

Overview - Austrian Open

Traditionally Austria has hosted two ATP events (Portschach in May followed by Kitzbuhel in July), however, in another change to the annual schedule, that has now been reduced to one.

What it meant this year was the staging of the tournament in its usual May, pre-French Open, slot but the selected location was Kitzbuhel (it will revert to Portschach once again in 2010).

The week before a Grand Slam it was no surprise to see a fairly moderate field assembled and that was weakened even further by the late withdrawal of the top seed, Nikolay Davydenko, with a foot injury. Furthermore, we also lost Fabrice Santoro (No.4), Marc Gicquel (No.6) and Dudi Sela (No.8) in the first round of matches, throwing the event wide-open.

What it did create was a good opportunity for several players in the bottom half of the draw and both Jurgen Melzer (No.2) and Mikhail Youzhny (No.7) posted back-to-back straight sets wins to reach the QF's. Also through to the last eight was Victor Hanesu (No.3) who improved upon a good R1 win over Nicolas Lapentti with an even better showing against Marcel Granollers in R2.

Other notable performances came from the native Austrian, Daniel Koellerer, who saw off both Thomaz Bellucci and Diego Junqueira to reach the quarters along with Julien Benneteau, a lucky loser, who beat Sela in R1 and then ousted the Chilean, Nicolas Massu in his second match. Juan Ignacio Chela also caught the eye as he also reached the QF's.

Those matches saw a couple of upsets as Hanesu was brushed aside in just 82 minutes by Guillermo Garcia-Lopez and another Spanish player, Oscar Hernandez, accounted for Chela. Going more to the form Benneteau ended the run of Koellerer in a 2'31" match and Mikhail Youzhny knocked out the other remaining Austrian, Jurgen Melzer, in straight sets.

A big surprise came in the first SF as Garcia-Lopez defeated Youzhny to make his first ever tour final. It was a fine performance by the Spaniard against a much more experienced opponent. He would face Benneteau in the final as the Frenchman stopped Hernandez making it an all-Spanish final.

It was an epic final, over three hours long, which saw Garcia-Lopez tough it out to win his first ATP title - *'I think it's the best moment in my career. It's an unbelievable feeling'* said the new champion upon sealing the win. With it he became the first maiden winner of 2009 whilst as for the unfortunate Benneteau, this loss took his record to 0:3 in tour finals.



Austrian Open

May 17-23, 2009

Outdoor, Clay - ATP Tour Masters 250

R32	LL-Paul Capdeville	3 2	R16	Diego Junqueira	1 2
R32	Diego Junqueira	6 6	R16	Daniel Koellerer	6 6
R32	Thomaz Bellucci	4 4	R16	Nicolas Massu	1 7 6
R32	wc-Daniel Koellerer	6 6	R16	Julien Benneteau	6 6 7
R32	Nicolas Massu	6 6	R16	Oscar Hernandez	7 6
R32	q-Robin Vik	4 2	R16	Andreas Beck	5 4
R32	LL-Julien Benneteau	7 6	R16	Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo	3 2
R32	Dudi Sela [8]	5 1	R16	Juan Ignacio Chela	6 6
R32	Fabrice Santoro [4]	2 3	R16	Martin Vassallo Arguello	6 4 3
R32	Oscar Hernandez	6 6	R16	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	4 6 6
R32	Jan Hernych	7 3 5	R16	Marcel Granollers	1 6
R32	wc-Andreas Beck	5 6 7	R16	Victor Hanescu	6 7
R32	LL-Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo	6 6	R16	Mikhail Youzhny	6 6
R32	q-Mario Ancic	4 3	R16	Stefan Koubek	2 4
R32	q-Juan Ignacio Chela	5 6 6	R16	Agustin Calleri	4 5
R32	Marc Gicquel [6]	7 3 0	R16	Jurgen Melzer	6 7
R32	Martin Vassallo Arguello [5]	6 6	QF	Daniel Koellerer	2 7 0
R32	Christophe Rochus	2 4	QF	Julien Benneteau	6 6 6
R32	Bjorn Phau	3 2	QF	Oscar Hernandez	6 6
R32	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	6 6	QF	Juan Ignacio Chela	4 4
R32	Marcel Granollers	7 6	QF	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	6 6
R32	Teimuraz Gabashvili	6 3	QF	Victor Hanescu	2 2
R32	q-Nicolas Lapentti	7 3 5	QF	Mikhail Youzhny	6 6
R32	Victor Hanescu [3]	6 6 7	QF	Jurgen Melzer	4 4
R32	Mikhail Youzhny [7]	6 7			
R32	Daniel Gimeno-Traver	2 6	SF	Julien Benneteau	6 6
R32	wc-Stefan Koubek	7 6	SF	Oscar Hernandez	3 4
R32	Philipp Petzschner	6 4	SF	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	6 1 7
R32	Yen-Hsun Lu	ret'd. 6 5 1	SF	Mikhail Youzhny	3 6 6
R32	Agustin Calleri	3 7 0			
R32	Frederico Gil	3 0	RU	Julien Benneteau	6 6 3
R32	Jurgen Melzer [2]	6 6	W	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	3 7 6

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	12-4	2.25	21.37
R16	8 matches	6-2	2.25	21.00
QF	4 matches	3-1	2.25	24.50
SF	2 matches	1-1	2.50	27.00
F	1 match	0-1	3.00	31.00

Austrian Open - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Nikolay Davydenko [1]	11/10
Jurgen Melzer [2]	12/1
Mikhail Youzhny [7]	16/1
Frederic Gil	16/1
Andreas Beck	20/1
Victor Hanescu [3]	25/1
Agustin Calleri	33/1
Marcel Granollers	33/1
Oscar Hernandez	33/1
Stefan Koubek	40/1
Martin Vassallo Arguello [5]	40/1
Marc Gicquel [6]	40/1
Fabrice Santoro [4]	50/1
Thomaz Belluci	50/1
Dudi Sela [8]	66/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez (66/1)	Julien Benneteau (100/1)	Youzhny-Hernandez
2008	Juan Martin Del Potro (7/1)	Jurgen Melzer (12/1)	Hanescu-Starace
2007	Juan Monaco (20/1)	Potito Starace (33/1)	Verdaco-Calleri
2006	Agustin Calleri (20/1)	Juan Ignacio Chela (40/1)	Verdasco-Youzhny
2005	Gaston Gaudio (3/1)	Fernando Verdasco (40/1)	Zabaleta-Massu
2004	Nicolas Massu (8/1)	Gaston Gaudio (9/2)	Schuetzler-Verdasco

Betting - Austrian Open

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Nikolay Davydenko (11/10) is very much a 'course specialist' in Austria being a three time winner in the country. However, having withdrawn the week before in Madrid (and being injured previously in 2009) his very short price on account of his abundant 'course form' had to be viewed with caution ... and, lo and behold, the market leader did withdraw shortly before the start.

This created a vacuum in the top half of the draw as the three remaining seeds - Gicquel (40/1), Santoro (50/1) and Sela (66/1) - hardly presented a strong case for support even allowing for large odds. Better options would probably lie with Bellucci (50/1) and Chela (20/1 - a late qualifier) who at least boasted better credentials on clay.

The bottom half offered more options with Melzer (12/1) having solid claims on home soil - but his price was no great value - plus Youzhny (16/1) and Hanescu (25/1). You could possibly include Vassallo Arguello (40/1) as the tournament the week before a Grand Slam often provides a few surprises.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Not an event which will stay long in the memory. A generally weak bunch of seeds, some moderate clay court form, a hint of battle-fatigue and a big tournament the following week conspired to make this something of a lottery.

Hats off the Garcia-Lopez as he beat some decent opponents to take the title but the loss of Davydenko (added to Youzhny and Melzer being in the same quarter) made his task much easier. The Russian, Youzhny, really fluffed his lines after beating Melzer in the QF's as did Juan Ignacio Chela in falling to Oscar Hernandez.

Overall, a tournament for the also-rans to dominate as most of the game's best players rested up prior to heading off to Roland Garros.

Pointers for 2010 :-

The form of this event is hard to read with a switching of locations - but what can be said is that decent clay-courtiers, by and large, tend to win in Austria. The likes of Del Potro, Monaco, Gaudio etc in Kitzbuhel with Davydenko, Monaco, Volandri successful in Portschach. After several busy weeks in Europe do expect the odd shock but also note that seeds tend to win out in the end (as the field is never blessed with much quality). Nikolay Davydenko has to be a consideration here along with Juan Monaco, Jurgen Melzer and Mikhail Youzhny. Bascially, seeded, top 50 players with some clay pedigree.