak. But Vondroušová sealed the match with a double minibreak in the second-set tiebreak.

Vondroušová’s run set her up with a championship match against Barty. Barty has an all-court game and a crafty playing style. The Australian has solid groundstrokes, which let her create sharp angles on cross-court shots. Her kick serve and backhand slice are her best weapons. Her doubles game translates properly to singles, as she frequently comes to the net and excels at volleying. I found this match-up interesting because **NEITHER** Vondroušová **NOR** Barty **EVER** reached a Grand Slam final in their careers! I was curious to know what type of rallies I would see, because both players have contrasting styles in their games. Even though Vondroušová came up short in a straight-set loss, Barty had only praise for the young Czech teenager. “Marketa has had an amazing two weeks. She’s only just starting her climb, I have absolutely no doubt she’s going to be in many more Grand Slam finals.” This propelled Barty’s ranking up to number two in the world.

# **2019 BIRMINGHAM CLASSIC – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Birmingham Classic is held at the [Edgbaston Priory Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgbaston_Priory_Club) in [Edgbaston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgbaston), Birmingham, UK. The tournament is played on outdoor grass courts as a tune-up tournament for Wimbledon.

In 2011, Lisicki made her climb in the rankings at this tournament. The German is a primary baseline player because she can hit with topspin and pace. Her forehand and backhand have power, depth, and pace. She is nicknamed “Boom Boom”, because of her huge serve and thrashing groundstrokes. Her game is often compared to Graf because of these elements. While Lisicki represents the country of Germany, her permanent residence is in Bradenton, FL. Having trained at the Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy since 2004, the American fans have continued to support the German tennis star every time she plays at the Miami Open. Despite struggling with a severe left ankle injury through her career, her hard work and happy-go-lucky attitude helped her to win her first grass court title without dropping a set:

1. Date-Krumm: 6-4 7-6[7-3]
2. Flipkens: 7-5 7-6[7-3]
3. Tamira Paszek (AUSTRIA): 7-6[7-1] 6-4
4. Rybáriková: 7-6[7-1] 6-4

Eight years later, more thrills came into the tournament. The second-round match between Karolína Plíšková and her identical twin sister, Kristýna Plíšková (CZECH REPUBLIC), was the first historical match between identical twins. Like Karolína Plíšková, Kristýna Plíšková also has an aggressive playing style. But, Kristýna Plíšková can string stronger winners together with her lefty forehand on hard and grass surfaces. The Kristýna Plíšková serve is also more stable with uninterrupted back-to-back aces. Ultimately, Kristýna Plíšková emerged as the victor in a third-set tiebreak.

After Barty won the French Open, she cemented her place at the top of the WTA rankings as world number one. This arrived as soon as she won the Birmingham Classic without dropping a set:

1. Donna Vekić (CROATIA): 6-3 6-4
2. Jennifer Brady (USA): 6-3 6-1
3. Venus: 6-4 6-3
4. Strýcová: 6-4 6-4
5. Julia Görges (GERMANY): 6-3 7-5

Görges is an attack-minded player. She likes to hit big from the baseline to take time away from her opponents. She produces a huge amount of topspin on her forehand, which zooms off the court with pace and pushes players behind the baseline. Her backhand is more traditional, because it is rotated with spin crosscourt and swatted flat down the line. Her strength is her serve, because she has a strong first serve and an effective kick on the second serve. Both the first and second serves help Görges to put her opponents on defense. But unfortunately, she is not quick on court and does not change the pace of her shots. This makes her weak to players who hit bigger than her. Goerges is also uncomfortable at the net and misses quite a few easy volleys. In the first set, Barty broke Görges in the sixth game. In the second set, Görges broke in the second game. But Barty broke in the fifth and 11th games.

# **2019 WIMBLEDON – WOMEN’S DOUBLES**

Strýcová formed a unique partnership with Hsieh. Hsieh has a unique, eccentric playing style. Her two-handed groundstrokes are powerful with depth. She incorporates drop shots, lobs, volleys, and sharply angled groundstrokes. This helped her and Strýcová to win their first Grand Slam title without dropping a set:

1. Mona Barthel (GERMANY)/Xenia Knoll (SWITZERLAND): 6-2 6-1
2. Ekaterina Alexandrova (RUSSIA)/Viktorija Golubic (SWITZERLAND): 6-2 6-2
3. Begu/Monica Niculescu (ROMANIA): 6-3 6-4
4. Aryna Sabalenka (BELARUS)/Elise Mertens (BELGIUM): 6-4 6-2
5. Babos/Mladenovic: 7-6[7-5] 6-4
6. Dabrowski/Yifan Xu (CHINA): 6-2 6-4

The Taiwanese-Czech duo played their best tennis against Babos and Mladenovic. The first set went on serve for all 12 games. Babos and Mladenovic earned the first minibreak on the first point of the first-set tiebreak. But Hsieh and Strýcová returned the favor to earn a minibreak lead of their own on the next point. In the second set, Hsieh and Strýcová broke in the first game. This was the lone service break of the match. Hsieh and Strýcová’s clean stats revealed that they had **NO** aces **OR** double faults **AND** faced zero break points.

# **2019 ROLEX PARIS MASTERS – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Shanghai Masters is played on outdoor hard courts. It is held annually in early October at the Qizhong Forest Sports City Arena in the Minhang District of Shanghai.

Daniil Medvedev (RUSSIA) is a baseline player. He possesses superior movement and quickness. This lets him excel from the back court. His game is based on long baseline rallies because of his groundstrokes. His best shot from the baseline is his backhand, which he hits with depth, pace, and precision. He is a talented defender and can handle pace with his positioning and quickness. His forehand has an eccentric motion, which lets him generate easy pace. He also possesses a powerful serve. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2018 WINSTON-SALEM OPEN**

1. Bašić: 6-4 6-4
2. de Minaur: 6-3 6-3
3. Guido Andreozzi (ARGENTINA): 7-5 6-1
4. Harrison: 7-6[7-4] 6-4
5. Steve Johnson (USA): 6-4 6-4

**2018 RAKUTEN JAPAN OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. Diego Schwartzman (ARGENTINA): 6-4 6-4
2. Martin Kližan (SLOVAKIA): 6-4 6-3
3. Raonic: 7-6[7-4] 6-3
4. Denis Shapovalov (CANADA): 6-3 6-3
5. Nishikori: 6-2 6-4

**2019 CITI OPEN**

1. Bjorn Fratangelo (USA): 6-3 6-4
2. Tiafoe: 6-2 7-5
3. Čilić: 6-4 7-6[9-7]
4. Peter Gojowczyk (GERMANY): 6-2 6-2

**2019 ROGERS CUP**

1. Kyle Edmund (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-3 6-0
2. Cristian Garín (CHILE): 6-3 6-3
3. Dominic Thiem (AUSTRIA): 6-3 6-1
4. Karen Khachanov (RUSSIA): 6-1 7-6[8-6]

**2019 ST. PETERSBURG OPEN**

1. Evgeny Donskoy (RUSSIA): 7-5 6-3
2. Andrey Rublev (RUSSIA): 6-4 7-5
3. Egor Gerasimov (BELARUS): 7-5 7-5
4. Borna Ćorić (CROATIA): 6-3 6-1

Medvedev finished the 2018 season with the most hard-court match wins of any player. But the 2019 North American summer hard-court swing proved to be a transforming point in the young Russian’s career. This is when he reminded the world that he is a force to be reckoned with. I also chose to write about the championship match between Medvedev and Nick Kyrgios (AUSTRALIA). Kyrgios has an aggressive playing style with mixture and flair in his game. His strength is his serve. His serve reaches 75% accuracy and speeds up to 136 mph. His second serve is also often hit at speeds above 130 mph. He also has a tremendous, blasting forehand and dangerous backhand. His skills are also an effective slice and efficient net game. Kyrgios ousted Medvedev in two tiebreakers. But the level of tennis from both players was extraordinary. All 12 games in both sets went on serve without **ANY** break points created. Krygios had 18 aces to zero double faults, while Medvedev had 10 aces to only two double faults. The Australian credited the Russian for his tournament run. “All props to Daniil, he’s one of the most consistent players on the tour. He’s so young and his career is just beginning.”

Medvedev’s form improved throughout the rest of the 2019 season. He established himself as true hard-court player. This helped him to win the title in Shanghai without dropping a set:

1. Cameron Norrie (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-3 6-1
2. Vasek Pospisil (CANADA): 7-6[7-4] 7-5
3. Fabio Fognini (ITALY): 6-3 7-6[7-4]
4. Tsitsipas: 7-6[7-5] 7-5
5. Sascha Zverev (GERMANY): 6-4 6-1

Fognini is known for his streaky personality, flair, speed, and movement on court. The Italian is known for his baseline play and big ground strokes. One of his signature shots is his off forehand He also uses the backhand down the line frequently, often in key moments. But his frustration can build easily, especially when he loses leads in matches.

Zverev is an aggressive player. He hits powerful groundstrokes for winners. Although his height slows him down on the court, it lets him get more balls back in play. Zverev can create power with his groundstrokes, especially with his strength on his backhand. He can also hit slice backhands. Zverev excels at hitting a high percentage of first serves. But volleying is his biggest weakness.

# **2019 ROLEX PARIS MASTERS – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Paris Masters is held in Paris. It is played on indoor hard courts at the AccorHotels Arena in Bercy. The event is the final tournament on tour before the year-ending ATP Finals. The ATP Finals is the year-ending championships for the men’s tennis players and is held annually each November. The ATP Finals feature the top eight singles players and doubles teams on the ATP Rankings.  Djokovic won the title without dropping a set:

1. Corentin Moutet (FRANCE): 7-6[7-2] 6-4
2. Edmund: 7-6[9-7] 6-1
3. Tsitsipas: 6-1 6-2
4. Grigor Dimitrov (BULGARIA): 7-6[7-5] 6-4
5. Shapovalov: 6-3 6-4

Moutet has a mixture of genius, grinding texture, complexity, and a touch of insanity. He can create any shot at any time. As a lefty, his forehand makes him a solid defender. But his complexity can come unglued with unforced errors. In the first set, Moutet broke in the seventh game. But Djokovic broke in the 10th game. Then, Djokovic secured the first-set tiebreak with a double minibreak. In the second set, Djokovic broke in the third and fifth games. Then, Moutet broke in the sixth game.

Dimitrov employs an all-round playing style. He has flexibility, athleticism, and fluidity. He uses a traditional one-handed backhand. While his forehand is strong, it can also be weak because he tends to over-rotate and misfire on that wing. In the first set, both players traded service holds for all 12 games. Djokovic claimed the first-set tiebreak. In the second set, Djokovic broke Dimitrov in the fifth game. The Serbian did not face any break points. This score was unique because it was **EXACTLY IDENTICAL** to the 2019 Wimbledon semifinal win for Hsieh and Strýcová when they defeated Babos and Mladenovic. But the only differences were the serving stats and service breaks.

# **2020 ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Adelaide International is played in Adelaide, South Australia at the Memorial Drive Tennis Centre. It is a tune-up tournament for the Australian Open. Dayana Yastremska (UKRAINE) has a unique playing style. She is a great mover with incredible power on her groundstrokes. This helped her reach three finals without dropping a set:

**2018 HONG KONG TENNIS OPEN**

1. Fanny Stollár (HUNGARY): 6-4 6-4
2. Saisai: 6-3 6-3
3. Kristína Kučová: 7-6[8-6] 6-2
4. Zhang Shuai (CHINA): 7-5 6-4
5. Wang Qiang (CHINA): 6-2 6-1

**2019 THAILAND OPEN**

1. Arantxa Rus (NETHERLANDS): 6-0 6-3
2. Peng: 6-1 6-4
3. Muguruza: 7-6[7-5] 6-1
4. Linette: 6-4 6-3

**2019 INTERNATIONAUX DE STRASBOURG**

1. Pauline Parmentier (FRANCE): 6-2 6-4
2. Sam Stosur (AUSTRALIA): 6-0 6-2
3. Fiona Ferro (FRANCE): 6-1 6-3
4. Sabalenka: 6-4 6-4

At the beginning of the 2020 season, the Ukranian started a partnership with Sascha Bajin (GERMANY). Bajin coached Osaka to two Grand Slams in the 2018 US Open and 2019 Australian Open. Yastremska reached the Adelaide final without dropping a set:

1. Babos: 7-5 6-3
2. Kerber 6-3 2-0
3. Vekić: 6-4 6-3
4. Sabalenka: 6-4 7-6[7-4]

Sabalenka is an aggressive baseline player with a powerful serve. Her game revolves around aiming for groundstroke winners. These groundstrokes are often hit flat. While Sabalenka can hit lots of winners, they are often accompanied by many unforced errors. The same is also said for her serve. Yastremska received serve in this match. In the first set, Yastremska broke in the fifth game. In the second set, Yastremska broke in the first game. But Sabalenka broke in the sixth game.

# **2020 MEXICAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Mexican Open is played on outdoor hard courts and held annually in late February at the Fairmont Acapulco Princess in Acapulco, Mexico. Leylah Fernandez (CANADA) possesses a unique playing style. Like Nadal and Kerber, she is born right-handed, but plays left-handed. Her forehand is her best weapon. She reached two junior Grand Slam finals without dropping a set:

**2019 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

1. Kylie Collins (USA): 6-3 6-2
2. Moyuka Uchijima (JAPAN): 6-4 7-6[7-5]
3. Lisa Pigato (ITALY): 6-3 7-5
4. Manon Léonard (FRANCE): 6-3 6-1
5. Anastasia Tikhonova (RUSSIA): 6-1 6-3

**2019 FRENCH OPEN**

1. Mariia Tkacheva (RUSSIA): 7-5 6-3
2. Marta Custic (SPAIN): 6-0 6-3
3. Park So-hyun (SOUTH KOREA): 6-2 6-0
4. Elsa Jacquemot (FRANCE): 6-0 6-0
5. María Camila Osorio Serrano (COLOMBIA): 6-2 6-4
6. Emma Navarro (USA): 6-3 6-2

When Fernandez played at the Mexican Open, she cruised through all her matches in straight sets to book her place in the championship match:

**QUALIFYING**

1. Cabrera: 6-3 6-1
2. Lepchenko: 6-3 6-3

**MAIN DRAW**

1. Stojanović: 6-4 6-1
2. Nao Hibino (JAPAN): 6-3 6-0
3. Potapova: 6-3 7-5
4. Renata Zarazúa (MEXICO): 6-3 6-3

Heather Watson (GREAT BRITAIN) is right-handed and plays with a two-handed backhand. Her on-court intelligence, court sense and timing are the key points about her game. She possesses variety with a one-handed backhand slice, volleys, and angles. Heather Watson (GREAT BRITAIN) has on-court communication, court sense and timing in her game. Even though Watson beat Fernandez in a three-setter, the Brit had only praise for her Canadian opponent. “I’ve played Leylah two times before this, and I knew what to expect. She is a great player, and it would be tough because the two matches before that had been tough. The thing I notice about her the most is the head on her shoulders. She is very, very mature for her age. I think it is her mental toughness that really stands out. I think she’s going to have a great career ahead of her and rise up the rankings very quickly if she keeps playing like this.”

# **SERENA’S YTD STATS**

Ever since I graduated from high school, tennis has always been one of my favorite sports to watch and follow. There is lots of data involved in the sport with the number of tournaments played, number of titles won, wins, losses, and winning percentile ranges. So, I knew that the best way to organize this data is in a table.

Serena is my favorite tennis player. She is a steady player with more wins, less losses, and solid winning percentile ranges. I came up with the idea to collect her data, organize it in a table, and analyze that data in several different ways. I will break down this data analysis project into smaller pieces to show you guys how to put this together step-by-step.

I collected Serena’s data from the WTA website. When I organized her data in my table, I created the following headings:

* YEAR [I started with the year that Serena made her debut on the WTA tour, which was in 1997]
* TOURNAMENTS [number of tournaments played each year]
* TITLES [number of titles won]
* WINS
* LOSSES
* WINNING PERCENTILE RANGE [difference between wins and losses divided by wins]

Wins and losses are straight-forward results in tennis. But a walkover result is different. A walkover occurs when a player withdraws before the start of a match, or a player wins a match without having to face their opponent on court. So, the result does not count towards a player’s record of wins and losses.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **YEAR** | **TOURNAMENTS** | **TITLES** | **WINS** | **LOSSES** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| 1997 | 5 | 0 | 9 | 5 | 44% |
| 1998 | 11 | 0 | 29 | 11 | 62% |
| 1999 | 13 | 5 | 41 | 7 | 83% |
| 2000 | 11 | 3 | 37 | 8 | 78% |
| 2001 | 10 | 3 | 38 | 7 | 82% |
| 2002 | 13 | 8 | 56 | 5 | 91% |
| 2003 | 8 | 4 | 38 | 3 | 92% |
| 2004 | 12 | 2 | 39 | 9 | 77% |
| 2005 | 10 | 1 | 21 | 7 | 67% |
| 2006 | 4 | 0 | 12 | 4 | 67% |
| 2007 | 13 | 2 | 35 | 10 | 71% |
| 2008 | 13 | 4 | 44 | 8 | 82% |
| 2009 | 16 | 3 | 50 | 12 | 76% |
| 2010 | 6 | 2 | 25 | 4 | 84% |
| 2011 | 6 | 2 | 22 | 3 | 86% |
| 2012 | 15 | 7 | 58 | 4 | 93% |
| 2013 | 16 | 11 | 78 | 4 | 95% |
| 2014 | 16 | 7 | 52 | 8 | 85% |
| 2015 | 13 | 5 | 53 | 3 | 94% |
| 2016 | 8 | 2 | 38 | 6 | 84% |
| 2017 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 88% |
| 2018 | 7 | 0 | 18 | 6 | 67% |
| 2019 | 8 | 0 | 25 | 6 | 76% |
| 2020 | 6 | 1 | 17 | 5 | 71% |
| 2021 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 88% |
| **SUM** | **244** | **73** | **851** | **147** | **83%** |
| **AVERAGE** | **10** | **3** | **34** | **6** | **83%** |

I created two charts. The first chart I created was a clustered column chart for Serena’s YTD wins and losses. A clustered column chart compares values across categories.

The second chart I created was a line chart. A line chart is used to track changes over certain periods of time. I also added a trendline to my line chart. A trendline can tell me an upward slope or downward trend in my data to help me predict Serena’s future winning percentile range. I can see that Serena’s winning percentile range in 2022 is between 80% and 90%.

# **SOURCES**

I hope my readers enjoyed reading about consistency in tennis! If you guys want to watch the highlights of these matches, please feel free to check out these YouTube videos at your convenience!

# **2010 WIMBLEDON**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoDnsqnQ4Tc>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWsGFNBpWVE>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDuf1UOV5uY>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kwNu2HOZO8>
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pel7S0n3V_k>
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsAdVyEXdV0>

**2011 US OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XojByvxPOBQ>

**2012 STANFORD**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VG18HkIKghw>

**2012 OLYMPICS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMUjXz7TuFk>

# **2013 BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nl-OuwEUHmg>

# **2014 BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-iTgZeaP8s>

**2015 US OPEN**

# <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=634UMLDrVzc>

**2015 WTA FINALS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALSJD_1tJ5o>

# **2016 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1u8p2v0Zws>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yp5DCUib1nc>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZbYobSBwjM>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AimypuXJjFo>
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdBDPd7Lf8I>
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FQkBD96usI>

**2016 WIMBLEDON**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGoI7rAzNTE>

**2017 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlB4YvHyeoo>

# **2018 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPWj01Q1Jx0>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BODJnANg4Xs>

**2019 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ox8uWPCn0I>

**2019 MUTUA MADRID OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rx6k-yXL93M>

**2019 INTERNATIONAUX DE STRASBOURG**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcSkh2a5HmE>

**2019 BIRMINGHAM CLASSIC**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0rcWhB14Us>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PPNqLRkoG8>

# **2020 ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GL8DOgodemQ>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQ8gw1bh17w>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfdRJmrQb9s>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4QZBtnKPjg>

# **OFFICIAL TENNIS WEBSITES**

1. <https://www.atptour.com/>
2. <https://www.wtatennis.com/>
3. <https://ausopen.com/>
4. <https://www.rolandgarros.com/en-us/>
5. <https://www.wimbledon.com/>
6. <https://www.usopen.org/index.html>