

Overview - LA Tennis Open

The first hard court event of the 'North American swing' produced a mediocre field dominated by homegrown talent and journeyman players - lacking the marquee names needed to raise it above what was quite an ordinary level.

As it was Benjamin Becker (No.7) managed to find one of the few players in the draw with an upward profile, John Isner, as the 6'9" American proved too strong for the German. Better results for Kunitsyn (No.5), Querrey (No.6) and Safin (No.8) as all three made it through to R2 unscathed. Other notable wins came for Baghdatis, Gulbis and Robert Kendrick who 'double-bageled' fellow American, Vincent Spadea, 6-0 6-0 in just 36 minutes!!

The top four seeds then entered the fray in R2. Haas (No.1), Fish (No.2) and Sela (No.4) all progressed - even though Sela dropped a set in his match and Fish had to save 3 match points before seeing off Chris Guccione - but Dmitry Tursunov (No.3) wasn't quite so lucky, a left ankle injury caused the Russian to retire early in the second set of his match with Carsten Ball.

Also through to the QF's were Marat Safin, who fought back from a break down in the third set to defeat Ernests Gulbis, John Isner, who also recorded a fine win over Marcos Baghdatis and Leonardo Mayer, the Argentine accounting for the seeded Kunitsyn in a very close 2'43" match.

The last eight kicked off with Sam Querrey using his big serve to great effect in downing the Israeli, Dudi Sela, in straight sets - Querrey dropped just two points on his first serve in the whole match. Marat Safin then blew 3 set points in the opening set of his match with Tommy Haas and, once missed, the Russian had precious few other opportunities as the No.1 seed won 7-6 6-2.

The SF's were completed via two shock results. Carsten Ball made full use of his very few chances to defeat John Isner and Leonardo Mayer advanced when Mardy Fish withdrew on account of an oblique strain.

Querrey made his third consecutive ATP final with an impressive win over Haas. He would meet Carsten Ball in that match after the qualifier made his first ever tour final by winning a scrappy encounter with Leonardo Mayer.

It was third time lucky for Querrey as after losing in Newport and Indianapolis he won his second career title (2:3 in finals) - but still made heavy weather of putting away his inexperienced opponent ... *'I was a little worried after that second set, but I came back strong in the third'* he said later. Ball enjoyed a stellar run to make his first final, his best ever showing, but just found Querrey too strong in the latter stages. Question now is if he can build on this effort.



LA Tennis Open

July 27-02, 2009

Outdoor, Hard - ATP World Tour 250

R32 Tommy Haas [1]		R16 Tommy Haas	66
R32 Bye		R16 Jesse Levine	13
R32 wc-Jesse Levine	66	R16 Ernests Gulbis	634
R32 Bobby Reynolds	23	R16 Marat Safin	266
R32 Yen-Hsun Lu	52	R16 Dudi Sela	636
R32 Ernests Gulbis	76	R16 Robert Kendrick	461
R32 se-Robby Ginepri	634	R16 Ryan Sweeting	373
R32 Marat Safin [8]	366	R16 Sam Querrey	666
R32 Dudi Sela [4]		R16 John Isner	67
R32 Bye		R16 Marcos Baghdatis	36
R32 Vincent Spadea	00	R16 Carsten Ball	60
R32 Robert Kendrick	66	R16 Dmitry Tursunov	ret'd. 41
R32 wc-Taylor Dent	463	R16 Igor Kunitsyn	673
R32 q-Ryan Sweeting	626	R16 Leonardo Mayer	766
R32 Denis Istomin	20	R16 Chris Guccione	764
R32 Sam Querrey [6]	66	R16 Mardy Fish	676
R32 Benjamin Becker [7]	66	QF Tommy Haas	76
R32 John Isner	77	QF Marat Safin	62
R32 se-Frank Dancevic	63	QF Dudi Sela	35
R32 Marcos Baghdatis	76	QF Sam Querrey	67
R32 q-Carsten Ball	67	QF John Isner	44
R32 Marc Gicquel	26	QF Carsten Ball	66
R32 Bye		QF Leonardo Mayer	w/o
R32 Dmitry Tursunov [3]		QF Mardy Fish	
R32 Igor Kunitsyn [5]	76		
R32 q-Somdev Devvarman	52	SF Tommy Haas	35
R32 Leonardo Mayer	66	SF Sam Querrey	67
R32 q-Josselin Ouanna	23	SF Carsten Ball	77
R32 wc-Chris Guccione	66	SF Leonardo Mayer	56
R32 Kevin Kim	14		
R32 Bye		RU Carsten Ball	461
R32 Mardy Fish [2]		W Sam Querrey	636

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	12 matches	10-2	2.16	20.08
R16	8 matches	5-3	2.37	25.50
QF	3 matches	3-0	2.00	20.66
SF	2 matches	2-0	2.00	23.00
F	1 match	0-1	3.00	26.00

LA Tennis Open - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Tommy Haas [1]	9/4
Mardy Fish [2]	11/2
Dmitry Tursunov [3]	15/2
Sam Querrey [6]	8/1
Dudi Sela [4]	16/1
John Isner	20/1
Frank Dancevic	20/1
Benjamin Becker [7]	25/1
Robby Ginepri	28/1
Marc Gicquel	33/1
Marcos Baghdatis	33/1
Igor Kunitsyn [5]	40/1
Ernests Gulbis	40/1
Marat Safin [8]	40/1
Taylor Dent	40/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Sam Querrey (8/1)	Carsten Ball (250/1)	Haas-Mayer
2008	Juan Martin Del Potro (9/1)	Andy Roddick (5/4)	Fish-Gremelmayr
2007	Radek Stepanek (33/1)	James Blake (3/1)	Kiefer-Lee
2006	Tommy Haas (8/1)	Dmitry Tursunov (20/1)	Hrbaty-Gonzalez
2005	Andre Agassi (3/1)	Gilles Muller (150/1)	Chela-Hrbaty
2004	Tommy Haas (14/1)	Nicolas Kiefer (20/1)	Saulnier-Morrison

Betting - LA Tennis Open

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Given the lack of strength in the top half of the draw, the choice boiled down to either Tommy Haas (9/4) or Sam Querrey (8/1). One offered experience, proven form and winning ability (Haas) whilst the other had current form, future potential and a bigger price going for him (Querrey).

Sela (16/1) was a ludicrous price even for this weak an event - the guy just has no winning pedigree - and although a huge price, Safin (40/1) was hard to support given a testing draw.

The bottom section was much tougher. Fish (11/2) had to be respected on home soil, Tursunov (15/2) had won events like this before and even though Becker (25/1) and Kunitsyn (40/1) were both weak looking seeds, the trio of Isner (20/1), Dancevic (20/1) and Baghdatis (33/1) were all possible winners.

So whilst Haas and Fish had solid claims, several other players (given this was the first event of a new 'mini-season') had each-way possibilities and were maybe worth the punt.

Post-Tournament Review :-

The predicted Haas/Querrey showdown proved crucial to determining the outcome. Querrey edged that match and went on to win the title.

Given his recent form he deserved a bit of luck but his less than clinical defeat of Ball underlined the concerns about his 'killer instinct'. As for Ball, the cards simply fell right for him. Not a player expected to build on this to any great extent, his result brings the whole event's form into some question.

Generally speaking, Haas and Fish were a bit unlucky, Isner blew a decent chance, Leonardo Mayer again caught the eye (he will win events) and Sela did nothing to justify a lofty seeding.

Pointers for 2010 :-

As with all North American events of this nature, the starting point has to be Americans - Querrey, Isner and Blake being obvious candidates. Others like Dmitry Tursunov, Tommy Haas and Radek Stepanek feature in past events with distinction. This is clearly not a great event, it doesn't attract the big names but the roll of honour is surprisingly solid all the way down and seeds, mostly, dominate. Because it's early in the 'swing' and far away from the main action (which at this time of year is in Europe) shocks will occur and the more naturally acclimatised players will stand a better chance.