



The Website of Maria Bueno, Tennis Champion

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WRAP-UP FROM NEW YORK 12 September 2010

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Well, I certainly got that one wrong!

I couldn't believe that Roger [Federer] would possibly lose to [Novak] Djokovic in five sets on Saturday, the way he has been playing for the past two weeks.

He must have been edgy about reaching the final because he didn't play to the same standard at all. He was very in and out and couldn't sustain his play as he's used to doing.

On the other side was Djokovic, who maintained his game at pretty well the same level throughout and he never gave up.

The rain on Sunday probably saved Djovic from not being 100% fit after such a long match with Federer and now will give [Rafa] Nadal a better match, but I think it's highly unlikely that Rafa will let this one go now. He will be up for his first US Open title.

It is really amazing that for the third year running, the US Open men's finals have to be held over until the Monday, causing all sorts of operational problems.

There is talk again about a roof and I think they need to think about it seriously, as the other Grand Slams have done. Australia and Wimbledon provide play when it rains to worldwide TV audiences, and now Roland Garros is planning a new stadium with a roof, leaving Flushing Meadows behind.

It was a shame that the women's final was so one-sided and such a let down for the crowd. The men's semis were so dramatic and the hype for the final was huge, played at prime time and so on. I think even Kim [Clijsters] was a bit unhappy about how easy it was for her to win her third title.

She played really well from the start and didn't let [Vera] Zvonareva into the match, and that's how champions play.

The real disappointment was that Zvonareva had no answer to that and didn't play how she did against [Caroline] Wozniacki. This time she didn't have the excuse of being nervous because she was the finalist at Wimbledon and should have gained from the experience.

Champions have to learn to use their nerves and adrenaline. To get so far and offer so little resistance shows she has not completely mastered her temperament yet and that's a pity.

These past two weeks have been great, with lots of contrast in the weather and many on-court dramas.

I have enjoyed working with the crew from Sport TV / TV Globo, putting together features on many different things going on throughout the Open. It's been fun as well as hard work!

Now, we are all looking forward to a really great men's final.



LOOKING AT THE US OPEN FINALS 11 September 2010

As we go into the final week of the US Open, we can't help but notice the date – 9/11 as they call it here.

New Yorkers remember the tragedy each year and I will never forget the images of those planes flying into the twin towers in 2001.

Many of the drivers at the US Open are law enforcement officers or firemen and were actively involved, losing comrades and suffering first hand with the families of the many victims.

Everyone in this city was affected by the shocking happenings and it has changed them profoundly.

They are planting trees to create a park at Ground Zero with two reflective pools of water where the twin towers once stood. It is going to be something wonderful, I think.

But turning to the tennis, the on-form players are definitely [Rafael] Nadal and [Roger] Federer from what we have seen from their last two matches, which were played in horrible conditions.

They seemed unaffected and it was as if they were playing indoors with no wind or difficulties, both playing to such a high standard.

[Mikhail] Youzhny is a very talented player, has always been, but has been held back, I think, because of his temperament. Remember when he hit his head so hard last year with his racket, he had blood running down his face?

He seems to have got that under control a bit better now and so is a more dangerous player for Rafa to face, but I still believe Nadal will make it through to the final.

[Novak] Djokovic is always happy when things are going well for him and complaining when they are not.

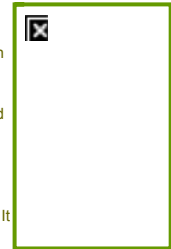
He has steadily improved throughout the tournament and will offer some resistance to Roger but, again, I think Federer will win. He is just so much a stronger player.

As for a Nadal/Federer final, we are really in for one of their best matches ever if they can get there. Both are playing so well, and at the same time, injury free, and wanting to win for different reasons.

To win the title means so much to both of them, and it will come down to one or two points in the end, who wants it most.

A prediction? Perhaps Federer... not sure!

On the women's side, everything changed yesterday when [Vera] Zvonareva pulled off the upset against [Caroline] Wozniacki, who had looked as if she would cruise into the final.



Caroline didn't play the same way in the semis as she had done leading in to that match, while Vera looked sharp and more aggressive. To win a Grand Slam you have to keep it going right through to the last match and that, of course, is not easy.

Again the conditions were very tough. I have never seen such a windy US Open, which has really affected play, specially on Ashe [stadium]. It hasn't been much fun watching in it either!

Zvonareva reached the Wimbledon final and is capable of playing really good tennis but has a fragile temperament and suffered many injuries.

I remember her pounding the strapping on her legs last year as she unravelled but she seems to have got all that under control and looked very calm and determined yesterday.

She is also the only player to have beaten Kim [Clijsters] leading into the Open this year – at Wimbledon and in Montreal, so is going to be a real challenge for her today.

I still think Clijsters has a huge edge in the final, the way she was playing at the end of her semi with Venus [Williams] yesterday.

She has been a bit up and down with her serve, mostly because of the wind, and when that goes off, her game suffers a bit but she only served three doubles, I think, against Venus, which is remarkable.

Venus served very well but lost track of her game plan after winning the first set. That and Kim stepped in to take the ball earlier. The key point was that lob when Venus ran back and landed badly. You could see her left knee bend oddly, which must have hurt, and she wasn't the same again after that.

She had a good run considering she came into the Open without having played a match since Wimbledon because of her left knee injury. She also plays better when Serena is not in the draw but she is now 30 and realistically, to win the title was a step too far for her.

The final should be interesting if Zvonareva takes the game she played against Wozniacki with her. Unfortunately, at Wimbledon, she wasn't the same player in the final, but maybe she has learned from that. I still tip Kim for her third title here.

And the good news is that the wind has finally dropped! I

I had a hit with Martina [Navratilova] out on the practice courts at Flushing Meadows on Thursday and the wind was unbelievable! I can't imagine what it must have been like in the stadium where it notoriously swirls around.

The players have been coping with it remarkable well but the weekend matches will be so much better without the wind!

US OPEN - A LOOK AT THE FIRST WEEK OF PLAY Saturday 4 September 2010



It's been a week of huge contrasts – intense heat and a pre-occupation with the hurricane, which has been followed by a dramatic change in the conditions. The weather was very windy on Saturday, much cooler, and then it got cold overnight.

This makes it very difficult for the players, who have to adapt to the conditions. It's another good reason for them to wait until an hour or so before their matches to get their rackets strung because the tension in the strings is critical in controlling the ball.

The men's matches have been very competitive and long, between three and five hours; nothing like that amazing marathon match at Wimbledon though, but endurance tests just the same, particularly in the intense heat and humidity.

Some players found it hard and a few who won through couldn't sustain their performance and had to give up in the next round, mostly because of a lack of physical conditioning – players like [Julien] Benneteau and [Kai] Nishikori, which was a pity.

The number of players from Spain and France still resisting until today on the cement courts at Flushing Meadows is amazing – 10 Spanish and 4 French – especially when they now mostly play from the back of the court. In my day it was mostly serve volley tennis and the matches were much shorter. Now it is about endurance and physicality.

There have been some great battles in the tiebreakers too, which adds to the excitement. [Denis] Istomin led [Rafael] Nadal 5-1 the other day but Rafa got back to win it and thrilled the crowd.

The New York crowds are very excitable, as we all know, but never more so than when an American is playing. The disappointment at Andy Roddick's loss was clear, surrounded by the controversy over his foot fault.

He did foot fault and I think it cost him the match because he made such a thing about it. He didn't let it go and you can't play at the top of your game that way.

It used to be that the Americans and Australians dominated world tennis but now they only have a few players at the top who have the game to make it to major titles.

There are only three Americans left in the draw into the second week – relative newcomers Sam Querrey, John Isner and Mardy Fish, who is over 30 and enjoying an incredible run after he lost a ton of weight. They are compensating the fans but the one that really grabbed our attention was Ryan Harrison, 18 years old.

He is a great prospect for the future because he has personality, is good looking and has a very good all court game.

He showed great presence when he played what I think was the match of the tournament so far against Starkhovsky on Friday.

He has a beautiful game, with very good net play and variation, but he lacks experience and lost the first five-set match he's ever played in the final set tie break after squandering 3 match points, much to the disappointment of the crowd.

Summing up the first week for the men then, the highlight for me was Harrison, while [Roger] Federer and Nadal are showing why they are the favourites to reach the final. They are doing just enough to come through without wasting too much energy. The same is true of [Andy] Murray, [Novak] Djokovic and [Robin] Soderling.

On the women's side, there have been some long matches too, but causing more attention are the very easy results that the top seeds are producing, especially Caroline Wozniacki, who has lost just three games until now to reach the fourth round.

Also showing great force is Maria Sharapova, who seems to have finally fully recovered from injury and her lack of match play.

The highlight of the week was another young American revelation, Beatrice Capra. She is a great hope for US tennis and the teenager was playing her first pro match ever at the US Open having won the wild card tournament run by the USTA.

Unfortunately she couldn't get a single game off Sharapova and while this was disappointing, she will have been on a huge learning curve. I'm hoping she uses the experience well.

Meanwhile Kim Clijsters seems to be cruising without difficulty too, as is Venus [Williams].

Speaking of Venus, the sisters continue to prove to be the greatest attraction, both on and off the court.

This was clear on Friday night when Serena [Williams], who is not playing here because of injury to her feet, showed up in a red dress to watch her sister, sitting in the player's box.

All the hype that surrounded her was amazing. Both were interviewed by all the TV channels live by the likes of Patrick McEnroe, John McEnroe and Pam Shriver. It was like the Night of the Oscars, with lots of talk about fashion and awards.

There are still 6 'ovas' in the fourth round of the women's draw, showing the solid presence from Eastern Europe.

In fact Venus is the sole American survivor in the draw and the rest, apart from Sam Stosur from Australia and one Israeli [Shahar Peer], the rest are all Europeans.

I think Venus has a good chance of reaching the semi finals to meet Clijsters in the lower half of the draw.

The top half features the match of the tournament - Sunday's clash between Wozniacki and Sharapova. This is the first real test for both of them and the winner should get a pretty clear run to the final.

And the prospect for the final? Either Venus or Kim against Wozniacki, in my opinion.

For sure it will be an interesting second week!

NIKE VISIT, 20 June 2010



Maria returned to the Nike House wearing her Brazilian Nike soccer shirt, specially made for the World Championships from recyclable materials including old plastic bottles, and caused quite a stir.

Nicolas Barthes, Global & US Director Tennis Sports Marketing for Nike, Inc., had a different slant.

"Obviously I am supporting Brazil but Nico was trying to say that Argentina is going to win the World Cup!" said Maria. "We can't have that now, can we?"

"Kylie (Martin), who takes such good care of the needs of the players, is from New Zealand and she was rooting for them so there was a big discussion about soccer.

"It was a nice chance to meet players and Nike staff, especially after all the antics we had in Brazil when Maria Sharapova came over.

It's all Nike Action!"



WIMBLEDON PREVIEW, 18 June 2010

Maria visited the Nike House at Wimbledon where players get their supplies for the grass court season and met with Nicolas Barthes, the Global & US Director Tennis Sports Marketing for Nike, Inc.

She has been collaborating with Nike Brazil and as fans know, hit with the other Maria (Sharapova) in the street in Sao Paulo last December.

Taking a tour of the practice courts, Maria closely watched players hitting on the immaculate grass courts.

"It made me want to get out and play," she admitted enviously.

Roger Federer spotted her watching on the side of his court and stopped his hit to wander over to say hello. The two chatted for a while, Roger telling her he felt good, particularly with his family with him this year.

"He was telling me about his twin girls, now 11 months old, and what a joy they are to him. He looked so relaxed and was having so much fun that it is hard to believe he feels any pressure at all going for his seventh title.

"As always, Wimbledon is going to be fascinating. Rafa (Nadal) was invincible in Paris and although he lost early on the grass at Queen's Club, he is looking hungry for a second Wimbledon win. With Federer in the other half, it is hard to see anyone else in the final, frankly.

"Anything is possible, of course, and there are other players who just could have a good run and cause an upset.

"Andy Murray is on everyone's minds as a contender and he certainly has the game for grass but he will need to find something extra to come through two hard weeks of grass court tennis against the best, all in the media spotlight. It requires a strong mentality and that is a bit in question with him right now.

"it would be great for British tennis if he can have a run to the final and Andy has shown in New York and Australia that he is capable. It is now time for him to prove to himself that he is a winner."

Maria's thoughts on the women's draw are that a Williams will win...

MEETING FRIENDS IN LONDON, 14 June 2010

Maria recently had the opportunity to catch up with members of the Combe family, friends from New York.

They met at The Wallace Collection in London where she, Chris and Courtney, Christie and Michael Shoemacher took lunch in the beautiful atrium.

Chris, who is the Chairman and President of Combe Incorporated, which has worldwide interests including in Brazil, is an avid tennis follower as well as an intrepid traveller.

"It was a lovely, elegant place for lunch and great fun to see them all," said Maria. "We caught up on news and laid plans for the US Open in New York in September."



WIMBLEDON MUSEUM PREVIEW, 11 June 2010



As part of her ambition to show her nephew all her favourite haunts, Maria arranged for Lucas, and his family to visit the Wimbledon Museum and see around the All England Lawn Tennis Club as it prepared for The Championships.

Also in the party was a friend, Parrey Amiri and her son, Matthew, who is an aspiring player and an avid tennis fan at the age of 6.

The tour of the Museum included a preview of the special 'Hot Pink Corner', an area featuring Ted Tinling creations centrepieced by Maria's outrageous pink lining that precipitated the AELTC's adoption of the 'predominantly white rule' for clothing. The exhibit is due to be opened during Wimbledon this year.

"My niece was stunned to see various pictures and dresses featuring her aunt in the museum. She is only two and a half years' old and has no concept of all of this, but I hope she'll remember it," said Maria.

"When we took a look at the Centre Court, she asked me 'did you play here all alone?' I told her yes and she was amazed!"

In follow up to the special day out, Matthew reported back to his class mates at Clare House Primary School that he had spent the day with Maria. The class then proceeded to look up this website and to have a lesson on the achievements of our great champion!

"He was proud as Punch," said his mother, who is a coach at the David Lloyd Club in Beckenham.

"I took a tennis session with him and some of his class, not realising they had done this, and was surprised to get Maria's history when I asked if they knew who she was... it was just great!

"It's really good the younger generations get an appreciation of the history of the game and we are so privileged to have a Wimbledon champion in our midst."

FAMILY VISIT TO BECKENHAM TENNIS CLUB, June 2010

Maria took her nephew, Lucas, and his family to visit Beckenham Tennis Club, one of the largest and longest surviving lawn tennis clubs in Kent and South East London, which proudly celebrated its [125th anniversary](#) in June 2004.



It was an occasion to remember as Maria herself was present, playing an exhibition match on the famous grass courts that were home to the pre-Wimbledon tournament for many years.

The club has always been fond of its association with Maria and created The Maria Bueno Lounge in her honour as part of the refurbishment of the original clubhouse.

"I was so pleased to show Lucas and his family the club, which I have been telling them all about for years," said Maria. "It is a unique and special place and quite unlike anything we have back home in Brazil."

"It was a wonderful day and they were really impressed with it all, particularly my lounge!"

"We had a typical Sunday lunch nearby and they even got to see a Cricket match so it was all very English!"

ROLAND GARROS, May/June 2010



Maria was invited to the French Open, held at Roland Garros in Paris, as a guest of the President, Jean Gachassin, and enjoyed watching the finals, particularly the women's contest between the Italian outsider Francesca Schiavone and Samantha Stosur from Australia.

"I really enjoyed the unexpected final between two new contenders. They both deserved their places in the final – Stosur having beaten Justine (Henin), Serena (Williams) and then (Jelena) Jankovic was very impressive but she wasn't the same player against Schiavone. Grand Slam finals are very different though."

"On the other hand, the Italian was so determined and put her heart and soul into the match that it was hard not to support her. It was a difficult call and in the end Francesca's sheer will won through."

"I'm sure Sam will have her chance and she should not be discouraged by the loss because she had a spectacular run in Paris."

"She is a great doubles player and needs to use those skills on the grass."

"On the men's side, it was sad to see (Roger) Federer's premature departure in the quarters. I am a real admirer of Roger's skills, both on and off the court. He is such a sportsman and a true gentleman."

"The Swede, Robin Soderling, proved again how well he can play on different surfaces but was stopped in the final by a more than brilliant Rafa Nadal, who played the perfect match. What more can be said about him?"

"Then, just 48 hours later, he was at Queen's practising on grass in the rain – the true professional, looking to win Wimbledon! Truly amazing!"

It was a good visit, with the opportunity to meet lots of friends and acquaintances and to see the Racing Club (Lagardere) again where Maria used to practice for Roland Garros all those years ago.

Dining al fresco on the terrace, Maria recalled with fondness her days spent in Paris.

Back at Roland Garros, Maria was particularly pleased to see Guga (Gustavo Kuerten) who was in Paris to receive an ITF Award – the Philippe Chatrier Lifetime Achievement Award – and the two had a good chat about all sorts of things.

Philippe Chatrier, whose name now graces Roland Garros' centre court, was a lifelong friend of Maria's and she was his special guest at the French Championships for many years when he was President of the French Tennis Federation as well as the International Tennis Federation.

"I really miss Philippe," said Maria. "Apart from everything he did for tennis, he always made time for his friends. He would have been thrilled to know the FFT named the court central after him in recognition of his work to elevate the championships and the grand slams."



RETURN TO WIMBLEDON, 27 May 2010

Maria arrived in London and took only a couple of days to visit the All England Lawn Tennis Club, scene of her many triumphs and where she is now a loyal member.

"I have so many fond memories of Wimbledon and I am treated so well here," she said.

"Last year I was the Chairman's Special Guest in honour of my winning my first singles title 50 years earlier and I was looked after so well for the entire two weeks. The Club certainly knows how to do things well – perfectly, in fact!"

Maria did not arrive empty-handed. She presented Tim Phillips, Wimbledon's Chairman, with a Brazilian football shirt and he was thrilled.

"It isn't just any football shirt," she explained. "Nike had it specially designed for the World Cup and it is made from recycled materials – plastic bottles apparently, so it is very green!"

"I've got one too!"

"I told Tim he had better have a shirt from the winning team!"

TV GLOBO CONTRACT RENEWED, April 2010

Maria's contract with TV Globo has been renewed and she will, once again, be delivering her opinion and colour commentary on the major tennis events over the coming year on Brazilian TV.

The contract includes programmes for both national TV Globo and its cable channel, Sport TV.

"I am thrilled to know I will be continuing to work with the Globo and Sport TV teams," she said.

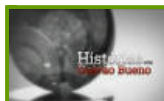
"They are very professional and I have learned a lot with them. We have a lot of fun with the transmissions and I think they enjoy the way I work."

Ratings spike when Maria is on air in Brazil and she has once again become instantly recognisable throughout the land.

"I took a cab ride recently in Sao Paulo," she recalls with a laugh. "And when the driver heard my voice, he turned around and said: 'It's you! I always watch when you are on because you have interesting things to say about the tennis!'"

"I was very pleased because that's exactly what I try to do – to tell the audience something about the game or the players that they don't already know... perhaps I succeed," she concludes with a shrug.

A HISTORY OF MARIA ESTHER ON TV GLOBO, March 2010



A special on Maria entitled "Histórias com Galvão Bueno - Maria Esther Bueno" has just been aired in Brazil and is a huge success.

Filmed in February, the hour long feature is being transmitted nationally on both TV Globo and Sport TV at different times of the day and the viewing figures are mounting up to a big audience.

"I'm amazed at the response by everyone," says Maria. "It seems everyone has seen it!"

Filmed at the beautiful Sociade de Harmonia Club de Tennis in Sao Paulo, the film features an in-depth interview held in the gardens alongside archive footage of Maria's greatest triumphs.

Maria is a Brazilian icon who is much loved in her own country as well as abroad and fans are intrigued to learn more about her life and achievements. Her comments and reflections are portrayed with humour and insight into the highly competitive environment of international, world class tennis.

"It was all a long time ago but I remember it as if it was just yesterday," Maria reflects. "It was a lot of fun doing the special and TV Globo has access to archive footage, which has been wonderful to see again."

The interview was conducted by Galvão Bueno, a top television personality in Brazil who enjoys a big following. In fact, celebrities line up for the chance to be featured in one of his shows.

This is the third in his series featuring big stars in Brazil: the fore-runners to Maria Esther were Joao Havelange, the former President of FIFA, and Zagalo, the national football coach.

When asked if the two Buenos are related Maria says, no, although she does come from a large family of relatives.

The two laughed together at the anecdotes and recalled many of Maria's successes and the stories behind the scenes.



Early pictures of her with her parents and brother demonstrate the closeness of the family and reveal the courage of a young girl who left home with a one-way ticket in pursuit of her dream.

It is a remarkable and poignant story that is told with sensitivity and humour in the film. It also touches on the fashionable dresses resulting from the collaboration with couturier Teddy Tinling and Maria's glamour that became the sensation of the sixties.

But the film is not simply about past success. It also allows Maria to demonstrate her unique understanding of the game today.

As an acknowledged and popular television commentator, Maria is a keen observer of the game and possesses a special insight into what has created the professional sport of today.

To view the programme online > Click [here](#)

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