

Shanghai Masters - Overview

Roger Federer missing on personal grounds. Andy Murray absent due to medical grounds. This wasn't quite the Masters Series event which the organisers would have wished for - but coming this late in the year, this far from home, a few absentees were understandable.

To make up for these losses, the action was good right from the start with James Blake and Ivo Karlovic fighting out a tough three-setter and there were similar encounters which saw Tomas Berdych oust Marin Cilic, Nicolas Almagro defeat Philipp Kohlschreiber and Stanislas Wawrinka edge past qualifier Lukasz Kubot.

All highly competitive affairs but easier wins came for the likes of Stepanek, Monfils, Robredo and Ferrer who all opened their campaigns with clear cut victories over decent opposition (Ferrero, Mathieu, Llodra and Gasquet respectively).

Overall, of the seeded players in R1 action only Cilic (No.12) was defeated which set up a number of very interesting matches in R2.

Rafael Nadal (No.1) took 2'13" to finally see off James Blake 6-4 in the third, Tommy Robredo saved three match points en route to defeating the German, Florian Mayer, also 6-4 in the third set and Gael Monfils had to come back from a set down to beat Lleyton Hewitt.

By contrast Novak Djokovic (No.2) had an easy ride into R3 along with Davydenko (No.6), who also made short work of Igor Kunitsyn, and Gilles Simon (No.8) who was no other winner in straight sets.

However, it wasn't so good for the other three top seeds as Del Potro (No.3) had to retire from his match with Jurgen Melzer due to tendinitis in his wrist, Andy Roddick (No.4) had to retire early in his match with Stanislas Wawrinka due to a knee injury and Fernando Verdasco (No.7) came unstuck against Ivan Ljubicic.

In the rest of the games there were solid wins by Robin Soderling over Nicolas Almagro, Radek Stepanek against Andreas Beck and Fernando Gonzalez who won an all-South American battle with Thomaz Bellucci.

Moving into R3 and there was quality right through the eight ties. Nadal set the tone with a facile win over fellow Spaniard, Tommy Robredo, for the loss of just five games. Novak Djokovic, for his part, then lost just six in seeing off Rainer Schuettler.

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Other players who put a marker down were Robin Soderling, with a straight sets defeat of Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, Nikolay Davydenko, who was also a two set winner over Fernando Gonzalez, and Gilles Simon, the Frenchman taking out Tomas Berdych with a dominant display.

The QF line-up was completed by Feliciano Lopez and Radek Stepanek, the only players involved in three sets matches in this round. Lopez came from a set down to defeat the Austrian, Jurgen Melzer, 6-1 in the decider and Stepanek also recorded a come from behind win as Stanislas Wawrinka retired from their match when trailing 2-4 in the third set.

Two very tough matches in the QF's and two which were settled early. The long battles involved Djokovic and Simon, with the Serb eventually winning their 2'23" match in decisive fashion, 6-2 in the final set. Davydenko and Stepanek also slugged it out for over two hours in what was something of a see-saw battle, the Russian winning the first set comfortably, losing the second, but then regrouping to take the deciding set again in what proved to be an impressive manner, 6-1.

By contrast, Feliciano Lopez produced something like his very best from to defeat Robin Soderling in straight sets and Rafael Nadal made the last four when his opponent, Ivan Ljubicic, had to pull out of their match at 1-1 with a hip injury.

And as if that wasn't help enough for the top seed it got even better for Nadal in the SF's as his opponent, Lopez, then retired as well. This time it was an ankle injury which aided Nadal's cause as his compatriot could play no more having fallen 1-6 0-3 down and with no way back into the match.

Davydenko and Djokovic then served up a classic match, all 3'03" of it, which went all the way to a third set tie-break. The Russian quickly got on top in that, racing to a 5:0 lead, and from that position there was no way back for the No.2 seed.

'On the final day, you want to give everything in this match, 100 per cent what you can do ...and really I lost 5 finals and I won 17. That was my 18th ATP World Tour title. Now it's really amazing. Really, in finals I play very well'.

That's how Davydenko summed up his feelings after defeating Nadal in a well-contested final. His win, in just over two hours, gave the No.6 seed his third Masters Series title (18:5 overall in ATP deciders) whilst the loss for the Spaniard meant that Nadal now dropped 36:11 in career finals.



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October 11-18, 2009

Outdoor, Hard - Masters Series

R64 Rafael Nadal [1]		R64 Nikolay Davydenko [6]	
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 James Blake	3 7 6	R64 Igor Kunitsyn	6 6 6
R64 Ivo Karlovic	6 6 3	R64 Igor Andreev	7 4 2
R64 q-Florian Mayer	6 6	R64 q-Marco Chiudinelli	6 4
R64 Philipp Petzschner	3 2	R64 q-Thomaz Bellucci	7 6
R64 q-Michael Llodra	1 4	R64 Mischa Zverev	retd. 5 7 2
R64 Tommy Robredo [14]	6 6	R64 Fernando Gonzalez [13]	7 6 2
R64 Gael Monfils [11]	6 6	R64 Radek Stepanek [10]	6 6
R64 Paul-Henri Mathieu	2 2	R64 Juan Carlos Ferrero	3 0
R64 Lleyton Hewitt	6 6	R64 Jose Acasuso	retd. 6 0
R64 John Isner	2 4	R64 Andreas Beck	7 1
R64 Julien Benneteau	3 6 1	R64 q-Lukasz Kubot	6 6 6
R64 Ivan Ljubicic	6 3 6	R64 Stanislas Wawrinka	2 7 7
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Fernando Verdasco [7]		R64 Andy Roddick [4]	
R64 Juan Martin Del Potro [3]		R64 Gilles Simon [8]	
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Jeremy Chardy	4 4	R64 Viktor Troicki	6 6
R64 Jurgen Melzer	6 6	R64 Juan Monaco	1 2
R64 Feliciano Lopez	6 6	R64 wc-Mao-Xin Gong	4 4
R64 Guillermo Garcia-Lopez	3 4	R64 wc-Marat Safin	6 6
R64 Richard Gasquet	4 3	R64 Tomas Berdych	7 3 6
R64 David Ferrer [16]	6 6	R64 Marin Cilic [12]	6 6 4
R64 Robin Soderling [9]	6 6	R64 Tommy Haas [15]	7 6
R64 Victor Hanescu	3 4	R64 Benjamin Becker	6 4
R64 Philipp Kohlschreiber	7 1 6	R64 Martin Vassallo Arguello	4 6 6
R64 Nicolas Pietrangolo	6 6 7	R64 q-Rainer Schuettler	6 3 7
R64 wc-Shao-Xuan Zeng	2 6 6	R64 q-Fabio Fognini	7 6
R64 Dudi Sela	6 1 4	R64 wc-Ernests Gulbis	6 3
R64 Bye		R64 Bye	
R64 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [5]		R64 Novak Djokovic [2]	

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
R64	24 matches	15-9	2.37	22.87
R32	16 matches	11-5	2.31	21.18
R16	8 matches	6-2	2.25	20.50

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R32	Rafael Nadal	6 6 6	R16	Rafael Nadal	6 6
R32	James Blake	2 7 4	R16	Tommy Robredo	1 4
R32	Florian Mayer	6 6 4	R16	Gael Monfils	retd. 20
R32	Tommy Robredo	4 7 6	R16	Ivan Ljubicic	6 3
R32	Gael Monfils	4 6 6	R16	Jurgen Melzer	7 6 1
R32	Lleyton Hewitt	6 4 2	R16	Feliciano Lopez	5 7 6
R32	Ivan Ljubicic	6 7	R16	Robin Soderling	6 6
R32	Fernando Verdasco	4 6	R16	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	3 3
R32	Juan Martin Del Potro	retd. 5 1	R16	Nikolay Davydenko	6 7
R32	Jurgen Melzer	7 2	R16	Fernando Gonzalez	3 5
R32	Feliciano Lopez	4 7 6	R16	Radek Stepanek	3 7 4
R32	David Ferrer	6 5 1	R16	Stanislas Wawrinka	retd. 6 6 2
R32	Robin Soderling	6 7	R16	Gilles Simon	6 6
R32	Nicolas Almagro	4 5	R16	Tomas Berdych	3 4
R32	Shao-Xuan Zeng	3 3	R16	Rainer Schuettler	4 2
R32	Jo-Wilfried Tsonga	6 6	R16	Novak Djokovic	6 6
R32	Nikolay Davydenko	6 6	QF	Rafael Nadal	3 6
R32	Igor Kunitsyn	4 2	QF	Ivan Ljubicic	retd. 6 3
R32	Thomaz Bellucci	3 4	QF	Feliciano Lopez	7 6
R32	Fernando Gonzalez	6 6	QF	Robin Soderling	6 3
R32	Radek Stepanek	7 6	QF	Nikolay Davydenko	6 4 6
R32	Andreas Beck	5 4	QF	Radek Stepanek	1 6 1
R32	Stanislas Wawrinka	3	QF	Gilles Simon	3 6 2
R32	Andy Roddick	retd. 4	QF	Novak Djokovic	6 2 6
R32	Gilles Simon	6 6			
R32	Viktor Troicki	3 4	SF	Rafael Nadal	6 3
R32	Marat Safin	6 4 4	SF	Feliciano Lopez	retd. 1 0
R32	Tomas Berdych	3 6 6	SF	Nikolay Davydenko	4 6 7
R32	Tommy Haas	retd. 4	SF	Novak Djokovic	6 4 6
R32	Rainer Schuettler	6			
R32	Fabio Fognini	3 1	RU	Rafael Nadal	6 3
R32	Novak Djokovic	6 6	W	Nikolay Davydenko	7 6

	No. Matches	2 sets-3 sets	Ave. Sets/Match	Ave. Games/Match
QF	4 matches	2-2	2.50	22.25
SF	2 matches	1-1	2.50	21.50
F	1 match	1-0	2.00	22.00

Shanghai Masters - Facts & Figures

Market Leaders	Odds
Rafael Nadal [1]	7/2
Juan Martin Del Potro [3]	4/1
Novak Djokovic [2]	9/2
Andy Roddick [4]	10/1
Marin Cilic	20/1
Jo-Wilfried Tsonga [5]	20/1
Nikolay Davydenko [6]	20/1
Robin Soderling	22/1
Fernando Gonzalez	33/1
Fernando Verdasco [7]	33/1
Gael Monfils	40/1
Gilles Simon [8]	40/1
Stanislas Wawrinka	66/1
Tommy Haas	66/1
Tomas Berdych	66/1

Performance Of The Seeded Players

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2009	RU	SF	R2	R2	R3	W	R2	QF
2008	No event held							
2007	No event held							
2006	No event held							
2005	No event held							
2004	No event held							

Recent Winners/Leading Performers

	Winner	Runner-Up	Losing SF's
2009	Nikolay Davydenko (20/1)	Rafael Nadal (7/2)	Djokovic-lopez
2008	No event held		
2007	No event held		
2006	No event held		
2005	No event held		
2004	No event held		

Betting - Shanghai Masters

Pre-Tournament Briefing :-

A couple of question marks in the top half of the draw with Nadal (7/2) not having won since Rome back in early May and Del Potro (4/1) still coming to terms with his US Open win. However, short prices about these two opened up any number of possibilities in the rest of the section.

Tsonga (20/1), Soderling (22/1) and Monfils (40/1) looked the best prospects to take advantage as all had winning hard court form and seemed capable of mounting a challenge in such a big tournament.

The bottom section was also the subject of much debate about who to back for the title - could Djokovic (9/2) take advantage of the absence of Federer and Murray, was Roddick (10/1) able to do likewise. Davydenko (20/1), Cilic (20/1) and Gonzalez (33/1) were other considerations who could go well.

Any number of ways this one could be viewed however the best policy did seem an avoidance of the top two in the betting in preference for a couple of decent each-way bets or support of Djokovic as he tried to win back-to-back after his win in Beijing (never easy when it's a Masters Series event).

Post-Tournament Review :-

Some surprises, a host of retirements, some rather dubious form but a worthy winner in the end. Davydenko beat Gonzalez-Stepanek-Djokovic-Nadal to win the title and that's as tough a quartet as this event could produce. When it all falls into place the Russian is a genuine top ten player.

Nadal rode his luck a little to get to the final so judgement must be reserved on his achievements, Djokovic though did play well to make the SF's where he just came up short.

Del Potro, Roddick, Tsonga, Verdasco and Cilic were all guilty of below par showings (for different reasons) - maybe the location, maybe the time of year.

Pointers for 2010 :-

Little to go on after the first year but this late in the schedule, in this remote a location, expect some shocks (a bit like the later Paris Masters). A good player will tend to win here, as that's what happens in Masters Series events, but it might not be one of the 'big four'. Better to look at players who make have played the week before but didn't go all the way i.e. they still have a bit of gas in the tank. That said, you'd be looking for seeded quality, the likes of Del Potro, Tsonga, Monfils, Cilic and Davydenko immediately come to mind.