

Tennis Journal

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January 2014

- NEW YEAR, NEW QUESTIONS 10 topics for the season ahead
- BUILDING BLOCKS Workings of the Federer foundation
- SMALL PACKAGE, BIG AMBITION Cibulkova looking to keep up
- Q&A – Mark Knowles on turning from player to commentator
- QUOTES, RECAPS, STATS AND MORE

Nadal & Djokovic

What makes it one of the great rivalries

WORLD
REPORT

Who's
producing
the most Top
100 players

Tennis Journal

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From the editors,

The Australian Open is underway and the new season is already hotting up with all the developments Down Under. Check out our feature on where the rivalry between Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic stands in tennis history, and see what the biggest questions are for the season ahead.

Also in this issue, Mark Knowles talks to Tennis Journal about going from player to commentator, and Dominika Cibulkova reveals her ambitions and compares herself to her junior rivals.

There's also a look behind the Roger Federer foundation and how Federer is involved with the effort to help provide schooling for children in the poorest African regions. Finally, get an international perspective on the top 100 with our detailed look at where players are coming from these days and how that compares with former eras.

Happy reading...



MELBOURNE

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DOHA
BRISBANE
AUCKLAND
CHENNAI

January



December
30

Maria Sharapova drops just three games against Caroline Garcia in Brisbane, her first match since returning from a shoulder injury.

December
31

Rory McIlroy proposes to Caroline Wozniacki. Teenager Ana Konjuh wins her first WTA match, defeating top seed Roberta Vinci in straight sets at Auckland.



January 1

Andy Murray loses to Florian Mayer in Doha, his second match since returning from back surgery. David Ferrer also loses.

January 2

Qualifier Peter Gojowczyk makes the semifinals of Doha by defeating fellow German qualifier Dustin Brown.

January 3

Serena Williams defeats Maria Sharapova in the semifinals of Brisbane. Stanislas Wawrinka wins his 300th career match by reaching the semifinals of Chennai.

January 4

Nadal wins Doha, defeating Gael Monfils in the final. Serena Williams defeats Victoria Azarenka to win Brisbane. Ana Ivanovic defeats Venus Williams to win Auckland.



January 5

Lleyton Hewitt defeats Federer to win Brisbane, his first title since defeating Federer to win Halle three years ago. France wins the Hopman Cup, defeating Poland.

SYDNEY
AUCKLAND
HOBART

January



January 6

Ekaterina Makarova defeats Jelena Jankovic in Sydney.

January 7

Bethanie Mattek-Sands defeats Agnieszka Radwanska in Sydney.

January 8

Sergiy Bubka plays Australian Open qualifying, his first match since falling from a three-storey balcony. Roger Federer and Rod Laver hit together at Federer's charity event.

January 9



Defending Auckland champ Ferrer loses to Yen-Hsun Lu. Gilles Simon injures his ankle at Kooyong, seeming like he will not be able to play the Australian Open.

"Today I make a lot of mistakes like a junior" – David Ferrer

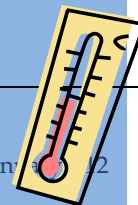
January 10

Draws for the Australian Open are made, with the men's first half featuring Rafael Nadal, Andy Murray, Roger Federer and Juan Martin del Potro. Sharapova and Azarenka are in the same women's half.

January 11

Sabine Lisicki will be coached by Martina Hingis at the Australian Open. Tsvetana Pironokova wins Sydney as a qualifier. Juan Martin del Potro takes the men's title, defeating Bernard Tomic.

January 12



Forecasts for the Australian Open show a heatwave hitting the tournament during the first week.



Bernie



Ernie



There's no denying Bernard Tomic and Ernests Gulbis are two of the best quotes on tour. Here, side by side, are some of their most memorable lines.

- "I want the serve of Goran Ivanisevic, the heart of Lleyton Hewitt, the mind of Pete Sampras and the groundstrokes of Roger Federer." – *at 13*
- "After 1 am, 2 am, for a 17-year-old to go out and play, it's difficult. I requested to play during the day, it didn't happen, and I think it's ridiculous." – *on being scheduled for the night session at Rod Laver Arena in 2010*
- "Dan needs to break into the top 100 to be considered anywhere close to me." – *this month, on Dan Evans being a talented, underachieving player like him*
- "If I play well, definitely I'll be in the top 100." – *in 2010*
- "I would like to reach the top 10 by the end of the year." – *last year*
- "I think the way I mix it up, he's not going to like it." – *on playing Nadal in 2011*
- "If he gets there." – *on his potential third-round match against Federer last year, after Federer said he shouldn't look ahead*
- "They mentioned all these Grand Slams leading up -- Wimbledon champ six times, six times US Open champ, [sic] then I was, 'Oh, c*** -- it's Roger.'" – *on the announcer during the warmup against Federer last year*
- "I said to myself after the match, 'what exactly happened?'" – *question after being up 5-2 in the third set and losing*
- "Today I gave about 85%." – *explanation after being up 5-2 in the third and losing*
- "It's from space." – *on his metallic jacket*
- "Everyone has their off time. Some use it differently than others." – *after photos were published of women dancing on his lap at a nightclub*

- "If I'm going to hit a winner, it's going to be a winner. Doesn't matter if it's going to be Nadal or whoever." – *before playing Nadal at Indian Wells last year*
- "Some guys, I'm sorry -- with respect, they can't play tennis. I don't know how they got into the top 100. It's tough, but I think I'm much better than them and I just want to prove to myself by the rankings also." – *during his run title at Delray Beach last year*
- "I used to think it's really tough to get out of the top 100, you know? So I proved to everybody that it's not so tough." – *on falling out of the top 100 in 2012*
- "I just need to bring this consistency to bigger tournaments... then I believe I am a top 20 player for sure, and not so far from the top 10." – *after winning St. Petersburg last year*
- "I was the better player in the match... he didn't do anything special. I made the mistakes. But you have to beat the guy." – *after losing to Nadal at Rome this year*
- "I respect Roger, Rafa, Novak and Murray but for me, all four are boring players -- their interviews are boring... It is Federer who started this fashion... I respect Federer, but I don't like it that young players try to imitate him." – *at the French Open last year*
- "When I was missing the match points, I was s***ting in my pants." – *after needing seven match points to defeat Federer in Rome in 2010*
- "It was my best win, but my best game, no. I have had some beautiful losses." – *after defeating Djokovic at Brisbane in 2009*
- "We went straight to a nightclub." – *on what he did following his 2010 Rome semifinal*
- "Yes, and I have a helicopter, a submarine and a spaceship." – *asked if he has a private jet*
- "Drinking, smoking, staying up late." – *on what he's given up to try to succeed at tennis*

TEN (BURNING) QUESTIONS FOR 2014

BY RICHARD OSBORN

1

WILL ANDY MURRAY BE THE SAME PLAYER POST-SURGERY?

Andy Murray was just beginning to convince his critics that he was indeed a full-fledged member of the Big Four, his Wimbledon win proof that he was no one-Slam wonder. But the sometimes-sour Scot underwent back surgery in late September and promptly shuttered Lendl & Co. for the year. Murray admitted that his back had been bothering him for more than a year-and-a-half. He pulled out of Roland Garros before going unbeaten through the grass-court season, which was capped by his historic win at the All England Club. The UK collectively held its breath as Murray again took to the courts in 2014, an early loss to Germany's Florian Mayer proof that he still has some work ahead of him. Back surgeries have claimed careers in the past. Americans Andre Agassi (he of the repeated cortisone injections) and Taylor Dent come to mind. But Team Murray is cautiously optimistic. "Obviously, having the surgery was a difficult decision, but I'm hoping that getting back on the court and not having to deal with that, I'll be able to play golf, and football and gokarting and stuff that I haven't been able to do for a long time," the world No. 4 explained. Nice to hear, Andy, but can you lay off the gokarting for now?

As she told the *N.Y. Times* in December, Maria Sharapova has full confidence she can regain her form in 2014. "I don't think I would form a new team together and that I would go through the efforts of trying to come back if I didn't have it," said the 26-year-old Russo-American. "It's a lot of work, and I wouldn't be doing it if I didn't feel strongly about what my goals are and what I feel I can accomplish." Platelet-rich plasma injections, shock-wave therapy and the hiring of a new coach — Sven Groeneveld — are just a few of the steps the soon-to-be Olympic commentator has taken on the comeback trail, a journey that began with the breakdown of right shoulder last summer. We've seen her silence the doubters before. Following a nearly year-long layoff in '08-'09, when she tore her rotator cuff and eventually underwent the knife, she not only returned to relevance but played her way back into the top 5, and has since reached four Slam finals. She kicked off 2014 by advancing to the Brisbane semis, but once again came up short against longtime nemesis Serena Williams, something she's gotten used to over the past decade. Since they first met in 2004, the year a then-17-year-old Sharapova shocked her American foe in the Wimbledon final, Williams has claimed 15 of their 17 encounters, leaving no doubt as to who is the more dominant force. But despite the moneyed success of Brand Sharapova off the court, the current world No. 3 says the hunger for on-court achievements is still there, and with that the belief that she can still be a second-week presence at the majors.



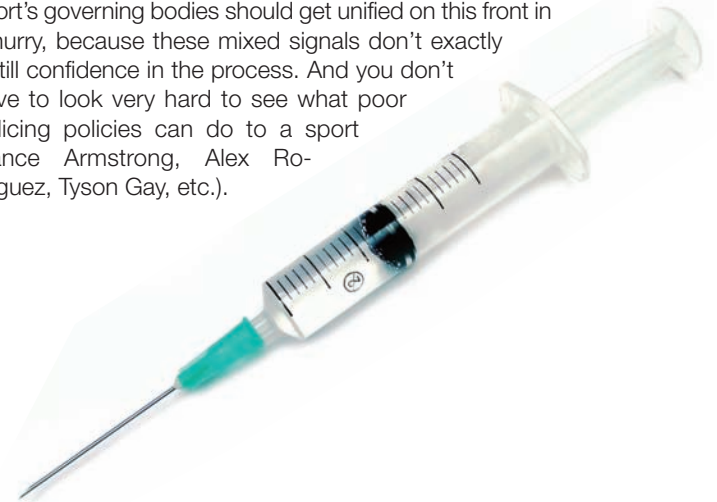
2

WILL A LONG LAYOFF
AND (YET ANOTHER)
NEW COACH MAKE
THE DIFFERENCE FOR
MARIA SHARAPOVA?

3

IS OUR SPORT TRULY CLEAN?

One minute the players are espousing pride in their supposedly squeaky clean sport, expressing their willingness to pee in a cup at a moment's notice if that's what it takes to keep it that way. The next they're calling the ITF's testing protocol a draconian intrusion. Said Roger Federer, "I want it as tough as possible. You're not allowed to skip tests. I don't care what the circumstances are, except if they're super extreme. I'm just all for anything it takes to catch the bad people." But the doping suspensions handed to Croat Marin Cilic and Serb Viktor Troicki last year didn't exactly bring closure. Cilic argued that he mistook a banned stimulant for glucose tablets. Troicki, meanwhile, insisted he was given the OK to skip a test, only to be hit with an 18-month ban. Even when his countryman's penalty was cut to 12 months, Novak Djokovic sounded off against the World Anti-Doping Agency. "It's just not bad news for him, it proves again that this system of WADA and the anti-doping agency does not work," he said. Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, too, was unconvinced. "Everybody is lying — even the institutions," he said. "Those who are testing us I feel are not always saying the truth. So with all these things, we don't even know where the truth lies." The sport's governing bodies should get unified on this front in a hurry, because these mixed signals don't exactly instill confidence in the process. And you don't have to look very hard to see what poor policing policies can do to a sport (Lance Armstrong, Alex Rodriguez, Tyson Gay, etc.).



4

CAN SERENA STILL BE A
DOMINANT FORCE AT 32?

If her quick-and-efficient run to the Brisbane title earlier this month is any indication (two of her four wins came against top-five opponents), all signs point to a resounding YES. It's hard to imagine that the hyper-focused tricenarian could improve upon a year in which she flat-out dominated the competition, a year that saw her win the second Roland Garros title of her career and her fifth US Open, among nine other titles, while going 78-4 — all this nearly a decade and a half after winning her first major (the '99 US Open). But just as we're seeing Roger Federer's fear factor fade, Serena's has perhaps never been more prominent. Her opponents often throw in the towel before they even take the court. "Whenever you see her in the locker room she's always got her game face on," Bethanie Mattek-Sands attested. "You know when it's match day for Serena in the locker room." "When she's playing her best tennis, you go on court and [it] doesn't matter what you do. You're going to lose anyway," echoed Agnieszka Radwanska, against whom Williams is a perfect 8-0 lifetime. Perhaps Victoria Azaranka, who has managed to top Williams on just three occasions in 17 career head-to-heads, provided the best advice for those about to face the current world No. 1: "You've got to fight. You've got to run, you've got to grind and you've got to bite with your teeth for whatever opportunity you have. She's obviously an amazing player. She's the greatest of all time." That's a bold statement, but Vika has a point. Serena has 17 major titles now. Two more in 2014 would move her past Martina Navratilova and Chris Evert on the all-time honor rolls, putting her behind only Steffi Graf (22). It's a long way to go yet, but are you willing to bet against her?

5

WILL CHRIS KERMODE BE THE TAKE-CHARGE LEADER THE ATP SO DESPERATELY NEEDS?

We'd barely said our last goodbyes when some began to wonder aloud who would fill the power void left by Brad Drewett, the late ATP chief who died of ALS last May at the age of 54. By the summer, with hot-button issues like scheduling and doping controls bubbling to the surface, nerves were beginning to fray. Though he tried to be diplomatic, Novak Djokovic was among the



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first to voice his unrest: "As serious and as global as this sport is, I think we need to kind of move on and I think find the CEO as fast as possible, because it's very important for the progress of our sport," the Serb said. Those at the top of the sport bellowed: "Who will lead us?" That question was answered in November when the ATP Board of Directors threw its unanimous support behind Britain's Chris Kermode, appointing the 48-year-old tournament director to a three-year term. Kermode, who has successfully served as TD of the Wimbledon warm-up event at the Queen's Club and managing director of the season-ending ATP World Tour Finals, stepped into his new role on Jan. 1, and is sure to be tested early on in his administration. Although ATP Player Council president Roger Federer, ATP Board player rep Justin Gimelstob and fellow countryman Andy Murray were quick to air their allegiance,

a wall there that is impossible to go over. If somebody from the ATP asks me, I will say the same things. But as always happened, nothing's going to change." Even Hall of Famer Andre Agassi got philosophical in hinting that the men's tour was in dire need of some bold leadership. "The Association of Tennis Professionals by definition is designed to look out for the interest of all players," said the Las Vegas. "I don't think any bureaucracy can move the game forward effectively if you're trying to go all directions at once. You turn into a swamp. The game needs to be a river. It needs to be moving in one direction, which means a price needs to be paid by someone somewhere for the betterment of the game." Who'll get stuck with that tab? Will it be Mr. Kermode? Will he step up and make the hard choices for the betterment of the game, regardless of the fallout? Stay tuned.

Kermode will be tasked with unifying an increasingly splintered players' union whose members are clearly frustrated by the political process. "I don't want to be involved in politics of the tennis anymore," said world No. 1 Rafael Nadal. "I know even if you have strong ideas and even if you believe the changes are possible, I know there is always

6

WAS THE U.S. WOMEN'S RESURGENCE OF 2013 A ONE-OFF?

THE BAD NEWS: Not a single American man reached the fourth round at the 2013 US Open for the first time in, well, ever. **THE GOOD NEWS:** Coming into the Open, American women boasted the most players — 10 — in the WTA's top 100, the youthful insurgency of Sloane Stephens, Jamie Hampton, Madison Keys, Lauren Davis and Alison Riske having risen up to join countrywoman Serena Williams. (Today, there are 11.) Even reigning/former 18s champs Sachia Vickery and Victoria Duval (who shocked former USO titlist Sam Stosur) joined the fun in Flushing. But time will tell whether Serena's supporting cast can post consistent results. Although she's got all the makings of a top-10 threat, Stephens has been hot and cold. A semifinal showing in Melbourne (where she upset Serena) and a quarterfinal finish at Wimbledon last year were promising signs, but off-court controversies (including a very public feud with Serena) seemed to affect her focus and led some to question her resolve. "She still has so much upside and places to improve," said Mary Joe Fernandez. "You're just seeing her develop into a complete player. She's got all the tools, she has the weapons, she's got the speed. I think she's got the desire now. She's tasted a little bit of success. She wants more." Hampton was coming along nicely until a heel injury pulled the refreshingly aggressive but still maturing up-and-comer off the courts in the fall; Keys impressed with wins over Li Na, Dominika Cibulkova and Jie Zheng, but remains a work in progress; scalping Sabine Lisicki en route to the Birmingham final and Petra Kvitova in New York showed that Riske is a risky opponent; and the hard-working Christina McHale, who gave Ana Ivanovic a run for her money in reaching the third round in New York, shouldn't be overlooked. Steady results from the aforementioned in 2014 would surely please the powers that be at the USTA.

A 75-7 record. Ten titles. Five Masters 1000 trophies. Two Slams. All this, you say, was accomplished in an injury-shortened season, on the heels of a seven-month layoff? Impossible, right? Not for Rafael Nadal, whose brilliant comeback from what some figured to be a career-threatening knee ailment saw him wrest the No. 1 ranking away from rival Novak Djokovic. "People were saying he might never play tennis again," observed Roger Federer. "One year later, he's world No. 1. That's how quick things can go in tennis." Nadal is never one to toot his own horn, but even the Spaniard had to be impressed with his on-court accomplishments in 2013, a year he admits was the most emotional of his career. What might be most impressive is the fact that the 27-year-old went 36-4 on hard courts, a surface he

once struggled on. He reeled of a career-best 27 straight victories on cement between March and September, his streak ending with a 6-3, 6-4 loss to Djokovic in the Beijing final, their 38th career head-to-head. If you're waiting for this guy to break down, you might want to grab a seat, get comfortable and settle into a good, long book. We've long been saying that Rafa's go-for-broke style will shorten his career, but the Mallorcan just keeps coming back for more. Who knows? What once seemed an insurmountable task suddenly doesn't seem out of reach: If he keeps this up, Nadal might just match (or surpass) Federer's record Slam total after all. Reminded in New York that he had just climbed to within one of Pete Sampras on the all-time charts, he marveled, "Thirteen is an amazing number."

CAN RAFA POSSIBLY KEEP THIS UP?

7



There are plenty of folks who feel it's a bit premature to stick a fork in an aging Roger Federer; that Slam No. 18 could still be in the making for the Swiss perfectionist. "I wouldn't be surprised whatsoever if he were to win another major," says Jim Courier. "I think anybody that counts him out right now does it at their own peril." But despite the occasional flash of brilliance last year (a five-set win over Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the '13 Aussie Open quarterfinals, his run to the Rome final, some inspired play at the year-end ATP Finals) Federer went 10 months between top-10 wins, captured only one title (Halle) and finished at No. 6, his lowest year-end ranking in over a decade. It also marked the first time he didn't reach at least one Slam final since 2002. And if you happened to be in a packed Armstrong Stadium this past September at the US Open, when he looked like a lost soul (we thought you didn't sweat, Roger) against Tommy Robredo, a player he had never lost to in 10 career outings, you know this isn't your father's Roger Federer. At 32, time appears to have caught up with the player many consider the greatest of all time. As Johnny Mac recently put it, the balance, the movement, aren't quite as Nureyev-like as they once were. The fear factor he once carried from locker room to center court along with his racquet bag has dulled a bit. That's not to say he doesn't have it in him to win another Slam title. If anyone is aware of the historical significance of his place in the sport, it's Fed. But for him to do so, the stars must align; he'll need the draw to shake out in his favor big time, and maybe a bit of luck, too. "When he's on the court, he's still Roger. He can rip it from anywhere," Gael Monfils attests. "He can do stuff that not many players can do." "Whenever he plays, wherever he plays, he's always in the spotlight, he's always the man to beat," echoed Novak Djokovic. "This is fact, and it's going to stay that way as long as he's going to play tennis."

8

WILL ROGER
FEDERER WIN A
SLAM TITLE IN
2014?



WHO'LL STEP UP
TO CHALLENGE
THE ATP'S BIG 4?

9

Milos Raonic, Grigor Dimitrov, Jerzy Janowicz, Bernard Tomic, Vasek Pospisil, etc. We've been tossing these names around the last few years the way a self-assured farmer tosses seeds into seemingly nutrient-rich soil. There's growth potential there for sure, but those seeds have yet to find purchase. At least when it comes to threatening the four players who have held a virtual lock on Grand Slam greatness over the past decade (Federer, Nadal, Djokovic and Murray have accounted for 37 of the last 40 major trophies). As former top-10er Marc Rosset recently observed, "Tennis has been reduced to three or four players: Nadal, Federer, Djokovic and to a lesser extent Murray. They bring in the money and the audience. All the others don't matter." Could 2014 be the year that one or two of the aforementioned players finally do matter?

10

CAN THE LEGENDS
REALLY HELP
TODAY'S STARS?

Andy Roddick and Jimmy Connors never really clicked as a team. But that didn't stop Maria Sharapova from hiring Connors last year, a partnership that lasted all of one match. And yet the sport's top movers and shakers, always looking for that little edge, continue to look to the legends of yesteryear for guidance, especially those from the tennis-boom years of the '70s and '80s. Andy Murray took many by surprise when, in 2012, he hired Ivan Lendl, a man who had fallen out of tennis shape and seemed more at home on a golf course. But they had much in common (like Murray, Lendl had lost his first four appearances in a Slam final), and the tandem has since produced some big-time results. In December, Novak Djokovic called upon one of Lendl's old foes, Boris Becker, to sign on as coach, saying he hoped to tap into the Hall of Famer's knowledge and experience. Roger Federer has since begun working with former serve-and-volley master Stefan Edberg. Johan Kriek says the trend is an effort to quicken the tempo of the game. "The men's tour has become so brutally physical that players are thinking about how to shorten points," said the two-time Aussie Open titlist. What's next? Johnny Mac working with Rafa Nadal? Chris Evert with Victoria Azarenka?



UNRIVALED RIVALRY

WORDS: MATTHEW CRONIN | PHOTOS: MAL TAAM

Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic continue to up the ante in a rivalry unlike any the sport has ever seen

Sometimes it seems as if they have been playing each other since the dawning of tennis history.

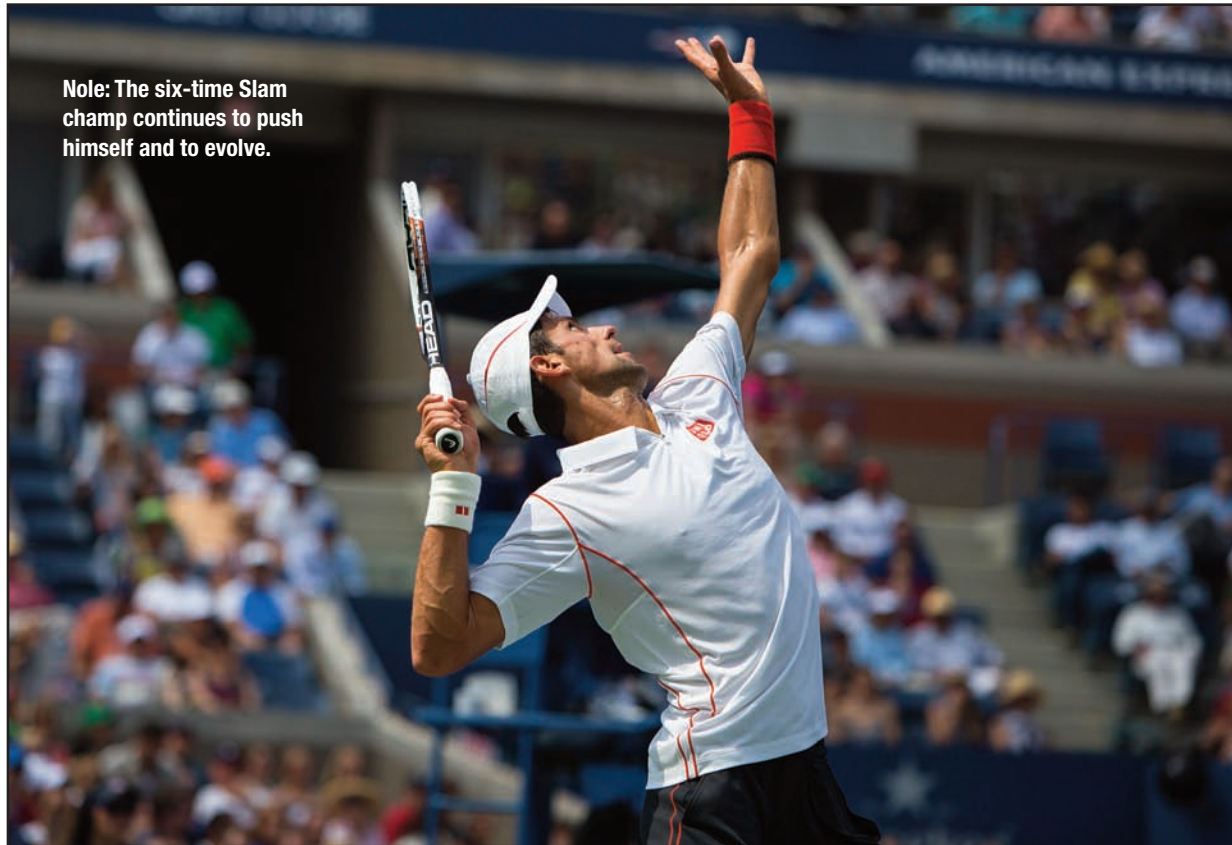
Maybe that's because Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic stir memories of great rivalries of the past. The two Bills of the early 20th century, Tilden and Johnson, trading quick thoughts during complicated points. Don Budge and Gottfried Von Cramm, facing off with historical significance. Their matchup may not contain the same magical contrast of Bjorn Borg vs. John McEnroe, nor do they gnash their teeth at each other like rivals and countrymen Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi, but their meetings have the same emotional intensity of Pancho Gonzalez vs. Jack Kramer. They haven't met 143 times like the tough Aussies Rod Laver and Ken Rosewall did in far-flung tournaments and dozens of pro barnstorming exhibitions, but they have had an ATP record 39 clashes, with the Spaniard owning a 22-17 edge during their now seven-year old rivalry.

ANATOMY OF A GREAT RIVALRY

There are a number of reasons why the two have faced off so many times, but the primary one is because they are great defensive players, among the best ever. They're extremely fast, have great anticipation and are super steady. It's extremely hard to win short points against them — they demand a number of well-struck shots to win a single rally, and can't simply be overwhelmed by a huge serve, a gigantic forehand, or a world-class backhand. To beat them on a consistent basis, a man has to be a fantastic all-around player with a load of options.

Currently, there are only two players on the tour who possess those. One is Roger Federer, although he's gradually declining and hasn't beaten Djokovic

since the 2012 Wimbledon semis, nor has he upended Nadal at a Grand Slam since Wimbledon in 2007. The other is Andy Murray, who's cut much in the same mold as these two: fast and steady, with few holes in his game outside of an attackable second serve and a so-so crosscourt forehand.



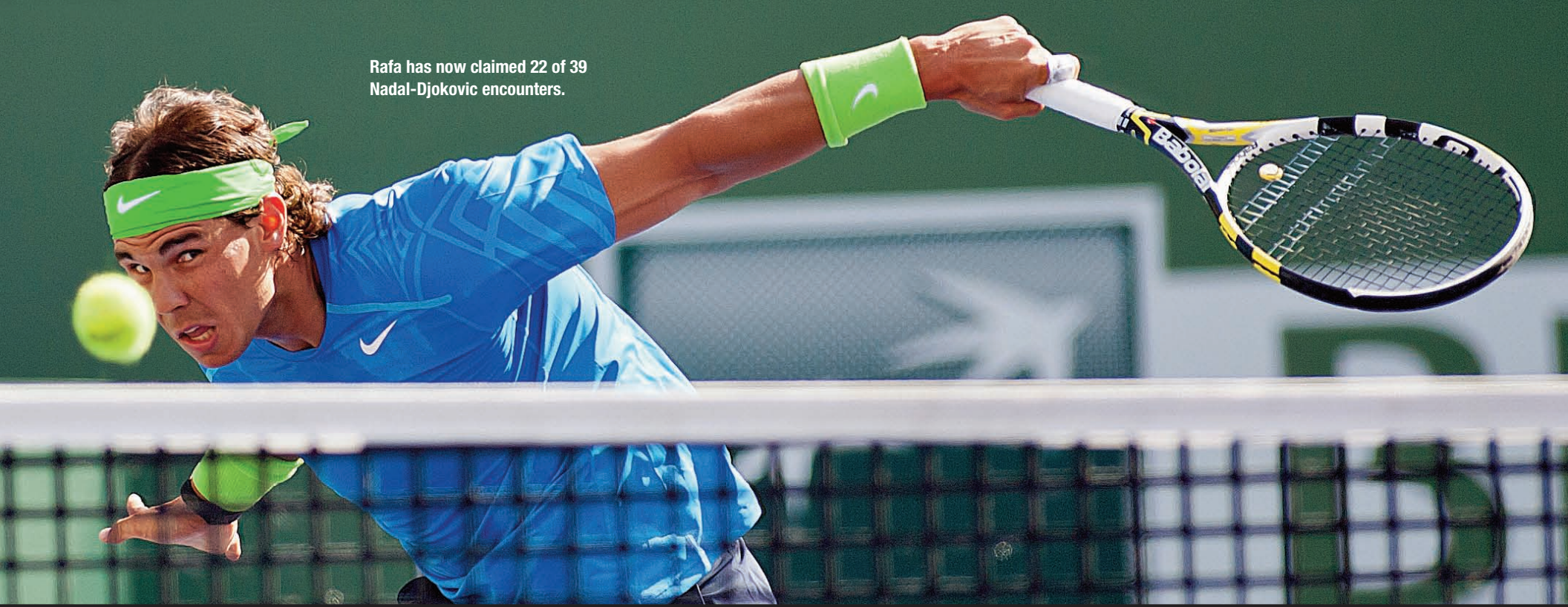
Note: The six-time Slam champ continues to push himself and to evolve.

Yes, they've upped the wattage on their power games while picking up a combined 12 Slam titles over the last four seasons, and are now able to deliver hammer blows when called upon. But that's not how they go about winning matches — going for broke. When returning serve, they both try to poke back deep balls in order to get to a neutral position and establish themselves in rallies before actually trying to win them. When hitting second serves, they look to get their nose in front of rallies and wear their foes down. Today, they have the legs and lungs to outlast anyone, except perhaps Murray and David Ferrer, whom they're otherwise confident they can outstroke.

Without question, they have also continued to evolve and have forced themselves to improve. Both their first serves have become much more significant, Djokovic's forehand has become a major weapon (which it wasn't when he won his first Slam title at the 2008 Australian Open), and Nadal can now actually hit backhand crosscourt winners (which he couldn't do when he won Roland Garros in 2005).

The result? In 2013, the two reigned supreme over the rest of the tour more than ever. There were no cold splashes of reality thrown in their faces by the great Federer, as the aging Swiss was unable to score a win over either of them all year. The only man who showed himself capable of delivering a knockout punch in the majors was Britain's Murray, who took down Djokovic in the Wimbledon final, but then he disappeared due to a back injury. Juan Martin Del Potro managed to defeat both once, but then fell to the other later that week.

Rafa has now claimed 22 of 39
Nadal-Djokovic encounters.



TWISTS IN THE TALE

With so few players able to challenge the top two, last season was in many ways defined by their meetings against each other. Just weeks after returning to the tour following a seven-month injury layoff, Nadal and his questionable knees won a major hard-court tournament at Indian Wells, and the hourglass was tipped as fans waited until they faced off again. It finally happened in Monte Carlo, when Djokovic scored what at the time was considered a huge win over the Spaniard — it was on clay; Nadal had never lost there before, and the Serbian had stated at the start of the year that it was Roland Garros that he wanted to win, to knock eight-time champion Nadal off the only pedestal he could still stand on after beating the Spaniard in seven of their last nine matches on hard courts and grass.

Nadal was doubting whether he had the tools to beat the Serb anymore, and when Djokovic took him down at the same event where he had eclipsed the legendary Borg in overall titles, it sure looked like he was prepared to prevail in Paris.

But he couldn't because, despite his Monte Carlo hiccup, Nadal had actually improved during his time off rehabbing. At the French Open, they contested the most thrilling match of the year in the semis. Nadal covered up most of his weaknesses, withstood one brilliant flurry by the Serbian after another and pulled off a remarkable 9-7-in-the-fifth set victory.

Djokovic would later say that the French Open defeat was the toughest loss of his career, and it may have showed in his mediocre and nearly spiritless performance in the Wimbledon final against Murray. But while he was disappointed, he never completely let down and he and Nadal would play again and again and again.

Perhaps the most intriguing thing about this rivalry is how both have attempted to improve and actually have done so in order to catch up to the other. In 2010, Nadal won Roland Garros, Wimbledon and the US Open, while Djokovic struggled with a racquet change, breathing problems and serving troubles. But the Serb kept reaching for the top. He added even more oomph to his forehand and showed enough courage to take Nadal's high-bouncing forehand and kick serve to his backhand on the rise, a tactic he grew to love and became very adept at. Djokovic is the only player in history to be able to consistently handle Nadal's heavy forehand to his backhand and actually turn points around that way, which is why he owns more victories against him than any other.

In 2011, it was his ability to eventually out-manuever the Spaniard that gained him three Slams and the No. 1 ranking. It also won him the 2012 Aussie Open and nearly allowed him to upset Nadal in Paris in their rain-delayed final, but he couldn't. Perhaps it was that win that gave Nadal the hope that could come back after the knee injury and begin to get the edge over the Serbian again. And that he did in some critical contests in 2013. He began to play much more

freely and aggressively with his inside-out forehand, which messed up Djokovic's favored position on his forehand side. He developed more confidence in his backhand down the line, which, while it is still the weakest part of his repertoire, means that Djokovic could not longer sit on Nadal's cross-court backhand.

The Spaniard's backhand slice keeps him in rallies, and he is more effective now going the opposite way with his left-handed serves. He has become less predictable, which is why he was also able to overcome Djokovic in both the Canadian Open and US Open finals.

Nadal has never been a very successful player during the fall season, but he played respectably in 2013. But that wasn't good enough. Djokovic kept pushing himself forward. He struck his first serve with more force, got into Nadal's backhand before the Spaniard got into his forehand, and was more than competent around the net. He bested Nadal in Beijing and then scored a convincing win over him in the ATP World Tour Finals.

But Djokovic didn't stop there, curiously adding the outspoken Boris Becker to his coaching team. He says that he will not serve and volley as much as the German might hope, but he will volley more. He says that he'll learn to win the big points again in 2014, as if he had completely forgotten to in 2013. Nadal did no such thing, as he is happy with his coach, Uncle Toni, who is an underrated tactician. But he has grabbed the No. 1 ranking again and says that, unlike in 2011 when he came on court against Djokovic for the US Open final and didn't really believe he could win the match, he now he believes that he can anytime, anywhere if he plays at his very best.

NO END IN SIGHT

So what lies ahead in this back-and-forth struggle?

Common wisdom says that the primary reason that great players win so many Slams is because they're more mentally tough than the vast majority of the tour. While there's some truth to that, it also means their superior technical and physical sides are sold short.

The reason why Nadal has been so much better than, say, current world



Djokovic has somehow managed to add even more oomph to his forehand.

No. 3 Ferrer isn't only because he has more self belief, but because his left-handed forehand and serve are more formidable, he can actually out-steady the much-praised scrapper, and because of that he forces Ferrer to play outside of his comfort zone. The same could be said of Djokovic against, say, Tomas Berdych. The big Czech can't run with him and over the long haul of a match he can't keep as many balls back in play either because he is constantly forced out of position.

It's important to remember going into the 2014 Australian Open which two players contested the longest Grand Slam final ever, one that lasted five hours and 53 minutes — it was these two, in Djokovic's 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-7(5), 7-5 victory in the 2012 Melbourne final. Both said they enjoyed taking each other to the physical limit. Nadal spoke of positive "suffering."

There were a number of nimble, eye-popping points during the match, but it was not like watching McEnroe go up against Ilie Nastase, when one cute shot followed an absolutely darling one.

Nadal and Djokovic's rallies were about sprints, depth, angles and power. It was defense to offense, offense to defense, and back again. Nadal and Djokovic are newer and improved versions of Borg, Guillermo Vilas, Michael Chang and Lleyton Hewitt. All were bred as counterpunchers and are still more comfortable in that style than in anything else.

There are some who don't like to watch the two matchup. The rallies are too long for them and they don't enjoy the constant grind. But that is the reality of the ATP Tour now, where the two best players can do almost anything asked of them. Regardless of style preferences, it is a truly great rivalry. Perhaps not the best ever, but head-to-head it's about as close and tough as any two all-time greats have put up against the other. In 2013, they combined to win three of the four Slams and nine of the 10 next biggest events. Nadal and Djokovic may not achieve that same level of success this season, but unless catastrophe strikes, they should be there week in, week out.

Even Federer, who many still consider the best player ever, concedes that. "I think Rafa and Novak are going to be the ones to beat this season, particularly in the beginning," he said. "Then, as we move forward, you have to see if they stay injury free and keep on winning. I kind of expect them to go deep in most of the tournaments they'll enter, of course."

FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS

As a player, Roger Federer thinks big and pays meticulous attention to detail. His foundation, which helps provide schooling for children in Africa, is no different.

By Kamakshi Tandon

The Thursday before the Australian Open began, it was Roger Federer's night on Rod Laver Arena, and appropriately enough, Roger Federer and Rod Laver were the highlight of the evening. The two all-time greats hit a few balls against each other to kick off proceedings, trading shots on the same court for once.

Even Federer felt the weight of the occasion, saying, "My racquet feels heavy."

It was a memorable moment for those watching, but also for the cause that had brought the two together that evening -- the Roger Federer foundation, which recently marked ten years since it was established. The exhibition event, obliquely named "A Night with Roger Federer and friends," raised over \$1 million. Proceeds went to benefit the foundation's education efforts in Africa as well as the Australian tennis foundation. The idea for the evening came from the popular offseason matches with Nadal a few years ago, when Federer was able to raise \$3 million over the exhibition series.

The amount raised will also likely reinforce the recent decision to make more use of Federer's high profile in fundraising. "This potential we didn't use so much in the past because we were focused on building our portfolio of very good partners," foundation CEO Janine Handel said in an interview last year, "but now we want to use a little bit more that potential."



Following the example set by Andre Agassi, many players have begun to establish their own charitable foundations soon after reaching prominence. Federer was no exception. Towards the end of 2003, having won his first Grand Slam at Wimbledon and positioned himself as a leading player, the then 22-year-old Federer and his parents, Robert and Lynne, started a foundation to help provide schooling for children in South Africa -- Lynne's home country, and one where Federer spent many childhood holidays.

"Being from here, me spending a lot of time here as well, I feel most connected to this part of the world," he has said, adding that it also reflects his personal experiences as a tennis player. "When I travelled the world, I definitely saw poor countries, people who told me it was so hard for them to get an education."

Starting with one donation to one school, the effort slowly grew over the years, expanding to other African countries and underprivileged children in Switzerland as well. By 2009, it had become big enough to require its own office and staff, which is where Handel came in.

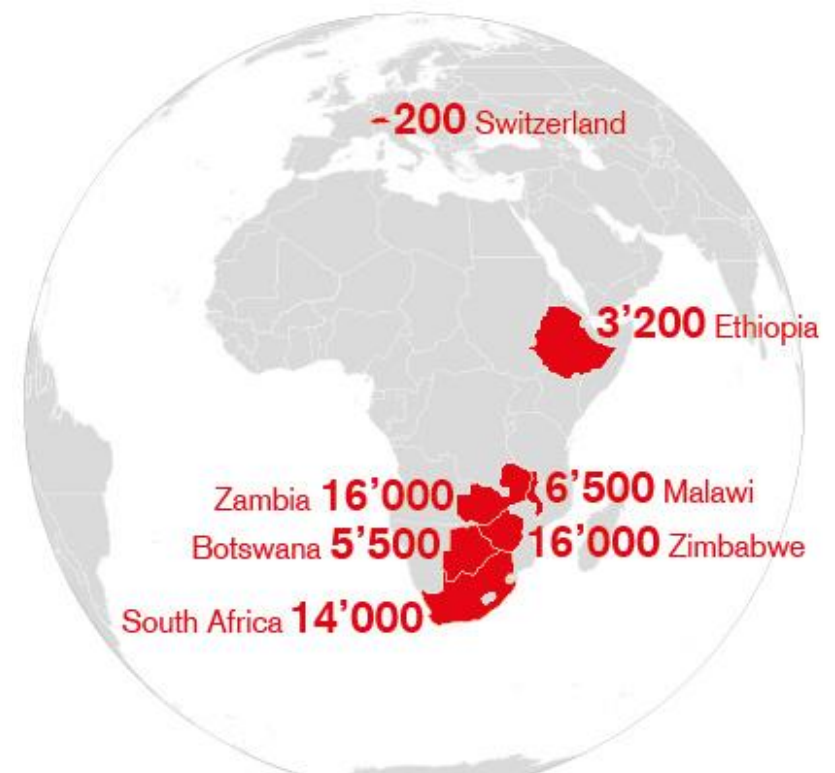
"The foundation was at this stage, at a milestone where they said, if we really want to know what we achieve, if we really want to be sure that our money is [being spent] in the best way, then we need to have professional management," she said.

Handel, a former diplomat who switched on to do charitable work for corporations before joining the Federer foundation three years ago, wasn't sure what to expect at first, but found she enjoyed bring part of a smaller, privately-run organization. "My best boss ever," she said of Federer, jokingly, "And I don't just say that because it's public."

"For me, [it's] a special situation because it's a small family business, and such a nice family around me who is personally involved and so engaged," she said. "I think this is unique."

"Our board members are emotionally much more attached than it is in a corporation, where the money is not from your own pocket."

Even while playing full-time, Federer is described by Handel as an active participant in the decisions and direction of the foundation -- "by email, by telephone, by meetings... [there is] huge ownership from his side for everything." He also attends the scheduled board meetings, which take place three times a year and tend to go for three or four hours. Federer's parents maintain an even closer connection, and are in contact with Handel every two weeks or so.



86'400 children currently supported

FEDERER FOUNDATION

Goal (total number of children supported)



If Federer's own playing career is meticulously planned and organized, it's no surprise that his charity appears to operate in a similar fashion.

While the foundation does not have the financial resources that might come from being backed by a large corporation or institution, it does have the advantage of being associated with a well-known public figure like Federer. Not only can he draw crowds for fundraising events like the exhibition at Rod Laver Arena, his near spotless reputation attracts sponsors both to him and to the cause. Credit Suisse, for example, donates \$1 million to the foundation every year as part of its long-term deal with the 17-time Grand Slam champion.

But fundraising is just one half of the mission. The other -- if not more difficult then more complex -- part is spending it. The foundation works by partnering with local organizations on the ground in Africa to provide access to schooling and educational resources for children in need.

Last year, the foundation reached about 50,000 children, spending about \$3 million. In its first ten years, it has reached about 200,000 children in total and wants that number to be one million in five years' time.

But while that will require a significant growth, Handel also emphasizes that such growth must be managed. First and foremost, the goal is to help local communities help themselves.

"We grow as much as we can, but we grow with care because when you work with local organizations in Africa like we do, you need to watch carefully how much can they absorb," she said. "We are not a 'delivering' organization, we really want to increase local capacities in doing and finding solutions, and implementing solutions by themselves."

Figuring out how well the money is being spent is a task by itself, though one made easier by the of the foundation 's focus on education. While the effects of access to schooling take longer to manifest themselves than some other forms of aid, they are more straightforward to track over time. "There are many indicators out there that are currently tested and even measured by the schools themselves," said Handel. "How is the performance level of the children improving over the years, how decreased are the repetitions [of school years by pupils], the dropout rates, the enrollment rates of boys and girls, the reduction of teenage pregnancies. So there are many, many easy, measurable indicators."

Not everything is that easy, however. "So for example, when our output is 'capacity building seminars' for teachers -- workshops, everybody likes workshops," Handel offered. "How can we measure now that because of that workshop, our children are doing better at school?"

"With our partners, we say, okay, we do a feedback round... let's say 10 percent of the teaches and ask them, what have you used out of that workshop 6 months ago and what have you not used?"

She added, "But then we are reasonable, we don't say we do that with all of the teachers."

"If you come along with 99 indicators [then] they just spend all their time in the management."

But measuring results is also not enough -- the process must be monitored as well. Handel cites one occasion when it was discovered that textbooks had been left untouched in their boxes by cautious teachers who wanted to keep them in good condition. To avoid and fix such problems or misunderstandings, a system of regular oversight is put in place.

"We have two visits from our side through our partners, I'm in permanent contact with them," she said. "We do external audits, and we have external evaluations every three to four years."



FEDERER FOUNDATION

Federer plays with local children during a visit in February 2013 to a South African school supported by the foundation.

Last year, however, there was a visit to the field in the most direct way possible -- from Federer himself. He toured two preschools in South Africa's Limpopo region in February.

"The thing is such visits are important for Roger himself... to really emotionally understand what he is doing," said Handel. "For the children, it doesn't make so much difference if Roger is there or I am alone."

She recalls one moment in particular, with Federer sitting down at a small table and chairs with a couple of children from the school. "He was showing them how to cut out a star with the paper," she said. "And we said, 'Roger, could you come out now, because the children here are waiting because you are reading a story.' 'Yeah, yeah, wait,' [he replied] -- he was so concentrated with these two kids."

"There was nothing from being a star, or being the best tennis player in the world left. He was just a human being, and a father, there, enjoying the moment with the children."

"These moments are the engine for the time and energy he is spending."

Transition Game

Mark Knowles retired in 2012 after a long and distinguished doubles career, which included winning three Grand Slams with Daniel Nestor and reaching No. 1 in the team rankings. The Bahamian turned first to coaching, working with Mardy Fish, and is now a commentator for Tennis Channel and the international broadcast of the US Open. He talks about the experience of going from court to commentary box.

By Kamakshi Tandon

Q. Talk about what it's like going from being a player to being a commentator.

A. Yeah, it's interesting. It's a way to stay close to the game. Obviously, when you are close to the game you miss it a little bit, but it's exciting to see some of my colleagues still playing. And also I'm friends with a lot of guys in the locker room so it's nice to bring an inside perspective every now and then, which is really nice.

It's an exciting challenge as well, which is nice -- because it's something you know, but it's also a slightly different spectrum. It's always something that I was interested in, that I kind of ventured into a little... towards the last few years of my career, so. It's a game I love. I always loved -- even when I was playing I was always very analytical -- not only with my opponents but in watching the game.



So it's a good way to... relay what I'm seeing to the audience and to the viewers.

Q. So it sounds like it's something that comes pretty easily.

A. Yeah, I think it does. I really enjoy it, which is important. I think anything you do, you want to have a passion for it, and you want to be the best at it. It's the same for broadcasting for me. I want to be as good as I can possibly be. And like I said, I've always looked at the game through an analyst's mind, so it comes pretty easy -- not easy, but it comes pretty naturally to me to look at the game that way.

So obviously you're going to constantly have to improve how to relate that to the viewer and so forth, and to the audience, and there are other dynamics in TV that you need to learn, but overall I really enjoy it, which is the most important thing.

Q. What are one or two things you've had to learn?

A. I'll tell you, the biggest thing I had to learn was, as players we're so used to giving interviews and being very monotone. Obviously we don't give the press that much in our answers, and try not to give them any emotions. And that's probably the biggest thing you have to learn in broadcasting, is that even though you're passionate, you have to somehow relay that to the audience. They don't necessarily know your passion, and you have to kind of relay that through your voice. That's probably the biggest thing I've had to learn and adjust to.

Q. As you were saying, as a player you bring a lot of background information, and just listening to you it's obvious because you're giving so many small details. Do you ever find you have to think about what you should or shouldn't say?

A. Not really. I think all players are different, and all minds are different, obviously. But there are some players that maybe don't see the game as much analysis, and so forth, but like I said, I've always

been that type of player, whether I was actually playing in the match or even just watching the match, I was always trying to figure out things that one could do better or improve or what was faltering and so forth. So that translates very easily for me when I'm speaking on TV and so forth. I've never really felt -- so far, I haven't felt a roadblock where I'm not sure, not necessarily lost for words, but not sure how to get my opinion out.

"[A]s players we're so used to giving interviews and being very monotone. Obviously we don't give the press that much in our answers, and try not to give them any emotions. And that's probably the biggest thing you have to learn in broadcasting."

Q. What about just in terms of information... Do you ever feel you know things you can't say?

A. That's sort of the fine balance you kind of travel along. Because obviously I know a lot of the players really well. And there are some things are allowed to be known and there are some things that should stay in the locker room and stay amongst the competitors. So obviously I have a very good perspective on that because I was -- having been a player for a long time and also. ..with the press and so forth I kind of know where that line is. I know where you can cross and where you cannot cross. And I think that also helps with the players -- because it's hard to obtain the trust of the players, but having been a former player, especially if they know your personality and who you are -- and I got along with most guys on tour, and they know who I am, I was who I was, so I think they may be a little more open and trustworthy towards me, which can be very beneficial.

Q. What are some of the things you try to bring out in your commentary that you feel aren't brought out enough?

A. Honestly, I want to be honest. That's probably the biggest thing. But that's also a tricky line sometimes as well because having been a competitor, I know tennis is a lot harder than it looks. There are a lot of obstacles that got into it that the viewer doesn't see or doesn't know.

I want to make people responsible for their actions and so forth. I want to bring a breath of fresh air. I want to bring great analysis, and I also want to bring true content, to the best of my ability.

Q. Are there any people you look to that you think are particularly good -- not exactly a role model, but someone you kind of appreciate?

A. I think you can learn from a lot of people. I watch a lot of sports so I'm always in tune to, whether it's the NFL, NBA in the United States, you know, you always have former players that are commentators -- Troy Aikman, Phil Simms, and so forth.

Then you have from the broadcasting side, you have people like Chris Fowler who worked for ESPN, Mike Tirico, that cross over a lot, Bill Macatee. That's admirable, because those are people who are to their craft. They've got to learn each sport and they've got to relay it to the audience that they're on the inside and they know the ins and outs. And that's very difficult. But I think the common theme there is professionalism, and that's what I try to learn from all the broadcasters I watch.

Q. And any memorable moments so far?

A. So far I think it's been pretty smooth. I don't think I've messed up that badly, at least no one's brought it to my attention.



Commentating a match involving his friend Mardy Fish (right) was "awkward," says Mark Knowles (left), especially after being his coach as well.

ATP

Q. Or what was it like maybe doing Fish, because... [Knowles coached Mardy Fish in 2012]

A. Yeah, doing Fish, I did him in Cincinnati... that was probably one of the more awkward ones. Just because obviously I know him not only from a competitor's standpoint but I also coached him a little bit last year and also we're great friends. So that was probably the biggest challenge, as you said, for holding him accountable for however he was playing and so forth, but also you know, mending that line of friendship. And that's where I was saying, probably the challenge where you have to be truthful, but not hurtful.

A photograph of tennis player Dominika Cibulkova. She is wearing a bright red sleeveless tennis dress and is smiling while looking back over her shoulder. She is holding a tennis racket with a purple grip. The background is a clear, bright blue sky.

SMALL PACKAGE, BIG PUNCH

BY MATTHEW CRONIN

Slovakian Dominika Cibulkova stands only 5-foot-3, but she's one of the WTA Tour's hardest hitters and has claimed a number of big scalps. The 24-year-old reached a career-high No. 12 in 2009, and has won three career titles. But she's erratic, has been troubled by injuries and has yet to put together the type of consistent season that would allow her to be talked about in the same breath as some of her junior peers, like former No. 1s Caroline Wozniacki and Victoria Azarenka, and Wimbledon finalist Agnieszka Radwanska. However, the chatty "Pocket Rocket" still believes that she has a bright future. She spoke with *Tennis Journal* at the Brisbane International.

You had some good moments in 2013, like avenging your loss to Agnieszka Radwanska in Sydney to win Stanford. But your season was pretty spotty after Toronto.

After Canada it was not easy, but the clay season wasn't really good. I had troubles with my body and Achilles, but I've been six months not injured and I have a new physio [Iveta Stankova], but that something else I have to work on. I don't have many points to defend this year, and it's the second year with my coach [Matej Liptak]. Things are going better and we're working on my mental side, so that's very good

“[SERENA IS] UNBELIEVABLE AND MORE FIT THAN EVER. SHE'S A HUMAN, SO SHE CAN BE BEAT, MAYBE A LITTLE LESS HUMAN [THAN OTHERS], BUT SHE'S STILL HUMAN.”

Have you re-set your goals form the time you first became a pro?

When I first came on tour, I only wanted to be top 100. That was my dream. It's changed a lot. It's different when you're 24 than when you were 17.

Does reality set in more now? Have you ever said to yourself, “I don't really like this sport — I wish I was doing something else?”

When you're 17, the players don't know you. Now I am the favorite most of the time. When I first came on tour, I was playing the No. 1 in the world and I didn't care. No pressure at all. Nothing to lose. But I never thought I didn't like tennis. Sometimes it's hard when you're losing, but when you do well it makes you so happy.

When you are older you realize that there are actually things to lose, rather than the cliché of “nothing to lose.”

If I think I *have* to win, it's not fun anymore and then tennis doesn't make me happy. Now I'm trying to be more relaxed and enjoy it.

It's your job though, although I can understand that you want to try and have fun to keep the pressure off.

It's not like I want to have fun, but today I was on court and losing 4-1 in in the second and I was going down and you could see it in my body language and my coach came out and said, “Look, it's just tennis, it's not like you're going to die.” You have to realize that sometimes.

But you also want to win, and when you're not playing well you're thinking, “I can play

better than this.”

Yes, many times I think like that. What helps me put bad points behind me is when I stay aggressive. I just say, “Be aggressive and even if I lose it I'm okay, it doesn't matter.” But when I push and say, “I just want her to win the point,” that's the worst.



You specifically have to strike a balance between being a super-aggressive player and not being too wild because there are times when you need to play defense.

That's what my coach is trying to work on. Last year, I thought he was trying to change my game too much and wanted me to be less aggressive, but that's not what he really wants. He just wants to work on my defense so I can run a lot and go from defense to offense. Before I wanted to go for it too much.

You've had some other coaches before and I assume they all told you different things.

Not always different, but when I had Zeljko Krajan, he was extreme and it wasn't easy with him.

But you did have some good results with him, even though you were troubled in the end

of the relationship.

Yes, but I'm a good player to work with. [Laughs.] But you also have to understand each other off the court.

You travel with many people — your dad, boyfriend, coach and physio. Do you ever need a break from them after talking tennis all day and night?

I need them. My boyfriend is with me 24/7 and I need my physio because my body needs attention. Of course I need my coach, but I'm not bringing my fitness trainer with me. There are many times I don't want to see them and when I need a break, I go with my boyfriend to the beach or to dinner.

“YOU CAN'T HAVE REAL BEST FRIENDS ON TOUR. TENNIS IS VERY INDIVIDUALISTIC AND YOU'RE ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR YOURSELF.”

With such a long season, can you actually get excited about the New Year?

Sort of. I made sure to go home to Slovakia for Christmas after training in Florida before coming to Australia, even though I knew I would be jet-lagged. I have my life and I wanted to spend Christmas with my family.

Some girls came to Australia before Christmas. I have my normal life outside of tennis that I like. Some girls only have the tennis.

I was looking at the 2005 ITF junior rankings, and it was such an incredible group — you, Azarenka, Wozniacki, the Radwanskas, Lisicki, Wickmayer, Cirstea, Pavlyuchenkova, Kleybanova, Kvitova. So many of you became excellent pros. Did you push each other?

We did. The year I won the Eddie Herr [she beat Cirstea in the 2005 final] and the week after Caroline won the Orange Bowl. Those were the tournaments where we were pushing each other. She wanted to do better than me. It's still this way and they motivate me more. If they can do it, I can do it, too.

Can you be friends with them?

What are friends? We say “hello” and “how are you?” and that's it.

You know what real friends are, like the ones you have at home.

You can't have real best friends on tour; the Radwanska sisters are best friends because they are sisters. We compete all the time against each other and you want to do better than the other one. Tennis is very individualistic and you're always looking out for yourself.

Maria Sharapova says that she doesn't need friends on tour, but to me, if you see people all the time, it should be possible to be friends with some of them.

I am the same as she is. I have my friends at home. Here on tour, I don't expect big friendships because I know how it is. But Marion Bartoli is a real friend of mine and she's coming to visit me in Slovakia in February.

She has said that she really likes how honest you are, no bullshit.

She's been like my older sister.

What did you think when she retired?

I couldn't believe it, but I think she's really happy now. Until she retired she didn't have a real life and now she gets to go home and have friends and go out like a normal person.

Her father was her life on tour. But almost everyone expects her to come back.

I don't think so. She worked harder at tennis than any of us. It would be really hard for her to come back and do that again.

Will anyone be able to beat Serena this year? She been dominating the tour.

She has been very consistent over the past year. She unbelievable and more fit than ever. She's a human, so she *can* be beat, maybe a little less human [than others], but she's still human.

Do you see any of very younger players taking over this season?

No, I think it's ²⁴ to be us again. When I came on tour, I was able to beat really good players and move up, but you see these young girls today, it's harder. Times have changed.

Are you satisfied with your career? You have been consistent top-20 player, you have reached the quarters of three out of the four Slams, but some of your peers have done better.

I'm just 24 and I really think have so many good things to come.

How about reaching the WTA Championships for the first time at the end of this year?

I want it so much, but sometimes when you want something so much, it doesn't happen. So I need to be relaxed and hopefully it will.

AND YOU CAN **Quote** ME ON THAT...

By Richard Osborn

"I think this was the best possible way to start off the year." — **Caroline Wozniacki**, who on New Year's Eve was engaged to pro golfer **Rory McIlroy**

"I wish to help my country in many ways, but not as a politician." — **Novak Djokovic**

"Make no mistake. This is a protest. This is civilized disobedience." — ESPN's **Bonnie Ford** on the openly-gay **Billie Jean King** being named to the U.S. delegation that will attend the opening and closing ceremonies at the Sochi Olympics

"Maria Sharapova is an American tennis player even though she was born in Russia. All of her formative years were in America. But she doesn't play for America. That's fine. It is what it is." — **Jim Courier**

"She hits the ball harder than anyone else, but her best weapon is her competitive instinct." — **Chris Evert** on **Serena Williams**

"I will do my best to help him reach his goals, and I am sure we can achieve great things together." — Hall of Famer **Boris Becker**, who was hired to coach **Novak Djokovic** in December



Fed: "Everybody assumes we're always okay, we're always happy. It's not always the case. We have problems of our own."

"We changed tennis. We brought passion and fashion, wearing extravagant clothes. And also style, power as a new skin color as we are African-Americans. We improved tennis." — **Serena Williams** on the impact she and sister Venus have had on the sport

"I've kept my mouth shut a lot of times in my career, you know, but I'm an open book really. The things I say at my press conferences, I don't lie. I don't pretend. I

respect where respect is due. I speak bad of my game and of myself when I feel I deserve it. I'm very honest." — **Maria Sharapova**

"I don't think I ever would have accomplished anything without him. There's no one like him. He's cantankerous and he acts cranky, but a lot of it is a show and once you get past that you can see who he is deep down. But he's not afraid of anybody. He'll tell you like it is because he doesn't care if you don't come tomorrow and your parents stop paying him. He

would give it to you straight, but it was always great to hear the truth." — **Lindsay Davenport** on her former coach **Robert Lansdorp**, who recently turned 75

"Most doubles players, I hate to say, are the slow guys who were not quick enough to play singles." — **John McEnroe**

"You have to do everything right to really excel in the sport right now. It's become so physical and so challenging. You can't really skate by on anything. You have to be ready to go day in, day out." — **Jim Courier**

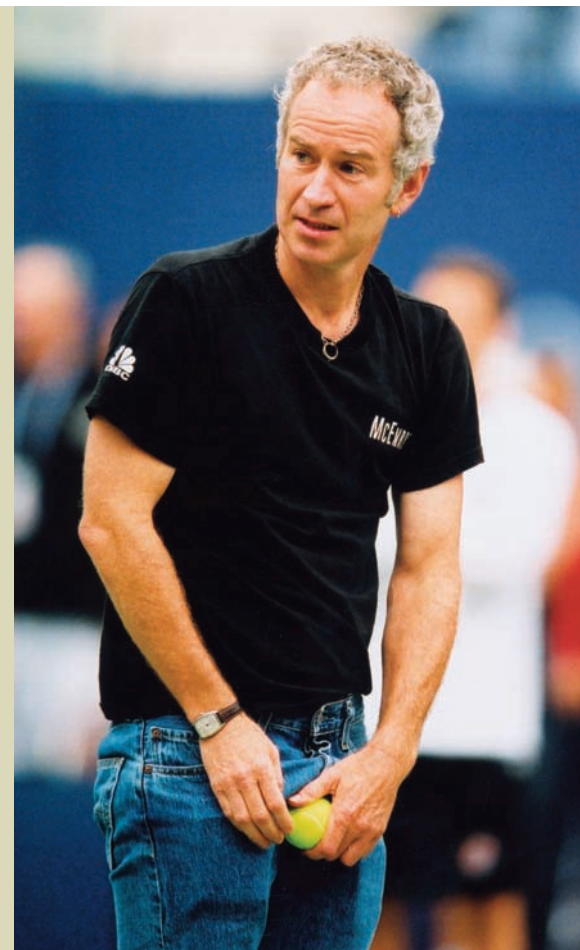
"I think the tennis player also has to be able to play tennis when things are not okay in your personal life...That's the tough part. That's what people never talk about, write about, because everybody assumes we're always okay, we're always happy and we're always feeling great. In the personal life, everything is wonderful. It's not always the case. We have problems of our own." — **Roger Federer**

"Killing someone when they stay alive is the worst thing you can do to someone." — Serbian Davis Cup captain **Bogdan Obradovic** on **Viktor Troicki's** ITF-mandated doping suspension

"It's part of life as a tennis player. It ain't just practice and matches, and the rest is non-existent. It's a whole machinery that's happening." — **Roger Federer** on the off-court demands that come with playing ATP World Tour events

"If one stupid guy in the crowd will laugh at him because he misses a dropshot, I mean, he shouldn't react. The players who are better ranked than he is are able to manage that better than he is." — **Guy Forget** on emotional Frenchman **Benoit Paire**

"You have the player like Nadal, who just says, 'I've [had] enough, I don't want to have any part on that.' When [Ivan] Ljubicic was president of council, he actually took the initiative,



Ballsy Statement?: Mac didn't endear himself to doubles specialists, likening them to "slow guys" not cut out for the singles game.

sat down with all the top players, I was No. 3 at that time, he spoke to me, to Nadal, to Murray, to Federer, to four of us, said, 'Listen, guys, I think you should be involved in the sport because your voice is very important here, you make the show, you should be part of decision making, and you should express your wish, your desire, your thoughts in order to improve this sport, in order to get it better for your interest and just for better of the sport in general.'" — **Novak Djokovic**

QUESTIONS HEARD 'ROUND THE MEDIA ROOM

"WHAT DO YOU
LIKE ABOUT WRITING?"
— **ROGER FEDERER TO
A REPORTER IN LONDON**

"HASN'T ANYONE TOLD YOU
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE
OLD BLOKE?"
— **TO LLEYTON HEWITT, 32**

"I'D LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU RE-
ALLY THINK THAT SERENA
WILLIAMS WILL BE IN CLEVEL-
LAND."
— **TO U.S. FED CUP CAPTAIN
MARY JOE FERNANDEZ**

"WHY DO YOU THINK THE
FANS LIKE YOU SO MUCH?"
— **TO AGA RADWANSKA**

"HOW BIG IS YOUR HOUSE?"
— **TO TROPHY HOARDER
RAFAEL NADAL**

"FOURTEEN STRAIGHT
LOSSES NOW TO SERENA.
DOES IT FEEL DIFFERENT
THAN A LOSS TO ANOTHER
OPPONENT? SO MANY AT THIS
POINT. IS IT NUMBING?"
— **TO MARIA SHARAPOVA**

"That's why you
still play the
game." — **Lleyton
Hewitt** after beat-
ing **Roger Federer**
6-1, 4-6, 6-3 in
Brisbane, only his
second win over
the Swiss in his
last 18 tries

"Even when you
play good tennis,
your best tennis,
he's still there, still
trying to find a
way to win." —
Stanislas Wawrinka
on **Rafael Nadal**

"I am a guy that
when I do things, I
do the things with
everything that I
have." — **Rafael
Nadal**

"I don't want to
fight more, seri-
ously. I want to
play tennis. I
want to enjoy the
last years of my
career, and that's
what I am doing."
— **Rafael Nadal** on
the politics of ten-
nis



Venus: A full ap-
preciation for all
that Richard and
Oracene have done
for her career.

RICHARD OSBORN

"When you are requested for a sample, you have to give the
sample. It doesn't matter how bad you feel. I'm sorry." —
Roger Federer on drug testing in tennis

"They wanted Roger, but they had me." — Switzerland's
Stanislas Wawrinka on the crowd at the ATP World Tour Finals

"I don't want anyone out there on the court with me. It's my
moment." — **Serena Williams** on on-court coaching

"It's like a puzzle. You have to put all the pieces together." —
Stanislas Wawrinka on playing elite-level tennis

"It's an honor to be even with Roger." — **Serena Williams** on
equaling **Roger Federer's** Slam total of 17

"We actually have a history. That's kind of unique to have a
history with a former President of the United States of Amer-
ica." — **Serena Williams** on **Bill Clinton**

"Looking back at all the number of hours and the dedication
both my parents put in, I don't know how they did that." —
Venus Williams

NUMBERS GAME

1992

The last time the U.S. Davis Cup team
chose clay as the surface for a home
tie.

15

Age of Francis Tiafoe, who defeated
Stefan Kozlov in the Orange Bowl final
7-6(3), 0-6, 6-3 to become the
youngest boys' 18s winner in tourna-
ment history.

9

Times that the Bryan Bros. have
claimed the year-end No. 1 doubles
ranking.

2

Career top-five wins for Bethanie Mat-
tek-Sands, who stunned Agnieszka
Radwanska 7-5, 6-2 in Sydney. "It's
probably one of the best wins of my
career," she said.



Hewitt At 32: Still gritty after all these years.

start from zero, from scratch.” — **Novak Djokovic** reflecting on the NATO bombings of Yugoslavia in 1999

“I don't know. Some idiot put it on Wikipedia...Some journalist asked me about the Mad Dog. I was like what the F? It's okay, but Mad Dog? What is that? Like a dog with rabies? I don't know...They have too much time on their hands on Wikipedia.” — **Marinko Matosevic** on how his nickname, “Mad Dog,” originated

“I really want to keep on playing tennis at this level hopefully for years to come, as long as I have the desire, as long as my body holds on, as long as there is this love, flame of love for this sport inside of me.” — **Novak Djokovic**

“Ivanisevic vs. Sampras — there was nothing to me that was more boring than watching the big servers. If the serve didn't go in, that's all she wrote.” — **Cliff Drysdale**

“You better have an unbelievable passion for the game and love the process and sort of love the pain. This idea that you can get to the top just because you were a great junior or

“I wouldn't have won a single title without him.” — **Serena Williams** on her father, Richard

“This is what I used to do as a little boy. It's something that always is there in your DNA. It's almost like I started walking at the same time I started playing tennis.” — **Roger Federer**

“War is the worst thing in life for humanity. Nobody really wins. But it made us stronger, this two and a half months. We looked at it on the bright side. We were kids. We were only 12 years old. So we thought, ‘Okay, now we're not obliged to go to school, we can play more tennis.’ So we spent the whole day basically every day for two months on the tennis courts with the planes flying over our heads. We really didn't mind. After a week or two of the bombings, we just kind of moved on with our lives. We did everything we could and what we wanted. We just let the life decide for us. It was not in our control. We were helpless basically. Luckily, we all survived, and we take this kind of experience and this particular situation from our past as a great lesson in the life and something that allowed us to be stronger mentally and to actually understand what it is to basically have nothing,

won a lot of the juniors is just a complete myth.” — **Patrick McEnroe's** advice to Slam-minded up-and-comers

“There are so many athletes that say they can never replace that feeling of having that adrenaline rush, but I get more of an adrenaline rush now seeing my daughter wake up in the morning.” — **James Blake**

“I don't kid myself. I know I have had a great career in my eyes, but it's not one that's going to go down in the history books. It's not one that's going to end in Newport, but it's one that I'm proud of.” — **James Blake**

“I was supposed to be a mermaid, but I said, ‘You're out of your mind. I'm not swimming in the water. It's cold. What are you talking about?’” — **Victoria Azarenka**, who instead played the part of a flight attendant in boyfriend **Redfoo's** *Let's Get Ridiculous* video

“There's no question that the United States is looking for the next great player...The Americans are getting a little chip on their shoulder and saying, ‘We want to get US tennis back to where it belongs.’” — **Jay Berger**, USTA Head of Men's Tennis

“I don't like the word ‘confidence.’ To me it doesn't exist. It's a matter of going out there and giving your 100 percent every day. Because no matter how confident you are, if you don't focus, if you don't give 100 percent on every point, you're not going to win.” — **Victoria Azarenka**

“He knows when to be like, ‘Okay, this girl is *nuts*.’” — **Serena Williams** on her father, Richard

“Honestly, I don't know where they all are. Some in are Florida and some are in L.A. and some are in Paris and some are MIA. A lot are MIA.” — **Serena Williams** on her trophies

“I keep putting myself through it. Must like punishment.” — **Lleyton Hewitt** on why he's still pushing himself at the tennis-old age of 32

“If, if, if. There are so many ifs. That's the sport. That's the beauty of the sport. Sometimes it goes your way; sometimes it doesn't.” — **Jelena Jankovic**

“My God, who was that girl? I don't recognize her at all. I was so intense.” — **Serena Williams** on watching herself at Roland Garros on the Tennis Channel

“He's one of the reasons I am who I am today.” — **Bernard Tomic** on his father, John, who continues to serve a 12-month ban from ATP events

“I have good painkillers.” — **Agnieszka Radwanska** on how she copes with her troubled shoulder

“I may be a little crazy.” — **Bethanie Mattek-Sands**

“Roger suffocated me. I grew up watching this guy and cheering for him...I think every player admires him — not just the way he carries himself, but he's got probably the most beautiful strokes of all time. He's very aesthetically pleasing to watch. I'm watching this guy, and I'm drenched in sweat and he's like not even sweating, not even using a towel and not taking a sip.” — **Marinko Matosevic** on his 6-1, 6-1 loss to **Roger Federer** in Brisbane

WHAT TO WATCH FOR (CHASING ANDY)

BY MATTHEW CRONIN

• Somewhat remarkably, **Andy Murray's** Wimbledon title has meant next to nothing to him financially off court. His agents have yet to sign him a new sponsor, even though he became the first man since **Fred Perry** in 1936 to win the title and the victory was celebrated all over the U.K. A film was even made about it, *The Day We won Wimbledon*, narrated by the famous actor **John Hurt**. Murray was named the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year. So why are there no new sponsors when the likes of **Novak Djokovic** — who is from the small, economically challenged nation of Serbia, ranked 30th in Europe by the IMF in GDP compared to third for the UK — just signed a \$4 million per year deal with Peugeot and a \$1 million per year deal with Seiko? Is it because Murray's celebrity agent, **Simon Fuller**, is too inexperienced in the tennis world to get his client major new deals? Fuller has certainly been successful in the entertainment world with his *Idol* franchises, and also in the soccer and Formula 1, but he has yet to show that he can lead Murray to the bank vault post the Scott's biggest title run. It's also possible that Murray doesn't want any more major deals that require him to put in a lot of hours with his sponsors. He already has deals with the watch company Rado, the bank RSB, the apparel company Adidas, the racquet company Head, and the muscle rub outfit Fuse Science. But there's room for more, which is why some other agencies are sniffing around, trying to see if he's interested in making a move. IMG, which reps Djokovic, would certainly like to take Murray under its wing, especially now that it has been bought by CAA and its private equity partner. Former IMG agent **Tony Godsick** and his main client/partner **Roger Federer** might also want to manage Murray. Godsick and Federer formed the new company Tema8Global and have already signed two major players — **Juan Martin Del Potro** and **Grigor Dimitrov**. Lagardère would also be happy to take on Murray, but already seems to have its hands full trying to nail down deals for world No. 2 **Victoria Azarenka** and **Sloane Stephens**, who for all intents and purposes is boycotting the media outside of press conferences, which doesn't make her an easy sell.

• Lagardère is thanking its lucky stars that it has a media accessible star in **Caroline Wozniacki** in its stable. The Dane was recently engaged to golfer **Rory McIlroy**, and when they are wed



they'll become one of the sports world's most powerful and marketable couples.

• Speaking of sponsors, the **WTA** is still without a title sponsor and is working hard to bring in a new one. A title sponsor isn't mandatory, but another one say in the \$3 million per annum range to compliment current sponsors Xerox and SAP would help. Some of their Premier level tournaments are said to be less than pleased about offering them substantial prize money increases because they don't think the women are bringing in the same level of revenue that the men are. There's even been back-room talk about reducing prize money.

• The ATP Tour is in better financial shape and is also finally back in decent political shape, as its new CEO, Britain's **Chris Kermode**, is now in place, and after giving a presentation at the players meeting in Melbourne, he received no questions, which usually means the players are satisfied with the direction of the tour. However, the Masters 1000s and the players' three-year agreement that mandates a 9 percent-per-year prize money increase ends this year, and the players want bigger in-

creases beginning in 2015, which could become a hot topic.

• The Tennis Industry Association is organizing a Future of Tennis Summit during the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells, California.

• Cleveland has responded brilliantly and the USTA announced that single-day tickets are now available for the 2014 Fed Cup by BNP Paribas World Group First Round tie between the U.S. and Italy at the Public Auditorium, Feb. 8-9. U.S. captain **Mary Joe Fernandez** and her husband, **Tony Godsick**, live there. Her two highest ranked players, **Serena Williams** and **Sloane Stephens**, are questionable for the tie, as they are both scheduled to play Doha.

• **Victoria Azarenka** apparently won't play for Belarus again, and Russia might not be able to field a better team for its opening tie against Australia in Hobart than it did against Italy in the 2013 final, when its top 13 players didn't compete.

World Report

How various nations are faring at getting players into the singles Top 100.

TOP 8 TOP 100 NATIONS... PLAYERS IN TOP 100 (ATP, WTA)

1. SPAIN	20 (14, 6)
2. USA	18 (7, 11)
3. FRANCE	15 (10, 5)
4. GERMANY	13 (7, 6)
5. RUSSIA	11 (5, 6)
=6. ITALY	9 (3, 6)
=6. CZECH REPUBLIC	9 (4, 5)
8. ARGENTINA	7 (6, 1)

CANADA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 3 (2 ATP, 1 WTA)

After a history of throwing up a few top 10 players and doubles specialists but not much more, for the moment it is perhaps the hottest nation. Milos Raonic is the highest-ranked of the new men's prospects, and Vasek Pospisil unexpectedly joined him in that group last year. Eugenie Bouchard, similarly, has become the highest-ranked teenager on the women's side, and there are promising recent juniors like Filip Pelwo and Francoise Abanda coming up. and Daniel Nestor keeps hanging on in doubles.

UNITED STATES

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 18 (7 ATP, 11 WTA)

Much is made of its decline on the tennis stage, particularly on the men's side, but it still has the second-most players in the combined top 100, and Bob and Mike Bryan on top in doubles. On the men's side it's more quantity than quality -- only John Isner and Sam Querrey are in the top 50 or anywhere near it. But on the women's, Serena Williams is at No. 1 and there is also an emerging group of young players led by Sloane Stephens and Madison Keys.

PUERTO RICO

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 1 (WTA)

Monica Puig is a lone but proud representative of the territory, which also produced Gigi Fernandez and Charlie Pasarell.

NORTH AMERICA

Though the United States is not as strong as it once was, it remains a significant producer of players and Canada has never had as many good players as these days. Mexico, however, continues to be inexplicably absent from the scene.

SOUTH AMERICA

Though still a significant presence, particularly on the men's side, the number of top players has dwindled, as have the number of countries with top 100 players. Chile, which once had Marcelo Rios, Nicolas Massu and Fernando Gonzales currently has none, and Peru and Venezuela have also lost their top 100 presence these days.

Once known for raising claycourters, more and more of its tournaments are shifting to hardcourts.

BRAZIL

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (WTA)**

The nation which once boasted Gustavo Kuerten and, before that, Maria Bueno, now has just one player in the men's and women's top 100. Thomaz Belluci, erratic and currently out of the top 100, nevertheless remains its best prospect.

The heightened presence from the upcoming Olympics, however, has led to a number of new tournaments.

COLOMBIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **3 (ATP)**

It gets little attention and has yet to produce a top player. But it consistently has a few players in the top 100, and right now also a strong doubles presence with Juan Sebastian Cabal and Robert Farah.

ARGENTINA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **7 (6 ATP, 1 WTA)**

The 'Argentine Legion' was declared to be drawing to a close with David Nalbandian's retirement last year -- gone are the days when Guillermo Coria, Gaston Gaudio, Nalbandian and a strong supporting cast swarmed the French Open annually. But there are still a decent number of players among the men, along with a Grand Slam contender in Juan Martin del Potro and some promising up and comers like Guido Pella and Federico Delbonis. But few women have followed behind Gabriela Sabatini.

GREAT BRITAIN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **2 (1 ATP, 1 WTA)**

After decades of famous underachievement, it now has a two-time Slam winner in Andy Murray, and some promising young WTA players led by Laura Robson. But despite one of the best-funded development programs, still only two players in the top 100, and a few men's doubles players (who are no longer being funded).

BELGIUM

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **2 (WTA)**

It was a tiny source of major talent a decade ago, with Justine Henin and Kim Clijsters dominating the women's game and Xavier Malisse and the Rochuses providing a presence on the men's side. Now, there's Kirsten Flipkens (helped by Clijsters) and Yanina Wickmayer, who have reached a Grand Slam semifinal each, and the effective but frequently injured David Goffin.

FRANCE

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **15 (10 ATP, 5 WTA)**

Always a consistent producer of talent, it has the third most top 100 players of any nation. What it has lacked since the days of the Musketeers and Suzanne Lenglen, however, is a consistent supply of Grand Slam champions. Players like Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, Richard Gasquet and Gael Monfils have the talent to break the drought, but doing so in the current state of Big Four dominance would be unexpected. On the women's side, the retirement of Marion Bartoli left it without a top player, but there is potential among young players like Mladenovic and Caroline Garcia.

SPAIN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **20 (14 ATP, 6 WTA)**

The powerhouse of men's tennis, it has the most players in the men's and women's top 100. There is quality as well as quantity -- two of the top three men in Rafael Nadal and David Ferrer. Its current strength builds on the procession of players like Sergi Bruguera, Carlos Moya, Alex Corretja, Albert Costa, and Juan Carlos Ferrero in recent year. But there are no women following the standard set by Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Martinez, and there have been complaints about the lack of support they receive.

PORTUGAL

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (6 ATP, 1 WTA)**

Usually has one or two players in the top 100, and right now it's Joao Souza, who just became the first to win an ATP title from the nation.

EUROPE

The engine of the sport, it is where nearly 80 percent of the combined top 100 comes from and holds the most tournaments. Eastern Europe has become perhaps the biggest supplier of players over the past decade.

SWEDEN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (WTA)**

It's hard to believe that after having an assembly line for No. 1s -- Bjorn Borg, Mats Wilander, Stefan Edberg -- it has just one player in the top 100, and that on the women's side, where it has not had a strong tradition. Even the steady flow of high-ranked players -- Bjorkman, Norman, Johansson -- gave way to Soderling and one or two semi-retired names, and now the drought extends almost through the top 400.

FINLAND

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (ATP)**

More or less begins and ends with Jarrko Nieminen, but as long as he's the top-ranked Scandinavian among these rivalrous nations, that counts for a lot.

DENMARK

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (WTA)**

Right now, can be summed up in two words -- Caroline Wozniacki.

NETHERLANDS

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **3 (ATP)**

A tall, talented but underachieving group, especially when playing outside their country.

AUSTRIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **7 (6 ATP, 1 WTA)**

Thomas Muster gave it a No. 1 player a couple of decades ago, but since then Jurgen Melzer and a few others have kept it hanging around the edges. It also has a promising young player, Dominic Thiem, coming up after them.

GERMANY

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **13 7 ATP, 6 WTA**

The memorable days of Steffi Graf, Boris Becker and Michael Stich are gone, but it maintains a solid presence in the top ranks -- the fourth most players in the combined top 100. The recent surge of women, especially, has revived interest -- Andrea Petkovic, Sabine Lisicki, Julia Goerges, Angelique Kerber. The concern for the men is that most are veterans rather than up and comers, and the highest-ranked is 35-year-old Tommy Haas.

SWITZERLAND

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **2 (2 ATP, 2 WTA)**

It's been a bountiful few years for this small nation. First Roger Federer dominating the game, and now Stanislas Wawrinka moving up through the top 10 as well. Before that it was Martina Hingis who carried the flag, but her retirement and that of Patty Schnyder means the women's ranks are now thin. But coming up is Belinda Bencic, who is one of the top young prospects.

ITALY

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **9 (3 ATP, 6 WTA)**

Though it has had few legendary players in its long tennis-playing history -- Adriano Panatta and Nicola Pietrangeli are probably the best examples -- its women's side has been strong in recent years. Until a few years ago, it had never had a women in the top 10, and Flavia Pennetta, Francesca Schiavone, and Sara Errani have all got there since, with Roberta Vinci getting to the top 20 as well. Schiavone also won the French, while Errani and Vinci have combined to become the No. 1 doubles team. Their Fed Cup results have reflected and reinforced this climb. The men have not been at the same level, though the entertaining and talented Fabio Fognini is rising through the ranks, and Andreas Seppi continues to hang around.

Iceland

POLAND

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

5 (3 ATP, 2 WTA)

Over the last couple of years, it has been the hottest talent source. Not only has it produced some top up-and-comers in the Radwanskas and Jerzy Janowicz, but there are also a slew of others -- Wozniacki, Kerber, Lisicki -- with roots in the nation. And that without having great facilities for training.

CZECH REPUBLIC

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

9 (4 ATP, 5 WTA)

Has continued the strong tradition established by Jan Kodes, Martina Navratilova, Ivan Lendl and others from behind the Iron Curtain. These days, there is Tomas Berdych, Petra Kvitova, Radek Stepanek and Lucie Safarova and more, helping capture both the Davis Cup and Fed Cup in recent years.

HUNGARY

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

1 (WTA)

Anges Szvay was its most significant contender for many years, but her injury retirement has left Timea Babos as its lone representative in the top 100.

SERBIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

6 (3 ATP, 3 WTA)

None has been hotter over the last five years, with Novak Djokovic, Ana Ivanovic and Jelena Jankovic all making it to the top of the game. Others like Janko Tipsarevic, Viktor Troicki and Bojana Jovanovski also came up, and Nenad Zimonjic has consistently been one of the big players in doubles. The only question is what to do for an encore -- there are not too many up-and-comers making their way through, and no comprehensive development program has been established.

CROATIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

5 (3 ATP, 2 WTA)

From Goran Ivanisevic to Mario Ancic and Ivan Ljubicic to Marin Cilic, it has continued to churn out tall, lanky big servers, especially from the town of Split.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

5 (1 ATP, 4 WTA)

A smaller presence than its neighbour, but still a fine crop of WTA players led by Daniela Hantuchova and Dominika Cibulkova.

RUSSIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

11 (5 ATP, 6 WTA)

Ten years ago, it looked like the new world power in tennis, with Marat Safin following Yevgeny Kafelnikov to Grand Slam wins and world No. 1 and a whole army of women coming up behind Anna Kournikova. There has been a retreat since, but five men in the top 100 isn't too bad. Nor is six women in the top 100 -- even if it's a long way from having four of the top 10, as it once did. Many players complain of a lack of funding and infrastructure, which could have helped keep the run going.

ESTONIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

1 (WTA)

Kaia Kanepi has defied its lack of top level infrastructure to become a threat on the women's circuit.

LATVIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

1 (ATP)

Ernest Gulbis has helped establish this small breakaway republic, though he has not yet been consistent enough to make the impact he is capable of. And Anastasia Sevastova, who looked like she was going to give it a women's presence, has faded.

BELARUS

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

1 (WTA)

Victoria Azarenka reached No. 1 in the world and Max Mirnyi is still hanging around in doubles, so things are going quite well following the initial example set by Natasha Zvereva.

UKRAINE

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

4 (2 ATP, 2 WTA)

Has a few promising players, particularly Alexandr Dolgoplov and Svitolina, maintaining its steady presence.

ROMANIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100

4 (1 ATP, 3 WTA)

Ilie Nastase and Ion Tiriac were the glory days for Romania, but now there is only one man in the top 100. The women's side is going quite well, however, with Simona Halep coming on strong and Sorana Cirstea producing the occasional good result.

AFRICA

Continues to be severely underrepresented, limited by lack of resources as well as lack of tradition in most countries. South Africa is the source of most of the players that reach the top 100, and Cara Black is keeping both the Black name and Zimbabwe in the game as she continues to compete in doubles. Tunisia has the potential to re-enter the ranks, with Malek Jaziri and Ons Jabeur both regulars on the circuit.

SOUTH AFRICA PLAYERS IN TOP 100 2 (1 ATP, 1 WTA)

Has a history of being a small but steady presence in the game, but recently there has been consistent conflict between the federation and players, and funds are scarce. But there are still two players in the combined top 100, Kevin Anderson and Chanelle Scheepers.

KAZAKHSTAN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **3 (1 ATP, 2 WTA)**

Its strategy of buying players hasn't been that successful, with few of its imports climbing or staying in the top ranks. But it does give them a lot of resources, and now has a homegrown player making a climb.

ASIA

Beginning to assert itself, particularly South East Asia with a growing number of players and tournaments. But is still has relatively few in the top ranks, and they come from a small number of nations.

UZBEKISTAN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **7 (6 ATP, 1 WTA)**

It hasn't paid off with any significant presence, but its ruler is keen on tennis and players get looked after as a result. At the moment, Denis Istomin is the only one in the top 100 on either side.

ISRAEL

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **3 (1 ATP, 2 WTA)**

Continues to produce a small stream of players, with Shahar Peer still hanging in and Andy Ram and Jonathan Erlich have been strong in doubles. Retirements have thinned the men's ranks, however, and others trying to come up have struggled with financing.

INDIA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (ATP)**

The world's second-most populous nation, and one where tennis is popular, yet it produces few players -- particularly on the singles side. Somdev Devvarman is currently the only player in the ATP top 100, though there are also a few promising ones like Yuki Bhambri. Sania Mirza's decision to stop playing singles means none on the women's side, but doubles continues to be strong -- Leander Paes, Rohann Bopanna, Mahesh Bhupathi deciding to continue for a little while, and Mirza.

CHINA

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **4 (WTA)**

Supposed to be the next tennis power, though its advance has been slower than predictions expected. One major development is Na Li giving it a first Grand Slam singles title and climbing to No. 3 in the rankings, and its other top 100 players are all capable of a significant result. Much of the success has come following the federation's decision to allow players to make their own decisions. The men's effort, however, has been noticeably lacking by comparison. There has also been a significant jump in the number of tournaments, particularly WTA events, and the game's popularity appears to be increasing.

JAPAN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **4 (1 ATP, 3 WTA)**

Was supposed to be the next tennis power, though that never quite materialized. But Kei Nishikori is currently its highest-ranked man ever at No. 14 and looks ready to go higher. On the women's side, most remarkably, Kimiko Date-Krumm is back after 12 years and still playing at 43, and there are two good young players in Misaki Doi and Kurumi Nara as well.

THAILAND

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **1 (WTA)**

Not as well positioned as a decade ago, when Paradorn Srichaphan and Tamarine Tanasugarn were making waves. But it does have Lusika Khumkum, who is towards the bottom of the top 100 but looks likely to go higher.

TAIWAN

PLAYERS IN TOP 100 **2 (ATP, WTA)**

Has yet to produce a top player, but Yen-Hsun Lu and Su-Wei Hsieh have long kept the flag flying, with Hsieh also becoming a top 4 player in doubles.

AUSTRALASIA

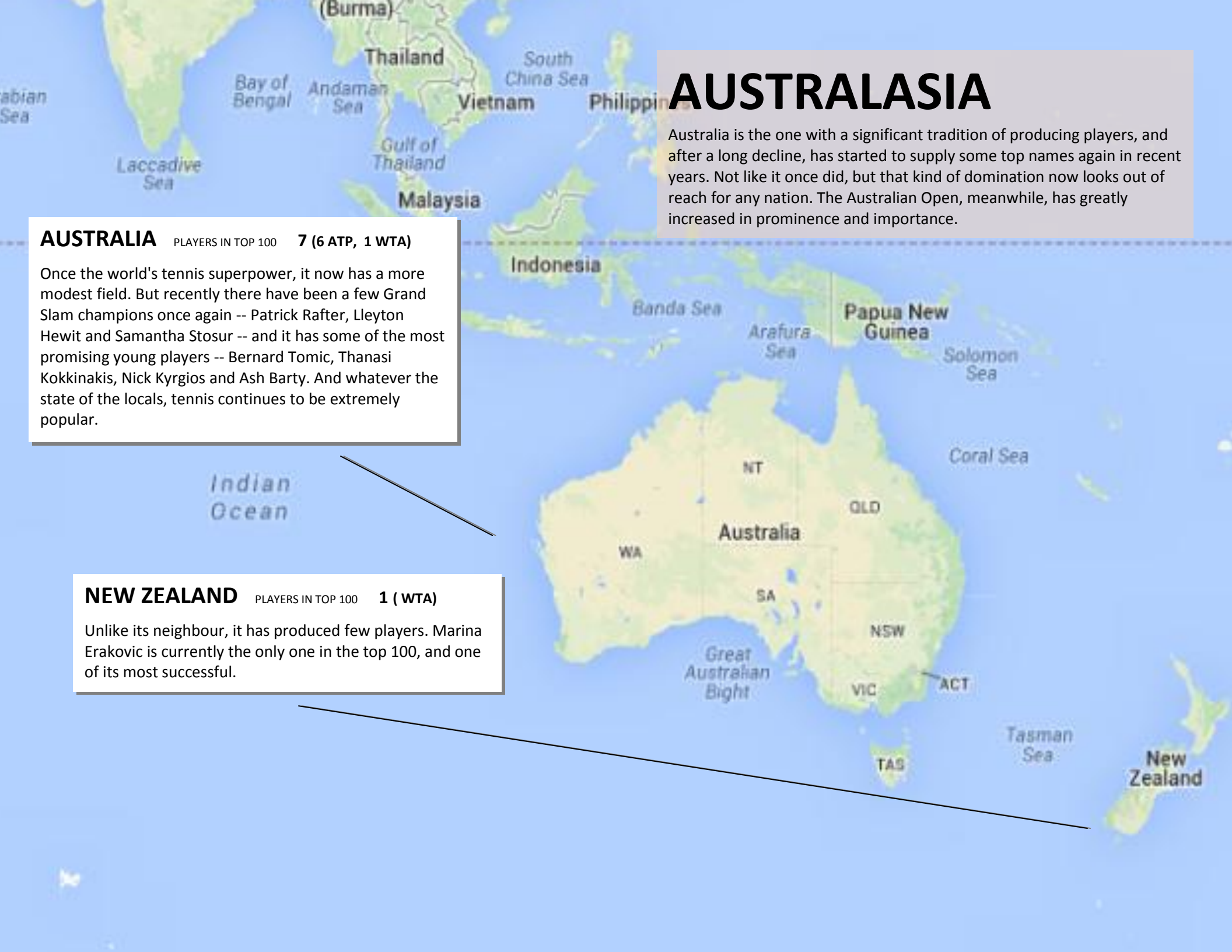
Australia is the one with a significant tradition of producing players, and after a long decline, has started to supply some top names again in recent years. Not like it once did, but that kind of domination now looks out of reach for any nation. The Australian Open, meanwhile, has greatly increased in prominence and importance.

AUSTRALIA PLAYERS IN TOP 100 7 (6 ATP, 1 WTA)

Once the world's tennis superpower, it now has a more modest field. But recently there have been a few Grand Slam champions once again -- Patrick Rafter, Lleyton Hewit and Samantha Stosur -- and it has some of the most promising young players -- Bernard Tomic, Thanasi Kokkinakis, Nick Kyrgios and Ash Barty. And whatever the state of the locals, tennis continues to be extremely popular.

NEW ZEALAND PLAYERS IN TOP 100 1 (WTA)

Unlike its neighbour, it has produced few players. Marina Erakovic is currently the only one in the top 100, and one of its most successful.



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