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 contrasting times. The 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 at the end of June into early July, and the US Open from the end of August into early September. The Grand Slams last two weeks and each Grand Slam is on a different surface [Australian and US Opens 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 for the men [outside of the four Grand Slams, the men play best of three sets in the other tournaments], while the WTA is for the women. My favorite matches are from the Grand Slams and other tournaments on the ATP and WTA tours. I will analyze and focus on certain matches from specific rounds.

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

Serena Williams (USA) is a baseline player. Her game revolves around taking direct control of rallies with her serve, return game, and groundstrokes. Her forehand and double-handed backhand are the most powerful shots in the women’s game. She constantly projects great pace and placement with her serve. 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. 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. 9 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

Cibulková forms her game with enthusiasm and pace. She can embark on long rallies with her drop shots. Her strength creates quickness to reach and return shots. In the first set, Serena broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first eleven 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 to put herself one point away from a second-set tiebreak. But Serena won Cibulková’s last three service points of the match with two return winners and a forehand return 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 strength is her mental toughness and competitive spirit. 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 with a minibreak. Then, Serena broke in the fourth game of the second set.

Li is an aggressive baseliner with quick reflexes and athleticism. Her crosscourt forehand is her favorite shot because she can hit it with great accuracy and pace. Her backhand is also steady because she can release it to all areas of the court to dictate play. She has a solid defensive game with footwork, speed, and movement. Serena received serve in this match. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first ten games. In the 11th game, Li raced out to triple game point. But she let Serena in back to deuce with two forehand errors and a double fault. Serena earned a break point with a second consecutive double fault. Then, the American broke in the 11th game with a forehand volley error from Li. From triple game point in the 11th game, Serena won six straight points to earn the key break and serve for the first set in the 12th game. In the 12th game, Serena missed her first service point. But she smoothly won her last four service points of the set. Things could have tough for Serena if Li effectively held to love in the 11th game. If that were the case, then Serena would need to hold in the 12th game to force a first-set tiebreak. But once Li squandered triple game point, Serena did an excellent job to take advantage of Li’s dip in form. The American crushed 13 winner to only five unforced errors and faced zero break points in the first set. In the second set, Serena broke in the fifth and seventh games. Li broke in the eighth game. But Serena broke again in the ninth game to claim the match.

Kvitová has an offensive game. She also has fast, well-placed serves. The Czech uses her lefty serve to set up her groundstrokes. She also comes to the net to finish points and can hit volleys and overheads comfortably. Her forehand is her dominant wing because she can create tremendous pace and penetration on it. In the first set, Kvitová broke in the fifth game, while Serena broke in the eighth game. Then, Serena claimed the first-set tiebreak with a minibreak. In the second set, Serena broke in the fifth and seventh games.

# **2011 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Serena’s 2011 season was limited due to her health issues. This caused her ranking to fall out of the top 100. But after she won titles Stanford and Toronto, this resurgence helped her return to the top 32 seeds of the WTA rankings. Her stats in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced ratios helped her reach the final without losing a set. She dropped only 29 games in six matches:

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. Nastia 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 is a defensive baseline player. Her counterpunching playing style has movement, speed, anticipation, balance, and stamina. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth and sixth games. Wozniacki broke in the seventh game. But Serena broke in the eighth game to claim the first set. In the second set, Serena broke in the third game. Wozniacki broke in the ninth game. But Serena broke in the 10th game to claim the match.

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

The Bank of the West Classic 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

Vandeweghe has a strong serve. She plays aggressive with her heavy, powerful groundstrokes. In the first set, Serena broke in the second and fourth games. Then, Vandeweghe broke in the third, fifth, and seventh games. But Serena broke in the 10th and 12th games to claim the first set. Then, Serena broke in the fourth game of the second set.

# **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. The tournament takes place at the Queensland Tennis Center in Brisbane. This tournament heading is different because I chose to merge the 2013 and 2014 editions together. Serena first played at this tournament in 2012. She won her opener against Jovanovski before she withdrew from the tournament with a left ankle injury. But in 2013 and 2014, she became the only player to successfully defend her title two years in a row without dropping a set both times:

**2013**

1. Varvara Lepchenko (USA): 6-2 6-1
2. Alizé Cornet (FRANCE): 6-2 6-2
3. Sloane Stephens (USA): 6-4 6-3
4. Pavlyuchenkova: 6-2 6-1

**2014**

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

I chose to write about Serena’s 2014 title win against Azárenka. Azárenka is an aggressive baseline player. She can redirect power both crosscourt and down-the-line. Her movement, speed, court coverage, and footwork let her blend offense and defense together. 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 and seventh games, while Azárenka broke in the fourth and sixth games. In the 10th game, Serena was in danger of dropping the second set when she lost her first two service points. But she recovered to win four straight service points. Immediately after Serena held in the 10th game, I knew that this next 11th game was now a **MUST-HOLD** game for Azárenka. Azárenka was two points away from claiming the second set when she won Serena’s first two service points in the 10th game. But Serena’s strength highlighted how she found four big first serves to get out of trouble at this crucial moment. Then, Serena broke in the 11th game to serve for the match in the 12th game. In the 12th game, Serena won her first two service points before Azárenka cut the deficit with a cross-court return winner. Next, Serena won her last two service points of the match. Azárenka’s return game makes her a dangerous player for any opponent to face. But I was curious to know why her losing record against Serena was so lopsided. So, I decided to collect their stats from this match and organize them in a table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Serena | Azárenka |
| **1st SERVE %** | 61% | 72% |
| **ACES** | 11 | 4 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 0 | 6 |
| **WINNERS** | 30 | 15 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 30 | 23 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 75% [27 of 36] | 64% [35 of 55] |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 57% [13 of 23] | 38% [8 of 21] |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 50% [4 of 8] | 67% [ 2 of 3] |

Each women had strengths and weaknesses in this match. Azárenka maintained a higher first serve percentage and came out on top in break point conversions. Those two components came in the second set, when Azárenka broke Serena in the fourth and sixth games. But her serve came apart in the seventh and 11th games. Even though Serena had a lower first serve percentage and break point conversion rate, she kept her first and second serve points won in her normal category.

With her 2013 and 2014 titles, Serena maintained her perfect streak of sixteen sets won and zero sets lost in this tournament. Even though she permanently chose not to participate at this tournament anymore after her 2014 win, she already cemented herself far above the rest of the women with her achievement. Her Brisbane International success in 2013 and 2014 was so rare she left large shoes to fill. Since the 2014 edition, there are only three other women, who managed to successfully reach the final without dropping a set – Sharapova [2015 champion], Azárenka [2016 champion], and 2019 runner-up Lesia Tsurenko (UKRAINE). I will explain about Tsurenko’s run in a later heading.

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

Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC) plays left-handed with a two-handed backhand. She possesses a high topspin forehand. Her timing off the ground lets her project groundstrokes with power, and she is quick to spot opportunities to take the initiative. She has a dangerous return that can hit clean 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. Lisicki: 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 movement and net play make her a fast player. In this match, Šafářová received serve. In the first set, Ivanović got off to a strong start with a break in the second game. But Šafářová broke in the ninth and 11th games. In the second set, Šafářová broke in the third game. Ivanović broke in the 10th game. But Šafářová broke again in the 11th game.

Casey Dellacqua (AUSTRALIA) and Slava Shvedova (KAZAKHSTAN) formed a unique partnership with their playing styles. Dellacqua has spin on her shots with a strong lefty forehand. 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. Katya Makarova (RUSSIA)/Elena Vesnina (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-2

Makarova is an all-court player, who uses power and angles to set up her shots. She can attack the return by hitting deep with her backhand. Meanwhile, Vesnina has an all-court game, but focuses on having an offensive baseline game. Her game is based on getting control in the rallies by using her groundstrokes to move her opponents around the court to find an opening. She can use her backhand to find angles on the court and dominate the rally. She also frequently uses drop shots, volleys, and angles to win points. Her movement and footwork around the court is solid, and she can accelerate around the court horizontally. The Russians were the heavy favorites to win this match. But experience helped Dellacqua and Shvedova to win this match in straight sets. Shvedova won two Grand Slam titles with Vania King (USA) 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 believe that Shvedova knew what to expect from Vesnina. Ultimately, Dellacqua and Shvedova pulled off the upset in straight sets.

# **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 superior movement, anticipation, and court coverage. Meanwhile, Mirza is an offensive player. She can set up attacks with her groundstrokes. 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)/Date-Krumm (JAPAN): 6-0 6-1
3. Anabel Medina Garrigues (SPAIN)/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

Hingis and Mirza 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, while Hingis and Mirza broke in the second game. In the final set, Makarova and Vesnina broke in the third game. The Russians were two games away from victory in the seventh game of the final set. But Hingis and Mirza held in the eighth and 10th games. Then, they broke in the ninth and 11th games and successfully served out the match in the 12th game.

# **2015 US OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Federer is an all-court, all-around player with speed and fluidity. His movement and footwork help him run around shots. He has immense variety with his forehand, because he can hit it with both topspin and pace. This helped him reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Leonardo Mayer (ARGENTINA): 6-1 6-2 6-2
   1. Twelve aces
   2. Five double faults
   3. Twenty-nine winners
   4. Thirteen unforced errors
2. Steve Darcis (BELGIUM): 6-1 6-2 6-1
   1. Eleven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. Forty-six winners
   4. Twenty-five unforced errors
3. Philipp Kohlschreiber: 6-3 6-4 6-4
   1. Five aces
   2. Four double faults
   3. Twenty-seven winners
   4. Twenty-six unforced errors
4. John Isner (USA): 7-6[7-0] 7-6[8-6] 7-5
   1. Fifteen aces
   2. One double fault
   3. Fifty-five winners
   4. Sixteen unforced errors
5. Richard Gasquet (FRANCE): 6-3 6-3 6-1
   1. Sixteen aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. Fifty winners
   4. Twenty-one unforced errors
6. Stan Wawrinka (SWITZERLAND): 6-4 6-3 6-1
   1. Ten aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. Twenty-nine winners
   4. Seventeen unforced errors

I chose to write about the championship match between Federer and Novak Djokovic (SERBIA). Djokovic is an aggressive baseline player. His best shot is his backhand down the line because it has pace and precision. He has quickness, court coverage and mobility, which let him hit winners from shaky positions. In the first set, Djokovic broke in the third and seventh games, while Federer broke in the fourth game. In the second set, Federer broke in the 12th game. 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.

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

The WTA Finals is the year-end championships for the women. 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 the 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 went undefeated for the rest of the season. They secured the top spot at the WTA Finals 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 an aggressive playing style with slices and drop-shots. Meanwhile, Mladenovic has an all-court playing style, using variety along at the baseline to win points. Her forehand is her strongest wing, and she can hit this shot both flat, and with topspin. She can also hit her backhand as a slice more frequently to change the pace of the rally. She uses her volleys, along with her backhand slice and drop shots, to create variety in her game. Her height and footwork help her develop movement. In this match, Hingis and Mirza received serve. In the first set, Hingis and Mirza broke in the ninth game. Then, the Swiss-Miss Indian duo broke 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 twenty-six games in six matches. She accumulated forty-six aces, ten double faults, 164 winners, and ninety-eight unforced errors:

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. Twelve 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. She possesses powerful groundstrokes. She can create angles with both her forehand and backhand to amaze her opponents and hit winners with ease. She can regularly hit deep returns and take the ball early while receiving, which lets her hit a considerable amount of return winners. In this match, Serena received serve. In the first set, Serena broke in the third game and fifth games, while Giorgi broke in the sixth game. In the second set, Serena broke in the 11th game.

Aga Radwańska is a tactically delicate tennis player. She can pull off challenging shots with smoothness. Her game is based on mobility and anticipation. She can redirect the ball by using her backhand on defense. Her primary weapons are slices and lobs. She can hit her groundstrokes at a variety of angles. 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 again in the ninth game.

# **2016 INDIAN WELLS MASTERS – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Indian Wells Masters take place at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden in Indian Wells, CA. The singles main draws have ninety-six players in a 128-player grid. The top thirty-two seeded players get a free pass from the first round into the second round. Serena’s form in this tournament was incredible. She successfully reached the final without dropping a set:

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]

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

The Miami Open takes place after Indian Wells. Indian Wells and Miami are the only two tournaments, where matches take place beyond eight days. In this edition, Azárenka won the title without dropping a set:

1. Monica Puig (PUERTO RICO): 6-2 6-4
2. Linette: 6-3 6-0
3. Muguruza: 7-6[8-6] 7-6[7-4]
4. Jo Konta (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-2 6-4
5. Angelique Kerber (GERMANY): 6-2 7-5
6. Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-2

Muguruza has an aggressive, all-court game. She has powerful groundstrokes and can use her serve to set up points. But her aggressive, unpredictable style causes her to lose to lower-ranked players. Azárenka broke in the third game of the first set and the second game of the second set. Muguruza broke in the fourth game of the second set and the ninth game of the second set. The Spaniard fell to the Belarussian in two tiebreakers.

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

The Italian Open is a tune-up tournament for the French Open. Serena 13 of Serena’s 73 WTA titles came on clay. She won three French Open titles in 2002, 2013, and 2015. The American also reigned in Rome in 2002, 2013, and 2014. In this edition, she won the title without dropping a set:

1. Anna-Lena Friedsam (GERMANY): 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. Kuznetsova: 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

McHale is an aggressive baseline player with a strong forehand and incredible speed. McHale broke in the fifth game of the first set. But Serena broke in the 10th game. Then, Serena broke in the third, fifth, and seventh games of the second set.

Keys is a baseline player. She relies on her power to hit winners to end points. In the first set, Keys broke in the first game. But Serena broke in the sixth game and dominated the first set tiebreak with a minibreak. Serena broke in the first and third games of the second set. Keys broke in the fourth game. But Serena broke again in the ninth game.

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

Kerber was born right-handed but plays left-handed. Her counterpunching style lets her hit low-risk winners with ease. She can hit her forehand with disguise, speed, and redirect it shot down-the-line. This helped her breeze through to her first Wimbledon 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

I chose to write about the Wimbledon final between Serena and Kerber. Serena and Kerber faced each other in the 2016 Australian Open final. In that match, Serena won less than 50% of her points at the net and sprayed forty-six unforced errors across three sets. But despite the loss, Serena made a significant turnaround and successfully avenged her loss to Kerber in the Wimbledon final. With her Wimbledon victory, the American secured her seventh Wimbledon title and became a 22-time Grand Slam champion alongside Steffi Graf (GERMANY). “I thought I learned a valuable lesson, which I thought I learned at 18, when I tied Chrissie Evert (USA) and Martina Navratilova (USA). But now I learned I cannot think about that. I have to do the best that I can and enjoy the moment.” Patrick Mouratoglou (FRANCE), Serena’s coach, said, that Kerber is tough to play because she reads the game well and has a convenient answer to the problem. But she is predictable. Even though Kerber won all twelve sets she played in six matches, she doesn’t have a big serve to get out of trouble like Serena does. To understand this better, I collected Kerber’s match stats from her last three matches. That way, I could compare her level between each match.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Halep | Kerber |
| **1st SERVE %** | 69% | 71% |
| **ACES** | 1 | 2 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 3 | 1 |
| **WINNERS** | 18 | 23 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 21 | 21 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 50% | 57% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 36% | 42% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 75% [6 of 8] | 64% [7 of 11] |

Halep is an aggressive baseline player. She can hit winners both cross-court and down-the-line. She uses her speed and anticipation to set up her shots. But her serve does not come down from a great height and she cannot create the power required to end points quickly. In the first set, Kerber broke in the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and 12th games, while Halep broke in the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth games. In the second set, Kerber broke in the sixth and eighth games. Then, Halep broke in the seventh and ninth games. Halep earned an immediate minibreak in the second-set tiebreak. But Kerber won five of the last seven points of the match. Halep came out on top only in one area with a higher rate of break point conversion.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Kerber | Venus |
| **1st SERVE %** | 71% | 64% |
| **ACES** | 2 | 3 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 4 | 2 |
| **WINNERS** | 17 | 24 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 11 | 21 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 73% | 57% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 36% | 52% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 45% [5 of 11] | 60% [3 of 5] |

Venus has an all-court game. She can hit her backhand with slice to slow down pace in the rallies. Her height provides her with a long arm span to let her reach any ball while she is at the net. Kerber broke in the first, third, and fifth games. Venus returned the favor with breaks of in the second, fourth, and eighth games. Then, Kerber broke in the first game of the second set.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Serena | Kerber |
| **1st SERVE %** | 65% | 67% |
| **ACES** | 13 | 0 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 9 | 1 |
| **WINNERS** | 39 | 12 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 21 | 9 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 88% | 59% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 45% | 71% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | Thirty-three percent [2 of 6] | Zero percent [0 of 1] |

The championship match between Serena and Kerber was magical. The score featured only one break of serve in each set. The German had only one double fault in the entire match, which came in the second game of the first set. She also kept her unforced error count low in the single digits. Even though Kerber’s first serve percentage and second serve points won were higher than Serena’s, she fell apart on first serve points won and break points won. Kerber’s serve is her biggest weakness, because her opponents can frequently step into the court to return it. This puts the German under pressure right from the start. She also struggles to end points even if she is in a winning position. Her second serve is prone to attack, because she does not win more than 50% of her second serve points. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first eleven games. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Kerber, because she was serving to force a first-set tiebreak **AND** stay in the set. Kerber dropped serve in the 12th game. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first seven games. In the seventh game, Serena won her first service point before Kerber won the next two points. Serena found a big first serve before a loose backhand error gave Kerber her lone break point of the match. But Serena scorched down two straight aces and forced a backhand return error from Kerber to edge through a crucial hold. This was the one and only break point Serena faced in the match. Just like the 12th game of the first set, the nerves crept in for the German in the eighth game of the second set. As a result, Serena broke in the eighth game and successfully served out the match to love in the ninth game.

# **2016 NATIONAL BANK OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

The National Bank Open takes place in Canada. The event used to take place during separate weeks in the July and August for the men and women. But now, the two competitions take place during the same week in August. The events alternate between Montreal and Toronto. In the 2016 edition of this tournament, 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

Nishikori is a primary baseline player. He uses his groundstrokes to push his opponents around. He can create pace on his backhand. He also plays defensively to wear out his opponents. The Serbian broke in the sixth game of the first set. Djokovic broke in the third game of the second set. Nishikori broke in the sixth game. But Djokovic broke again in the 11th game.

# **2016 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Kerber exhibited stamina and adapted a sense to play with freedom. Her speed and sense of anticipation were top notch. She ran down the biggest shots with deadly passes. She was also able to hit forehand crosscourt, down-the-line, and inside-out. These parts of her game helped her to reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Polona Hercog (SLOVENIA): 6-0 2-0 RETIRED
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 has proficiency at the net and brutal use of her backhand slice. She has excellent anticipation with a powerful forehand. 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**

Serena’s 2016 season originally got off to a shaky start. But she got herself back on track with her 2016 Wimbledon win. She came into the 2017 Australian Open with more confidence [she tiedGraf’s record with her 22nd Grand Slam title under her belt] and less pressure [she was the number two seed and defending only finalist points]. This helped her win 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

Strýcová has a crafty game with elegant footwork and well-disguised drop shots. In the first set, Strýcová broke in the first, third, and seventh games. Serena returned the favor with breaks in the second, fourth, eighth, and 12th games. In the second set, Serena broke in the fourth game. Strýcová broke in the ninth game when Serena served for the match. But Serena broke again in the 10th game for the win.

Konta has an offensive baseline playing style. She can create sharp angles on her groundstrokes. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth and eighth games. In the second set, Konta broke in the third game. But Serena broke in the sixth and eighth games. Then, the American effectively served out the match to love in the ninth game.

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

The Dubai Tennis Championships take place at the end of February on outdoor hardcourts. Hlaváčková started a creative partnership with Shuai Peng (CHINA). Hlaváčková’s game highlights her attacking return of serves. Meanwhile, Peng plays two-handed on her groundstrokes. This helped them reach multiple finals without losing a set:

**2014 CHINA OPEN [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Medina Garrigues/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 [CHAMPIONS]**

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 [CHAMPIONS]**

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 [RUNNERS-UP]**

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

After Hlaváčková and Peng won the 2017 Shenzhen Open, they won ten more straight sets when they reached their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set at the 2017 Australian Open. This put their winning streak at 18 sets won and zero sets lost. Even though they came up short in the finals with a three-set loss, they maintained their blistering form in their next tournament. They efficiently navigated their way through a delicate draw in Dubai and breezed through another final without dropping a set:

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

Hlaváčková and Peng faced Makarova and Vesnina in the championship match. In the first set, Makarova and Vesnina broke in the second game. Hlaváčková and Peng broke in the fifth game. But the Russians broke in the sixth and eighth games to claim the first set. Hlaváčková and Peng recovered to take the second set. Then, the Russians edged the Czech Chinese duo in a match tiebreak to claim the title.

# **2017 FRENCH OPEN – MIXED DOUBLES**

Gaby Dabrowski (CANADA) started a productive partnership with Rohan Bopanna (INDIA). Dabrowski is an all-court player, who uses touch shots when she plays at the net. Meanwhile, Bopanna has a serve-oriented game, where he uses his big first serve to set up points. He is proficient at the net, and can use his sharp reflexes to deal with passing shots. Neither of these players won a Grand Slam title in their careers. But their playing styles helped them reach 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)/Benoît Paire (FRANCE): 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/Édouard Roger-Vasselin (FRANCE): 7-5 6-3
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault

Dabrowski and Bopanna faced Anna-Lena Grönefeld (GERMANY) and Robert Farah (COLOMBIA) in the final. In the first set, Grönefeld and Farah broke in the third and seventh games. Grönefeld and Farah broke in the third game of the second set. But Dabrowski and Bopanna broke in the fourth, sixth, and eighth games to claim the second set. Then, the Canadian Indian duo saved two championship points in the match tiebreak to claim the title. “We didn't start off great today, but we kept pushing and working hard together, and we finally got through. At that point in time, we didn’t think that it’s a match point. We just played aggressive.”

# **2017 WIMBLEDON – MEN’S SINGLES**

Federer’s form on grass is impeccable. The surface helps him with his athleticism, all-court knowledge, and variety. The surface lets him play quick so that his opponents do not have time to react. This helped him reach multiple Wimbledon finals without losing a set:

**2006 [CHAMPION]**

1. Richard Gasquet (FRANCE): 6-3 6-2 6-2
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 35 winners
   4. 13 unforced errors
2. Tim Henman (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-4 6-0 6-2
   1. Six aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 23 winners
   4. Eight unforced errors
3. Nicolas Mahut (FRANCE): 6-3 7-6[7-2] 6-4
   1. Seven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 50 winners
   4. 13 unforced errors
4. Tomáš Berdych (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 6-3 6-4
   1. 21 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 47 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors
5. Mario Ančić (CROATIA): 6-4 6-4 6-4
   1. Seven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 35 winners
   4. 17 unforced errors
6. Jonas Björkman (SWEDEN): 6-2 6-0 6-2
   1. Nine aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 30 winners
   4. 13 unforced errors

**2008 [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Dominik Hrbatý (SLOVAKIA): 6-3 6-2 6-2
2. Robin Söderling (SWEDEN): 6-3 6-4 7-6[7-3]
3. Marc Gicquel (FRANCE): 6-3 6-3 6-1
4. Lleyton Hewitt (AUSTRALIA): 7-6[9-7] 6-2 6-4
5. Ančić: 6-1 7-5 6-4
6. Marat Safin (RUSSIA): 6-3 7-6[7-3] 6-4

In 2017, Federer secured an eighth crown at the All-England Club. He was the second player to reign at Wimbledon without dropping a set in the Open Era since Björn Borg (SWEDEN) accomplished this feat in 1976. Like his 2006 win, he accumulated positive ratios in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced errors categories:

1. Alexandr Dolgopolov (UKRAINE): 6-3 3-0 RETIRED
   1. 10 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 18 winners
   4. 17 unforced errors
2. Dušan Lajović (SERBIA): 7-6[7-0] 6-3 6-2
   1. Nine aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 31 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors
3. Mischa Zverev (GERMANY): 7-6[7-3] 6-4 6-4
   1. 13 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 61 winners
   4. Seven unforced errors
4. Grigor Dimitrov (BULGARIA): 6-4 6-2 6-4
   1. Eight aces
   2. Zero double faults
   3. 24 winners
   4. 11 unforced errors
5. Milos Raonic (CANADA): 6-4 6-2 7-6[7-4]
   1. 11 aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 46 winners
   4. Nine unforced errors
6. Berdych: 7-6[7-4] 7-6[7-4] 6-4
   1. 13 aces
   2. Four double faults
   3. 53 winners
   4. 20 unforced errors
7. Marin Čilić (CROATIA): 6-3 6-1 6-4
   1. Eight aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 23 winners
   4. Eight unforced errors

Marin Čilić (CROATIA) is an aggressive baseline player. He can use his height to hit big off both wings and change direction. He can use his serve to win free points and set up groundstroke winners. He can hit his forehand with topspin, which lets him control most rallies. His footwork helps him reach balls that others cannot. In the first set, Federer broke in the fifth and ninth games. The Swiss grabbed two more breaks in the second and sixth games in the second set. Then, Federer broke again in the seventh game of the third set.

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

Federer is a great attacking player. He averages 90% of service games in his career, because he can produce big serves in tight games. Federer is confident in his game and always found a way to play his best at the moments in matches when it counted most. This helped the Swiss player win the 2007 Australian Open title without dropping a set:

1. Björn Phau (GERMANY): 7-5 6-0 6-4
   1. Seven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 29 winners
   4. 29 unforced errors
2. Björkman: 6-2 6-3 6-2
   1. Seven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 38 winners
   4. 19 unforced errors
3. Mikhail Youzhny (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-3 7-6[7-5]
   1. Seven aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 40 winners
   4. 33 unforced errors
4. Djokovic: 6-2 7-5 6-3
   1. 12 aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 51 winners
   4. 26 unforced errors
5. Tommy Robredo (SPAIN): 6-3 7-6[7-2] 7-5
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 42 winners
   4. 31 unforced errors
6. Andy Roddick (USA): 6-4 6-0 6-2
   1. 10 aces
   2. Two double faults
   3. 45 winners
   4. 12 unforced errors
7. Fernando González (CHILE): 7-6[7-2] 6-4 6-4
   1. Five aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 45 winners
   4. 19 unforced errors

Eleven years later, Federer’s form was still scintillating. The Swiss won all 18 sets he played in six matches. While he could not blow his opponents out, he also did not give them any hope either. His opponents pushed him to tiebreakers. But no opponent could grab a set from him. He was able to count on his all-court game and superior skill to pull him through tough positions. He also spent fewer hours on court. This helped him accumulate positive ratios in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced errors categories:

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 RETIRED
   1. Nine aces
   2. One double fault
   3. 24 winners
   4. 15 unforced errors

I chose to write about the championship match between Federer and Čilić. Both men treated Rod Laver Arena to a five-setter thriller. In the first set, Federer broke in the first and third games. Then, Čilić won the second-set tiebreak. In the third set, Federer broke in the sixth game. In the fourth set, Federer broke in the first game. But Čilić broke in the sixth and eighth games. In the fifth set, Federer broke Čilić in the second and sixth games.

In the mixed doubles portion of the tournament, Dabrowski started a partnership with Mate Pavić (CROATIA). Pavić has quick reflexes with a 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

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. In the second set, Dabrowski and Pavić broke in the seventh game. Then, Pavić and Dabrowski claimed the title in a match tiebreak.

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

Raonic has an all-court style with a big serve. He can blast his serve with pace and hit it with kick. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2011 PACIFIC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS [CHAMPION]**

1. Xavier Malisse (BELGIUM): 6-3 6-4
2. James Blake (USA): 6-2 7-6[7-4]
3. Ricardas Berankis (LITHUANIA): 6-4 7-6[7-2]
4. Fernando Verdasco (SPAIN): 7-6[8-6] 7-6[7-5]

**2012 AIRCEL CHENNAI OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Victor Hănescu (ROMANIA): 6-1 6-4
2. Dudi Sela (ISRAEL): 7-6[7-4] 6-3
3. Nicolás Almagro (SPAIN): 6-4 6-4

**2012 PACIFIC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS [CHAMPION]**

1. Tobias Kamke (GERMANY): 6-2 7-6[9-7]
2. Kevin Anderson (SOUTH AFRICA): 7-5 7-6[7-3]
3. Ryan Harrison (USA): 7-6[7-4] 6-2
4. Denis Istomin (UZBEKISTAN): 7-6[7-3] 6-3

**2012 MEMPHIS OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Ernests Gulbis (LATVIA): 6-2 7-6[7-3]
2. Sergiy Stakhovsky (UKRAINE): 6-4 6-4
3. Olivier Rochus (BELGIUM): 7-6[7-3] 6-3
4. Benjamin Becker (GERMANY): 6-4 6-4

**2013 PACIFIC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS [CHAMPION]**

1. Michael Russell (USA): 6-2 7-5
2. Istomin: 7-6[7-0] 6-3
3. Sam Querrey (USA): 6-4 6-2
4. Tommy Haas (GERMANY): 6-4 6-3

**2013 JAPAN OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Go Soeda (JAPAN): 6-4 7-6[7-0]
2. Jérémy Chardy (FRANCE): 6-4 6-3
3. Lukáš Lacko (SLOVAKIA): 6-3 6-3
4. Ivan Dodig (CROATIA): 7-6[7-4] 6-1

**2014 WASHINGTON OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Jack Sock (USA): 7-6[7-3] 7-6[7-3]
2. Lleyton Hewitt (AUSTRALIA): 7-6[7-1] 7-6[7-3]
3. Steve Johnson (USA): 7-6[7-2] 6-2
4. Vasek Pospisil (CANADA): 6-1 6-4

**2014 JAPAN OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Bernard Tomic (AUSTRALIA): 7-6[7-3] 6-3
2. Jürgen Melzer (AUSTRIA): 6-4 6-3
3. Istomin: 7-6[10-8] 6-3
4. Gilles Simon (FRANCE): 6-1 6-4

**2015 ST. PETERSBURG OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Evgeny Donskoy (RUSSIA): 6-4 6-4
2. Tommy Robredo (SPAIN): 6-1 6-2
3. Roberto Bautista Agut (SPAIN): 6-2 7-6[7-2]

The Stuttgart Open takes place on grass courts in Stuttgart, Germany. It is a tune-up tournament for Wimbledon. In the 2018 edition of this tournament, Raonic’s flawless, solid, serve helped him reach his first grass-court final without losing a set or any of his service games:

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

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

2019 was the final year that the Brisbane International was part of the ATP and WTA tours. Tsurenko’s playing style labels her as a counterpuncher. This gives her power to dominate the court. Even though her serve is not a big strength in her game, her backhand is a powerful weapon that has helped her get out of trouble. This helped her reach the final 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

Osaka is an aggressive baseline player with power on her forehand and serve. She uses her serve to take advantage of points and her forehand controls the rallies. But Tsurenko cut Osaka’s effective playing style down in this semifinal match. Tsurenko broke in the first and seventh games of the first set. Then, the Ukrainian broke in the first game of the second set.

Tsurenko set up a clash against Karolína Plíšková (CZECH REPUBLIC) in the championship match. Even though Tsurenko lost the final in three sets after suffering a left ankle injury, she played a cleaner match than Plíšková. Plíšková has an aggressive playing style. Her groundstrokes let her hit winners from any position on court. She can hit her forehand with pace and power. But her weaknesses are movement and footwork. Her movement lets her opponents hit low-risk winners because she cannot reach winning shots quick enough. She also struggles against players who move her around the baseline. Tsurenko had only one ace each in the first and third sets. But in the first and third sets, the Ukrainian had no double faults at all. The second set saw Tsurenko hit four aces to two double faults. On the other side, Plíšková had only a single ace to five double faults. Even though Plíšková won more first serve points, Tsurenko had the cleaner aces-double faults ratio. The Ukranian also had a higher first serve percentage, second serve points, and break point conversions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Plíšková | Tsurenko |
| **ACES** | 1 | 6 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 5 | 2 |
| **1st SERVE %** | 67% | 70% |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 68% | 58% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 50% | 54% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 60% [6 out of 10] | 67% [4 out of 6] |

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

During the off-season in 2016 going into the 2017 season, Kvitová suffered injuries to her dominant left hand during a home invasion. The doctors said she may never be able to play tennis again. But she overcame the obstacles to return to the sport and reached her first Australian Open final without dropping a set:

1. Rybáriková: 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 an aggressive playing style that is daring and fierce. She has a powerful serve and strong groundstrokes. Her strengths are her kick serve, inside-out forehand, and her backhand down the line. She can also hit winners from any position on court. In this semifinal match, Collins broke in the fifth game. But Kvitová broke in the sixth game. After Kvitová won the first set tiebreak with a double minibreak, she broke in the first, third, and fifth games of the second set.

I chose to write about the final between Kvitová and Osaka. This final was special, because the was the first-ever head-to-head meeting between both these players. In the first set, all twelve games went on serve. Then, Osaka won the first-set tiebreak with a double minibreak. In the second set, Kvitová broke in the second game. But Osaka broke in the third and fifth games. Then, Kvitová broke in the 10th and 12th games. In the third set, Osaka broke in the third game.

Rafael Nadal (SPAIN) is born right-handed but plays left-handed. His game is based on his groundstrokes, footwork, and court coverage. This makes him an aggressive counterpuncher. His strength and speed on court make him an exceptional defender because he can create winning plays from questionable 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 a baseline, all-court player. He hits his forehand and one-handed backhand with topspin to open the court. He can control the points with his forehand to move his opponents around. Tsitsipas routed Federer in a fourth-round four-setter and saved all twelve break points that he faced. But in this semifinal match, Nadal broke in the third and seventh games of the first set. Then, the Spaniard broke ninth game of the second set. This was followed by breaks in the first, third, and fifth games of the third set. Before this semifinal match started, Tsitsipas was predicted to push Nadal to five sets. But several people pointed out that Tsitsipas’s game matched up better with Federer’s than Nadal’s. While I realized that this point made complete sense, I realized that the only way to uncover the truth was to collect the match stats for Tsitsipas’s fourth-round win against Federer and semifinal loss to Nadal. Then, I organized the stats in two separate tables.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Tsitsipas | Federer |
| **1st SERVE %** | 60% [112 of 188] | 67% [105 of 156] |
| **ACES** | 20 | 12 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 1 | 0 |
| **WINNERS** | 62 | 61 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 36 | 55 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 78% [87 of 112] | 79% [83 of 105] |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 64% [49 of 76] | 61% [31 of 51] |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 33% [1 of 3] | 0% [0 of 12] |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Tsitsipas | Nadal |
| **1st SERVE %** | 69% [45 of 65] | 66% [40 of 61] |
| **ACES** | 5 | 5 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 2 | 0 |
| **WINNERS** | 17 | 30 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 22 | 14 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 64% [29 of 45] | 85% [34 of 40] |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 30% [6 of 20] | 71% [15 of 21] |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 0% [0 of 1] | 55% [ 6 of 11] |

When Tsitsipas defeated Federer, the aces, winners, first serve percentages, first serve points won, and second serve points won were close in proximity. This is because Tsitsipas and Federer share the same playing styles. But when Tsitsipas lost to Nadal, the Greek’s first and second serve points won took a plunge. Tsitsipas’s weakness is that he struggles to return serve against players with strong kick serves on their backhand. In other words, the Greek went for too much, too soon.

# **2019 MIAMI OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Isner is an aggressive player. He can use his groundstrokes to finish points quickly. His serve is powerful and stable because he delivers huge serves when it matters most. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2011 NEWPORT HALL OF FAME OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Karol Beck (SLOVAKIA): 6-3 6-2
2. Arnaud Clément (FRANCE): 7-6[8-6] 6-4
3. Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA): 7-6[7-5] 6-4
4. Kamke: 7-5 7-6[7-4]
5. Rochus: 6-3 7-6[8-6]

**2017 HALL OF FAME OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Sam Groth (AUSTRALIA): 6-2 6-4
2. Dennis Novikov (USA): 6-4 6-4
3. Bjorn Frantangelo (USA): 6-2 6-4

**2017 BB&T ATLANTA OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Vasek Pospisil (CANADA): 6-3 6-4
2. Lukáš Lacko (SLOVAKIA): 7-5 6-4
3. Müller: 6-4 6-2
4. Ryan Harrison (USA): 7-6[8-6] 7-6[9-7]

Isner’s form in Miami was flawless. He won all ten sets he played in five matches and dropped serve only three times throughout his run in the tournament:

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 is an all-court player with a strong forehand. In the first set, Auger-Aliassime broke in the seventh game. But Isner broke in the 10th game. In the second set, Auger-Aliassime broke in the sixth game. But Isner broke in the ninth game and defeated Auger-Aliassime in two tiebreakers.

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

The Madrid Open takes place in early May. It is a tune-up tournament for the French Open. Kiki Bertens (NETHERLANDS) is a baseline player. She can hit her forehand with heavy topspin. Her movement, fitness, footwork, and court coverage make her an expert counterpuncher. 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 favors her forehand and can run around her backhand. Bertens received serve 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. But Bertens broke in the seventh game. In the 10th game, Bertens was down triple set point on her serve. But she edged through a key hold. Then, she broke in the 11th game and efficiently served out the match in the 12th game.

With her win against Stephens, Bertens set up a final against Halep. The Romanian won four sets without losing a game and dropped only one set against Bencic in a second-set tiebreaker in the semifinals. Bertens’s quarterfinal win over Kvitová in the quarterfinals took the energy out of her. The Dutchwoman told reporters that she struggled to recover after her win against Kvitová. But the good news for Bertens is that she had an earlier finish in her semifinal win against Stephens. This earlier finish gave her extra time to squeeze in rest and recovery as much as possible. This was a physical advantage for Bertens. 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 once in the third game. Ultimately, Bertens claimed the biggest title of her career and dropped only thirty-five games in six matches.

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

Markéta Vondroušová (CZECH REPUBLIC) has a crafty playing style with a variety of shots. Her game has lengthy rallies with her lefty topspin forehand. Her signature shot is her drop shot. 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 has an aggressive all-court game with variety. She can hit her backhand with slice. She can extend rallies to force errors out of aggressive players. In the first set, Vondroušová broke in the fifth game. Martić broke in the sixth and eighth games. But Vondroušová broke in the ninth game. In the second set, Vondroušová broke in the second, sixth, and 11th games.

Vondroušová scored a breathtaking recovery in her semifinal win against Konta. In the first set, Konta broke in the first and fifth games. But Vondroušová broke in the fourth, 10th and 12th games. In the second set, Konta broke in the third game. But Vondroušová broke in the 10th game. Then, the Czech closed out the match with a double minibreak in the second-set tiebreak.

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

Strýcová formed a unique partnership with Hsieh. Hsieh has a unique, eccentric playing style with her two-handed groundstrokes. She incorporates drop shots, lobs, volleys, and sharply angled groundstrokes. This helped them win their first Grand Slam title without losing 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 flattened Babos and Mladenovic in their semifinal match. The first set went on serve for all twelve games. Hsieh and Strýcová won the first set tiebreak with a minibreak. Then, the Taiwanese Czech duo broke in the first game of the second set.

# **2019 SHANGHAI MASTERS – MEN’S SINGLES**

Daniil Medvedev (RUSSIA) is a baseline player. He possesses superior movement and speed. His strongest weapon is his backhand because he can hit it with depth, pace, and precision. He also possesses a powerful serve. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2018 WINSTON-SALEM OPEN [CHAMPION]**

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

**2019 WASHINGTON OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

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

The Washington Open takes place at Rock Creek Tennis Stadium in Washington DC. It is a tune-up tournament for the US Open Series. I chose to write about the 2019 final between Medvedev and Nick Kyrgios (AUSTRALIA). Kyrgios has an aggressive playing style. He can use his serve to set up his forehand, which he can hit with topspin. He also has a superb slice and well-disguised drop shot. Even though Kyrgios defeated Medvedev in straight sets, the score was closer than it looked. The match went the into two tiebreakers and zero break points between both players. Both men had positive ratios in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced categories. The first serve percentage, first serve points won, and second serve points won were also all close in proximity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Kyrgios | Medvedev |
| **1st SERVE %** | 80% | 74% |
| **ACES** | 18 | 10 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 0 | 2 |
| **WINNERS** | 32 | 29 |
| **UNFORCED ERRORS** | 19 | 14 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 81% | 88% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 63% | 67% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 0% [0 of 0] | 0% [0 of 0] |

With his run in Washington, Medvedev broke into the top ten. In his 2019 summer North American hard-court campaign, the Russian reached a second final in Montreal without losing a set:

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]

Khachanov is a baseline player. His signature shot is his forehand, which he hits with speed and spin to move his opponents around. But his weaknesses are lack of variety, and defense at the baseline. He often struggles when he is under pressure. In the first set, Khachanov double faulted away both breaks he conceded in the first set. Medvedev broke in the third and ninth games of the second set. But Khachanov returned the favor in the fourth and 10th games. Despite letting his advantage slip, Medvedev held his nerve in the second-set tiebreak to triumph in straight sets.

The St. Petersburg Open takes place on indoor hard courts at the Petersburg Sports and Concert Complex in St. Petersburg, Russia. It takes place in late September, after the US Open. Medvedev became the youngest player to win the title on home soil without losing a set:

1. Donskoy: 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

The Shanghai Masters takes place on outdoor hard courts in early October. It takes place at the Qizhong Forest Sports City Arena in the Minhang District of Shanghai. Medvedev’s form soared when he won the without losing 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

I chose to write about the semifinal match between Medvedev and Tsitsipas. All 12 games of the first set went on serve. Both players traded holds for the first ten points of the tiebreak. Then, Medvedev won the first-set tiebreak with a minibreak. Medvedev broke in the third game of the second set. Tsitsipas broke to love in the 10th game. But Medvedev quickly put the disappointment behind him and broke Tsitsipas with a forehand return winner in the 11th game.

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

The Paris Masters takes place in Paris 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 takes place annually each November. The ATP Finals feature the top eight singles players and doubles teams on the ATP Rankings. In this edition, 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

Dimitrov has an all-round playing style. He has flexibility, athleticism, and fluidity. He is comfortable playing in all areas of the court with his groundstrokes. But his one-handed backhand and mental game are his two biggest weaknesses, because he frequently makes the wrong decisions or loses concentration on the big points. In the first set, Djokovic claimed the first-set tiebreak with a minibreak. In the second set, the Serbian in the fifth game.

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

Dayana Yastremska (UKRAINE) has a unique playing style. Her groundstrokes can create speed and sharp angles. She can also apply a slice to her backhand to break up the pace of rallies. This helped her reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2018 HONG KONG TENNIS OPEN [CHAMPION]**

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

**2019 THAILAND OPEN [CHAMPION]**

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 [CHAMPION]**

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

The Adelaide International takes place in Adelaide, South Australia, at the Memorial Drive Tennis Centre. It is a tune-tup tournament for the Australian Open. Yastremska cruised through to the biggest final of her career without dropping a set:

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

Sabalenka has only one all-out attack playing style. She can hit winners from any position on court and end points quickly. But her height restricts her mobility on court. She is also not strong in volleying and struggles to close points at the net. In this semifinal match, Yastremska broke in the fifth game of the first set. Then, the Ukrainian broke in the first game of the second set. While Sabalenka broke in the sixth game, the Belarusian’s fourteen winners outnumbered twenty-four unforced errors could not force a third set.

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

Leylah Fernandez (CANADA) is born right-handed but plays left-handed. She can attack with her forehand to run around her backhand. She can also put pace into her shots. This helped her reach two junior Grand Slam finals without losing a set:

**2019 AUSTRALIAN OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

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 [CHAMPION]**

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

The Mexican Open takes place in late February at the Fairmont Acapulco Princess in Acapulco, Mexico. This tournament was a breakthrough for Fernandez. The Canadian came through the qualifying and main draws with six straight-set wins to book her place in her first WTA final:

**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) has a unique playing style. Her on-court intelligence, movement, footwork, and timing are her strengths. She has variety with her backhand slice, volleys, and angles. In the first set, Watson broke in the first and third games. But Fernandez broke in the eighth game. In the second set, Watson broke in the first game. But Fernandez broke in the fourth game. Fernandez saved four match points in the second-set tiebreak to send the match into a decider. In the third set, Watson broke in the second and sixth games. Despite the loss, Watson only had praise for Fernandez. “Leylah’s mature for her age. Her mental toughness stands out. I think she’s going to have a lengthy career ahead of her and rise up the rankings quickly if she keeps playing like this.”

# **2020 FRENCH OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Nadal’s game on clay revolves around his groundstrokes, footwork, and movement. The surface helps him gain extra time to create additional topspin on his forehand. His patience, speed, and stamina helped him reach multiple French Open finals without dropping a set:

**2007 [CHAMPION]**

1. Juan Martín del Potro (ARGENTINA): 7-5 6-3 6-2
2. Flavio Cipolla (ITALY): 6-2 6-1 6-4
3. Albert Montañés (SPAIN): 6-1 6-3 6-2
4. Hewitt: 6-3 6-1 7-6[7-5]
5. Carlos Moyá (SPAIN): 6-4 6-3 6-0
6. Djokovic: 7-5 6-4 6-2

**2008 [CHAMPION]**

1. Thomaz Bellucci (BRAZIL): 7-5 6-3 6-1
2. Nicolas Devilder (FRANCE): 6-4 6-0 6-1
3. Jarkko Nieminen (FINLAND): 6-1 6-3 6-1
4. Verdasco: 6-1 6-0 6-2
5. Almagro: 6-1 6-1 6-1
6. Djokovic: 6-4 6-2 7-6[7-3]
7. Federer: 6-1 6-3 6-0

**2010 [CHAMPION]**

1. Gianni Mina (FRANCE): 6-2 6-2 6-2
2. Horacio Zeballos (ARGENTINA): 6-2 6-2 6-3
3. Hewitt: 6-3 6-4 6-3
4. Bellucci: 6-2 7-5 6-4
5. Almagro: 7-6[7-2] 7-6[7-3] 6-4
6. Melzer: 6-2 6-3 7-6[8-6]
7. Robin Söderling (SWEDEN): 6-4 6-2 6-4

**2017 [CHAMPION]**

1. Paire: 6-1 6-4 6-1
2. Robin Haase (NETHERLANDS): 6-1 6-4 6-3
3. Nikoloz Basilashvili (GEORGIA): 6-0 6-1 6-0
4. Bautista Agut: 6-1 6-2 6-2
5. Pablo Carreño Busta (SPAIN): 6-2 2-0 RETIRED
6. Dominic Thiem (AUSTRIA): 6-3 6-4 6-0
7. Wawrinka: 6-2 6-3 6-1

After the 2020 Mexican Open, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world on March 11th, 2020. Nobody knew if tennis would return. But, when the 2020 French Open took place in late September, the fans came back. Court Philippe-Chatrier had a retractable roof as well. Nadal found his best level and won the title without dropping a set:

1. Egor Gerasimov (BELARUS): 6-4 6-4 6-2
2. Mackie McDonald (USA): 6-1 6-0 6-3
3. Stefano Travaglia (ITALY): 6-1 6-4 6-0
4. Sebastian Korda (USA): 6-1 6-1 6-2
5. Jannik Sinner (ITALY): 7-6[7-4] 6-4 6-1
6. Diego Schwartzman (ARGENTINA): 6-3 6-3 7-6[7-0]
7. Djokovic: 6-0 6-2 7-5

Sinner’s playing style displays his all-court movement. He can hit his backhand with topspin. In the first set, Sinner broke in the 11th game. But Nadal broke in the 12th game. In the second set, Sinner broke in the fourth game. But Nadal broke in the fifth and ninth games. Then, Nadal broke in the first, third, and seventh games of the third set to seal the match.

Schwartzman is a baseline player. He can hit his groundstrokes with depth and pace. His speed lets him retrieve drop shots and hit passing shots with ease. His defense is his strength, because he can hit winners from suspicious positions far out of the court. In the first set, Nadal broke in the second and fourth games, while Schwartzman broke in the third game. In the second set, Nadal broke in the third and ninth games. In the third set, Nadal broke in the fourth and sixth games, while Schwartzman broke in the fifth and seventh games. Then, Nadal cruised through the third-set tiebreak and defeated Schwartzman in straight sets.

With his win against Schwartzman, Nadal set up a clash with Djokovic in the championship match. In this final, Nadal broke in the first, third, and fifth games to whitewash Djokovic in the first set. Then, the Spaniard broke in the third and fifth games of the second set. In the third set, Nadal broke in the fifth and 11th games, while Djokovic broke in the sixth game.

# **2021 MUTUA MADRID OPEN**

Sacsha Zverev is a baseline player. He can hit his backhand either crosscourt or down the line with tremendous disguise. He can also create glittering defense with his sense of court awareness and anticipation. This helped him reach multiple finals without losing a set:

**2016 ST. PETERSBURG OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Khachanov: 7-6[7-3] 6-4
2. Medvedev: 6-3 7-5
3. Youzhny: 6-2 6-2
4. Berdych: 6-4 6-4

**2018 MUTUA MADRID OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Donskoy: 6-2 7-5
2. Mayer: 6-4 6-2
3. Isner: 6-4 7-5
4. Shapovalov: 6-4 6-1
5. Thiem: 6-4 6-4

**2019 MEXICAN OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Alexei Popyrin (AUSTRALIA): 6-3 6-3
2. David Ferrer (SPAIN): 7-6[7-0] 6-1
3. De Minaur: 6-4 6-4
4. Norrie: 7-6[7-0] 6-3

**2021 MEXICAN OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Carlos Alcaraz (SPAIN): 6-3 6-1
2. Laslo Đere (SERBIA): 6-4 6-3
3. Dominik Koepfer (GERMANY): 6-4 7-6[7-5]
4. Tsitsipas: 6-4 7-6[7-3]

**2021 MUTUA MADRID OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Nishikori: 6-3 6-2
2. Dan Evans (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-3 7-6[7-3]
3. Nadal: 6-4 6-4
4. Thiem: 6-3 6-4

Thiem is an aggressive baseline player. His groundstrokes are solid on both wings, with a heavy forehand and a persistent one-handed backhand. He uses his groundstrokes to construct points. The topspin he creates lets him attack and defend. But his backhand can be vulnerable because it tends to produce untimely errors out of nowhere. He rarely introduces variations into rallies and makes him a predictable opponent. This costed him in the semifinal against Sacsha Zverev. Sacsha Zverev broke in the third, fifth, and ninth games, while Thiem broke in the sixth game. Then, the German broke in the 10th game to claim the match.

# **2021 QUEEN’S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Matteo Berrettini (ITALY) is an all-court player with a strong serve and forehand. His forehand has speed, spin, and depth. His serve can reach speeds up to 146 mph. He also has a strong backhand slice capable of defusing aggression. His backhand slice lets him set up his forehand. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2018 SWISS OPEN GSTAAD**

1. Radu Albot (MOLDOVA): 6-4 6-2
2. Rublev: 6-3 6-3
3. Feliciano López (SPAIN): 6-4 6-3
4. Jürgen Zopp (ESTONIA): 6-4 7-6[8-6]
5. Bautista Agut: 7-6[11-9] 6-4

**2019 STUTTGART OPEN**

1. Kyrgios: 6-3 6-4
2. Khachanov: 6-4 6-2
3. Denis Kudla (USA): 6-3 6-3
4. Auger-Aliassime: 6-4 7-6[13-11]

The Queen’s Club Championships takes place at the Queen’s Club in West Kensington in London. The event is the oldest tennis tournament in the world and is a tune-up tournament for Wimbledon. At this event, Berrettini successfully reached his first grass court final without dropping a set:

1. Stefano Travaglia: 7-6[7-5] 7-6[7-4]
2. Andy Murray (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-3 6-3
3. Evans: 7-6[7-5] 6-3
4. De Minaur: 6-4 6-4

Norrie’s playing style dubs him as a counterpuncher. His forehand has heavy topspin. He is strong in his ability to deactivate pace and spin with his movement and speed. When Berrettini and Norrie faced off in the championship match, it was a high-quality display from both men. In the first set, Berrettini broke in the fifth game. All twelve games of the second set went on serve and Norrie won the second-set tiebreak with a minibreak. Then, Berrettini broke in the eighth game of the third set.

# **2021 CINCINNATI MASTERS**

Barty has a playing style, filled with volleys, slices, lobs and intelligent shot placement. Her tennis is a balance of offense and defense. Her court sense is her biggest strength. She is a strategic player, who knows how to outsmart her opponents. She can hit her forehand deep crosscourt and flat down the line. She can also use her backhand as a slice. She can hit short slices to draw her opponents to the net or sharp angles to pull them off court. Her composure on court is also incredible. Whether she wins or loses a match, she does an excellent job to always keep herself calm in the moment. She is also a well-rounded athlete, who knows how to balance her tennis schedule with her personal life and stay 100% healthy. Since 2019, she is the current number one player in the world. Her 2019 season saw her win the Miami Open, French Open, Birmingham Classic, and WTA Finals. She kicked off her 2020 season with a title on home soil at the Adelaide International. Then, she took the rest of the year off due to traveling concerns once the COVID19 pandemic hit. But she came back with a bang in her 2021 season. She won her second title on home soil at the Yarra Valley Classic. This was followed by titles in Miami, Stuttgart, Wimbledon, and Cincinnati. The Cincinnati Masters is the oldest tennis tournament in the US. It has been played in its original city since 1899. It is a tune-up tournament for the US Open Series. In the 2021 edition, Barty won the title without dropping a set:

1. Watson: 6-4 7-6[7-3]
2. Azárenka: 6-0 6-2
3. Barbora Krejčíková (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-2 6-4
4. Kerber: 6-2 7-5
5. Jil Teichmann (SWITZERLAND): 6-3 6-1

Barty received serve in her opener against Watson. In the first set, the Australian broke in the first, third and seventh games. Watson returned the favor with two breaks in the fourth and sixth games. In the second set tiebreak, Barty earned an immediate minibreak with a forehand winner and sealed the deal on her third opportunity. “Heather’s an extremely tough opponent. It was an exceptionally tough match for me to find my groove and rhythm. I felt like when it mattered, I was able to find some pretty good stuff.”

Barty was in traditional form against Kerber. In the first set, Barty broke in the sixth and eighth games. In the second set, Barty broke in the second game. But Kerber broke in the third and fifth games. Despite this hiccup, Barty kept her composure and showed no signs of panic or frustration. The Australian broke in the sixth and 12th games to seal the match. “I didn't feel like I did a lot wrong. Angie came up with some good stuff and tough points. I knew that Angie was lifting, and I needed to go with her. I had to accept if I was going to miss, I was going to miss in the right way.”

After Barty successfully reached the final without dropping a set, I was ready to write about her run in this tournament. But then I realized that I also wanted to focus on the second semifinal match between Plíšková and Teichmann. Whoever won that match would face Barty in the final. Plíšková reached the semifinals without dropping a set, while Teichmann upset Osaka in a three-setter in the Round of 16. The oddsmakers favored Plíšková to defeat Teichmann in straight sets. But Teichmann broke in the fifth and seventh games and successfully served out the first set in the eighth game. It was the same scenario in the second set. Teichmann broke in the seventh game. Plíšková broke in the eighth game. Then, Teichmann broke back in the ninth game and effectively served out the match in the 10th game. When I wrote about Barty’s title win, I wondered if a draw could make a difference. If Plíšková defeated Teichmann in the semifinals in three sets, could the Czech push the Australian to three sets in the final and defeat the world number one? When I compared the weaknesses between Barty and Plíšková, there was a disparity. Barty’s lone weakness is that she gets hit off court by her opponents. But Plíšková’s weaknesses are movement and defense. Then, I also understood that fatigue could play a role. After a player wins a match in three sets, I always wonder how much energy they have left in their tank. But whether this semifinal match between Plíšková and Teichmann went three sets, it did not matter to me. Regardless of this result, Barty had the physical advantage. The Australian spent less time on court and gained further time to squeeze in rest and recovery for the final. After I found out that Teichmann beat Plíšková in straight sets, I knew that this result would be a straight set win for Barty. Barty and Teichmann never faced each other before. But Barty knew what to expect. “I don’t know Jil a lot. But I have seen bits and pieces. I know she’s got the ability to move and run and defend. She’s got a great slice backhand, and she’s got variety off her lefty forehand. She can flatten it out if she wants to or she can flip it up and change the tempo of the match.” In the first set, Barty broke in the eighth game. This was followed by breaks in the first, third, and fifth games of the second set. Teichmann broke in sixth game. But Barty broke again in the seventh game to claim the title. “It’s been a fun week. “I wanted to be really aggressive and get up after my serve. I wanted to push myself this week to be more assertive on my serve. In my return games I was able to build pressure and wear down my opponents. It’s been a fun week and exciting for us to come away with the title.”

# **2021 US OPEN**

When the pandemic hit, the 2020 US Open was held behind closed doors without spectators. But one year later, the fans were allowed to return to the tournament. Emma Raducanu (GREAT BRITAIN) is an aggressive baseline player. Her movement and court coverage let her defend efficiently against her opponents. This helped her become the first qualifier to win the title without losing a set:

**QUALIFYING**

1. Bibiane Schoofs (NETHERLANDS): 6-1 6-2
2. Mariam Bolkvadze (GEORGIA): 6-3 7-5
3. Mayar Sherif (EGYPT): 6-1 6-4

**MAIN DRAW**

1. Stefanie Vögele (SWITZERLAND): 6-2 6-3
2. Zhang: 6-2 6-4
3. Sara Sorribes Tormo (SPAIN): 6-0 6-1
4. Shelby Rogers (USA): 6-2 6-1
5. Bencic: 6-3 6-4
6. Maria Sakkari (GREECE): 6-1 6-4
7. Fernandez: 6-4 6-3

The 2021 US Open women’s final is one I will remember forever. After Fernandez stunned Sabalenka in the semifinals, Raducanu pulled off the upset a similar upset against Sakkari. As a result, Raducanu and Fernandez set up the first unseeded all-teenage women’s singles US Open final! It didn’t matter to me who was the champion or runner-up. The level these two ladies displayed with their incredible composure and unique playing styles was outstanding.

# **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I hope my readers enjoyed reading about consistency in tennis. My family and friends did a wonderful job to help me out with this stuff! They gave me excellent feedback and inspired me to turn my love for the sport into an ongoing, long-term project! I could not have done it without them! So, stay tuned for updates! In the meanwhile, though, feel free to watch these match highlights!

# **2010 WIMBLEDON**

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

# **BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL**

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

**2015 FRENCH OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMaFt3fcqG8>

**2015 US OPEN**

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

**2015 WTA FINALS**

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

**2016 MIAMI OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCn1bF3DxT8>

**2016 WIMBLEDON**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSD2GYqKx1U>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoucgxhB2R8>

# **2017 AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pn78K9cbwyw>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLc-BHLtqb4>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=My06GZINqVU>
4. <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>

**2020 FRENCH OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGa-ygDVN2A>

**2021 MUTUA MADRID OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q643IDhjWhI>

**2021 QUEEN’S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3swqdv52f_c>

**2021 US OPEN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F99Kz2eptqM>

# **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>