

Overview - Japan Open

Similar to the week's other event in China, a high quality event coming the week before the Masters event in Shanghai.

Competitive to the point where Juan Martin Del Potro (No.1) lost in R1 to the French qualifier, Edouard Roger-Vasselin, in his first match since winning the US Open and Radek Stepanek (No.6) also lost to Ernests Gulbis.

Pick of the other ties were Stanislas Wawrinka (No.7) beating John Isner, Mikhail Youzhny easily brushing aside Thomaz Bellucci and Jurgen Melzer accounting for Leonardo Mayer - all these wins coming in straight sets.

Just the one seed fell in R2, Gilles Simon (No.3) coming unstuck against the impressive Youzhny, however Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (No.2) had to come from behind to oust Richard Gasquet and Lleyton Hewitt (No.8) also met trouble as Fabrice Santoro took the first set before the former champion here got the measure of him as the match wore on.

Easier wins came for Stanislas Wawrinka and Tomas Berdych (No.5) against Greul and Beck respectively, Gael Monfils (No.4), who proved too strong for the Swiss player Marco Chiudinelli, and Ernests Gulbis who progressed when the Argentine, Juan Monaco, retired from their match with a hip injury when trailing 3-6 1-4.

Contrasting QF's in that Hewitt won very easily over Roger-Vasselin. The young Frenchman had recorded good back-to-back wins over Del Potro and Melzer but found Hewitt way too strong, losing in 67 minutes. There was also a good win for Youzhny over the defending champion, Berdych, in another match which was similarly one-sided.

The two other games were much tighter affairs. Monfils downed Wawrinka but only after losing the first set 6-2 and Tsonga also had to overcome losing the first set before he too rebounded to make the SF's with a three set win.

In those SF's Hewitt and Youzhny fought out a 2'40" battle before the Russian edged into the final 7-5 in the deciding set, whilst Tsonga won his all-French encounter with monfils in just 56 minutes.

'I played so well in the semi-finals and final here ... I just felt so comfortable on court'. Those were the words of Tsonga after he took the title with some ease in little over an hour. The win took him to 5:1 in career finals (winning last 5) whilst Youzhny, outplayed on the day, dropped to 4:6 in championship matches.



Japan Open

October 05-11, 2009

Outdoor, Hard - ATP World Tour 500

R32	Juan Martin Del Potro [1]	4 4	R16	Edouard Roger-Vasselin	4 6 6
R32	q-Edouard Roger-Vasselin	6 6	R16	Jurgen Melzer	6 2 3
R32	Jurgen Melzer	7 6	R16	Fabrice Santoro	6 3 1
R32	Leonardo Mayer	6 3	R16	Lleyton Hewitt	3 6 6
R32	Andrey Golubev	7 2 2	R16	Gilles Simon	6 7 4
R32	Fabrice Santoro	6 6 6	R16	Mikhail Youzhny	7 6 6
R32	wc-Tatsuma Ito	1 5	R16	Andreas Beck	4 1
R32	Lleyton Hewitt [8]	6 7	R16	Tomas Berdych	6 6
R32	Gilles Simon [3]	6 6	R16	Stanislas Wawrinka	6 6
R32	wc-Takao Suzuki	3 4	R16	Simon Greul	3 2
R32	Thomaz Bellucci	2 3	R16	Marco Chiudinelli	6 3
R32	Mikhail Youzhny	6 6	R16	Gael Monfils	7 6
R32	Andreas Beck	6 4 7	R16	Ernests Gulbis	6 4
R32	Rainer Schuettler	3 6 6	R16	Juan Monaco	retd. 3 1
R32	wc-Go Soeda	2 4	R16	Richard Gasquet	6 2 2
R32	Tomas Berdych [5]	6 6	R16	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	4 6 6
R32	Stanislas Wawrinka [7]	6 6	QF	Edouard Roger-Vasselin	4 0
R32	John Isner	4 4	QF	Lleyton Hewitt	6 6
R32	Simon Greul	4 6 6	QF	Mikhail Youzhny	6 7
R32	Martin Vassallo Arguello	6 4 2	QF	Tomas Berdych	2 6
R32	q-Marco Chiudinelli	4 6 6	QF	Stanislas Wawrinka	6 3 4
R32	Dudi Sela	6 1 4	QF	Gael Monfils	2 6 6
R32	q-Marsel Ilhan	2 4	QF	Ernests Gulbis	6 4 3
R32	Gael Monfils [4]	6 6	QF	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	4 6 6
R32	Radek Stepanek [6]	4 4	SF	Lleyton Hewitt	2 7 5
R32	q-Ernests Gulbis	6 6	SF	Mikhail Youzhny	6 5 7
R32	Juan Monaco	5	SF	Gael Monfils	3 3
R32	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	retd. 0	SF	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6
R32	Richard Gasquet	6 6	RU	Mikhail Youzhny	3 3
R32	Philipp Petzschner	3 2	W	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6
R32	Mischa Zverev	4 3			
R32	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [2]	6 6			

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	9-7	2.43	20.62
R16	8 matches	5-3	2.37	23.00
QF	4 matches	3-1	2.25	23.25
SF	2 matches	2-0	2.00	25.00
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	18.00

Japan Open - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Juan Martin Del Potro [1]	5/4
Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [2]	15/2
Gilles Simon [3]	8/1
Tomas Berydch [5]	10/1
Radek Stepanek [6]	12/1
Gael Monfils [4]	14/1
Lleyton Hewitt [8]	14/1
Richard Gasquet	25/1
Stanislas Wawrinka [7]	25/1
John Isner	28/1
Mikhail Youzhny	33/1
Philipp Petzschner	50/1
Jurgen Melzer	66/1
Juan Monaco	66/1
Simon Greul	80/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (15/2)	Mikhail Youzhny (33/1)	Monfils-Hewitt
2008	Tomas Berdych (20/1)	Juan Martin Del Potro (9/2)	Roddick-Gasquet
2007	David Ferrer (9/1)	Richard Gasquet (5/1)	Karlovic-Berdych
2006	Roger Federer (4/11)	Tim Henman (33/1)	Becker-Lee
2005	Wesley Moodie (125/1)	Mario Ancic (12/1)	Nieminen-Phau
2004	Jiri Novak (25/1)	Taylor Dent (18/1)	Hewitt-Ulirach

Betting - Japan Open

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Del Potro (5/4) was very short for a player who was fresh from a first big success and hadn't played for quite some time. It was open to debate how he would react and to win his first event back on tour would be some achievement. Even on the bare form, and given the field, he was no 5/4 shot.

Each of Simon (8/1), Berydch (10/1) and Hewitt (14/1) had claims and given Hewitt's recent win over Del Potro at Wimbledon, plus the Aussie's past win here (2001), he looked a decent each-way bet. More so if Simon and Berydch couldn't be split ... and then there was Youzhny (33/1).

The bottom half was wide open. Any one of Tsonga (15/2), Stepanek (12/1), Monfils (14/1) and Wawrinka (25/1) could either be supported or opposed for a variety of reasons. Given the fourth quarter also included dangerous floaters, notably Gulbis and Gasquet, the call might well fall between the none-too-reliable Wawrinka and the improving Monfils.

In short, a great event for betting each-way as a very opposable short-priced favourite made every player in the field a backable price ... the difficulty was choosing which one, or two, to back.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Tsonga won well enough in the end, raising his game when he needed to - especially in the SF and final. Youzhny played great tennis and showed that his ability far outweighs his achievements in the game to date.

The only surprise with Del Potro was how soon he lost - another example of players being 'caught cold' by qualifiers in R1 - but most other players upheld the form. Hewitt rolled back the years to some extent, Wawrinka, Berdych and Gulbis all played up to their form (for a change) and Roger-Vasselin made his mark with a couple of notable wins.

Overall few players really let themselves down in an event which saw good competitive matches right through the event.

Pointers for 2010 :-

Now played the week before a Masters event, in a big city, this tournament will attract big names. Added to this, a field of 32 will make it very hard for lesser players to sneak through and win (Moodie won when it was a pretty ordinary event). Go for seasoned hard court winners, with global experience, who can win big tournaments - Del Potro, Verdasco, Monfils, Gasquet etc.