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. I believe that 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 sets. The Grand Slams last two weeks and each Grand Slam is on a different surface. 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. I will analyze and focus on certain matches from specific rounds in the Grand Slams and other ATP/WTA events.

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

Wimbledon is the oldest tennis tournament in the world. It is held at the All-England Club in London since 1877. It is one of the four Grand Slam tennis tournaments alongside the Australian Open, French Open, and US Open. It is played on outdoor grass courts with two retractable roofs over two main courts. The tournament takes place over two weeks in late June and early July, starting on the last Monday in June and ending with the singles finals on the Saturday and Sunday at the end of the second week. Since 2015, the event moved back by a week to start in early July. Its traditions are a strict all-white dress code for competitors.

Serena Williams (USA) is a baseline player. Her game revolves around her powerful serve and forceful groundstrokes. Her greatest strength is her serve because it has fast pace and accurate placement. She also possesses effective, accurate kick and slice serves. Both her forehand and two-handed backhand are hit with heavy topspin. But she can also hit her backhand flat with speed, power, and depth both crosscourt and down-the-line. She is a skilled net player and can finish points at the net either with clever touch, aggressive drive volleys, or a solid, powerful, reliable overhead smash. Her return game lets her nullify powerful first serves and attack weak second serves. She is an excellent defender, because she can counterpunch against her opponents until she creates an opportunity to hit a winner. She is an exceptional athlete with her movement, speed, court coverage, agility, flexibility, balance, and footwork. Her on-court intelligence, shot selection, and point construction let her execute her playing style with a high level of accuracy.

Serena’s form at the 2010 edition of Wimbledon was spotless. She only dropped serve three times in three matches, swept all 14 sets she played in seven matches, and accumulated positive ratios in the aces-double faults and winners-unforced categories:

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’s playing style is filled with energy, speed, and power. Her remarkable racquet-head speed lets her produce deep groundstrokes with her forehand and powerful shots with her backhand. She can also approach the net and finishing points with swing volleys. Her strength creates quickness around court and lets her reach to 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 11 games. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Cibulková, because she was serving to force a second-set tiebreak **AND** stay in the match. Cibulková had a game point on her serve in the 12th game to take the second set into a tiebreak. But Serena broke in the 12th game to claim the match.

Sharapova is a baseline player. Her game revolves around her groundstrokes. She can hit her shots with speed, power, depth, and sharp, acute angles. Her backhand is her greatest shot, because she can hit it down-the-line, crosscourt, or from any position. She has terrific speed to make up for her height, footwork, and court coverage. In the first set, Serena broke in the third game. Then, Sharapova broke in the fourth game. In the first set tiebreak, Serena earned the first minibreak on the third point. Then, Sharapova won four straight points to earn her own minibreak lead. The Russian also had four set points. But Serena made the breakthrough on Sharapova’s double fault and secured the first-set tiebreak with an ace. This was followed by another break 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 quarterfinal match. In the 11th game, Li raced out to triple game point. But Serena forced Li to deuce with three unforced errors. 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 lost her lead at triple game point and let Serena in back to deuce, 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 uses her lefty serve to set up her groundstrokes. Her groundstrokes let her finish points with one big strike. Her forehand is her dominant wing because she can create tremendous pace and diffusion off 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**

The US Open is the fourth and final Grand Slam tournament of the year. It follows the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon. It starts on the last Monday of August and continues for two weeks, with the middle weekend coinciding with the US Labor Day holiday weekend. Like Wimbledon, it is also the oldest tennis championships in the world. The tournament was first played in 1881 on grass courts until 1974. From 1975 until 1977, it was switched to clay. Since 1978, the tournament is played on acrylic hardcourts at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, NY. The tournament uses standard tiebreakers [first to seven, win by two] in every set of a singles match. For the other three Grand Slam events, there are special scoring methods for a match that reaches six games all in the last possible set [third for women, fifth for men]. In the French Open, the decisive set continues until a player takes a two-game lead. In Australia, an extended tiebreaker to 10 points is played, and at Wimbledon, a tiebreaker is played only if the game score reaches 12 games each. The US Open uses standard tiebreakers to decide the other sets.

After Serena won Wimbledon without dropping a set, she ended her 2010 season due to her health issues. This caused her ranking to fall out of the top 100. She didn’t make her comeback in 2011 until Wimbledon. But despite the lengthy absence, she claimed two nonstop titles in Stanford and Toronto. These two title wins helped her return to the top 32 seeds of the WTA rankings. These two title wins helped her secure a seeding for the 2011 US Open. Serena was slated to face one of the top eight seeded players as early as the third round. It was easy to believe that this would be a tough path for Serena, because four of her six opponents were ranked in the top 10. In her first five matches, Serena dropped only 23 games without being extended to a third set. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth and sixth games, while Wozniacki broke in the seventh game. This was followed by three more breaks in the fourth, ninth, and 10th games of the second set. With this win, Serena swept all 12 sets in six matches with the loss of only 29 games. Despite coming up short in the title match, Serena took plenty of positives with her return to form. “It’s amazing. I was in the hospital six months ago and I couldn’t even stand up. But now, I beat the number one player int

But Serena successfully swept all 12 sets in six matches. She had positive ratios in both the winners-unforced errors and aces-double faults categories and dropped only 29 games:

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 with a counterpunching playing style. Her strengths are movement, speed, court coverage, aggressive footwork, anticipation, balance, and stamina. Her strongest weapon is her two-handed backhand, which she can use to turn defense into offense. In the first set, Serena broke in the fourth, sixth, and eighth games, while Wozniacki broke in the seventh game. 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 SILICON VALLEY CLASSIC – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Silicon Valley Classic is held on the campus of San Jose State University in San Jose, CA. The tournament is the oldest women’s tournament played, since 1971. It is played on outdoor hard courts and is the first women’s tournament in the annual US Open Series. The US Open Series is a series of North American tennis tournaments that lead up to the US Open. It was sponsored by Bank of the West from 1992 to 2017 and held on the campus of Stanford University from 1997 to 2017. It was known as the Stanford Classic from 1997 to 2017. The event moved to San Jose State University in 2018 and was renamed as the Silicon Valley Classic. In the 2012 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 for the Australian Open. The Brisbane International is the first tournament in the Australian Open series. It takes place at the Queensland Tennis Center in Brisbane. I chose to merge the 2013 and 2014 editions together into one heading. 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. 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 in the first and seventh games, while Azárenka broke in the fourth and sixth games. Serena was in danger of dumping the second set when she lost her first two service points in the 10th game. But she recovered with four straight service points and broke in the 11th game. In the 12th game, Serena won her first two service points before Azárenka found a cross-court return winner on the next point. Then, Serena won her last two service points of the match. With her 2013 and 2014 title wins, Serena maintained her perfect streak of 16 sets won and zero sets lost. Even though Serena chose not to participate at this tournament anymore after her successful title wins in 2013 and 2014, I think she cemented herself head and shoulders above the rest of the women. Her accomplishment was rare that it was challenging for any woman to be able to achieve this feat. Since her 2013 and 2014 title wins, only three other women successfully reached 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**

The French Open is held over two weeks at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris in late May each year. The tournament and venue are named after the French pilot, Roland Garros. The French Open is the highest clay court championship in the world and the only Grand Slam tournament held on this surface. It is the second of the four yearly Grand Slam tournaments alongside the Australian Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. The nature of the surface [slower pace, higher bounce] makes the French Open as the most physically demanding tennis tournament in the world. It was first played on a sand surface from 1891 until 1907. Since 1907, the surface switched to clay.

Lucie Šafářová (CZECH REPUBLIC) plays left-handed with a two-handed backhand. She possesses a high topspin forehand. Her timing let her project her groundstrokes with power. She is quick to spot opportunities to take advantage. She is tarnished for having a volatile return. 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 flat, powerful forehand is her strongest shot. Her height lets her strike winners with ease. 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 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 a strong lefty forehand, while 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 passing shots. She uses her lefty slice serve to throw her opponents into tough positions. She can attack returns by hitting deep and aggressively with her backhand. She can end the rally by moving her opponents around and hitting a winner near the sidelines. She can hit powerfully on both wings with her aggressive groundstrokes. Meanwhile, Vesnina has an all-court, offensive baseline game. 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. I believe that Shvedova knew what to expect from Vesnina. Dellacqua and Shvedova broke in the eighth game of the first set. This was followed by two more breaks in the second set.

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

The Australian Open is held annually at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia. The tournament is the first of the four Grand Slam tennis events held each year before the French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. It was first held in 1905 and became one of the biggest sporting events in the Southern Hemisphere. It is nicknamed as “The Happy Slam” because it is the highest attended Grand Slam event. It is also the first Grand Slam tournament to feature indoor play during wet weather or extreme heat on its three primary courts of Rod Laver Arena, John Cain Arena, and the refurbished Margaret Court Arena with retractable roofs. Before 1988, it was played on grass courts. But since then, three types of hardcourt surfaces have been used – green-colored Rebound Ace up to 2007, blue Plexicushion from 2008 to 2019, and blue GreenSet since 2020.

Serena’s form in the 2016 Australian Open was impeccable. After 15 previous appearances with six titles won [2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2015], she successfully reached the final without dropping a set. She dropped only 26 games in six matches with 46 aces and 164 winners:

1. Camila Giorgi (ITALY): 6-4 7-5
   1. Nine 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 (POLAND): 6-0 6-4
   1. Eight aces
   2. One double fault

Giorgi is a baseline player with an aggressive playing style and powerful groundstrokes. She can create angles with both her forehand and backhand to hit winners with ease. She can regularly hit deep returns and take the ball early, which lets her hit 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.

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 many angles. In this semifinal match, Serena received serve. In the first set, Serena broke Radwańska in the first, third and fifth games. In the second set, Serena broke in the third game. 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. Larry Ellison, is the executive chairman and co-founder of Oracle, owns the tournament and Tommy Haas (GERMANY), who is a former top-10 player, is the tournament director. The tournament is played on hard courts and the best-attended tennis tournament outside the four Grand Slam tournaments. It is also called the fifth Grand Slam. It has the second-largest permanent tennis stadium. The singles main draws have 96 players in a 128-player grid. The top 32 seeded players get a free pass from the first round into the second round. In the 2016 edition, Serena 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]

Putintseva is a baseline player. Her aggressive playing style consists of her firm backhand, crafty forehand, and deadly lobs. In the first set, Putintseva broke in the third and 11th games. But Serena broke in the 10th and 12th games. Then, the American secured the first-set tiebreak with a double minibreak. This was followed by three breaks in the first, third, and fifth games of the second set.

Serena faced off against Radwańska in the semifinals. In the first set, Radwańska broke in the first game. But Serena responded with two breaks in the eighth and 10th games to claim the first set. The second set featured multiple breaks of serve. Radwańska broke in the fifth and 11th games to serve for the second set. But Serena returned the favor with breaks in the second and 12th games to claim the match in straight sets.

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

The Miami Open is usually held between March and April. Alongside the Indian Wells Masters, it is the second event of the “Sunshine Double”, which is a series of two consecutive hard-court tournaments in the US at the beginning of the season. They are the only two tournaments, besides the four Grand Slams, where main draw play extends beyond eight days. The tournament was held at the Tennis Center at Crandon Park in Key Biscayne, Florida from 1987 through 2018. Since then, the venue shifted to Miami Gardens.

Šafářová’s playing style helped her start a partnership with Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA). Mattek-Sands has an all-court style with speed, determination, and skill at the net. This helped them win the title without dropping a set:

1. Stephens/Madison Keys (USA): 6-4 6-2
2. Kasatkina/Vesnina: 6-3 6-2
3. Hlaváčková/Hradecká: 7-5 6-3
4. Xu/Zheng: 6-2 6-1
5. Babos/Shvedova: 6-3 6-4

I chose to write about Mattek-Sands and Šafářová’s title win in a different way. When Dellacqua and Shvedova reached the 2015 French Open women’s doubles final without dropping a set, they inflicted an ongoing long-term drought. What this means is that since Dellacqua and Shvedova accomplished the feat back then, no other women’s doubles team has been able to reach a French Open women’s doubles final without dropping a set. I was curious to know if any other women’s doubles teams would succumb to this pressure in other Grand Slams or tournaments. But sure enough, Mattek-Sands and Šafářová became the second team to inflict the long-term drought in Miami.

# **ITALIAN OPEN**

The Italian Open is held in Rome. It is one of the most important clay tennis tournaments in the world The tournament is played on clay courts during the second week of May. It was first held in 1930 in Milan at the Tennis Club. The championships were held in Milan until 1934. In 1935, the event moved to the Foro Italico in Rome. No edition was held between 1936 and 1949, until the competition resumed in 1950. Since 1961, the tournament is held in Turin at the Sporting Club.

I chose to highlight this tournament in a unique manner. In 2016, for the first time in the tournament’s history, one men’s singles player, one men’s doubles team, one women’s singles player, and one women’s doubles team all reach the final without dropping a set:

**ANDY MURRAY (GREAT BRTAIN) [CHAMPION]**

1. Mikhail Kukushkin (KAZAKHSTAN): 6-3 6-3
2. Jérémy Chardy (FRANCE): 6-0 6-4
3. David Goffin (BELGIUM): 6-1 7-5
4. Lucas Pouille (FRANCE): 6-2 6-1
5. Novak Djokovic (SERBIA): 6-3 6-3

**SERENA [CHAMPION]**

1. Anna-Lena Friedsam (GERMANY): 6-4 6-3
2. Christina McHale (USA): 7-6[9-7] 6-1
3. Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUSSIA): 6-2 6-0
4. Begu: 6-4 6-1
5. Keys: 7-6[7-5] 6-3

**VASEK POSPISIL (CANADA)/JACK SOCK (USA) [RUNNERS-UP]**

1. Treat Huey (PHILIPPINES)/Max Mirnyi (BELARUS): 7-6[8-6] 6-4
2. Pablo Cuevas (ARGENTINA)/Marcel Granollers (SPAIN): 6-4 7-6[7-4]
3. Rohan Bopanna (INDIA)/Florin Mergea (ROMANIA): 7-6[7-4] 7-6[7-2]

**MARTINA HINGIS (SWITZERLAND)/SANIA MIRZA (INDIA) [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Hsieh/Oksana Kalashnikova (GEORGIA): 6-3 6-3
2. Kops-Jones/Spears: 6-4 6-2
3. Begu/Niculescu: 6-3 6-4

After seeing this extraordinary level of tennis from each singles player and both teams, I was curious to know if anything like this would ever occur again. Based on what I saw with the long-term droughts being imposed in the 2015 French Open women’s doubles edition with Dellacqua and Shvedova, Serena in 2016 Indian Wells and Mattek-Sands and Šafářová in 2016 Miami, I didn’t bet on it one bit. But somehow by God’s grace though, this tournament managed to keep its consistency alive in certain years and specific editions:

**2017 – MEN’S SINGLES, NOVAK DJOKOVIC (SERBIA) [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Aljaž Bedene (SLOVENIA): 7-6[7-2] 6-2
2. Roberto Bautista Agut (SPAIN): 6-4 6-4
3. Juan Martín Del Potro (ARGENTINA): 6-1 6-4
4. Dominic Thiem (AUSTRIA): 6-1 6-0

**2019 – MEN’S SINGLES, RAFAEL NADAL (SPAIN) [CHAMPION]**

1. Chardy: 6-0 6-1
2. Nikoloz Basilashvili (GEORGIA): 6-1 6-0
3. Fernando Verdasco (SPAIN): 6-4 6-0
4. Stefanos Tsitsipas (GREECE): 6-3 6-4

**2019 – WOMEN’S DOUBLES, Azárenka/ASHLEIGH BARTY (AUSTRALIA) [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Kato/Jessica Moore (AUSTRALIA): 7-5 6-2
2. Hsieh/Strycova: 6-4 6-3
3. Aliaksandra Sasnovich (BELARUS)/Lesia Tsurenko (UKRAINE): 6-4 6-3
4. Krejčíková/Siniaková: 6-4 6-4

**2020 – WOMEN’S DOUBLES, HSIEH/Strýcová [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Nao Hibino (JAPAN)/Makoto Ninomiya (JAPAN): 6-0 6-0
2. Siniaková/Veronika Kudermetova (RUSSIA): 7-6[7-5] 6-4
3. Hayley Carter (USA)/Luisa Stefani (BRAZIL): 7-5 6-4
4. Friedsam/Olaru: 6-2 6-2

**2022 – WOMEN’S SINGLES, Iga Świątek (POLAND) [CHAMPION]**

1. Elena-Gabriela Ruse (ROMANIA): 6-3 6-0
2. Azárenka: 6-4 6-1
3. Bianca Andreescu (CANADA): 7-6[7-2] 6-0
4. Sabalenka: 6-2 6-1
5. Ons Jabeur (TUNISIA): 6-2 6-2

**2022 – MEN’S SINGLES, NOVAK DJOKOVIC (SERBIA) [CHAMPION]**

1. Aslan Karatsev (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-2
2. Stan Wawrinka (SWITZERLAND): 6-2 6-2
3. Felix Auger-Aliassime (CANADA): 7-5 7-6[7-1]
4. Casper Ruud (NORWAY): 6-4 6-3
5. Tsitsipas: 6-0 7-6[7-5]

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

Kerber is naturally right-handed but plays left-handed. She is a defensive baseline player with speed, agility, athleticism, and footwork. Her counterpunching playing style lets her extend the rallies and hit low-risk winners with ease. The power on her groundstrokes let her hit winners from tough positions. Her forehand is her strongest weapon because she can hit this shot with disguise and speed. She can also hit extreme angles with this shot and her best shot is her forehand down-the-line. Her favorite surface is grass because the fast pace and low bounce afforded on grass courts suits her defensive playing style. This helped her reach 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

Halep is an aggressive baseline player. She can blend offense and defense together by redirecting her opponent’s placement. But her height and lack of power are two weaknesses in her game. Her serve doesn’t come down from a good height and she can’t create enough power on her groundstrokes to end the points. 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 the first minibreak on the first point of the second-set tiebreak. But Kerber won five of the last seven points of the match to secure the second-set tiebreak with a double minibreak lead.

I chose to also write about the final between Serena and Kerber. Serena and Kerber first faced each other in the 2016 Australian Open final. When Serena lost to Kerber, she won less than 50% of her points at the net and sprayed 46 unforced errors in three sets. But when Serena and Kerber faced off in the Wimbledon final, Serena made a positive turnaround and successfully avenged her loss to Kerber. She won 16 points out of 22 trips to the net and outweighed her 39 winners with only 21 unforced errors. In the first set, both players traded service holds for the first 11 games. The 12th game was a **MUST-HOLD** game for Kerber, because the German was serving to force a first-set tiebreak **AND** stay in the set. But instead of holding serve to send the first set into a tiebreak, Serena broke Kerber in the 12th game to claim the first set. In the second set, both players traded service holds for the first seven games. In the seventh game, Serena won her first service point. Then, Kerber won the next points. Serena found a big first serve on the next point. Then, Kerber earned her first break point of the match. But instead of losing serve, Serena scorched down two back-to-back aces and forced a backhand return error from Kerber to edge thru a crucial hold. Then, American broke in the eighth game and successfully served out the match to love in the ninth game. Kerber played a brave match with zero aces, one double fault, 12 winners, nine unforced errors, a first serve percentage of 67%, 59% of first serve points won, and 71% second serve points won. But her serve sadly let her down. Her serve is her major weakness because she rarely wins more than 50% of second serve points. Even though she swept all 12 sets she played in six matches, she dropped serve nine times in her last two matches, when Halep broke her six times in the quarterfinals and Venus broke her three times in the semifinals.

# **2016 CANADIAN OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

The Canadian Open is the second-oldest tournament in the history of the sport, behind Wimbledon. The tournament used to be held during separate weeks in the July-August period. But now, the two competitions are held together in the same week in August. The events alternate from year to year 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. The Toronto tournament is held at the Aviva Centre and the Montreal tournament is held at the IGA Stadium.

Djokovic is an aggressive baseline player. His best shot is his backhand down the line, because he can hit this shot with pace and accuracy. His agility, court coverage and mobility make him a complete athlete, as he can accumulate winners from outwardly unforgivable positions. This helped him win 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

# **2016 US OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Kerber has the best retrieving game in the sport. Her game is based on creative, aggressive counterpunching and classic lefty deception. Her stamina, speed and anticipation let her run down the biggest shots with deadly passes. This helped her 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

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

The 2017 season brought me curiosity in a fun exciting way. Before I kicked off the 2017 season, I chose to compare the 2016 seasons between Kerber and Serena. I wanted to know which player would come in with the highest and lowest amounts of pressure and confidence.

Kerber had an exceptional 2016 season. She won two Grand Slams [Australian Open and US Open], a clay court title on home soil at the Stuttgart Open, and an Olympic silver medal at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. After Serena withdrew from the WTA Finals, Kerber secured the world number one ranking for the rest of the season. In the WTA Finals, Kerber won all three of her round-robin matches and her semifinal match on her way to a runner-up finish.

Serena’s 2016 season initially got off to a shaky start. When she won the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon in her 2015 season, she was bidding to win all four Grand Slams in the same year at the US Open, only to be upset by Vinci in the semifinals. When Serena kicked off her 2016 season, she was the world number one, top seed, and defending champion at the first three Grand Slams. Despite coming up short as the runner-up in the first two Grand Slams, she got back on track at Wimbledon with a 22nd Grand Slam title win.

Kerber’s mental and physical toughness stood out in her 2016 season. But after she lost to Cibulková in the title match of the WTA Finals, the tide took a turn. Serena initially faced a tremendous amount of pressure in 2016 when she was stuck on 21 Grand Slam titles at the first three Grand Slams. But after she secured her 22nd Grand Slam title at Wimbledon, the pressure was completely gone and the American was able to play more relaxed tennis, moving forward. Once Kerber lost the title match to Cibulková in the WTA Finals, it was now her turn to deal with the pressure. Kerber came into the 2017 Australian Open as the world number one, top seed, and defending champion. But the German’s title defense ended in a fourth-round straight-set loss to Vandeweghe. As a result, Serena came into the 2017 Australian Open with more confidence [tying Graf’s record with her 22nd Grand Slam title under her belt] and less pressure [defending finalist points as the number two seed] to 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

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

The Dubai Tennis Championships take place on outdoor hardcourts at the end of February. The tournament was first played at the Aviation Club in 1993. In 1996, it took place at the newly constructed Dubai Tennis Stadium.

Hlaváčková started a partnership with Shuai Peng (CHINA). Hlaváčková has a fearless, attacking playing style. She can throw herself into every shot she makes. Meanwhile, Peng plays two-handed on both sides. Their playing styles helped them reach multiple finals without losing a set:

**2014 CHINA OPEN [CHAMPIONS]**

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

**2017 SHENZHEN OPEN [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Nina Stojanović (SERBIA)/Zhu Lin (CHINA): 6-4 7-5
2. Siniaková/Jelena Janković (SERBIA): 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. Knapp/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 reached their first Grand Slam final without dropping a set at the 2017 Australian Open. Even though they came up short in the title match 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:

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**

In the 2015 season, something unique struck me. It was the first time that I saw two first-time women’s doubles teams each reach their first Grand Slam finals without dropping a set **OR** being pushed into a tiebreak **BEYOND** a 7-5 set scoreline. After Dellacqua and Shvedova accomplished that feat at the 2015 French Open, Hingis and Mirza followed at Wimbledon. Now, I will tell my readers that it is extremely rare that history can repeat itself like this for something this special! But that is exactly what happened in the mixed doubles edition of the 2017 French Open!

Dabrowski (CANADA) formed a unique partnership with Rohan Bopanna. Dabrowski is an all-court player, who uses touch shots at the net. Bopanna has a serve-oriented game, where he can use his big first serve to set up most points. 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

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

Roger Federer (SWIZTERLAND) is an all-court, all-around player. He has speed, fluidity, and exceptional shot making. This helped him reach multiple Grand Slam finals without dropping a set:

**2006 WIMBLEDON [CHAMPION]**

1. Richard Gasquet (FRANCE): 6-3 6-2 6-2
2. Tim Henman (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-4 6-0 6-2
3. Nicolas Mahut (FRANCE): 6-3 7-6[7-2] 6-4
4. Tomáš Berdych (CZECH REPUBLIC): 6-3 6-3 6-4
5. Mario Ančić (CROATIA): 6-4 6-4 6-4
6. Jonas Björkman (SWEDEN): 6-2 6-0 6-2

**2007 AUSTRALIAN OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Björn Phau (GERMANY): 7-5 6-0 6-4
2. Björkman: 6-2 6-3 6-2
3. Mikhail Youzhny (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-3 7-6[7-5]
4. Djokovic: 6-2 7-5 6-3
5. Tommy Robredo (SPAIN): 6-3 7-6[7-2] 7-5
6. Andy Roddick (USA): 6-4 6-0 6-2
7. Fernando González (CHILE): 7-6[7-2] 6-4 6-4

**2008 WIMBLEDON [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

**2015 US OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Leonardo Mayer (ARGENTINA): 6-1 6-2 6-2
2. Steve Darcis (BELGIUM): 6-1 6-2 6-1
3. Philipp Kohlschreiber (GERMANY): 6-3 6-4 6-4
4. John Isner (USA): 7-6[7-0] 7-6[8-6] 7-5
5. Richard Gasquet (FRANCE): 6-3 6-3 6-1
6. Wawrinka: 6-4 6-3 6-1

**2017 WIMBLEDON [CHAMPION]**

1. Alexandr Dolgopolov (UKRAINE): 6-3 3-0 RETIRED
2. Dušan Lajović (SERBIA): 7-6[7-0] 6-3 6-2
3. Mischa Zverev (GERMANY): 7-6[7-3] 6-4 6-4
4. Grigor Dimitrov (BULGARIA): 6-4 6-2 6-4
5. Milos Raonic (CANADA): 6-4 6-2 7-6[7-4]
6. Berdych: 7-6[7-4] 7-6[7-4] 6-4
7. Marin Čilić (CROATIA): 6-3 6-1 6-4

I chose to write about the 2015 US Open final between Federer and Djokovic. Federer survived a seven-minute first game and saved three break points. Both players traded breaks in the third and fourth games. Then, Djokovic broke in the seventh game. In the second set, Djokovic saved five break points in the second game. Federer had a set point in a lengthy 13-minute game in the 10th game. But Djokovic saved it with a service winner. Then, Federer broke in the 12th game to claim the second set. The third set kicked off in the same way as the first set with breaks being traded in the third and fourth games. But this time, Djokovic grabbed a break in the ninth game. The Serbian secured an immediate break in the first game of the fourth set and grabbed a second break in the seventh game. But Federer canceled out one of the breaks in the ninth game with an aggressive return, slick drop shots, and deep forehands. Federer held in the ninth game and had two break points in the 10th game to draw level. But Djokovic survived those break chances and claimed the title.

Three years later, Federer’s form at the 2018 Australian Open was still scintillating. He was able to count on his all-court game and superior skill to pull him through tough positions. This helped him reach the final without dropping a set:

1. Aljaž Bedene (SLOVENIA): 6-3 6-4 6-3
2. Jan-Lennard Struff (GERMANY): 6-4 6-4 7-6[7-4]
3. Gasquet: 6-2 7-5 6-4
4. Márton Fucsovics (HUNGARY): 6-4 7-6[7-3] 6-2
5. Berdych: 7-6[7-1] 6-3 6-4
6. Hyeon Chung (SOUTH KOREA): 6-1 5-2 RETIRED

Federer and Čilić set up a marathon title match on Rod Laver Arena. Čilić is an aggressive baseline player. He uses his serve to set up his groundstrokes. He can hit flat and topspin forehands with efficiency. In the first set, Federer broke in the first and third games. The second set went on serve for all 12 games before Čilić claimed the second-set tiebreak with a minibreak. In the third set, Federer claimed the lone break in the sixth game. The fourth set featured breaks of serve. Federer broke in the first game. But Čilić responded with breaks in the sixth and eighth games. Then, Federer broke in the second and sixth games of the fifth set. Even though Čilić was outplayed for most of the match, the Croatian’s fighting spirit was admirable.

In the mixed doubles portion of the tournament, Dabrowski started a partnership with Mate Pavić (CROATIA). Pavić has quick reflexes with a lefty serve. He also has a strong backhand volley. 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

Pavić and Dabrowski faced Babos and Bopanna in the finals. In the first set, Babos and Bopanna broke in the fourth and eighth games. In the second set, Pavić and Dabrowski broke break in the seventh game. In the match tiebreak, Bopanna cracked a forehand winner to earn the first match point. But Pavić and Dabrowski found two consecutive aces and a return winner to claim the title.

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

Tsurenko’s playing style labels her as a counterpuncher. Her backhand gives her power to dominate the court. This helped her reach the biggest final of her 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 is an aggressive baseline player. This lets her strike fast winners or draw quick errors from her opponents. Her groundstrokes are hit flat with depth and power. She has exceptional footwork, stamina, and court coverage. In the first set of this quarterfinal match, Kontaveit broke in the eighth game. But Tsurenko broke in the ninth and 11th games. This was followed by two more breaks in the first and ninth games of the second set.

Osaka is an aggressive baseline player. Her game revolves around her serve, which she uses to take creativity in any point. She also uses her forehand to control the rallies. In this semifinal match, Tsurenko broke in the first and seventh games. This was followed by a break in the first game of the second set. Tsurenko clipped 20 clean winners off the ground, maintained her first serve percentage at 76% with six aces and saved both break points she that faced.

I chose to write about the final between Tsurenko and Plíšková. Plíšková’s playing style revolves around her serve and groundstrokes. She can hit her forehand flat with significant pace. Even though Tsurenko lost a three-set final after suffering a left ankle injury in the third set, the Ukrainian maintained a cleaner level than Plíšková. Tsurenko edged out Plíšková in five out of the six key areas and Plíšková only came out on top in first serve points won.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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**

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 play tennis again. But she overcame the obstacles and played herself back into form. This helped her reach 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

I chose to write about the title match between Kvitová and Osaka. Halep came into the tournament as the 2018 French Open champion, world number one, top seed, and defending finalist. But when Halep and Serena faced off in the fourth round, Serena sent Halep packing her bags in the fourth round. As a result, Serena kicked Halep off the world number one ranking permanently for good. Whoever took home the title would replace Halep as the new world number one. All 12 games of the first set went on serve, then Osaka ran away with the first-set tiebreak with a double minibreak. In the second set, Kvitová broke in the second game. But Osaka responded with breaks in the third and fifth games. This was followed by two more breaks in the 10th and 12th games. The third set only featured one break in the third game.

# **2019 MIAMI OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Isner has a powerful, stable serve. His serve often helps him end up winning a remarkable majority of his service games. His serve is a legendary shot because it has incredible power and precision. 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. Tobias Kamke (GERMANY): 7-5 7-6[7-4]
5. Olivier Rochus (BELGIUM): 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]

When I kicked off the 2019 season with the Brisbane International, I highlighted the irony of how a runner-up plays a cleaner tournament than the champion. But I never thought that history would repeat itself again in Miami. Even though Federer won the title against Isner, Isner maintained a cleaner level throughout the tournament. The American won all 10 sets he played in five matches:

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. Roberto Bautista Agut (SPAIN): 7-6[7-1] 7-6[7-5]
   1. 25 aces
   2. One double fault
5. Auger-Aliassime: 7-6[7-3] 7-6[7-4]
   1. 21 aces
   2. Two double faults

Isner scored a breathtaking recovery in his semifinal match against Auger-Aliassime. Auger-Aliassime is an aggressive baseline player with a strong forehand. In the first set, Auger-Aliassime broke in the seventh game, but Isner broke in the 10th game. It was the same pattern in the second set when Auger-Aliassime broke in the sixth game and served for the set in the ninth game. But Isner started to set more returns into play and ultimately took the match in two tiebreakers.

I chose to also write about Federer’s opener against Radu Albot (MOLDOVA). Albot is an aggressive baseline player. He has exceptional movement from the baseline and up at the net. In the first set, Federer dropped serve in the first game. In the second and third sets, Federer broke in the 12th and ninth games, respectively. To get a clearer idea on how Isner’s level was better than Federer’s, I collected the match stats for both players and organized them in two separate tables.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Isner | Auger-Aliassime |
| **1st SERVE %** | 73% | 64% |
| **ACES** | 21 | 6 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 2 | 7 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 75% | 77% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 53% | 73% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 50% [2 of 4] | 33% [2 of 6] |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PLAYER** | Albot | Federer |
| **1st SERVE %** | 65% | 62% |
| **ACES** | 2 | 14 |
| **DOUBLE FAULTS** | 0 | 2 |
| **1st SERVE POINTS WON** | 70% | 77% |
| **2nd SERVE POINTS WON** | 51% | 73% |
| **BREAK POINTS WON** | 25% [1 of 4] | 25% [2 of 8] |

Isner’s form was rock-solid with his first serve percentage. Even though Auger-Aliassime edged out Isner in first serve points won and second serve points won, Isner got out of trouble with his serve. Unfortunately for Federer, the Swiss’s form was patchy in all areas of his opener against Albot. His one-handed backhand is his biggest weaknesses, because he struggles to win more than 40% of his shots off that groundstroke. He also struggles with break point conversions. Even though he sometimes claims break points or set points easily, he frequently tends to give momentum to his opponents to let them bounce back.

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

The Madrid Open takes place in early May. The tournament is traditionally played on a red clay surface. It serves as a tune-up tournament for the French Open. It was first played on indoor hard courts from 2002 to 2008. In 2009, it switched to outdoor clay courts to Park Manzanares, where a new complex with a retractable roof equipped main court was constructed. This new complex eventually become the Caja Magica.

Kiki Bertens (NETHERLANDS) is a baseline player. She can hit her forehand with power and topspin. She can also apply a slice to her backhand to break up the pace of the rallies. Her fitness, movement, footwork, and court coverage make her a skilled counterpuncher. This helped her become the first woman to win the title without dropping a set:

1. Siniaková: 6-3 6-2
2. Jeļena Ostapenko (LATVIA): 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

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

Markéta Vondroušová (CZECH REPUBLIC) has a crafty playing style with a variety of shots. Her game includes lengthy rallies with her lefty topspin forehand. Her signature shot is her drop shot. She also likes to play aggressive and mix up the points. 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]

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

Dayana Yastremska (UKRAINE) is an aggressive baseline player. She can win most points with her inside-in forehand and she can accumulate winners from any position with this groundstroke. She can hit her backhand flat with power and sharp angles. She can also use a slice on her backhand to break up the pace of the 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 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. Aryna Sabalenka (BELARUS): 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 displayed superior movement and incredible ball-striking abilities. These two strengths helped her breeze 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. Donna Vekić (CROATIA): 6-4 6-3
4. Sabalenka: 6-4 7-6[7-4]

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

Leylah Fernandez (CANADA) is naturally right-handed but plays left-handed. She can change directions with her forehand. She can also switch from offense to defense easily, but she prefers to stay on offense. This helped her reach two junior Grand Slam finals without dropping 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. Camila Osorio (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. The tournament was first played in Mexico City from 1993 to 1998, and in 2000, before it relocated to Acapulco in 2001. It was played on outdoor red clay courts until 2013. But since 2014, the surface changed to hard courts. Fernandez 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

Potapova has a crafty playing style. She prefers to stay on top of the baseline and doesn’t hesitate to go for her shots. She uses her forehand to dictate points and her backhand is her strongest shot. Potapova broke in the first game of the first set. But after Potapova missed a game point in the fourth game, Fernandez broke with a volley winner to get back on serve. Fernandez saved a break point with a winning backhand winner in the fifth game and broke in the sixth game to lead by a break. Fernandez clinched the early lead in the third game of the second set. Potapova broke in the eighth game to get back on serve. But, Fernandez broke again in the 11th game.

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

Rafael Nadal (SPAIN) was born right-handed but plays left-handed. He has heavy topspin groundstrokes, speedy footwork, and persistent court coverage. His athleticism and speed make him an excellent defender because he can hit well on the run and constructing winning plays from tough positions. He plays defense and offense to make the quickest moves on key points in the rallies. This helped him reach multiple Grand Slam finals without dropping a set:

**2007 FRENCH OPEN [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 FRENCH OPEN [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. Fernando Verdasco (SPAIN): 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 FRENCH OPEN [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

**2010 US OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Teymuraz Gabashvili (RUSSIA): 7-6[7-4] 7-6[7-4] 6-3
2. Denis Istomin (UZBEKISTAN): 6-2 7-6[7-5] 7-5
3. Gilles Simon (FRANCE): 6-4 6-4 6-2
4. Feliciano López (SPAIN): 6-3 6-4 6-4
5. Verdasco: 7-5 6-3 6-4
6. Youzhny: 6-2 6-3 6-4

**2017 FRENCH OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Benoît Paire (FRANCE): 6-1 6-4 6-1
2. Robin Haase (NETHERLANDS): 6-1 6-4 6-3
3. Basilashvili: 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. Thiem: 6-3 6-4 6-0
7. Wawrinka: 6-3 6-2 6-1

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

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. Tsitsipas: 6-2 6-4 6-0

I chose to write about Nadal’s semifinal win against Tsitsipas. Tsitsipas is an aggressive baseline, all-court player. He can hit powerful groundstroke winners with his forehand. But as a one-handed backhand player, he struggles to return serve against players with strong kick serves. Tsitsipas routed Federer in a fourth-round four-setter and saved all 12 break points that he faced. But Tsitsipas lost to Nadal in the semifinals. Nadal broke in the third and seventh games of the first set and the ninth game of the second set. This was followed by breaks in the first, third, and fifth games of the third set. Tsitsipas was initially predicted to push Nadal to five sets. But several people pointed out that Tsitsipas’s game matches up better with Federer’s than Nadal’s. I knew that if multiple people said the same thing about how Tsitsipas’s game matches up better with Federer’s than Nadal’s, then there had to be some truth in their viewpoints. But I knew that this was the perfect time for me to collect data to find out whether those viewpoints were true.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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 in the fourth round, it was a battle between two all-court players with one-handed backhands. Their stats were identical and Tsitsipas claimed the lone break in the 11th game of the third set. But when Tsitsipas lost to Nadal, the stats took a turn. Even though Tsitsipas had a higher first serve percentage and matched Nadal with the same number of aces, Nadal’s counterpunching style caused Tsitsipas to go for too much, too soon.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit on March 11th, 2020, nobody knew if tennis would return. But, when the 2020 French Open took place in late September, the fans were allowed to return. This was also the first time that Court Philippe-Chatrier had a retractable roof. Nadal found his best level to claim 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

# **2021 QUEEN’S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS – MEN’S SINGLES**

Matteo Berrettini (ITALY) is an all-court player with a strong serve and forehand. His forehand has speed, spin, and depth. He also has a strong backhand slice, which can defuse aggression and keep the ball low. This backhand slice lets him set up his forehand. He also has clever disguise on his dropshots. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2018 SWISS OPEN GSTAAD [CHAMPION]**

1. Albot: 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 [CHAMPION]**

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. It was first established in 1881 at Stamford Bridge, Fulham. In 1890, the tournament moved to its current location at the Queen’s Club. In the 2021 edition, Berrettini successfully reached his first grass court final without dropping a set:

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

I chose to write about the title match between Berrettini and Norrie. Norrie’s groundstrokes make him a counterpuncher. His strengths are his shot tolerance, nullifying pace and spin with solid positioning, and speed. This match was a high-quality show from both men. There were only two breaks of serve in the fifth game and in the eighth game of the third set.

# **2021 CINCINNATI MASTERS – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

The Cincinnati Masters is the oldest tennis tournament in the US. It is a tune-up tournament for the US Open. It has been played in its original city since 1899. Until 1978, the tournament was played on clay courts. But since 1978, the surface was permanently switched to hard courts.

Barty has an all-court game. She plays old-school tennis with an equal mix of offense and defense. She has a crafty playing style with solid groundstrokes and a strong serve. Her two-handed backhand is used mainly as a rally shot. This helped her win the title without dropping a set:

1. Heather Watson (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-4 7-6[7-3]
2. Azárenka: 6-0 6-2
3. Krejčíková: 6-2 6-4
4. Kerber: 6-2 7-5
5. Jil Teichmann (SWITZERLAND): 6-3 6-1

Instead of analyzing certain matches, I chose to focus on when Barty awaited the winner of the second semifinal match between Plíšková and Teichmann. Plíšková reached the semifinals without dropping a set, while Teichmann upset Osaka in a three-setter in the Round of 16. Plíšková was the favorite to defeat Teichmann in two sets. But Teichmann broke in the fifth and seventh games of the first set. This was followed by breaks in the seventh, eighth, and ninth games of the second set. After Teichmann defeated Plíšková in straight sets, I wondered about one thing. Had Plíšková beat Teichmann in a three-set semifinal after dropping the first set, could she push Barty to three sets and cause an upset? Once Plíšková dropped the first set to Teichmann though, I realized that regardless of whether this second semifinal match went three sets or not, the result on who would come out as the winner didn’t matter. Whoever faced Barty in the final had to deal with the fatigue factor. As a result, Barty sealed the title with a straight-set victory.

# **2022 AUSTRALIAN OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Barty came into the tournament under pressure because she was dealt a tough draw. Her world number one ranking was also in contention with Sabalenka and Krejčíková. She was slated to face Osaka in the fourth round, Sakkari in the quarterfinals, Krejčíková in the semifinals, and either Muguruza, Sabalenka, or Kontaveit in the final. Once Muguruza and Kontaveit both lost in the second round though, Osaka, Sakkari, Sabalenka, and Krejčíková all crashed out too. As a result, Barty’s tough draw started to get easier. I could tell that history was about to repeat itself, because Serena also dealt with this situation when she won the 2014 US Open without dropping a set. Ultimately, Barty joined Serena as the second woman to win the title without the loss of a set:

1. Tsurenko: 6-0 6-1
   1. Five aces
   2. Zero double faults
2. Lucia Bronzetti (ITALY): 6-1 6-1
   1. Eight aces
   2. Two double faults
3. Giorgi: 6-2 6-3
   1. Four aces
   2. Two double faults
4. Anisimova: 6-4 6-3
   1. Seven aces
   2. Three double faults
5. Jessica Pegula (USA): 6-2 6-0
   1. Six aces
   2. Two double faults
6. Keys: 6-1 6-3
   1. Five aces
   2. Zero double faults
7. Collins: 6-3 7-6[7-2]
   1. 10 aces
   2. Three double faults

# **2022 MEXICAN OPEN**

The Mexican Open was held at the at the Princess Mundo Imperial until the 2020 edition. After the 2020 edition, it was played at the Princess Mundo Imperial in 2021. Then, the tournament changed to a new location at the Arena GNP Seguros in 2022. Nadal’s form was impeccable in this edition of the tournament. His draw may have looked tricky with the fact that Medvedev and Norrie were his semifinal and final opponents, respectively. But he smoothly swept through each set with flying colors. His superb return helped him minimize trouble receiving his opponents’ serves. This helped him win the title without dropping a set:

1. Kudla: 6-3 6-2
2. Stefan Kozlov (USA): 6-0 6-3
3. Tommy Paul (USA): 6-0 7-6[7-5]
4. Medvedev: 6-3 6-3
5. Norrie: 6-4 6-4

I chose to write about Nadal’s quarterfinal win against Paul. Paul possesses an attacking forehand and solid footwork at the baseline. In the first set, Nadal broke in the second, fourth, and sixth games. In the second set, Paul broke in the first, fifth, and seventh games. But Nadal broke in the fourth and 10th games. In the second-set tiebreak, Paul won the first two points to earn the first minibreak. But Nadal bravely responded with four straight points to earn a minibreak of his own. Then, the Spaniard grabbed the final minibreak in the 11th point with a service winner.

# **2022 FRENCH OPEN – WOMEN’S SINGLES**

Gauff is an all-round player. She can mix and apply topspin to her shots in rallies. She can hit her backhand flat cross-court with terrific speed. She can also apply a slice on this shot. This helped her reach a junior Grand Slam final without dropping a set:

**2018 FRENCH OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Stefania Rogozińska Dzik (POLAND): 6-3 6-0
2. Sada Nahimana (BURUNDI): 6-3 6-1
3. Xinyu Wang (CHINA): 6-4 6-4
4. Eléonora Molinaro (LUXEMBOURG): 6-2 7-6[7-1]
5. Fernandez: 6-4 6-3

Gauff started a partnership with Caty McNally (USA). McNally has a playing style with an all-court game and exceptional variety. She can use the serve-and-volley tactic and mix in the slice backhand. This helped them win multiple titles dropping a set:

**2019 WASHINGTON OPEN [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Diyas/Zhu Lin (CHINA): 6-3 6-2
2. Hsieh Yu-Chieh (CHINESE TAIPEI)/You Xiaodi (CHINA): 6-0 6-3
3. Kato/Anna Kalinskaya (RUSSIA): 6-1 6-2
4. Stollár/Maria Sanchez (USA): 6-2 6-2

**2021 EMILIA-ROMAGNA OPEN [CHAMPIONS]**

1. Yafan/Vivian Heisen (GERMANY): 6-2 6-0
2. Ninomiya/Zhaoxuan: 6-0 6-1
3. Alexa Guarachi (CHILE)/Desirae Krawczyk (USA): 7-5 7-6[7-4]
4. Klepač/Darija Jurak (CROATIA): 6-3 6-2

It is extremely rare that a teenager can reach her first Grand Slam final without dropping a set. Only three people have been able to do it in their careers – Vondroušová, Świątek, and Raducanu. But, at only 18 years old, Gauff joined this elite group after she reached her first Grand Slam final at the 2022 French Open without dropping a set:

1. Rebecca Marino (CANADA): 7-5 6-0
2. Alison Van Uytvanck (BELGIUM): 6-1 7-6[7-4]
3. Kaia Kanepi (ESTONIA): 6-3 6-4
4. Elise Mertens (BELGIUM): 6-4 6-0
5. Stephens: 7-5 6-2
6. Trevisan: 6-3 6-1

**2022 LOS CABOS OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Daniil Medvedev (RUSSIA) is a baseline player. He hits his groundstrokes long and flat. He has superb court sense in moving the ball around, changing pace and creating spin and angles. His strongest weapon is his backhand because he can hit it with depth, pace, and precision. He has a sneaky mix of strategies often end with a surprise move. He can mystify his game plan by launching attacks from every corner of the court. His height lets him build up a powerful serve to help him win points. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**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

**2019 NATIONAL BANK OPEN [RUNNER-UP]**

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 [CHAMPION]**

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

**2019 SHANGHAI ROLEX MASTERS [CHAMPION]**

1. Cameron Norrie (GREAT BRITAIN): 6-3 6-1
2. Pospisil: 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

**2021 OPEN 13 PROVENCE [CHAMPION]**

1. Gerasimov: 6-2 6-4
2. Sinner: 6-2 6-4
3. Ebden: 6-4 3-0 RETIRED

**2022 ROSMALEN GRASS COURT CHAMPIONSHIPS [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Simon: 7-5 6-4
2. Ilya Ivashka (BELARUS): 7-6[10-8] 6-4
3. Adrian Mannarino (FRANCE): 7-5 7-5

**2022 HALLE OPEN**

1. Goffin: 6-3 6-2
2. Ivashka: 7-6[7-4] 6-3
3. Bautista Agut: 6-2 6-4
4. Oscar Otte: 7-6[7-3] 6-3

The Los Cabos Open is played on outdoor hard courts. It is held each year in August in Los Cabos, Baja California Sur, Mexico. Medvedev got his summer hard-court season off to a perfect start in Los Cabos. He successfully captured the 14th ATP title of his career without dropping a set:

1. Rinky Hijikata (AUSTRALIA): 6-4 6-3
2. Ricardis Berankis (LITHUANIA): 6-2 6-2
3. Miomir Kecmanović (SERBIA): 7-6[7-0] 6-1
4. Norrie: 7-5 6-0

Kecmanović has a unique playing style. He can flatten out his groundstrokes with his forehand. He relies heavily on his court coverage and counter attacks to adapt his game plan. Kecmanović earned the first break in the fourth game of the first set. But Medvedev responded with a break of his own in the seventh game. Then, Medvedev shut out Kecmanović in a whitewashed first-set tiebreak. This was followed by two more breaks in the second and sixth games of the second set.

Medvedev’s success in this tournament was my toughest task to write about. But that toughness was a good thing. I first encountered this hurdle when Barty became the first woman to reach the 2021 Cincinnati Masters women’s singles final without dropping a set. At that time, Barty was awaiting the winner of the second semifinal match between Plíšková and Teichmann. Pl

**2022 MALLORCA OPEN – MEN’S SINGLES**

Bautista Agut is a counterpuncher with an all-around game. He can play offense with his forehand but also thrives off defense with his quickness. He has a clean flat strike on his groundstrokes. This helped him reach multiple finals without dropping a set:

**2014 KREMLIN CUP [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Andrey Kuznetsov (RUSSIA): 6-3 6-4
2. Groth: 7-6[7-5] 7-6[7-4]
3. Berankis: 7-5 6-3
4. Ernests Gulbis (LATVIA): 6-4 6-4

**2015 KREMLIN CUP [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Marsel İlhan (TURKEY): 6-2 7-5
2. Pouille: 6-4 6-2
3. Kohlschreiber: 6-4 6-4

**2017 WINSTON-SALEM OPEN [CHAMPION]**

1. Lajović: 6-4 6-3
2. Marcos Baghdatis (CYPRUS): 6-3 6-4
3. Fritz: 6-2 7-6[7-3]
4. Jan-Lennard Struff (GERMANY): 6-2 6-4
5. Damir Džumhur (BOSNIA): 6-4 6-4

**2021 OPEN SUD DE FRANCE [RUNNER-UP]**

1. Grégoire Barrère (FRANCE): 6-0 6-3
2. Ugo Humbert (FRANCE): 6-3 6-3
3. Gojowczyk: 7-5 6-1

The Mallorca Championships is held at the outdoor grass courts of Mallorca Country Club in Santa Ponsa, Mallorca, Spain. It is a tune-up tournament for Wimbledon. The new tennis complex has five natural grass courts, with construction and maintenance contributions from the All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club.

Bautista-Agut’s form in this tournament was impeccable. His strong all-around game and forehand let him force errors from his rivals by forcing them to take an additional shot. This helped him reach his first grass court final on home soil without dropping a set:

1. Taro Daniel (JAPAN): 6-4 7-6[7-1]
2. Medvedev: 6-3 6-2
3. Antoine Bellier (SWITZERLAND): 7-6[7-5] 6-2