

Australian Open - Overview

The first Grand Slam of 2009 saw the *'Big Four'* of Nadal, Federer, Djokovic and Murray breeze through their R1 matches. None of the quartet dropped a set in the process although Murray did benefit from Andrei Pavel's bad back en route to his 45 minute win over the Romanian.

Tsonga (No.5), Simon (No.6), Roddick (No.7) and Del Potro (No.8) were similarly impressive. None of them dropped a set either - that said, like the top four seeds, their respective opponents hardly offered much resistance.

In fact, all the top 16 seeds made R2. Only David Ferrer (No.11) and Fernando Gonzalez (No.13) were forced to go the distance. Ferrer had no excuse against the limited threat of Denis Gremelmayr but, in Lleyton Hewitt, Gonzalez faced one of the toughest possible first round matches - the former runner-up being unseeded after an injury hit 2008.

Elsewhere in the round, another former finalist, Rainer Schuettler (No.30) was bundled out by the Israeli, Dudi Sela, and Feliciano Lopez (No.27) joined him as the only other seed to lose their first match. The Spaniard losing an epic battle with Gilles Muller, 16-14 in the deciding set!

The top eight seeds all took R2 in their stride - dropping a mere three sets between them in the process. However, the first real shocks started to happen as Yen-Hsun Lu came back to beat David Nalbandian (No.10) in five sets. This ranked as the Taiwanese player's best ever win - *'I just had nothing to lose today ... he's a top 10 player, I'm 61 in the world ... I have no pressure. I just go on the court and play my game.'* It certainly worked!

Other seeds to perish were the Swede, Robin Soderling (No.16), to another former finalist, Marcos Baghdatis, and Ivo Karlovic (No.25) who lost out to his fellow-countryman, Mario Ancic. Both of these were tough matches though and both seeds were by no means certain to progress. The same can't be said for both Paul-Henri Mathieu (No.28) and Philipp Kohlschreiber (No.32) as they lost out to Amer Delic and Fabrice Santoro respectively.

R3 started to serve up some quality matches as seed met seed for the first time in the tournament. Strangely, there was only one five set match, but it was a belter, as Fernando Gonzalez rallied to defeat Richard Gasquet in a match lasting 4'17". The Chilean came back from two sets down to win.

Seeding upsets saw Marin Cilic (No.19) beat David Ferrer, with some ease, and Tomas Berdych (No.20) defeat Stanislas Wawrinka (No.15) but those two matches aside, most matches went pretty much to form.

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Ominously for the rest of the field, this included each of the top four seeds as once again they all progressed with little fuss. Novak Djokovic (No.3) was pushed to a fourth set by Amer Delic but the outcome was never in doubt.

Into week two. Rafael Nadal (No.1) continued his serene progress with another crushing display, a fourth consecutive win in straight sets seeing off Gonzalez. However, Roger Federer (No.2) had to battle back from two sets to love down to finally overcome Tomas Berdych 6-2 in the decider.

Novak Djokovic saw off the stubborn resistance of Marcos Baghdatis to go through in four sets but match of the round was Andy Murray (No.4) against Fernando Verdasco (No.14). The Scot was 5:0 against the Spaniard prior to this match but Verdasco played superbly to oust one of the pre-tournament favourites in five sets. Murray was generous in defeat - *'sometimes you've just got to say 'too good' ... he played better than me.'*

The round also saw comfortable wins for Andy Roddick over Tommy Robredo, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga against James Blake and Gilles Simon who was gifted the win as his opponent, Gael Monfils, retired from their match with an arm injury.

The top two seeds eased through their QF's in straight sets with Federer, in particular, looking in great nick hammering Del Potro in just 80 minutes!

The other two matches both produced shocks as both favourites were turned over. Fernando Verdasco continued his great form with a four set win over Tsonga and then Andy Roddick progressed as Novak Djokovic retired from their match suffering from heat exhaustion.

And so Roddick faced Federer in the SF's. The Swiss player led their series 15:2 and made it 16:2 with no great effort - Federer faced just three break points in the match and saved them all. The other match was the complete opposite. The longest match in tournament history at 5'14" the Spanish pair were ultimately separated by one point - Nadal 193, Verdasco 192 - with the top seed just edging the big points in what was a titanic battle.

Nadal-Federer had met 18 times prior to the final (Nadal 12:6) and this match was up there with the best of them. As it was Nadal won another four hour plus, five set encounter, overcoming the fatigue of his gruelling SF. This was his sixth Grand Slam win, and first on a hard court, moving his career final record to 32:8 overall. Federer lost little in defeat but missed the chance to match the Pete Sampras record of 14 Grand Slam titles - he remained on a total of 13 major titles - and his career record in finals dropped to 57:22.



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Outdoor, Hard - Grand Slam

First Quarter

R128 Rafael Nadal [1] 6 6 6
R128 Christophe Rochus 0 2 2
R128 Florent Serra 3 6 3 6 3
R128 Roko Karanusic 6 1 6 3 6
R128 Eduardo Schwank 3 3 4
R128 Tommy Haas 6 6 6
R128 Q-Flavio Cipolla 4 6 7 7
R128 Dmitry Tursunov [29] 6 2 6 5

R128 Richard Gasquet [24] 6 7 6 6
R128 Diego Junqueira 7 6 3 4
R128 Vincent Spadea 2 5 4
R128 wc-Denis Istomin 6 7 6
R128 Guillermo Canas 3 7 5 6 7
R128 Q-Dieter Kindlmann 6 5 7 0 5
R128 Lleyton Hewitt 7 2 2 6 3
R128 Fernando Gonzalez [13] 5 6 6 3 6

R128 Gael Monfils [12] 6 6 7
R128 Martin Vassallo Arguello 1 3 5
R128 Mikhail Youzhny 3 2 2
R128 Stefan Koubek 6 6 6
R128 Andrey Golubev 6 6 4 2
R128 Fabio Fognini 3 7 6 6
R128 Nicolas Massu 4 4 6 7 3
R128 Nicolas Almagro [17] 6 6 3 5 6

R128 Ivo Karlovic [25] 6 6 6
R128 Daniel Gimeno-Traver 3 4 4
R128 Q-Wayne Odesnik 5 4 6 2
R128 Mario Ancic 7 6 4 6
R128 Chris Guccione 6 6 6
R128 Nicolas Devilder 4 2 4
R128 Pablo Andujar 4 1 1
R128 Gilles Simon [6] 6 6 6

Second Quarter

R128 Andy Murray [4] 6 3
R128 Andrei Pavel *retd.* 2 1
R128 Teimuraz Gabashvili 4 6 6 0
R128 Marcel Granollers 6 7 4 6
R128 Q-Andreas Beck 7 6 6
R128 WC-Colin Ebelthite 5 1 0
R128 Kei Nishikori 5 2 1
R128 Jurgen Melzer [31] 7 6 6

R128 Radek Stepanek [22] 3 6 6 6
R128 Nicolas Lapentti 6 3 4 4
R128 Q-Michael Berrer 6 6 6
R128 wc-Carsten Ball 2 4 3
R128 Sergiy Stakhovsky 3 6 6 2 1
R128 Arnaud Clement 6 2 4 6 6
R128 WC-Adrian Mannarino 0 2 2
R128 Fernando Verdasco [14] 6 6 6

R128 James Blake [9] 6 6 7
R128 LL-Frank Dancevic 4 3 5
R128 Q-Sebastien De Chaunac 2 6 0 6 6
R128 Steve Darcis 6 3 6 2 2
R128 Albert Montanes 3 2 3
R128 Ernests Gulbis 6 6 6
R128 Q-Peter Polansky 7 6 4 3 4
R128 Igor Andreev [18] 5 3 6 6 6

R128 Rainer Schuettler [30] 6 2 4 4
R128 Q-Dudi Sela 1 6 6 6
R128 Victor Hanescu 3 3 7 7 8
R128 Jan Hernych 6 6 6 6 6
R128 Ivan Ljubicic 4 7 7 5 6
R128 Igor Kunitsyn 6 6 6 7 3
R128 Juan Monaco 4 4 0
R128 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [5] 6 6 6

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Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter

R128 Andy Roddick [7]	6 6 6	R128 Juan Martin Del Potro [8]	6 6 6
R128 q-Bjorn Rehnquist	0 2 2	R128 Mischa Zverev	3 4 2
R128 q-Xavier Malisse	7 6 6	R128 q-Lamine Ouahab	2 1 2
R128 Michael Llodra	6 1 1	R128 q-Florian Mayer	6 6 6
R128 Juan Carlos Ferrero	3 2 7 2	R128 Potito Starace	6 6 6 6
R128 Fabrice Santoro	6 6 6 6	R128 WC-Bernard Tomic	7 1 7 7
R128 Sam Querrey	6 3 2	R128 Gilles Muller	6 7 4 4 1 6
R128 Philipp Kohlschreiber [32]	7 6 6	R128 Feliciano Lopez [27]	3 6 6 6 1 4
R128 Tommy Robredo [21]	6 7 6	R128 Marin Cilic [19]	6 6 6 6
R128 Bobby Reynolds	2 5 1	R128 Kevin Anderson	3 2 7 3
R128 Alberto Martin	3 6 2 4	R128 Oscar Hernandez	6 1 3 6 0
R128 Viktor Troicki	6 3 6 6	R128 Janko Tipsarevic	4 6 6 4 6
R128 Thomaz Bellucci	3 5 4	R128 q-Dominik Hrbaty	7 2 6 7
R128 Yen-Hsun Lu	6 7 6	R128 wc-John Isner	6 6 2 5
R128 Marc Gicquel	1 6 2 3	R128 Denis Gremelmayr	1 7 1 7 4
R128 David Nalbandian [10]	6 4 6 6	R128 David Ferrer [11]	6 6 6 6 6
R128 Robin Soderling [16]	5 6 6 7	R128 Stanislas Wawrinka [15]	6 2 7 7
R128 Robert Kendrick	7 4 4 5	R128 Ivo Minar	1 6 5 6
R128 Julien Benneteau	3 6 2	R128 q-Bjorn Phau	4 3 6 3
R128 Marcos Baghdatis	6 7 6	R128 wc-Brydan Klein	6 6 4 6
R128 Simone Bolelli	7 7 7	R128 Brian Dabul	6 6 6
R128 Kristof Vliegen	6 6 5	R128 Philipp Petzschner	1 2 4
R128 wc-Samuel Groth	7 4 5 0	R128 Robby Ginepri	4 4 3
R128 Mardy Fish [23]	6 6 7 6	R128 Tomas Berdych [20]	6 6 6
R128 Paul-Henri Mathieu [28]	6 4	R128 Marat Safin [26]	6 6 6
R128 Jarkko Nieminen <small>retd.</small>	2 1	R128 Ivan Navarro	3 3 4
R128 Taylor Dent	4 6 6 3 4	R128 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	3 7 6 6
R128 LL-Amer Delic	6 3 4 6 6	R128 Agustin Calleri	6 6 2 0
R128 Jeremy Chardy	6 6 6	R128 q-Evgeny Korolev	6 6 7
R128 Marcos Daniel	4 4 1	R128 Carlos Moya	3 1 6
R128 q-Andrea Stoppini	2 3 5	R128 Andreas Seppi	1 6 5
R128 Novak Djokovic [3]	6 6 7	R128 Roger Federer [2]	6 7 7



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R64	Rafael Nadal	666	R64	Andy Roddick	4676
R64	Roko Karanusic	232	R64	Xavier Malisse	6262
R64	Tommy Haas	666	R64	Fabrice Santoro	57376
R64	Flavio Cipolla	121	R64	Philipp Kohlschreiber	75653
R64	Richard Gasquet	666	R64	Tommy Robredo	666
R64	Denis Istomin	344	R64	Viktor Troicki	130
R64	Guillermo Canas	534	R64	Yen-Hsun Lu	65466
R64	Fernando Gonzalez	766	R64	David Nalbandian	47642
R64	Gael Monfils	6636	R64	Robin Soderling	6533
R64	Stefan Koubek	4462	R64	Marcos Baghdatis	3766
R64	Fabio Fognini	350	R64	Simone Bolelli	415
R64	Nicolas Almagro	676	R64	Mardy Fish	667
R64	Ivo Karlovic	75643	R64	Paul-Henri Mathieu	66367
R64	Mario Ancic	57466	R64	Amer Delic	13679
R64	Chris Guccione	7412	R64	Jeremy Chardy	513
R64	Gilles Simon	6666	R64	Novak Djokovic	766
R64	Andy Murray	666	R64	Juan Martin Del Potro	676
R64	Marcel Granollers	422	R64	Florian Mayer	152
R64	Andreas Beck	7643	R64	Bernard Tomic	6142
R64	Jurgen Melzer	5766	R64	Gilles Muller	3666
R64	Radek Stepanek	6667	R64	Marin Cilic	6646
R64	Michael Berrer	3275	R64	Janko Tipsarevic	2363
R64	Arnaud Clement	112	R64	Dominik Hrbaty	221
R64	Fernando Verdasco	666	R64	David Ferrer	666
R64	James Blake	666	R64	Stanislas Wawrinka	666
R64	Sebastien De Chaunac	323	R64	Brydan Klein	344
R64	Ernestus Gulbis	44764	R64	Brian Dabul	113
R64	Igor Andreev	66536	R64	Tomas Berdych	666
R64	Dudi Sela	666	R64	Marat Safin	766
R64	Victor Hanescu	332	R64	Guillermo Garcia-lopez	522
R64	Ivan Ljubicic	7662	R64	Evgeny Korolev	231
R64	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6776	R64	Roger Federer	666

	No. Matches	3/4/5 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R128	64 matches	33-18-13	3.68	34.96
R64	32 matches	18-9-5	3.59	33.90
R32	16 matches	10-5-1	3.43	32.87
R16	8 matches	4-2-2	3.75	35.75

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R32 Rafael Nadal	6 6 6	R16 Rafael Nadal	6 6 6
R32 Tommy Haas	4 2 2	R16 Fernando Gonzalez	3 2 4
R32 Richard Gasquet	6662 10	R16 Gael Monfils	retd. 4 6 1
R32 Fernando Gonzalez	3376 12	R16 Gilles Simon	6 2 6
R32 Gael Monfils	6 6 7	R16 Andy Murray	6 1 6 3 4
R32 Nicolas Pietrangeli	4 3 5	R16 Fernando Verdasco	2 6 1 6 6
R32 Mario Ancic	6 4 2	R16 James Blake	4 4 6
R32 Gilles Simon	7 6 6	R16 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6 7
R32 Andy Murray	7 6 6	R16 Andy Roddick	7 6 6
R32 Jurgen Melzer	5 0 3	R16 Tommy Robredo	5 1 3
R32 Radek Stepanek	4 0 0	R16 Marcos Baghdatis	1 6 7 2
R32 Fernando Verdasco	6 6 6	R16 Novak Baghdatis	6 7 6 6
R32 James Blake	6 6 3 6	R16 Juan Martin Del Potro	5 6 6 6
R32 Igor Andreev	3 2 6 1	R16 Marin Cilic	7 4 4 2
R32 Dudi Sela	4 2 6 1	R16 Tomas Berdych	6 7 4 4 2
R32 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6 1 6	R16 Roger Federer	4 6 6 6 6
R32 Andy Roddick	6 6 6	QF Rafael Nadal	6 7 7
R32 Fabrice Santoro	3 4 2	QF Gilles Simon	2 5 5
R32 Tommy Robredo	6 6 6	QF Fernando Verdasco	7 3 6 6
R32 Yen-Hsun Lu	1 3 2	QF Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6 3 2
R32 Marcos Baghdatis	6 6 6	QF Andy Roddick	6 6 6 2
R32 Mardy Fish	2 4 4	QF Novak Djokovic	retd. 7 4 2 1
R32 Amer Delic	2 6 3 6	QF Juan Martin Del Potro	3 0 0
R32 Novak Djokovic	6 4 6 7	QF Roger Federer	6 6 6
R32 Juan Martin Del Potro	6 7 6 7		
R32 Gilles Muller	7 5 3 5	SF Rafael Nadal	6 6 7 6 6
R32 Marin Cilic	7 6 6	SF Fernando Verdasco	7 4 6 7 4
R32 David Ferrer	6 3 4	SF Andy Roddick	2 5 5
R32 Stanislas Wawrinka	6 1 3 4	SF Roger Federer	6 7 7
R32 Tomas Berdych	4 6 6 6		
R32 Marat Safin	3 2 6	RU Roger Federer	5 6 6 6 2
R32 Roger Federer	6 6 7	W Rafael Nadal	7 3 7 3 6

	No. Matches	3/4/5 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
QF	3 matches	2-1-0	3.33	30.66
SF	2 matches	1-0-1	4.00	45.50
F	1 match	0-0-1	5.00	51.00

Australian Open - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Roger Federer [2]	5/2
Andy Murray [4]	11/4
Rafael Nadal [1]	4/1
Novak Djokovic [3]	7/1
David Nalbandian	20/1
Juan Martin Del Potro [8]	33/1
Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [4]	33/1
Gael Monfils	40/1
Andy Roddick [7]	50/1
Gilles Simon [6]	66/1
Richard Gasquet	80/1
Ernests Gulbis	100/1
Marin Cilic	125/1
James Blake	150/1
Marat Safin	150/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2009	W	RU	QF	R4	QF	QF	SF	QF
2008	SF	SF	W	R4	QF	R3	R3	R4
2007	W	QF	QF	R1	R4	SF	QF	R4
2006	W	R4	R2	SF	QF	R3	QF	R3
2005	SF	SF	RU	W	R1	R4	R3	QF
2004	QF	W	SF	SF	R1	R1	-	QF

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Rafael Nadal (4/1)	Roger Federer (5/2)	Verdasco-Roddick
2008	Novak Djokovic (11/1)	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (400/1)	Federer-Nadal
2007	Roger Federer (2/5)	Fernando Gonzalez (100/1)	Roddick-Haas
2006	Roger Federer (1/2)	Marcos Baghdatis (300/1)	Kiefer-Nalbandian
2005	Marat Safin (12/1)	Lleyton Hewitt (7/1)	Federer-Roddick
2004	Roger Federer (6/1)	Marat Safin (33/1)	Ferrero-Agassi

Betting - Australian Open

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Prior to this event the view was that Nadal wasn't back to top form after injury struck him down late in 2008 and Djokovic's form in his first two tournaments had been disappointing - so either form player Andy Murray (11/4) or perennial Grand Slam winner Roger Federer (5/2) were better options.

Nadal's handicap was never having won a Slam on a hard court and that, added to his lack of recent matches, made the Spaniard opposable even at odds of 4/1. Djokovic just hadn't looked good in his first two tournaments of the year and even at 7/1 the defending champion was easy to resist.

Nadal also had Gonzalez, Gasquet, Monfils and Simon in his quarter - all credible opponents if only Gonzalez (150/1) had any real form in this event. Murray had a soft looking section as although Tsonga (33/1) made the previous year's final he was hampered by a back injury (or so it was thought).

Djokovic had the mercurial Nalbandian (20/1) in his section plus Roddick (50/1) and they both had chance if the big guns failed to deliver. The Federer of old would be expected to storm through his quarter but Del Potro (33/1) - like Nalbandian a tournament winner the week before - was an improving player with claims to making it well into the second week's action.

Post-Tournament Review :-

We didn't learn anything new from this event. Nadal is the best scrapper on tour, Federer has class in abundance (but isn't getting any younger), Murray and Djokovic are good but still remain some way off the No.1 and No.2 in the world when it comes to the really big events.

Of the rest, Verdasco, Del Potro and Roddick all impressed and others for the future included Marin Cilic and Tsonga - who both lost little in defeat - but Gasquet, Ferrer and Nalbandian all reverted to type - surely none of them will ever win a Slam given the manner of their defeats.

Pointers for 2010 :-

First time Grand Slam winners are rare. Winners tend to be seeded high (last 10 winners were all in top 16 of seedings) and are established tournament winners. However, big each-way prices have been highly visible in recent years so don't dismiss players purely on price. Of the 'Big Four' the preferred option would be Nadal and Murray over Federer and Djokovic - but solid hard court players such as Del Potro and Tsonga should also be noted.