

ATP Masters Series Cincinnati - Overview

After two hard weeks it was no surprise to see Juan Martin Del Potro (No.6) pull out because of fatigue but, the South American aside, all the main players were here for a second consecutive week of Masters Series action.

Same format as before in that the top eight players were afforded the luxury of missing R1 as the rest of the field continued to hone their skills in advance of the upcoming US Open.

Plenty of talent remained on show as several cracking matches got the event underway. Robin Soderling (No.12) lost to Lleyton Hewitt in a great battle (Hewitt saved two match points), Ivo Karlovic ousted Gael Monfils (No.13) in a 2'10" serve-fest and two Spanish seeds, Fernando Verdasco (No.11) and Tommy Robredo (No.15), were sent packing by Guillermo Garcia-Lopez and Jeremy Chardy respectively.

Fernando Gonzalez (No.10) also had cause for concern as a knee injury forced him out against Tomas Berdych, jeopardising his US Open chances.

Elsewhere, Kunitsyn downed James Blake in a 2'37" marathon, Lopez and Melzer also went into over-time before the Spaniard went through 7-6 in the third set, the same way that John Isner eventually beat Tommy Haas.

R2 saw the arrival of the top players. Federer (No.1) and Nadal (No.2) made rather heavy work of beating Acasuso and Seppi, Djokovic (No.4) had it little easier against Ivan Ljubicic but Andy Murray (No.3) won well enough against Nicolas Almagro.

The main surprises of the round came as Andy Roddick (No.5) was knocked out by fellow American, Sam Querrey, by way of two tie-breaks and he was joined in the stands by Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (No.7) who fell tamely to the big Australian, Chris Gussione, also in straight sets.

Good wins were registered by David Ferrer over Marin Cilic, Gilles Simon against Igor Andreev and the Frenchman, Paul-Henri Mathieu, who somehow managed to subdue the giant Ivo Karlovic. And the round continued to serve up competitive matches as each of Stepanek/Safin, Davydenko/Kunitsyn and Chardy/Isner went to a deciding set.

The action continued to be of a high standard in the last 16 as Roger Federer had to fight his way back from a 1-3 deficit in the third set of his match with David Ferrer before making the QF's whilst a rejuvenated Lleyton Hewitt, Julien Benneteau, who took over three hours to defeat Garcia-Lopez, and

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Gilles Simon, who recorded a fine comeback win over Nikolay Davydenko, all came through after tense three set battles.

More impressive were Nadal, Djokovic, Murray and Tomas Berdych who all progressed with straight sets victories. None, in fairness, faced much opposition and moved into the QF's with the minimum of fuss.

Having seen the top eight seeds contest the QF's in Montreal the previous week, a very rare feat, we were to witness a similar phenomenon here in Cincinnati - albeit one round later in the tournament.

This time around, the results of the QF's ensured that the top four players in the draw would meet in the SF's. This came about as Novak Djokovic got the better of Gilles Simon, beating the Frenchman by the odd break of serve in each set. That scoreline (6-4 7-5) was then matched by Rafael Nadal as the Spaniard accounted for Tomas Berdych to set up a clash with the Serb for a place in the final.

The other SF would see Roger Federer take on Andy Murray. The top seed proved too strong for Lleyton Hewitt, beating the Aussie in 70 minutes, whilst Murray had a real battle against the *lucky loser* Julien Benneteau. The Scot had to fight back from losing the first set to the French player and then found himself 0-2 down in the second. The No.3 seed won 12 of the next 14 games to confirm his meeting with Federer in the SF's.

The two matches bucked the head-to-head trends as Federer and Djokovic both won to make the final. Federer had trailed Murray 2:6 before he blew away his opponent in the first set of their match and then gutsed it out to take the match on a second set tie-break.

Djokovic was 4:14 down on Nadal before a comprehensive 6-1 6-4 win saw him beat the Spaniard for the first time in ten meetings and set up a Sunday final with the top seed and world No.1, Federer.

'I really had the feeling today I could mix it up the way I wanted to. That then gives me a lot of confidence. I was playing great from the beginning to the end' - those were the words of Federer after he over-powered Djokovic to take the title with a fine display. The win lifted the Swiss player to 61:22 in terms of final appearances on the ATP Tour.

Djokovic played well all week, could do little in the final against an opponent who was clearly in the groove. The Serb was now 13:11 in career finals.



Western & Southern Financial Group Masters

August 17-23, 2009

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R64 Roger Federer [1]		R64 Nikolay Davydenko [8]	
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Jose Acasuso	6 6	R64 James Blake	6 7 4
R64 q-Lukasz Kubot	4 3	R64 Igor Kunitsyn	7 6 6
R64 David Ferrer	7 6	R64 Igor Andreev	6 7
R64 Stanislas Wawrinka	5 2	R64 Nicolas Kiefer	1 5
R64 Juan Carlos Ferrero	3 4	R64 Wayne Odesnik	3 2
R64 Marin Cilic [14]	6 6	R64 Gilles Simon [9]	6 6
R64 Robin Soderling [12]	6 6 4	R64 Tommy Robredo [15]	3 5
R64 Lleyton Hewitt	3 7 6	R64 Jeremy Chardy	6 7
R64 Martin Vassallo Arguello	3 3	R64 wc-John Isner	7 5 7
R64 Benjamin Becker	6 6	R64 Tommy Haas	6 7 6
R64 q-Yen-Hsun Lu	3 4	R64 q-Ivan Ljubicic	4 6 6
R64 Sam Querrey	6 6	R64 Florent Serra	6 3 4
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Andy Roddick [5]		R64 Novak Djokovic [4]	
R64 Andy Murray [3]		R64 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [7]	
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Nicolas Almagro	6 1	R64 Philipp Kohlschreiber	5 6 3
R64 Dudi Sela	retd. 4 0	R64 q-Chris Guccione	7 2 6
R64 wc-Marat Safin	7 7	R64 q-Simone Bolelli	6 3
R64 wc-Robby Ginepri	5 6	R64 Philipp Petzschner	7 6
R64 Viktor Troicki	retd. 6 0	R64 Tomas Berdych	6
R64 Radek Stepanek [16]	7 1	R64 Fernando Gonzalez [10]	retd. 4
R64 Fernando Verdasco [11]	6 6	R64 Gael Monfils [13]	4 7 6
R64 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	7 7	R64 Ivo Karlovic	6 6 7
R64 Victor Hanescu	5 2	R64 Mischa Zverev	7 5 3
R64 q-Mikhail Youzhny	7 6	R64 Paul-Henri Mathieu	6 7 6
R64 Feliciano Lopez	5 7 7	R64 q-Jan Hernych	6 4 1
R64 Jurgen Melzer	7 6 6	R64 Andreas Seppi	3 6 6
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 LL-Julien Benneteau		R64 Rafael Nadal [2]	

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R64	24 matches	15-9	2.37	24.08
R32	16 matches	10-6	2.37	24.50
R16	8 matches	4-4	2.50	24.37

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R32 Roger Federer	67	R16 Roger Federer	366
R32 Jose Acasuso	35	R16 David Ferrer	634
R32 David Ferrer	76	R16 Lleyton Hewitt	626
R32 Marin Cilic	62	R16 Sam Querrey	163
R32 Lleyton Hewitt	66	R16 Andy Murray	66
R32 Benjamin Becker	33	R16 Radek Stepanek	41
R32 Sam Querrey	77	R16 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	646
R32 Andy Roddick	66	R16 Julien Benneteau	467
R32 Andy Murray	76	R16 Nikolay Davydenko	744
R32 Nicolas Almagro	62	R16 Gilles Simon	666
R32 Marat Safin	631	R16 Jeremy Chardy	53
R32 Radek Stepanek	466	R16 Novak Djokovic	76
R32 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	76	R16 Chris Guccione	43
R32 Mikhail Youzhny	53	R16 Tomas Berdych	66
R32 Jurgen Melzer	262	R16 Paul-Henri Mathieu	52
R32 Julien Benneteau	636	R16 Rafael Nadal	76
R32 Nikolay Davydenko	616	QF Roger Federer	66
R32 Igor Kunitsyn	263	QF Lleyton Hewitt	34
R32 Igor Andreev	671	QF Andy Murray	466
R32 Gilles Simon	766	QF Julien Benneteau	631
R32 Jeremy Chardy	664	QF Gilles Simon	45
R32 John Isner	ret'd. 731	QF Novak Djokovic	67
R32 Ivan Ljubicic	64	QF Tomas Berdych	45
R32 Novak Djokovic	76	QF Rafael Nadal	67
R32 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	62		
R32 Chris Guccione	76	SF Roger Federer	67
R32 Philipp Petzschner	674	SF Andy Murray	26
R32 Tomas Berydch	766	SF Novak Djokovic	66
R32 Ivo Karlovic	64	SF Rafael Nadal	14
R32 Paul-Henri Mathieu	76		
R32 Andreas Seppi	66	RU Novak Djokovic	15
R32 Rafael Nadal	77	W Roger Federer	67

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
QF	4 matches	3-1	2.25	22.25
SF	2 matches	2-0	2.00	19.00
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	19.00

ATP Masters Series Cincinnati - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Andy Murray [3]	11/4
Roger Federer [1]	11/4
Rafael Nadal [2]	11/2
Novak Djokovic [4]	9/1
Andy Roddick [5]	11/1
Juan Martin Del Potro [6]	14/1
Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [7]	20/1
Nikolay Davydenko [8]	33/1
Fernando Verdasco	66/1
Fernando Gonzalez	66/1
Robin Soderling	100/1
James Blake	100/1
Ivo Karlovic	125/1
Gael Monfils	125/1
Tommy Haas	150/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Roger Federer (11/4)	Novak Djokovic (9/1)	Murray-Nadal
2008	Andy Murray (22/1)	Novak Djokovic (7/2)	Karlovic-Nadal
2007	Roger Federer (4/6)	James Blake (66/1)	Hewitt-Davydenko
2006	Andy Roddick (40/1)	Juan Carlos Ferrero (250/1)	Gonzalez-Robredo
2005	Roger Federer (5/6)	Andy Roddick (7/1)	Ginepri-Hewitt
2004	Andre Agassi (33/1)	Lleyton Hewitt (14/1)	Roddick-Robredo

Betting - ATP Masters Series Cincinnati

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

With a very similar draw to last week in Montreal, the question was whether the form would be upheld or if it would be overturned?

Federer (11/4) did look good, forgiving his inexplicable meltdown against Tsonga the week before, and the Swiss player, along with Murray (11/4) not only dominated the top half of the draw but also the whole outright market.

Roddick (11/1) was the main danger as each of Soderling (injury), Verdasco (lack of winning form) and Cilic (general inexperience) could all be discounted for one reason or another.

Nadal (11/2) was hard to back with confidence. His US record is patchy and his comeback from injury was by no means complete. Djokovic (9/1) was a better looking bet in arguably the weaker quarter - Nadal was in with Monfils, Gonzalez and Tsonga whilst Djokovic appeared to have a much easier route to the QF's and a possible match with Nijkolay Davydenko (33/1).

Like last week, it made most sense to concentrate one's efforts at the head of the market.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Federer beat Hewitt-Murray-Djokovic to win here and that's good enough form. Murray (arguably) suffered as Del Potro did against him the week before i.e. trying to win back-to-back tournaments ... it's tough!

Djokovic and Murray lost nothing in defeat, Nadal had the excuse of his injury but doubts over his dominance on fast US courts remain.

Hewitt showed creditable resilience - something which guys like Soderling, Tsonga, Cilic and Monfils would be wise to note.

Pointers for 2010 :-

The last dual winner in Montreal/Toronto and Cincinnati in the same year was Andy Roddick in 2003 - it doesn't happen very often. With the US Open so near, players who do well the week before can take their foot off the gas here in Ohio (whether intentionally or not) as they know they're in good shape. In the same way, players who under-perform in Canada come here in the mood to play well. Do note this phenomenon. Given this factor, results have been more volatile here but it's still big names who dominate - Federer, Djokovic and Murray must be noted, possibly Roddick and Davydenko of the rest.