

Overview - RMK Championships

Being a '500 Series' event the field in Memphis tends to be relatively strong and this year we had good strength in depth.

In R1, James Blake (No.3) lost to Lleyton Hewitt, Robin Soderling (No.4) fell to Florent Serra and Igor Andreev (No.6) was turned over by Igor Kunitsyn in three sets just to emphasise the point there were no easy games here.

Even Andy Roddick (No.1) had to defeat the '08 champion, Steve Darcis, to progress, Juan Martin Del Potro (No.2) had to see off Guillermo Canas and Sam Querrey (No.8) drew the short straw of playing the three time former winner, but still unseeded, Tommy Haas - just to make it into R2!

Despite this competitive nature of the event only one R2 match went the full distance (Kunitsyn/Petschner) as the other seven were all two set affairs. Roddick and Del Potro breezed past Ginepri and Gulbis respectively, there were good wins for Querrey over Baghdatis, Stepanek over Koubek and the Israeli, Dudi Sela, over Serra. Elsewhere, Lleyton Hewitt saw off fellow Aussie, Chris Guccione, and we lost one seed as Mardy Fish (No.7) was surprised by the Belgian, Christophe Rochus.

The QF's produced a couple of good matches as Andy Roddick managed to see off Sam Querrey in three sets and then Stepanek edged out Del Potro - the Argentine won more points (60 to 59) in the match and had three set points in the second set but simply failed to take his chances.

In the other two ties, Hewitt made his first tour SF since August '07 with a routine win over Rochus and Dudi Sela battled back from losing the first set to defeat Igor Kunitsyn and make the first SF of his career.

Those SF's were starkly contrasting matches. Stepanek blitzed Sela in just 57 minutes whilst Roddick and Hewitt had a real battle. The 2'11" match saw the American rally from losing the first set to advance to his fourth Memphis final. Afterwards, Hewitt commented - *'Overall the week was great for me ... the hip held up pretty good and that's important.'*

Stepanek had beaten Roddick the previous week in San Jose (en route to the title himself) so this week the American gained revenge - *'A week ago he [Stepanek] played better when it counted on the big points. I played better today on the big points.'* Roddick took 3:4 break point opportunities whereas Stepanek was 1:4, that was the difference. With the win, his second here (alos '02), Roddick took his career tally to 27:15 whilst Stepanek's record in finals dropped to 4:6 - but it was a good effort after winning the week before.



RMK Championships

February 16-22, 2009

Indoor, Hard - ATP Tour World 500

R32	Andy Roddick [1]	7 6	R16	Andy Roddick	6 6
R32	Steve Darcis	6 2	R16	Robby Ginepri	2 3
R32	Robby Ginepri	6 6	R16	Marcos Baghdatis	1 2
R32	q-Simon Greul	4 4	R16	Sam Querrey	6 6
R32	wc-Marcos Baghdatis	7 6	R16	Lleyton Hewitt	6 7
R32	Kei Nishikori	5 3	R16	Chris Guccione	2 6
R32	Tommy Haas	6 4	R16	Christophe Rochus	6 6
R32	Sam Querrey [8]	7 6	R16	Mardy Fish	2 4
R32	James Blake [3]	6 1 4	R16	Igor Kunitsyn	3 6 6
R32	Lleyton Hewitt	3 6 6	R16	Philipp Petzschner	6 4 4
R32	Vincent Spadea	6 6	R16	Dudi Sela	7 7
R32	q-Chris Guccione	7 7	R16	Florent Serra	6 6
R32	wc-Donald Young	4 3	R16	Radek Stepanek	6 6
R32	Christophe Rochus	6 6	R16	Stefan Koubek	2 4
R32	Yen-Hsun Lu	1 5	R16	Ernesto Gulbis	3 4
R32	Mardy Fish [7]	6 7	R16	Juan Martin Del Potro	6 6
R32	Igor Andreev [6]	6 4 3	QF	Andy Roddick	6 3 6
R32	Igor Kunitsyn	1 6 6	QF	Sam Querrey	4 6 3
R32	Jarkko Nieminen	3 4	QF	Lleyton Hewitt	6 6
R32	Philipp Petzschner	6 6	QF	Christophe Rochus	2 3
R32	q-Dudi Sela	7 6	QF	Igor Kunitsyn	6 4 2
R32	Bobby Reynolds	6 2	QF	Dudi Sela	4 6 6
R32	Florent Serra	6 6 6	QF	Radek Stepanek	7 6
R32	Robin Soderling [4]	4 7 2	QF	Juan Martin Del Potro	6 4
R32	Radek Stepanek [5]	6 6			
R32	q-Kevin Kim	4 2	SF	Andy Roddick	2 7 6
R32	Stefan Koubek	6 6	SF	Lleyton Hewitt	6 6 4
R32	Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	2 2	SF	Dudi Sela	3 1
R32	Ernesto Gulbis	6 3 6	SF	Radek Stepanek	6 6
R32	Taylor Dent	4 6 2			
R32	Guillermo Canas	3 6	RU	Radek Stepanek	5 5
R32	Juan Martin Del Potro [2]	6 7	W	Andy Roddick	7 7

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R32	16 matches	12-4	2.25	22.18
R16	8 matches	7-1	2.12	20.37
QF	4 matches	2-2	2.50	24.00
SF	2 matches	1-1	2.50	23.50
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	24.00

RMK Championships - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Andy Roddick [1]	11/4
Juan Martin Del Potro [3]	9/2
Robin Soderling [2]	7/1
Mardy Fish [4]	10/1
Radek Stepanek	12/1
James Blake [5]	14/1
Marcos Baghdatis	20/1
Tommy Haas	20/1
Ernests Gulbis	22/1
Sam Querrey	28/1
Lleyton Hewitt	33/1
Jarkko Nieminen	40/1
Igor Andreev	40/1
Robby Ginepri	50/1
Kei Nishikori	66/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

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

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Andy Roddick (11/4)	Radek Stepanek (12/1)	Hewitt-Sela
2008	Steve Darcis (100/1)	Robin Soderling (12/1)	Bjorkman-Stepanek
2007	Tommy Haas (10/3)	Andy Roddick (11/4)	Fish-Murray
2006	Tommy Haas (9/2)	Robin Soderling (28/1)	Benneteau-Vliegen
2005	Kenneth Carlsen (80/1)	Max Mirnyi (14/1)	Roddick-Haas
2004	Joachim Johansson (40/1)	Nicolas Kiefer (66/1)	Fish-Enqvist

Betting - RMK Championships

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

Roddick (11/4) always commands respect in these North American hard court events. His draw wasn't too severe, he had played well the week before in San Jose and had previous winning form in this tournament.

His quarter included some solid opposition but Roddick had more experience and form than Baghdatis (20/1), Querrey (28/1) and Nishikori (66/1) and although the former three time champion Tommy Haas (20/1) was respected, his win here in '07 was his last tour win (and final appearance). The German lacked recent winning form and at 30 was beginning to slip off the radar.

Of the rest, Fish (10/1) is generally hard to win with, Blake (14/1) was also low on form in '09, Hewitt (33/1) was coming back off an injury lay-off.

The bottom section revolved around Del Potro (9/2) and Stepanek (12/1) as both players had already beaten the next best player, Soderling (7/1), in the early weeks of the year. Del Potro had youth on his side but the Czech player was in-form ... and, if anything, Stepanek had a slightly better draw and was over double the price of the young Argentine.

Post-Tournament Review :-

Roddick beat Darcis-Ginepri-Querrey-Hewitt-Stepanek to win, which was a solid effort (all are previous tour winners) and confirmed the respect he clearly deserves in these events. He's now won at least once on tour for the past 9 straight years and remains a real threat on hard courts.

Each of Stepanek, Del Potro and Hewitt also performed up to their expected level with Hewitt possibly just lacking a little match sharpness in the SF's.

Elsewhere, the decline of Haas was evident and maybe James Blake also is beginning to slide. Soderling was possibly a little rusty but Igor Andrejev again failed to justify his seeding in an event of this quality.

Pointers for 2010 :-

Not the happiest of hunting grounds for seeds - Chang '97 was the last No.1 seed to win before this year - however, a seed of some sort always tends to make the final. Form from San Jose the week will count for something but the winner tends to be a solid, hard court player, not necessarily a huge server (but do allow for this, like last week, being an indoor event). This event isn't massively dominated by Americans so names to consider would be Marcos Baghdatis, Ivo Karlovic, Robin Soderling and possibly Del Potro.