

Overview - Mercedes Cup

A left knee injury meant that Albert Montanes (No.6) was a late withdrawal from the event - and the Spaniard was soon joined in the stands by three other seeds, nearly four in fact, after R1.

Tomas Berdych (No.3) fell to the home player, Nicolas Kiefer, in straight sets as did Jose Acasuso (No.8) to Jeremy Chardy. Fabrice Santoro (No.7) at least managed to win a set in his match with Fabio Fognini but still lost out comprehensively to the Italian, losing the deciding set 6-1. And this trio was almost added to when Nikolay Davydenko (No.2) was taken all the way by Ivan Navarro before the Russian settled their 2'36" match 6-3 in the third set.

The remaining seeds all made it safely through to R2 as Gilles Simon (No.1), Victor Hanesu (No.4) and Philipp Kohlschreiber (No.5) all won without dropping a set.

However, the success of both Simon and Kohlschreiber was short-lived as both failed to make the QF's - losing to Mischa Zverev and Lukasz Kubot respectively. This left just Davydenko and Hanesu as the sole remaining seeds in the last eight as Davydenko picked up his game sufficiently to defeat Michael Berrer in 65 minutes whilst Hanesu swept aside another German, Rainer Schuettler, in just 61 minutes.

Elsewhere, Nicolas Kiefer beat Simon Greul in routine fashion and there were also good wins for Jeremy Chardy and Fabio Fognini - aided by the retirement of his opponent, Paul-Henri Mathieu, through dizziness.

The QF's went to form in terms of Kiefer, Chardy and Hanesu all winning in straight sets, and with very little fuss, but the major surprise came as the No.2 seed, Davydenko, was ousted by Fabio Fognini. A great win for the Italian who took advantage of a rain delay at 4-4 in the third set to re-group and re-start the better, stealing the win 7-5 in the deciding set.

In the SF's Hanesu was first to win through to the final, ending Fognini's great run after a gruelling 2'16" encounter. In the final he would face the Frenchman, Chardy, who edged out Nicolas Kiefer in two close sets.

A great final saw Chardy fight back from losing the first set 1-6 to win his maiden tour title (despite almost blowing a 4-0 lead in the third set) - *'I was very nervous at the start ... in the second set I started to play my game ... but it was tough in the end'* he said afterwards. Chardy was now 1:1 in career finals whilst this loss for Hanesu dropped the Romanian's record to 1:2 in championship matches.



Mercedes Cup

July 13-19, 2009

Outdoor, Clay - ATP World Tour 250

R32 Gilles Simon [1]	66	R16 Gilles Simon	42
R32 Philipp Petzschner	34	R16 Mischa Zverev	66
R32 Mischa Zverev	66	R16 Martin Vassallo Arguello	63 1
R32 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	24	R16 Jeremy Chardy	266
R32 Andrey Golubev	630	R16 Nicolas Kiefer	66
R32 Martin Vassallo Arguello	366	R16 Simon Greul	34
R32 Jeremy Chardy	67	R16 Lukasz Kubot	66
R32 Jose Acasuso [8]	26	R16 Philipp Kohlschreiber	24
R32 Tomas Berdych [3]	33	R16 Alexandre Sidorenko	266
R32 Nicolas Kiefer	66	R16 Osker Hernandez	643
R32 Andreas Beck	66	R16 Rainer Schuettler	21
R32 wc-Simon Greul	77	R16 Victor Hanescu	66
R32 q-Lukasz Kubot	66	R16 Fabio Fognini	64
R32 q-Pablo Andujar	24	R16 Paul-Henri Mathieu <small>retd.</small>	41
R32 Diego Junqueira	32	R16 Michael Berrer	33
R32 Philipp Kohlschreiber [5]	66	R16 Nikolay Davydenko	66
R32 LL-Alexandre Sidorenko	716	QF Mischa Zverev	61
R32 Q-Daniel Munoz-De La Nava	662	QF Jeremy Chardy	76
R32 Janko Tipsarevic	44	QF Nicolas Kiefer	66
R32 Oscar Hernandez	66	QF Lukasz Kubot	21
R32 Ivo Minar	664	QF Alexandre Sidorenko	64
R32 Rainer Schuettler	276	QF Victor Hanescu	76
R32 q-Dominik Meffert	46	QF Fabio Fognini	637
R32 Victor Hanescu [4]	67	QF Nikolay Davydenko	165
R32 Fabrice Santoro [7]	761		
R32 Fabio Fognini	576	SF Jeremy Chardy	67
R32 Mikhail Youzhny	66	SF Nicolas Kiefer	35
R32 Paul-Henri Mathieu	77	SF Victor Hanescu	666
R32 wc-Michael Berrer	077	SF Fabio Fognini	372
R32 wc- Stefan Koubek	666		
R32 Ivan Navarro	653	RU Victor Hanescu	634
R32 Nikolay Davydenko [2]	476	W Jeremy Chardy	166

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	10-6	2.37	24.00
R16	8 matches	6-2	2.25	19.25
QF	4 matches	3-1	2.25	21.50
SF	2 matches	1-1	2.50	25.50
F	1 match	0-1	3.00	26.00

Mercedes Cup - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Nikolay Davydenko [2]	9/4
Philipp Kohlschreiber [5]	9/2
Tomas Berdych [3]	8/1
Gilles Simon [1]	12/1
Jeremy Chardy	20/1
Mikhail Youzhny	22/1
Paul-Henri Mathieu	25/1
Jose Acasuso [8]	33/1
Albert Montanes	33/1
Mischa Zverev	40/1
Victor Hanescu [4]	50/1
Andreas Beck	66/1
Fabio Fognini	66/1
Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	80/1
Fabrice Santoro [7]	100/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Jeremy Chardy (20/1)	Victor Hanescu (50/1)	Kiefer-Fognini
2008	Juan Martin Del Potro (28/1)	Richard Gasquet (12/1)	Schwank-Calleri
2007	Rafael Nadal (3/10)	Stanislas Wawrinka (200/1)	Lopez-Chela
2006	David Ferrer (12/1)	Jose Acasuso (12/1)	Berdych-Monaco
2005	Rafael Nadal (4/6)	Gaston Gaudio (6/1)	Nieminen-Davydenko
2004	Guillermo Canas (28/1)	Gaston Gaudio (4/1)	Davydenko-Ferrer

Betting - Mercedes Cup

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

All the seeds in the top half deserved consideration. Kohlschreiber (9/2) was arguably the worst value - simply by virtue of being the shortest price - as each of Berdych (8/1), Simon (12/1) and Acasuso (33/1) had won titles before on the surface. Of the rest, Chardy (20/1) and Kiefer (100/1) could also be said to have claims in a very open looking draw.

The bottom half was much clearer given the presence of Davydenko (9/4) who looked a very solid call once a potential QF with either Youzhny (22/1), Mathieu (25/1) or Santoro (100/1) was overcome. Hanescu (50/1), a possible SF opponent, simply didn't possess a winning profile with just one title to date in his nine year career.

A win bet on the Russian would provide ample cover for a more speculative each-way in the top section with the winner of the Chardy/Acasuso tie or possibly Tomas Berdych (already a winner in Germany this year) the best call.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Chardy beat some decent players to win. Not brilliant players but the kind of solid pros who any player has to beat in order to win this kind of regular tour event. The Frenchman had already entered a few notebooks before this week but certainly showed top 20 potential with his all-round play.

Davydenko's loss, naturally, his life easier. Fognini's win was a genuine shock and not too much should be read into it as the Italian has only showed flashes of ability but never a sustained period of form.

Simon's loss was typical of a poor first half to the year, Kohlschreiber and Berdych both lost matches they really need to win in order to confirm their standing in the game's top 20 (like Chardy) and Hanescu, just shy of his 28th birthday, showed that he is playing the best tennis of his career right now even if, yet again, the Romanian failed to secure the win.

Pointers for 2010 :-

The roll of honour here is impressive - Chardy as a first time winner is rare in this respect. Previous clay success is usually a requirement, continental Europe or South America is the most likely origin of the winner but a high seeding isn't that crucial. Regular visitors to Stuttgart include Tomas Berdych, Nikolay Davydenko and, a home player to watch, Philipp Kohlschreiber. The last couple of years have also seen a less visible Spanish presence and, if this trend persists, better to concentrate on the central/Eastern Europeans.