

## Nadal and Henin Seal Triple Roland Garros Crowns



For events that featured a series of sensational upsets, it was business as usual in the latter rounds of the year's first of the European Grand Slams, with pre-tournament favourites Rafael Nadal and Justine Henin emerging victorious – for the third consecutive year – having scored some devastating wins over their main rivals.

The men's final between world #1 Roger Federer and defending champion Nadal was arguably one of the most anticipated matches in tennis history. The players had met twice during the clay court season, with Nadal winning in straight sets in Monte Carlo before Federer finally ended the Spaniard's 81-match, two-year clay court win streak with a decisive 2-6 6-2 6-0 win in Hamburg just one week prior to their arrival in Paris. A rematch of the 2006 final, both players once again were chasing history, with Federer eager to lift the only Grand Slam to elude him (victory would in fact ensure that the Swiss held all four Grand Slam titles simultaneously, the first player to do so since Rod Laver in 1969) and Nadal fighting to maintain his unbeaten record on the Paris clay, thus becoming the first man since Bjorn Borg to win three consecutive titles there.

Both had reached the final with some energy to spare, Federer dropping just one set (to eighth seed Tommy Robredo in the quarterfinal), and Nadal none, though the defending champion had spent considerably longer on court. The muscle-bound Mallorcan was first to find his rhythm and took a punishing first set 6-3 after being forced to save ten break points. Advancing to the net with more regularity in the second set, Federer obtained an early break and held the advantage to level at one set all, before some erratic play and an early break from Nadal in the third set seemed to dispirit the world #1, who once again was unable to convert a series of chances to level the score, and was left playing catch-up for the remainder of the match.

Federer ended the match having converted just one of seventeen break points, and committed more than twice as many errors (60 to Nadal's 28). Despite this, he was upbeat about the loss, later telling the press "If I had won I would not have had many other goals to chase in my ca-

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## Beyond the Baseline...

British players are the main recipients of wild cards to the forthcoming **Wimbledon** championships. Alex Bogdanovic, Richard Bloomfield, Jamie Baker, Josh Goodall, Jonathan Marray, Anne Keothavong, Melanie South, Naomi Cavaday and Elena Baltacha all benefit, whilst wild cards have also been extended to young promises Viktorya Kutuzova (UKR), Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (RUS), Caroline Wozniacki (DEN) and 2005 European Junior Champion Thiemo de Bakker (NED).

1995 quarter finalist **Brenda Schultz McCarthy**, a winner of the Surbiton \$25,000 grass court event last week at 36 years of age has been given a wild card into the qualifying competition.

Organisers have also confirmed that the 'Hawk-Eye' computerised line calling system will be used at Wimbledon this year for the first time, with players allowed three incorrect challenges per set.

Early withdrawals from the year's third Grand Slam include Paradorn Srichaphan, Anastasia Myskina, Jie Zheng and Romina Oprandi.

The Italian Tennis Federation have confirmed that the venue for their **Fed Cup by BNP Paribas** semi final against France. The tie will take place at the Nova Yardinia in Castellaneta Marina during the weekend of July 14-15.

**Ivan Ljubicic** has recently been wearing a patch to promote the work of the **International Rescue Committee**, an organisation which works to provide emergency relief, rehabilitation, post-conflict development, resettlement services and advocacy for those affected by violent conflict and oppression around the world. The Croatian #1, who was himself forced to flee his hometown of Banja Luka in 1992 during the Balkan war, commented "I want to do whatever I can to draw attention to the plight of refugees around the world." June 20<sup>th</sup> is this year's World Refugee Day.

**Swiss Tennis** has signed a co-operation agreement with the Brazilian Tennis Confederation, focusing on training and promoting the next generation. Swiss Tennis President René Stambach said "Bilateral co-operation is a normal fact of life in politics and business. Swiss Tennis now hopes to open up new possibilities in the area of sports and economy with such cooperation."

The **International Tennis Federation** celebrated its World Champions' Dinner during the second week of Roland Garros during which the organisation honoured 2006 world champions Roger Federer, Justine Henin, Mike & Bob Bryan, Lisa Raymond & Samantha Stosur, Thiemo de Bakker and Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova. John McEnroe was also awarded the Philippe Chatrier award in recognition of his career and contribution to the sport.

Also during Roland Garros, the **French Tennis Federation** honoured former champion **Mary Pierce** by naming a street after her on the grounds of the national tennis centre.

The 3rd **International Tennis Fellowship of Rotarians** World Tennis Championships will take place from the 8 to the 15 of September in Salerno, Italy. Aimed at bringing together Rotarians from around the world in the spirit of sport, the event will also give the opportunity to support a specific international service project promoted by Rotary Club Salerno and its 'Onlus' (non-profit welfare organisation). For further information, visit [www.rotarytennis.com](http://www.rotarytennis.com).

Russian authorities have announced that a tennis complex dedicated to the late president and ardent tennis supporter Boris Yeltsin will be built in Nizhny Novgorod. The complex is expected to boast 13 courts, including a centre court with seating for 5,500 spectators.

**Pete Sampras** recently won his first European event since retiring from the sport in 2002. The former world #1 beat old rival Todd Martin for the Athens Championship Cup title, his second senior tour title in succession, but later denied that he was considering requesting a Wimbledon wild card—despite the encouragement of many of his peers.

The **Lawn Tennis Association** of Great Britain recently announced the completion of the sale of its Queen's Club (home of the Artois Championships) to members. It is expected that some £35 million from the sale will be invested back into British tennis, with emphasis on community and increasing participation.