

DeMarco Brothers win 2nd straight State Title

Brothers Joe DeMarco and Matt DeMarco along with Alec Thomas took the five-hour drive down to Hershey Thursday afternoon to compete in the PIAA Tennis Tournament, held at the Hershey Racquet Club, which hosted the PIAA Team Tennis Tournament just the week before. Joe and Matt DeMarco made their way into the state draw by dropping only a handful of games at the District 10 Championship against McDowell's number one team. Alec Thomas advanced to Hershey by defeating Sebastian Carrillo 6-1, 6-1 in the D-10 final.

The opening round pitted Dylan Tull of Cedar Crest High School versus Alec Thomas. In doubles the DeMarco brothers faced Dante Falcucci and JT Mullins from Hershey. The brothers made quick work of the hometown team, dispatching them in straight sets 6-1, 6-3. Alec Thomas made the most of his court time as he jumped to a quick 4-0 lead over Tull before losing 6 straight to lose the first set. A quick comeback during the two-hour match left Alec Thomas on top 4-6, 6-2, 6-1.

In the second round, the DeMarco's cruised to an even easier victory defeating Greg Zlobinsky and Isaac Rockower from Abington 6-1, 6-0. Alec Thomas fell to senior and college commit Matt Chen 6-1, 6-4. Chen would go on to win the bronze.

In the semifinals Joe and Matt battled hard against Xandy Hammitt and Clay Gaieski who represented Strath Haven 6-1, 6-3. They now had only one more match to claim the gold. Coaches, parents, teammates, and friends gathered to watch the duo make history. Bryan Szyana and Danny Katz from Upper Dublin felt the full wrath of the speed and shot-making the DeMarco brothers could so easily produce. They cruised on service games and frequently broke the UD Team.

A 6-1, 6-2 victory on a service forced error gave the DeMarco brothers their second PIAA Gold in two years. "We played great, and we worked together well. It was important because we played as one," said Matt DeMarco shortly after their win. Joe, a rising senior, and Matt a rising junior look to be back at the state tournament in coming years.

Cathedral Prep tennis team takes Hilton Head

The Cathedral Prep tennis team cramped into a Cathedral Prep van for a 15-hour haul to the home of outdoor hard court tennis, Hilton Head, South Carolina. The top seven players, (Joe and Matt Demarco, Alec Thomas, Jacob Labonte, David Estes, Jon Hortsman, and Nick Hardner) boarded the van with assistant coach Gary Palisquilio and head coach Patrick Grab Easter Sunday night for the much warmer weather down south.

The drive through the night was worth it as the Ramblers made a pit-stop in Spartansburg, South Carolina, at Spartansburg High School to play the national indoor team champions from last year. A competitive match and a beautiful day turned dark just after introductions when rain ended the match early. The Ramblers were on serve against the reigning national champions at first singles with Joe Demarco and at third singles with Alec Thomas. Matt Demarco was up a break at number two singles. Jacob Labonte and David Estes were down a break and Jon Horstman and Nick Hardner were down a set at their matches respectively.

"This is actually extremely disappointing," said Matt DeMarco

as the Ramblers boarded the van once more for the final 6 hours to Hilton Head Island. After a long van ride we were looking for some great tennis and matches, which we were having on most every court. "It's a shame we were washed out."

They arrived late Monday night at the Van Der Meer Tennis Academy on Hilton Head Island where the Cathedral Prep tennis team would spend the next five days. Tuesday morning started the work for the tennis team. Practices from 9-12 and 3-6 each day tested the team on their strokes, stamina, tennis IQ, and heart as they battled the heat and their challengers under the southern sun in scorching heat.

"There wasn't a cloud in the sky all week and not a lick of wind," told Jacob Labonte, who endured high temperatures and humidity that brought the court temperature well over 100 degrees. While at the Van Der Meer Tennis Academy, they were coached by E.T., who coached Venus and Serena Williams for a period of time during their grand slam runs. In addition Thomas Richter who was a former top 50 ITA player in the world assisted him.

On Thursday they hopped in the van once more for a double header where they defeated Bergen Catholic 5-0 in Hilton Head. Bergen was a New Jersey state quarterfinalist. Joe and Matt DeMarco and Alec Thomas won in singles. In doubles, Jacob Labonte/David Estes and Nick Hardner/Jon Horstman won for the Ramblers. After a quick break Prep had a 4-1 win over Hilton Head Prep, the 2-time defending South Carolina 2A state champs. Matt DeMarco and Alec Thomas won in singles. Jacob Labonte/David Estes and Nick Hardner/Jon Horstman took home their matches in doubles. Joe Demarco fell in a third set tiebreaker to a Vanderbilt commit.

After a few more days of tennis the Prep tennis team headed back to Erie with a lot more experience and a lot more tan than when they first headed down. The Prep tennis team now looks to the postseason after winning the region title and

taking the number 1 seed at the district 10 tennis championships. Singles actions starts Saturday with the finals on Monday, doubles on Wednesday, and team on Friday.

Juan Martín Del Potro has a comeback year

When sports fanatics think of the greats of professional men's tennis, names like Arthur Ash, John McEnroe, Rafael Nadal, and Roger Federer quickly come to mind. For many sports fans, tennis is a sport that doesn't see the limelight like others do, and when Juan Martín Del Potro stepped back onto the court, many didn't notice, but in the tennis community this was one of the most celebrated and anticipated moments of the 2016 season.

He is known not only for his great play but for his overwhelmingly powerful and crowd favorite forehand. His forehand is "a complete weapon, and can punish me on the court with no way of defending against it," according to former world number one and 12-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic after his defeat to Del Potro at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

What Del Potro is most famous for is his heart. During his Grand Slam run at the U.S. Open in 2009 he defeated a red hot Roger Federer in five set fashion (3-6, 7-6, 4-6, 7-6, 6-2). Pennbriar tennis pro Rick Sertz said he can still remember the fight Del Potro possessed. "Whatever he was running on was inhumane. The way he kept fighting, you could see he didn't have anything left but kept giving more." Many thought that he was destined for greatness but injuries plagued the young

Argentine.

In 2010 he underwent a wrist surgery that ended the latter part of his 2010 season. His ranking dropped all the way from world number 4 to 485 according to the ATP World Tours official point ranking system. He rebounded quickly and was named the ATP Comeback Player of the Year in 2011, as well as taking home the bronze medal at the London Olympics in 2012. Del Potro was quoted saying, "This is one of my biggest accomplishments, representing my country like this." By 2013 he was once again ranked among the Top 5 players in the world. Del Potro once again struggled with misfortune as his wrist problems returned and he had wrist surgery once again in 2014. Many thought that he was out of action, and would hang up his racket.

On Feb. 15, 2016, the 6' 6" Juan Martin Del Potro took back to the court under the sun in Delray Beach, Florida. He made his presence known as the unranked wildcard powered his way to the tournament's semi-final losing to American Sam Querrey. This kick-started a thunderous year for Del Potro. His return to the All England Club at Wimbledon was highly anticipated, and he didn't disappoint. His aggressive forehand allowed him to eliminate world number five and Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka before he was eliminated by L. Pouille in the round of 32.

Del Potro appeared at the Rio Olympics representing Argentina, in the continent's first Olympic Games. With the home crowd behind him, Del Potro pulled the biggest upset on the men's side defeating world number one Novak Djokovic 7-6 (4), 7-6 (2) in a drama-filled match. He was almost a shoe-in to win the gold, after it seemed like no player in the world could match his level of play. Again in the semi-final round he beat Rafael Nadal, one of the sports most decorated athletes, to play in the gold medal match. Andy Murray (future world number one) would go on to defeat him for the gold medal 5-7, 6-4, 2-6, 5-7 and Del Potro took home the silver.

The truest test of character and performance came at this year's Davis Cup World Finals. This is when players of each country's nationality play a team tennis tournament. Argentina, who has never won a Davis Cup, came into the tournament with passion and fight. The Argentina tennis fans came out in full force, being known as some of the most passionate in the world. They were able to sail through the first two rounds but were put to the test by Team Great Britain.

Andy Murray and Del Potro battled for hours under the lights in Glasgow before Juan was able to pull the upset winning in the fifth set 6-4, 5-7, 6-7(5), 6-3, 6-4 to advance the team. In the finals they faced off against the dominant Croatian team in Zagreb. Del Potro first beat Ivo Karlovic, one of the game's biggest servers, in four sets 6-4, 6-7(6), 6-3, 7-5. In the title match he would play the strong and steady baseliner M. Cilic who is on the rise in the tennis rankings. He now holds number six in the world. Del Potro got in the hole early, down two sets to love, 6-7(4), 6-2. In the third set he hit the panic button and a huge clutch break of service at the end of the third set allowed him to serve it out. Cilic came out firing in the fourth taking the lead early but the Argentine battled back and miraculously won the fourth.

Gary Pasqualicchio, an avid tennis fan was glued to the TV. "The level of play was tremendous. Both were firing on all cylinders, and almost every point was a highlight." In the fifth the emotions and adrenaline took over for Del Potro who rallied past Cilic winning 6-3, clinching the title. As the team rushed the court, he was stunned. This was his first match he has come back and won being down two sets to love. He expressed his emotion when he hugged his teammates and coaches and during a post-match interview he was so choked up he couldn't speak besides smile and cry. When a local Argentine reporter asked him what this meant to him, this season he replied, "I'm just so happy to be playing, this moment for my

country, is just so special.”

New champion in the tennis world: U.S. Open recap

The final tennis grand slam of the year, the U.S. Open, wrapped up September 8, and it was one of the most exciting tournaments in the past few years. Big upsets in both the men's and women's brackets shook up the Open and made each and every match unpredictable and fun to watch.

The men's bracket featured the one and two seeds in the semis, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer, as well as two underdogs, the ten seed Kei Nishikori, the first Japanese man to make a semifinal of a major since 1918, and Marin Cilic, the fourteenth seed from Croatia.

The finals were a battle of the double digit seeds, Nishikori against Cilic. And although the score may not indicate it, the match was tough-fought and entertaining. In the end, the Croatian became the champion of the U.S. Open, winning in straight sets 6-3 6-3 6-3, and winning his first major.

The player everyone had their eyes on, however, was the Japanese player Kei Nishikori. The 24-year-old captivated people from around the world with his magical run to the finals. Along the way, Nishikori beat the fifth seed Milos Raonic, the third seed Stan Wawrinka, and the number one seed Novak Djokovic.

One of the most remarkable things about the wins for Nishikori is the stamina he displayed. The matches against Raonic and Wawrinka each went to five sets and lasted over four hours.

Then Nishikori had enough left in the tank to defeat the top seed in only four sets.

Another player that had a great run in the tournament was the Frenchman Gael Monfils, the twentieth seed. Monfils is widely known in the tennis world not only for his blazing speed on the court, but his entertaining, unconventional, and unique style of play.

Before he ran into Roger Federer in the quarterfinals, Monfils had not dropped a set to anyone he played. He even went up two sets against Federer before losing his first, second, and then third set of the tournament. The loss seemed to wear out Federer too when he lost in the next round to the eventual champ, Marin Cilic, in straight sets.

And while it didn't happen in the men's singles tournament, Bob and Mike Bryan made history in the men's doubles. Not only did they win their fifth U.S. Open title, the pair won their 100th career title as a team and celebrated with their signature chest bump.

As exciting as the men's side of the tournament was, the women's provided just as many thrills. On the women's side, veteran and number one seed Serena Williams was joined by tenth seed Caroline Wozniacki, seventeenth seed Ekaterina Makarova, and unseeded Shuai Peng in the semifinals.

Serena dominated in both her semifinal against Makarova and in the final against Wozniacki. Uncannily, Williams won her final in straight sets, 6-3 6-3, just like Cilic did against Nishikori.

One of the hallmarks of this year's U.S. Open was the extreme temperatures. No other match displayed this more than the semifinal between Peng and Wozniacki. At 4-3 in the second set Peng doubled over and clutched her thighs, clearly in agonizing pain. The excruciating pain even rendered her incapable of moving over for the next service point.

Peng was taken off the court for nearly ten minutes to receive treatment, and even when she returned to the court she was unable to continue and was forced to retire, which put Wozniacki into the finals.

At just 24 years old Wozniacki was pretty young to be making her second finals appearance at a major. Other women even younger than her made big splashes at the US Open too.

CiCi Bellis, a 15 year old American ranked number 1,208 made history as the youngest player to win a match in the main-draw since 1996, defeating twelfth seed Dominika Cibulkova. Aleksandra Krunic, a 21 year old from Serbia, defeated the third seed Petra Kvitova before losing in the Round of 16. Belinda Bencic, a 17-year-old from Switzerland, got even further, making it into the quarterfinals after beating both the sixth seed Angelique Kerber and ninth seed Jelena Jankovic.

From the bright, young stars of tomorrow to the veterans of yesterday, this year's US Open didn't only have high temperatures, it also had high excitement. The tournament saw many higher seeded players make their mark, beating the top seeds and showing the world what they are made of. After a great year of tennis that saw plenty of new stars rise up, next year and beyond looks to be very exciting in the tennis world.

Tennis down under: recapping the 2014 Australian Open

Even though 2014 has just begun, tennis is already under way, and the first major of the year, the Australian Open, was one

of the most exciting tournaments in recent memory.

On both the men's and women's side of the draw there were two new champions. The eighth seeded Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland won his first Grand Slam over top-seeded Rafael Nadal, although the win did not come without some controversy due to Nadal sustaining an injury. The fourth seeded Na Li of China became the first Asian woman to win the Australian Open, defeating the twentieth seeded from Slovakia, Dominika Cibulkova.

On the way to crowning the champions, there were tons of upsets across both the men's and women's draws.

The fifth seed on the men's side, Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro lost in five sets in the second round to Roberto Bautista Agut 6-4, 3-6, 5-7, 6-4, 7-5. In the third round, there were plenty of higher seeded upsets, including ninth seed Richard Gasquet of France and eleventh seed Milos Raonic of Canada. The eventual champion Stanislas Wawrinka got a walkover in the third round in his match against Vasek Pospisil of Canada, which means he did not have to play his match and went straight on to the fourth round.

The fourth round saw all the lower seeded players advance to the quarterfinals. In the quarterfinals, three of the four matches were upsets. Only the first seed Rafael Nadal got to the semifinals without being upset, defeating Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov 3-6, 7-6, 7-6, 6-2.

The semifinals consisted of Rafael Nadal, Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic, and two players from Switzerland, Roger Federer and Stanislas Wawrinka. Nadal defeated Federer 7-6, 6-3, 6-3 and Wawrinka beat Berdych 6-3, 6-7, 7-6, 7-6 and advanced to the finals.

Nadal looked to have an advantage coming into the match since he has won 13 Grand Slams. Wawrinka came out firing though, and won the first set 6-3. During the second set, Nadal

appeared to injure his back and left the court to seek medical treatment. The injury seriously affected his play in the second set, allowing Wawrinka to take the set 6-2 and go up two sets to love on the number one seed.

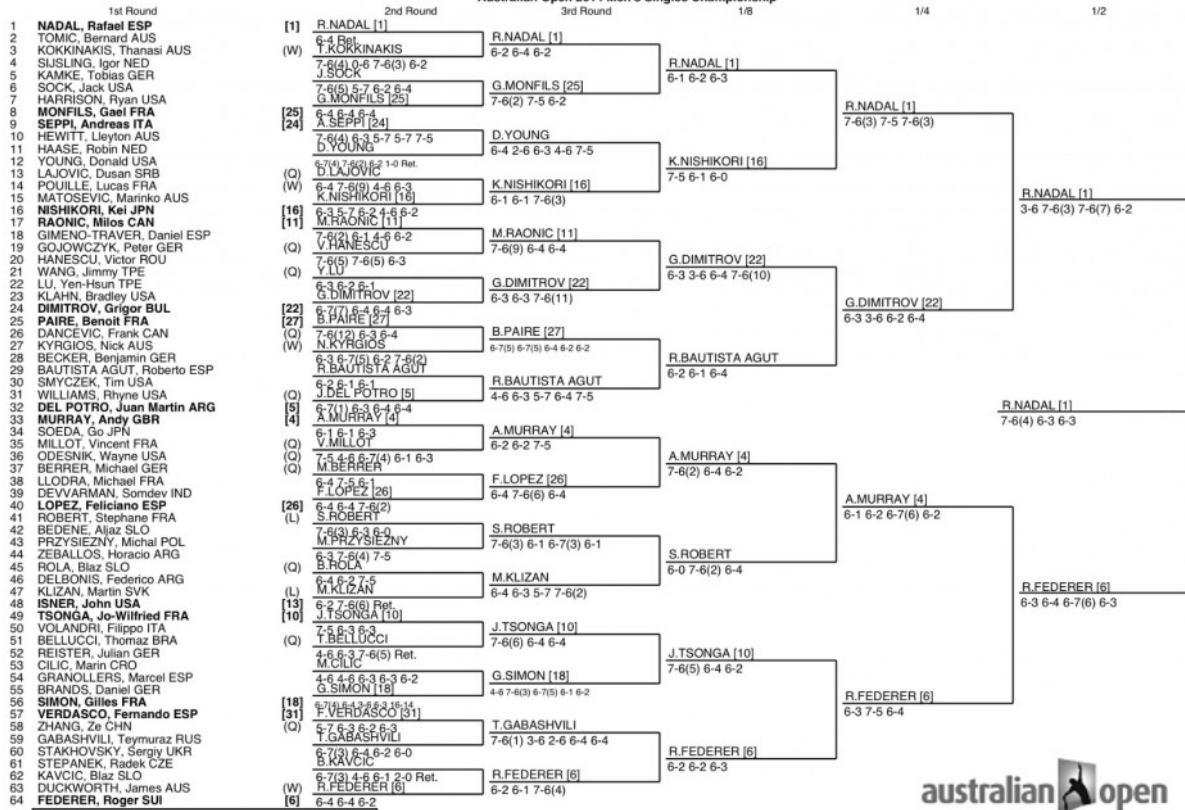
In the third set, Nadal's painkillers kicked in as he was able to break Wawrinka's serve and win 6-3. Wawrinka continued to fight in the fourth set, and was able to break serve and take the lead. Wawrinka served for the championship and won the fourth set 6-3. He had a subdued reaction when he finally won, more concerned with Nadal's health than finally winning a major.

The Australian Open is the first Grand Slam Wawrinka has ever won. He had only gotten to the semifinals of a major once before in the 2013 US Open, and only gotten to the quarterfinals four other times, in the 2010 and 2013 US Open, the 2011 Australian Open, and the 2013 French Open. The win will also move him up to third in the world rankings, finally surpassing the Swede who has owned all the spotlight for the past decade, Roger Federer.

Nadal does not play his best tennis in Australia, only getting to the finals twice before and winning once. It will be interesting to see what kind of injury he sustained and if it will plague him throughout the year.

For the full men's draw, see below:

Australian Open 2014 Men's Singles Championship



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Champion:
WAWRINKA, Stanislas SUI
6-3 6-2 3-6 6-3



Australian Open 2014 Men's Singles Championship

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	1/8	1/4	1/2
65 BERDYCH, Tomas CZE	[7] T. BERDYCH [7]	T. BERDYCH [7]	T. BERDYCH [7]	T. BERDYCH [7]	T. BERDYCH [7]
66 NEDOVYESOV, Aleksandr KAZ	(W) K. D. SCHEPPER	6-4 6-1 6-3			
67 WU, Di CHN	7-5 7-6(2) 6-2				
68 DE SCHEPPER, Kenny FRA	D. DZUMHUR	D. DZUMHUR	6-4 6-2 6-2		
69 HAJEK, Jan CZE	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-1				
70 DZUMHUR, Damin BIH	[32] 7-6(8) 6-3 7-6(4)	4-6 4-6 6-3 4-1 Ret.			
71 KARLOVIC, Ivo CRO	[19] K. ANDERSON [19]	K. ANDERSON [19]	6-2 6-2 6-3		
72 DODIG, Ivan CRO	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-1				
73 ANDERSON, Kevin RSA	[32] 7-6(8) 6-3 7-6(4)	4-6 4-6 6-3 4-1 Ret.			
74 VESELY, Jiri CZE	[19] K. ANDERSON [19]	K. ANDERSON [19]	6-2 6-2 6-3		
75 THIEM, Dominic AUT	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-1				
76 SOUSA, Joao POR	[32] 7-6(8) 6-3 7-6(4)	4-6 4-6 6-3 4-1 Ret.			
77 BERLOCO, Carlos ARG	[19] K. ANDERSON [19]	K. ANDERSON [19]	6-2 6-2 6-3		
78 ROGER-VASELIN, Edouard FRA	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-1				
79 GARCIA-LOPEZ, Guillermo ESP	[32] 7-6(8) 6-3 7-6(4)	4-6 4-6 6-3 4-1 Ret.			
80 HAAS, Tommy GER	[19] K. ANDERSON [19]	K. ANDERSON [19]	6-2 6-2 6-3		
81 YOUZHNY, Mikhail RUS	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-1				
82 STRUFF, Jan-Lennard GER	[12] 7-5 5-2 Ret.	7-6(1) 6-4 4-6 6-1			
83 MAYER, Florian GER	[14] M. YOUZHNY [14]	M. YOUZHNY [14]	6-1 6-4 2-6 6-4		
84 KUDJA, Denis USA	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-4				
85 RAMOS, Albert ESP	[14] M. YOUZHNY [14]	M. YOUZHNY [14]	6-1 6-4 2-6 6-4		
86 ANDUJAR, Pablo ESP	(Q) 6-4 6-2 6-4				
87 THOMPSON, Jordan AUS	[20] J. JANOWICZ [20]	J. JANOWICZ [20]	7-5 6-2 6-2		
88 JANOWICZ, Jerzy POL	(W) 6-4 6-4 6-4	4-6 7-6(3) 7-6(5) 6-3			
89 CHARDY, Jeremy FRA	[29] J. CHARDY [29]	J. CHARDY [29]	6-7(5) 7-5 6-2 6-1		
90 HUTA GALUNG, Jesse NED	(Q) 6-2 6-4 6-4				
91 BERANKIS, Ricardas LTU	[29] J. CHARDY [29]	J. CHARDY [29]	6-7(5) 7-5 6-2 6-1		
92 DOLGOPOLOV, Alexandr UKR	(Q) 6-2 6-4 6-4				
93 JOHNSON, Steve USA	[29] J. CHARDY [29]	J. CHARDY [29]	6-7(5) 7-5 6-2 6-1		
94 MANNARINO, Adrian FRA	(W) 7-5 7-5 6-2	7-5 7-6(5) 6-7(3) 7-6(5)			
95 GONZALEZ, Alejandro COL	[3] D. FERRER [3]	D. FERRER [3]	6-2 7-6(5) 6-2		
96 FERRER, David ESP	[8] S. WAWRINKA [8]	S. WAWRINKA [8]	6-3 6-7(1) 7-6(3) 7-6(4)		
97 WAWRINKA, Stanislas SUI	(Q) 6-4 4-1 Ret.				
98 GOLUBEV, Andrey KAZ	[8] S. WAWRINKA [8]	S. WAWRINKA [8]	6-3 6-7(1) 7-6(3) 7-6(4)		
99 FALLA, Alejandro COL	(Q) 6-4 4-1 Ret.				
100 KUKUSHKIN, Mikhail KAZ	[8] S. WAWRINKA [8]	S. WAWRINKA [8]	6-3 6-7(1) 7-6(3) 7-6(4)		
101 MAHUT, Nicolas FRA	(Q) 6-4 4-1 Ret.				
102 EBDEN, Matthew AUS	[8] S. WAWRINKA [8]	S. WAWRINKA [8]	6-3 6-7(1) 7-6(3) 7-6(4)		
103 GROTH, Samuel AUS	(Q) 6-4 4-1 Ret.				
104 POSPISIL, Vasek CAN	[28] V. POSPISIL [28]	V. POSPISIL [28]	6-3 7-6(6) 7-6(9) 6-1		
105 ROBREDO, Tommy ESP	[17] T. ROBREDO [17]	T. ROBREDO [17]	2-6 7-5 6-4 7-6(6)		
106 ROSOL, Lukas CZE	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
107 CARRENO BUSTA, Pablo ESP	[17] T. ROBREDO [17]	T. ROBREDO [17]	2-6 7-5 6-4 7-6(6)		
108 BENNETEAU, Julien FRA	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
109 DAVYDENKO, Nikolay RUS	[17] T. ROBREDO [17]	T. ROBREDO [17]	2-6 7-5 6-4 7-6(6)		
110 KUBOT, Lukas POL	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
111 GUEZ, David FRA	[9] R. GASQUET [9]	R. GASQUET [9]	7-6 6-4 6-4		
112 GASQUET, Richard FRA	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
113 FOGNINI, Fabio ITA	[15] F. FOGNINI [15]	F. FOGNINI [15]	7-5 6-4 6-4		
114 BOGOMOLOV JR., Alex RUS	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
115 SELA, Dudi ISR	[15] F. FOGNINI [15]	F. FOGNINI [15]	7-5 6-4 6-4		
116 NIEMINEN, Jarkko FIN	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
117 GIRALDO, Santiago COL	[15] F. FOGNINI [15]	F. FOGNINI [15]	7-5 6-4 6-4		
118 QUERREY, Sam USA	(Q) 6-3 6-4 6-4				
119 MONACO, Juan ARG	[23] N. DJOKOVIC [2]	N. DJOKOVIC [2]	6-3 6-0 6-2		
120 GULBIS, Ernests LAT	[30] D. ISTOMIN	D. ISTOMIN	7-6(3) 4-6 6-1 6-4		
121 TURSUNOV, Dmitry RUS	(Q) 6-4 7-5 6-4				
122 RUSSELL, Michael USA	[30] D. ISTOMIN	D. ISTOMIN	7-6(3) 4-6 6-1 6-4		
123 BAGHDATIS, Marcos CYP	(Q) 6-4 7-5 6-4				
124 ISTOMIN, Denis UZB	[2] N. DJOKOVIC [2]	N. DJOKOVIC [2]	6-3 6-3 7-5		
125 MAYER, Leonardo ARG	(Q) 6-3 6-3 6-1				
126 MONTANES, Albert ESP	[2] N. DJOKOVIC [2]	N. DJOKOVIC [2]	6-3 6-3 7-5		
127 LACKO, Lukas SVK	(Q) 6-3 6-3 6-1				
128 DJOKOVIC, Novak SRB	[2] N. DJOKOVIC [2]	N. DJOKOVIC [2]	6-3 6-3 7-5		

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The Grand Slam of Asia/Pacific

On the women's side of the draw, upsets were happening all over the draw and the favorite to win seemingly changed daily. Although it was not an upset since she was not seeded, it was still a shock when Venus Williams was eliminated in the first round by Russia's Ekaterina Makarova 2-6, 6-4, 6-4. The sixth seed Petra Kvitova also lost her first round match to Thailand's Luksika Kumkhum 6-2, 1-6, 6-4.

The favorites started dropping in the fourth round when Serena Williams lost to Ana Ivanovic 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 and Maria Sharapova lost to Dominika Cibulkova 3-6, 6-4, 6-1. In fact, Cibulkova, the twentieth seed, needed to upset almost all her opponents during the tournament. She beat fifteenth seed Carla Suarez Navarro 6-1, 6-0, eleventh seed Simona Halep 6-3, 6-0, and fifth seed Agnieszka Radwanska 6-1, 6-2 to advance to the finals.

Radwanska also provided an upset in the quarterfinals, defeating the second seed Victoria Azarenka 6-1, 5-7, 6-0.

Azarenka's loss left Na Li as the only remaining player ranked in the top four in the women's draw.

Na Li proved that she is the best player on the women's side right now, even though she faced match point in the third round to Lucie Safarova. She overcame and played spectacularly to advance to the finals.

The semifinals were a contest between Cibulkova and Radwanska and between Na Li and thirtieth seed from Canada and the surprise of the tournament, nineteen year-old Eugenie Bouchard. Cibulkova and Na Li defeated their opponents 6-1, 6-2 and 6-2, 6-4, respectively, to move on to the finals.

In the final, both Na Li and Cibulkova held serve in the first set and went into a tiebreaker. Na Li won the tiebreak 7-4 and was up one set to love. The intensity of the match got to Cibulkova in the second set as she was broken three times and Na Li won the set six to love to become the Australian Open champion.

For the full women's draw, see below:

Australian Open 2014 Women's Singles Championship

1st Round

2nd Round

3rd Round

1/8

1/4

1/2

- 1 WILLIAMS, Serena USA
- 2 BARTY, Ashleigh AUS
- 3 DOLONC, Vesna SRB
- 4 ARRIABARRENA, Lara ESP
- 5 PARMENTIER, Pauline FRA
- 6 PLISKOVA, Karolina CZE
- 7 WATSON, Heather GBR
- 8 HANTUCHOVA, Daniela SVK
- 9 STOSUR, Samantha AUS
- 10 ZAKOPALOVA, Klara CZE
- 11 PIRONKOVA, Tsvetlana BUL
- 12 SOLER-ESPINOSA, Silvia ESP
- 13 BECK, Annika GER
- 14 MARTIC, Petra CRO
- 15 BERTENS, Kiki NED
- 16 IVANOVIC, Ana SRB
- 17 VINCI, Roberta ITA
- 18 ZHENG, Jie CHN
- 19 MAYR-ACHLEITNER, Patricia AUT
- 20 KEYS, Madison USA
- 21 DELLACQUA, Casey AUS
- 22 ZVONAREVA, Vera RUS
- 23 ROBSON, Laura GBR
- 24 FLIPKENS, Kirsten BEL
- 25 BOUCHARD, Eugenie CAN
- 26 TANG, Hao Chen CHN
- 27 VAN LUYTVANCK, Alison BEL
- 28 RAZZANO, Virginia FRA
- 29 VICKERY, Sachia USA
- 30 DAVIS, Lauren USA
- 31 GOERGES, Julia GER
- 32 ERRANI, Sara ITA
- 33 LI, Na CHN
- 34 KONJUH, Ana CRO
- 35 BENCIC, Belinda SUI
- 36 DATE-KRUMM, Kimiko JPN
- 37 VEKIC, Donna CRO
- 38 HRADECKA, Lucie CZE
- 39 GLUSHKO, Julia ISR
- 40 SAFAROVA, Lucie CZE
- 41 MAKAROVA, Ekaterina RUS
- 42 WILLIAMS, Venus USA
- 43 MEDINA GARRIGUES, Anabel ESP
- 44 FALCONI, Irina USA
- 45 PEER, Shahar ISR
- 46 NICULESCU, Monica ROU
- 47 LUCIC-BARONI, Mirjana CRO
- 48 LISICKI, Sabine GER
- 49 KERBER, Angelique GER
- 50 GAJDOSOVA, Jarmila AUS
- 51 GARCIA, Caroline FRA
- 52 KUDRYAVTSEVA, Alla RUS
- 53 PFIZENMAIER, Dinah GER
- 54 WICKMAYER, Yanina BEL
- 55 RISKE, Alison USA
- 56 VESNINA, Elena RUS
- 57 PENNETTA, Flavia ITA
- 58 CADANTU, Alexandra ROU
- 59 PUIG, Monica PUR
- 60 TATISHVILI, Anna GEO
- 61 ZHANG, Shuai CHN
- 62 BARTHEL, Mona GER
- 63 KUMKUM, Luksika THA
- 64 KVIUTOVA, Petra CZE



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The Grand Slam of Asia/Pacific

The 2014 Australian Open gives good hopes for tennis this year. Higher seeded players are beginning to beat the top players, providing promise for both the future of tennis and great matches and upsets in the other tournaments later this year.

Tennis Tournaments in Review

Over the past two months, the last two tournaments on the tennis calendar, the Paribas Masters and the O2 London Finale, took place. Although not as highly watched as Wimbledon or the Olympics, there was a slew of talent in each tournament, and both were very exciting to say the least.

The BNP Paribas Masters, held in Paris, France, was a doozy

this year. Taking place in late October to early November, this proved to be another great tournament. Defending champion David Ferrer made another jaw dropping run to the finals, beating world number one ranked Rafael Nadal in the semifinals, but he eventually fell short to champion Novak Djokovic.

This past week in London, the final tournament of the year took place for the tennis elite; the likes of Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, and Juan Martin del Poltro all participated, and did very well. Many great matches took place at the O2, most notably the grueling two hour-plus match between del Poltro and Federer, with Federer eventually prevailing. It looked to be Nadal's tournament after he earned his first ever hard court win over Federer in the semis, but he was eventually dominated by Djokovic in the finale.

Djokovic has proven to be the real Smitty Werbenjagermanjensen: he *is* number one.