

Overview - Grand Prix Hassan II

This event has never been a strong one and has often produced surprising results - and this year's renewal was typical on both counts.

In R1 we lost both of Christophe Rochus (No.7) and Arnaud Clement (No.8), although in Juan Carlos Ferrero and Ivan Ljubicic both could count themselves unlucky to get such tricky opening matches. However, there was no such excuse for Rainer Schuettler (No.2) who lost rather tamely to the Spaniard, Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo.

Even the favourite, Igor Andreev (No.1), took three sets to defeat a local Moroccan wild-card, Rabie Chaki, in three sets.

The Russian had it little better in R2 also as he was made to fight mighty hard before seeing off Nicolas Devilder. Better results came for the Romanian, Victor Hanesu (No.4), Florent Serra (No.5) and Marc Gicquel (No.6) who all won a second successive match in straight sets - all three looked good.

They were also joined in the QF's by Albert Montanes (No.3) who limped by Santiago Ventura in a match which lasted 2'15" and included no less than 13 breaks of serve! Good wins were also recorded by Juan Carlos Ferrero over Potito Strace and Frederico Gil against Ivan Ljubicic.

All four QF's were settled in convincing fashion. The top seed, Andreev, set up a SF meeting with Juan Carlos Ferrero as both won their matches with little fuss. The former world No.1, Ferrero, was always in control against Hanesu whilst Andreev saw off the Frenchman, Gicquel, in just 53 minutes.

Montanes and Serra would meet in the other SF. The No.3 seed, Montanes, defeated Gil in a solid display to make his second career SF in Casablanca whilst Serra was rather more dismissive of his opponent, the Russian Teimuraz Gabashvili, beating him in a mere 53 minutes.

Upsets, of sorts, in the SF's as the unseeded Ferrero downed the No.1 seed, Andreev, and Serra (No.5) beat Montanes (No.3). Both were worthy of their wins and neither were huge surprises as both had been the better players, on form, throughout the week.

Ferrero ended his title drought (since Oct '03) with a deserved win and moved to 12:16 in finals - having lost his previous six ATP deciders! He said afterwards, *'this is a special event for me ... 10 years ago I played my first ATP tournament here and now I'm back winning the title'*. As for Serra, he played well all week and lost little defeat even if his record in finals dropped to 1:2.



Grand Prix Hassan II

April 06-12, 2009

Outdoor, Clay - ATP Tour Masters 250

R32 Igor Andreev [1]	3 6 7	R16 Igor Andreev	6 7 6
R32 wc-Rabie Chaki	6 3 5	R16 Nicolas Devilder	7 6 4
R32 Nicolas Devilder	6 6	R16 Mischa Zverev	4 5
R32 Daniel Koellerer	3 4	R16 Marc Gicquel	6 7
R32 Mischa Zverev	6 3 6	R16 Victor Hanescu	6 6
R32 q-Flavio Cipolla	2 6 3	R16 Ivan Navarro	1 0
R32 Kristof Vliegen	5 3	R16 Potito Starace	4 6
R32 Marc Gicquel [6]	7 6	R16 Juan Carlos Ferrero	6 7
R32 Victor Hanescu [4]	6 7	R16 Ivan Ljubicic	7 5 4
R32 Steve Darcis	4 5	R16 Frederico Gil	6 7 6
R32 Ivan Navarro	7 4	R16 Santiago Ventura	7 3 5
R32 Sergiy Stakhovsky <small>retd.</small>	5 2	R16 Albert Montanes	5 6 7
R32 Potito Starace	4 6 6	R16 Florent Serra	6 6
R32 Oscar Hernandez	6 3 3	R16 Olivier Rochus	3 3
R32 Juan Carlos Ferrero	6 6	R16 Teimuraz Gabashvili	6 6
R32 Christophe Rochus [7]	2 3	R16 Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo	4 4
R32 Arnaud Clement [8]	6 7 4	QF Igor Andreev	6 6
R32 Ivan Ljubicic	7 5 6	QF Marc Gicquel	1 3
R32 Alberto Martin	3 6 6	QF Victor Hanescu	3 5
R32 Frederico Gil	6 3 7	QF Juan Carlos Ferrero	6 7
R32 q-Santiago Ventura	6 6	QF Frederico Gil	6 4
R32 q-Oliver Marach	1 1	QF Albert Montanes	7 6
R32 wc-Reda El Amrani	2 5	QF Florent Serra	6 6
R32 Albert Montanes [3]	6 7	QF Teimuraz Gabashvili	0 4
R32 Florent Serra [5]	6 6		
R32 Thomaz Bellucci	3 3	SF Igor Andreev	6 3
R32 wc-Mehdi Ziadi	6 2 1	SF Juan Carlos Ferrero	7 6
R32 Olivier Rochus	4 6 6	SF Albert Montanes	4 4
R32 Fabio Fognini	2 1	SF Florent Serra	6 6
R32 Teimuraz Gabashvili	6 6		
R32 Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo	6 7	RU Florent Serra	4 5
R32 Rainer Schuettler [2]	4 6	W Juan Carlos Ferrero	6 7

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	10-6	2.37	23.87
R16	8 matches	5-3	2.37	25.00
QF	4 matches	4-0	2.00	19.00
SF	2 matches	2-0	2.00	21.00
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	22.00

Grand Prix Hassan II - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Igor Andreev [1]	9/4
Juan Carlos Ferrero	8/1
Albert Montanes [3]	12/1
Thomaz Bellucci	14/1
Ivan Ljubicic	16/1
Rainer Schuettler [2]	18/1
Frederico Gil	20/1
Florent Serra [5]	20/1
Potito Starace	22/1
Fabio Fognini	25/1
Oscar Hernandez	28/1
Victor Hanescu [4]	28/1
Teimuraz Gabashvili	33/1
Marc Gicquel [6]	33/1
Arnaud Clement [8]	33/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Juan Carlos Ferrero (8/1)	Florent Serra (20/1)	Andreev-Montanes
2008	Gilles Simon (14/1)	Julien Benneteau (18/1)	Tsonga-Calleri
2007	Paul-Henri Mathieu (11/2)	Albert Montanes (18/1)	Gicquel-R.Hidalgo
2006	Daniele Bracciali (50/1)	Nicolas Massu (3/1)	Simon-Phau
2005	Mariano Puerta (18/1)	Juan Monaco (16/1)	Volandri-Zib
2004	Santiago Ventura (50/1)	Dominik Hrbaty (7/1)	C.Rochus-Benneteau

Betting - Grand Prix Hassan II

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

An early, clay season event with a curious choice of seeds - omitting multiple tour winners like Ferrero and Ljubicic plus Darcis, Starace and Rochus - this tournament had a very open looking feel.

The top half was a choice between Igor Andreev (9/4) who was winless since '05, Juan Carlos Ferrero (8/1) winless since '03 and Potito Starace (22/1) who had never won at all, ever.

And, by the same token, guys like Darcis (50/1) and Rochus (50/1) also had the potential to go well at big prices.

The bottom half was no easier. Schuettler (18/1) hadn't won for six years himself and each of the other seeds - Montanes (12/1), Serra (20/1) and Clement (33/1) - lacked the form to make them strong recommendations.

The best policy seemed to look for (a) past winning form (b) a decent price making guys like Ferrero and Montanes, Hanescu (28/1) and Ljubicic (16/1) look the best options.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Ferrero wins for the first time in six years - but, to be honest, he should have won long before this (lost six finals since '03). He played well all week and deserved his win however, aged 29, he was simply the best of a bad lot.

Excuses can be made for players like Schuettler and Clement but guys like Andreev, Starace and Montanes all disappointed. They should be looking to win events like this but all three once again failed to deliver. At least Serra showed them how it can be done, taking advantage in a weak event to make a final (which he could have won).

As for the rest, each of Darcis, Stakhovsky and even Ljubicic were also below par. This event took little winning and none seemed able to grasp the chance.

Pointers for 2010 :-

The last No.1 seed to win here was Renzo Furlan in '94. This event, often caused by the seedings, is tough to read. The general profile of winners is modest form, past winner and some previous form on clay - anybody up to 50/1 is a live contender but favourite backers beware. The French do well here so look to them first (Serra, Gicquel, Benneteau) plus Albert Montanes and Garcia-Lopez of Spain along with a wild-card like Fabio Fognini of Italy.