

Overview - China Open

A very good quality event for a field of just 32 players with the eight seeds plus half a dozen more players all capable of mounting a serious challenge.

That competitive edge was felt more than most by Andy Roddick (No.3) as he was dumped out in R1 by the Polish qualifier, Lukasz Kubot. All the other seeds survived but Nadal (No.1), Davydenko (No.4), Verdasco (No.5) and Soderling (No.6) were all taken to deciding sets before managing to progress.

In other tough R1 encounters Ivan Ljubicic defeated Paul-Henri Mathieu, Juan Carlos Ferrero edged out fellow Spaniard, Nicolas Almagro, in two close sets and Philipp Kohlschreiber got the better of Ivo Karlovic.

No let-up for the players in R2 either as Nadal was made to work for well over two hours to see off James Blake, Verdasco had to overcome Juan Carlos Ferrero, Soderling got the better of Tommy Robredo and Gonzalez (No.7), the only seed to lose in this round, came up short against Marat Safin.

Notable wins came for Nikolay Davydenko over Kohlschreiber, an impressive 6-1 6-0 victory in just 57 minutes, Novak Djokovic (No.2), who dropped just three games himself in dispatching Troicki, and Ivan Ljubicic, a game winner against Kubot in a 2'35" battle which the Croat won 6-4 in the third set.

The QF's were all high quality affairs with every player a multiple tour winner, three Grand Slam champions. Nadal finally got into his stride to take out the Russian, Marat Safin, with his best showing of the week. Soderling then made the SF's by accounting for Ljubicic and he was joined there by Djokovic who overcame a second set mauling to see off Fernando Verdasco in convincing fashion, 6-1 in the third set.

We did see an upset as Marin Cilic (No.8) toughed it out against Davydenko to win by the odd break of serve in each set and complete the SF line-up.

Both semis provided clear-cut wins but again it was the Croat, Cilic, who made the headlines with a comfortable win over Nadal. The 6-3 6-1 scoreline illustrating his dominance. Cilic would next meet Djokovic in the final after the Serb beat Soderling in straight sets.

Djokovic led Cilic 3:0 before the final, it soon became 4:0. On top early the Serb was never to be pegged back. He said later - *'It's a great feeling. So far I've had lots of success on Asian soil and in Beijing I have only the best memories'*. The win moved him to 14:11 in tour finals whilst the runner-up, Cilic slipped to 3:1 in tournament deciders.



China Open

October 05-11, 2009

Outdoor, Hard - ATP World Tour 500

R32	Rafael Nadal [1]	6 3 6	R16	Rafael Nadal	7 6 6
R32	wc-Marcos Baghdatis	4 6 4	R16	James Blake	5 7 3
R32	James Blake	6 3 6	R16	Marat Safin	6 6
R32	q-Florian Mayer	3 6 3	R16	Fernando Gonzalez	3 4
R32	Jose Acasuso	4 2	R16	Nikolay Davydenko	6 6
R32	wc-Marat Safin	6 6	R16	Philipp Kohlschreiber	1 0
R32	David Ferrer	5 4	R16	Julien Benneteau	2 6 0
R32	Fernando Gonzalez [7]	7 6	R16	Marin Cilic	6 2 6
R32	Nikolay Davydenko [4]	6 6 6	R16	Robin Soderling	6 6
R32	Igor Kunitsyn	1 7 2	R16	Tommy Robredo	3 3
R32	Philipp Kohlschreiber	7 4 6	R16	Ivan Ljubicic	7 4 6
R32	Ivo Karlovic	6 6 1	R16	Lukasz Kubot	6 6 4
R32	Julien Benneteau	6 6	R16	Fernando Verdasco	7 6
R32	Marcos Daniel	3 4	R16	Juan Carlos Ferrero	5 4
R32	Igor Andreev	4 4	R16	Viktor Troicki	3 0
R32	wc-Marin Cilic [8]	6 6	R16	Novak Djokovic	6 6
R32	Robin Soderling [6]	6 4 6	QF	Rafael Nadal	6 6
R32	Jeremy Chardy	3 6 2	QF	Marat Safin	3 1
R32	Tommy Robredo	6 6	QF	Nikolay Davydenko	4 4
R32	Benjamin Becker	2 1	QF	Marin Cilic	6 6
R32	Paul-Henri Mathieu	6 6 1	QF	Robin Soderling	7 6
R32	Ivan Ljubicic	7 4 6	QF	Ivan Ljubicic	6 4
R32	q-Lukasz Kubot	6 6	QF	Fernando Verdasco	3 6 1
R32	Andy Roddick [3]	2 4	QF	Novak Djokovic	6 1 6
R32	Fernando Verdasco [5]	6 6 6			
R32	q-Robby Ginepri	7 1 2	SF	Rafael Nadal	1 3
R32	Nicolas Almagro	5 6	SF	Marin Cilic	6 6
R32	Juan Carlos Ferrero	7 7	SF	Robin Soderling	3 3
R32	q-Fabio Fognini	6 5	SF	Noval Djokovic	6 6
R32	Viktor Troicki	7 7			
R32	Victor Hanescu	3 5	RU	Marin Cilic	2 6
R32	Noval Djokovic [2]	6 7	W	Novak Djokovic	6 7

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	9-7	2.43	23.87
R16	8 matches	5-3	2.37	22.00
QF	4 matches	3-1	2.25	20.50
SF	2 matches	2-0	2.00	17.00
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	21.00

China Open - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Rafael Nadal [1]	7/5
Novak Djokovic [2]	4/1
Andy Roddick [3]	11/2
Fernando Verdasco [5]	22/1
Nikolay Davydenko [4]	22/1
Fernando Gonzalez [7]	25/1
Marin Cilic [8]	28/1
Robin Soderling [6]	50/1
David Ferrer	50/1
Paul-Henri Mathieu	50/1
James Blake	50/1
Juan Carlos Ferrero	50/1
Philipp Kohlschreiber	66/1
Ivo Karlovic	66/1
Viktor Troicki	66/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Novak Djokovic (4/1)	Marin Cilic (25/1)	Soderling-Nadal
2008	Andy Roddick (9/4)	Dudi Sela (200/1)	Schuettler-Phau
2007	Fernando Gonzalez (8/1)	Tommy Robredo (8/1)	Ljubicic-Kiefer
2006	Marcos Baghdatis (9/2)	Mario Ancic (12/1)	Srichaphan-Lee
2005	Rafael Nadal (8/11)	Guillermo Coria (5/1)	Ferrero-T.Johansson
2004	Marat Safin (11/2)	Mikhail Youzhny (25/1)	Nieminen-Srichaphan

Betting - China Open

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Tough to call with so much quality on show. One thing which was easy to spot was the poor value about Nadal (7/5). After a recent knee injury it was tough to say whether he was 100% and hard courts have always seen him in a lesser light than his beloved clay. A very definite swerve was required.

Each of Davydenko (22/1), Gonzalez (25/1) and Cilic (25/1) had claims. The Chilean, Gonzalez, had a tough draw but whoever won the likely QF match between Cilic and Davydenko would have to be in with a great chance if they faced the 'risky' Nadal or the erratic Gonzalez.

Bottom section. No easier. Verdasco (22/1) was the least attractive seed as his win ratio is very poor but any one of Djokovic (4/1), Roddick (11/2) and Soderling (50/1) had to be considered. Roddick, the defending champion, had arguably the best draw, Djokovic had the class, Soderling the big price.

However, in the final analysis, the choice really boiled down to either Roddick or Djokovic as they were the proven winners in quality events whilst Verdasco and Soderling had yet to make the breakthrough with a big tournament win.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Scepticism about Nadal was well-founded. The Spaniard looked a loss waiting to happen and Cilic duly administered the final knock-out blow. He was the big disappointment along with the inexplicable demise of Roddick.

Djokovic ultimately won this very indeed. He beat all-comers convincingly and, along with Cilic, was the pick of the players this week. Soderling kept up his good form of 2009 by making the SF's and there were fair efforts by Ljubicic, Safin and Davydenko (maybe tired after winning the previous week).

Overall a good event which produced a number of close matches and a solid level of form.

Pointers for 2010 :-

A quality event which seems almost certain to produce a 'name' winner as the matches are so tough back-to-back. Expect the organisers to offer a good prize fund as well to tempt in all the big names. Djokovic looks a good bet if he returns, Roddick can be forgiven this year's aberration and guys like Cilic and Soderling must enter the equation. Also, note players who might still have some gas in the tank after the US Open, they might still have a point to prove and some energy to expend late in the season - like Djokovic.