



TROPHY POSE: Roger Federer and Andy Roddick oblige the photographers after an incredible final. PAUL GILHAM/GETTY IMAGE

## Federer wins unforgettable Wimbledon final over Roddick

Tennis's greatest player breaks record with 15th grand slam title

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH & PATRICK HAYDEN  
Epoch Times Staff

Roger Federer outlasted Andy Roddick in an epic five-set Wimbledon men's final to break Pete Sampras's record of 14 career grand slam titles last Sunday in London, England. The match lasted four hours and 16 minutes with Federer winning 5-7, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (5), 3-6 16-14.

Now Federer stands out in history as having won more grand slam titles than any other player at 15. He added his sixth Wimbledon title, to accompany his five U.S. Open titles, three Australian Open titles, and last month's French Open title.

To underscore the significance of this final, in attendance were Rod Laver, who twice won all four grand slam titles in the same year, Bjorn Borg, who won five straight Wimbledon crowns from 1976-1980, and Pete Sampras, who owns seven Wimbledon crowns.

Coming into the match Federer owned an 18-2 record against Roddick, however the big serving American's revitalized game and improved fitness meant that the past history between the two was rendered irrelevant.

Roddick was aiming for his second major title after winning U.S. Open in 2003 and losing in three other grand slam finals (all to Federer).

**THE MATCH**

Roddick started the match in much the same way that he defeated Andy Murray, with big booming serves up to 143 mph. Aces were hit in abundance with Roddick wracking up 27 and Federer, a career-best 50.

As expected, between Roddick and Federer, break points would be few and far between. The first

break points came in the 11th game on Roddick's serve.

On the third break point of the 11th game, Federer hit a forehand winner down the line and Roddick challenged the in-call. The re-play showed the ball was in fact long. Roddick managed to hold his serve.

He then broke Federer in the next game to take a surprising one-set lead.

Roddick seemed quite comfortable to slug it out from the baseline although he mixed up his play effectively to keep Federer off-balance. Under the guidance of new coach Larry Stefanki, Roddick improved his court movement and his backhand, which delivered numerous key winners.

The second set went to a tiebreak and Roddick took a 6-2 lead. Both men have excellent 2009 tiebreak records, especially Roddick, but at 6-2 with four set points, Roddick failed to put away Federer. Federer played a couple of good points but Roddick helped him out with a couple of bad errors, most notably missing a high backhand volley.

With the match square at one set apiece, one could think Roddick would crumble but to his credit he continued to fight hard and hold serve.

The third set also went to a tiebreak and this time Federer forged ahead to a 5-1 lead. Roddick pulled it back to 5-6 but Federer took the next point and a two sets to one lead.

In the fourth set, Roddick broke Federer's serve in the fourth game for a 3-1 lead. The one break was all he would need as he took the match to a fifth set.

**FIFTH SET**

With such a dominant serving display from both players—Roddick had not been broken and Federer

broken only twice—it was not clear where or how the breakthrough was going to come. No tiebreak is played in the fifth set at Wimbledon.

Both players did not let their levels of play drop. Serves were held fairly routinely as the set wore on. Roddick had the added pressure of serving second, knowing that if he dropped serve, it's game over immediately.

Finally in the 30th game, Federer got the break and the win as Roddick framed a forehand high into the air on break point. Roddick had held serve for 37 straight games prior to the break.

"I couldn't get a read for basically four hours on Andy's serve," said Federer in an interview with John McEnroe on NBC.

"Winning the French and Wimbledon back-to-back, it's just crazy. Wimbledon—it's the trophy that means the most to me.

"I'm particularly happy Pete [Sampras] came, we're good buddies."

A dejected Andy Roddick told the BBC, "He [Federer] is a true champion. He deserves everything he gets."

Referring to the record of grand slam titles, Roddick said, "Sorry Pete, I tried holding him off!"

While Federer is the greatest tennis player of all time—he certainly now has the one final number to back it up, the 15th major—the final will be just as memorable for Roddick's courage and class.

Federer shared his thoughts about what Roddick must have been feeling after losing an epic final.

"It's hard. Sports or tennis is cruel sometimes. We know it. I went through some five-setters in grand slam finals, too and ended up losing. It's hard, you know," said Federer in his post-game press conference. "You know, I really thought I had to play my very, very best to come through."

The great Pete Sampras summed up to John McEnroe Federer's accomplishment.

"Roger's a stud, an incredible athlete."

## Free agent season gives NHL GMs another chance

By KARL YU  
Epoch Times Staff

While Canadians celebrate Canada Day on July 1 and Americans celebrate their independence on July 4, it is hockey general managers on both sides of the border that work hard this time of year—not only do they infuse their systems with some young blood through the NHL draft, but also bolster their rosters with a free agent or two.

What constitutes a free agent (FA) has changed through the years but according to the NHL, starting this season (2008-09), "a player age 27 with four accrued seasons or with seven accrued seasons will be an unrestricted free agent," meaning they have the right to sign with whichever team they desire.

In days gone by, teams in big markets could break open the bank account and scoop up all the big-name FAs, but with the salary cap in place since the end of the 2005 lockout, wild shopping sprees happen with less frequency.

When the NHL FA market opened for business this past July 1, most of the prize catches were reeled in within the first 24 hours by a number of different teams.

Both Henrik and Daniel Sedin re-signed with the Vancouver Canucks for \$30.5 million over five years.

Scott Niedermayer will remain with Anaheim for at least another year at \$6 million.

Ex-Detroit Red Wing Marian Hossa moved to Chicago and will receive \$62.8 million over the span of 12 years.

After acquiring his negotiation rights from Florida, the Calgary Flames sealed the deal with defenseman Jay Bouwmeester, signing him to a 5-year pact that will pay him a total of \$33.4 million.

Goalie Nikolai Khabibulin was one of the few players who decided



BIG CONTRACT: Scott Gomez has big shoes to fill in Montreal and his pricy contract won't reduce expectations. LEN REDKOLES/GETTY IMAGES

to sign with Edmonton. He signed for four years at \$3.75 million a year.

The free agent market has caused player salaries to rise with unrestricted FAs seeking "market value." That, of course, is to be expected, however, there are still some questionable deals that were tendered.

You can make cases about whether the Sedins, Hossa, Bouwmeester et al. are worth their new deals or not but was New York Rangers GM Glen Sather wise to sign former Minnesota Wild winger Marian Gaborik to a five-year \$37.5 million deal?

While no one will doubt Gaborik's talent, he has been plagued by back, groin, and hip injuries throughout his career. Last season, he only appeared in 17 games.

This isn't the first time Sather has signed free agents to big contracts either.

Two years ago at the start of the FA period, the Rangers GM signed

C Scott Gomez to a seven-year \$51.5 million deal and C Chris Drury to a five-year \$35.25 million deal.

Gomez averaged 64 points in two seasons with the Rangers and was dealt to the Montreal Canadiens while Drury has averaged 57 points—not exactly good returns on the Rangers' investment.

General managers have to be careful about which free agents to sign, the wrong player for the wrong amount of money can hamper a team for years to come—drafting still remains the best way to build a team. At least Sather used the free agent window to ship off the Gomez contract.

The Chicago Blackhawks have drafted well over the past few years with the likes of Jonathan Toews, Patrick Kane, and Brent Seabrook. This bodes well for Marian Hossa.

He won't be asked to lead the Blackhawks to the Promised Land. He'll just be asked to chip in along the way.

## IndyCar Returns to Toronto

By JAMES FISH  
Epoch Times Staff

For more than two decades Indy cars raced through the streets of downtown Toronto. Race weekend was an important part of the city's sports and social calendar, as the area became flooded with Canadian race fans, racing teams, curious Ontario residents, and tourists from across the U.S. who came to see their favourite drivers compete.

Some of the biggest names in racing have won in Toronto, including Michael Andretti (seven times), international champion Emerson Fittipaldi, and IndyCar legend Bobby Rahal.

Last year, Toronto was dropped from the IndyCar schedule when two different racing series, Champ Car and IndyCar, merged.

Michael Andretti didn't want to

see such an excellent event fade away, so Andretti Green Promotions teamed up with Honda to present the 2009 Honda Indy Toronto event, on July 10-12. (Honda also organizes the Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg with Andretti Green and supplies all the engines used in IRL IndyCar racing.)

This weekend's IndyCar race will feature four former winners: Will Power (2007), Justin Wilson (2005), Dario Franchitti (1999), and Canada's two-time winner (1993, 2003) Paul Tracy. Tracy will be driving for KV Racing in a car sponsored by Ontario Honda Dealers and <http://www.woundedwarriors.ca>, a foundation that helps injured soldiers when they arrive for surgery at military hospitals.

The racing is intense around Toronto's 11-turn, 2.77 km street-course. There are several

corners that lend themselves to passing, so fans all around the track are guaranteed high-speed excitement.

The weekend features non-stop racing action, with a Vintage GT race, an Acura Sports Car Challenge race, an Indy Lights race, and the main event. With all the practice and qualifying races, there will be cars on the track almost constantly.

Besides racing, the city has scheduled special events all week long to give visitors their money's worth and to keep residents involved, including race-themed parties, driver autograph sessions, and the Honda Indy Run, Walk, N' Wheelathon for Spinal Cure Research (register at <http://www.shootforacure.org>).

For more information about Honda Indy Toronto, please visit <http://www.hondaindytoronto.com>.



THE HURLING GOAL  
MARTIN MURPHY/EPOCH TIMES

## Introducing the Irish sport of hurling

Kilkenny claims their fifth Leinster hurling title in a row

By MARTIN MURPHY  
Epoch Times Staff

DUBLIN—Hurling is a game similar to field hockey. The stick used is called a hurley (camán in Irish). The ball is called a sliothar, which is similar in size to a field hockey ball but has raised ridges.

Each team consists of 15 players and the pitch is similar in dimensions to a rugby or American football field.

You get one point if the ball flies above the goal between the uprights. A goal is worth three points and is scored if you get the ball into the goal.

The first All-Ireland Championships in hurling and Gaelic football were organized on a county basis in 1887. The Island of Ireland is divided into 32 counties, which are grouped into four provinces: Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connacht. Twelve of the 32 counties entered the inaugural All-Ireland championships.

The majority of All-Ireland fixtures are held at Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) HQ, Croke Park. The site upon which Croke Park now stands was originally known as the "City and Suburban Racecourse". In 1913, the GAA purchased the site and renamed the ground Croke Park in honour of the association's first patron Archbishop Croke of Cashel.

Hurling is the oldest known field sport in Europe, believed to have been introduced to Ireland when the Celts arrived there just after the last ice age. Hurling features in many Irish folklore tales, often illustrating the deeds of heroic mystical figures. The sport is at least 2,000 years old.

The Senior All-Ireland Hurling Trophy is called the McCarthy Cup and was named in honor of the late Liam McCarthy who gave outstanding service to the sport. It was first presented in 1921 and Limerick County were the first

holders of the cup.

The winners of each provincial championship go on to compete for the All-Ireland championship.

**LEINSTER CHAMPIONSHIP**

Kilkenny claimed their fifth Leinster Hurling title in succession last Sunday when they beat a youthful Dublin side 2-18 (24 total points based on two goals worth three points each and 18 single points) to 0-18 (no goals and 18 single points) at Croke Park, in Dublin.

Kilkenny's experienced squad, who has only lost one Leinster final in the last 10 years, was able to counter a credible Dublin performance. The two goals scored by Martin Comerford—Man of the Match—made the difference when the final whistle blew.

The Kilkenny No. 11's second goal on 55 minutes silenced Dublin just as they were starting to build the pressure on the Leinster champions.



HURLING ACTION: Dublin ("The Dubs" in sky blue shirts) and Kilkenny ("The Cats in black and amber shirts) battle in the air for the long puck out, during the 2009 Leinster Senior Hurling Final in Croke Park, Dublin, Ireland last Sunday. MARTIN MURPHY/EPOCH TIMES

Kilkenny were by no means in control for the whole game. Dublin may have a second chance to play Kilkenny in the All-Ireland. Next time they will certainly have more confidence that they can get the better of Kilkenny.

Dublin hurling is experiencing a bit of a renaissance at the moment.

The last time the county was represented in the final was back in 1991 when they lost to Kilkenny by two points.

You have to go back further still to 1961 to Dublin's last victory. That same year, they also reached the All-Ireland final where they lost out to Tipperary.