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# DAILY NEWS

#ATPUMAG • #33ATPUMAG • OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ATP TOURNAMENT • N07 • 29.07.2023.

## NINO SERDARUŠIĆ AND BLAŽ ROLA WIN DOUBLES TOURNAMENT AFTER A DRAMATIC BATTLE



MAIN DRAW SINGLES



STATUS	NAT				
1	CZE	LEHECKA, Jiri	J. LEHECKA [1]		
2		BYE		J. LEHECKA [1]	
				63 75	
3	AUT	THIEM, Dominic	D. THIEM		
4	Q	ARG BAGNIS, Facundo	64 75		
					M. ARNALDI [7]
					36 62 64
5	CRO	CILIC, Marin	F. COBOLLI		
6	Q	ITA COBOLLI, Flavio	64 63		
					M. ARNALDI [7]
					63 76(5)
7	Q	NED DE JONG, Jesper	M. ARNALDI [7]		
8	7	ITA ARNALDI, Matteo	63 62		
					A. POPYRIN
					67(2) 75 63
9	3	AUT OFNER, Sebastian	S. OFNER [3]		
10		BYE			
					A. POPYRIN
					64 61
11	AUS	POPYRIN, Alexei	A. POPYRIN		
12		FRA BONZI, Benjamin	64 75		
					A. POPYRIN
					76(2) 75
13	WC	CRO AJDUKOVIC, Duje	D. PRIZMIC		
14	WC	CRO PRIZMIC, Dino	61 62		
					D. PRIZMIC
					62 63
15	HUN	PIROS, Zsombor	Z. PIROS		
16	5	AUS O'CONNELL, Christopher	63 64		
17	6	SUI WAWRINKA, Stan	S. WAWRINKA [6]		
18	Q	AUT MISOLIC, Filip	63 62		
					S. WAWRINKA [6]
					75 61
19	SUI	HUESLER, Marc-Andrea	F. CORIA		
20		ARG CORIA, Federico	64 62		
					S. WAWRINKA [6]
					64 75
21	JPN	DANIEL, Taro	T. DANIEL		
22	WC	ESP LANDALUCE, Martin	16 75 62		
					R. CARBALLES BAENA [4]
					63 61
23		BYE			
24	4	ESP CARBALLES BAENA, Roberto	R. CARBALLES BAENA [4]		
25	8	ESP RAMOS-VINOLAS, Albert	J. MUNAR		
26		ESP MUNAR, Jaume	63 36 63		
					J. MUNAR
					64 63
27	HUN	MAROZSAN, Fabian	F. MAROZSAN		
28		ARG CERUNDOLO, Juan Manuel	63 62		
					L. SONEGO [2]
					36 61 62
29	ITA	CECCHINATO, Marco	M. CECCHINATO		
30		SHEVCHENKO, Alexander	46 76(0) 63		
					L. SONEGO [2]
					61 76(7)
31		BYE			
32	2	ITA SONEGO, Lorenzo	L. SONEGO [2]		

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GORAN IVANIŠEVIĆ STADION

Matches Start At: 8:00 pm

1

Singles Final

Alexei POPYRIN (AUS) vs Stan WAWRINKA (SUI) [6]

STATUS	NAT.	MAIN DRAW DOUBLES	
1	ITA	<b>BOLELLI, Simone</b> <b>VAVASSORI, Andrea</b>	<b>S. BOLELLI</b> <b>A. VAVASSORI [1]</b> 64 61
2	KAZ	GOLUBEV, Andrey MOLCHANOV, Denys	
3	CZE	JEBAVY, Roman LEHECKA, Jiri	<b>S. BOLELLI</b> <b>A. VAVASSORI [1]</b> 64 36 10-2
4	CZE	JEBAVY, Roman LEHECKA, Jiri	
5	BRA	<b>CABRAL, Francisco</b> <b>MATOS, Rafael</b>	<b>S. BOLELLI</b> <b>A. VAVASSORI [1]</b> 64 76(5)
6	FRA	OLIVETTI, Albano VEGA HERNANDEZ, David	
7	NED	ARENDS, Sander PEL, David	<b>S. ARENDS</b> <b>D. PEL</b> 64 46 10-5
8	BRA	DEMOLINER, Marcelo OSWALD, Philipp	
9	SLO	ROLA, Blaz SERDARUSIC, Nino	<b>B. ROLA/N. SERDARUSIC</b> <b>46 76(2) 15-13</b>
10	ITA	BORTOLOTTI, Marco VERBEEK, Sem	
11	ECU	ESCOBAR, Gonzalo NEDOVYESOV, Aleksandr	<b>B. ROLA</b> <b>N. SERDARUSIC</b> 62 36 10-8
12	URU	BEHAR, Ariel PAVLASEK, Adam	
13	CRO	BABIC, Zvonimir MIKRUT, Luka	<b>B. ROLA</b> <b>N. SERDARUSIC</b> 76(5) 64
14	COL	BARRIENTOS, Nicolas DURAN, Guillermo	
15	IND	BALAJI, N.Sriram NEDUNCHEZHIAN, Jeevan	<b>S. DOUMBIA</b> <b>F. REBOUL [2]</b> 75 67(2) 10-7
16	FRA	<b>DOUMBIA, Sadio</b> <b>REBOUL, Fabien</b>	<b>S. DOUMBIA</b> <b>F. REBOUL [2]</b> 60 63

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## WAWRINKA DOMINATES, POPYRIN MAKES IT THROUGH AFTER A TOUGH FIGHT



Swiss player Stan Wawrinka and Australia's Alexei Popyrin will face off on Sunday at 8 p.m. in the final match of the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag tournament. In the semi-finals, Wawrinka played what might have been his best match this year at Stella Maris, defeating Italian Lorenzo Sonego 6:3, 6:4.

Popyrin also made it through to the final match after defeating an Italian player, but not as smoothly (6:7 (2), 7:5, 6:3). This will be the first match between these two players.

Popyrin reached his second ATP tournament final after an exhausting match which lasted 3 hours and 18 minutes. They haven't broken the all time record of this tournament (in 2011, Slovenian Kavčić and Argentinian Berlocq played for 3 hours and 41 minutes), but it was by far the longest match this season in Umag. The Australian might have gone to the finals a bit more easily, though. In the first set, he lost his break point advantage, and he kept missing his chances in the second set. He had 8 break points, four of them set points at a score of 5:4. However, after winning a game at his opponent's serve in the 12th game, Arnaldi couldn't keep up any more. Popyrin achieved a break point that gave him a 3:1 lead, and in the third set he lost only 5 points at his serve. Stats show that the Australian had as many as 19 break points, but he used only 4.

"This was probably the most difficult match I've ever played. I was already tired after the first set, but i tried to keep my spirits up. I intend to be ready for the finals, I have nearly 24 hours to recover. I'll probably skip breakfast and get a good sleep in," said Popyrin.

This Sunday, the Australian will try to win his second title at a tournament of this level, after winning in 2021 in Singapore. This was undoubtedly the best result of an Australian player in Umag, since the only other Australian player to have played at Stella Maris in these 33 years was Simon Youl in 1994, who was eliminated at the very start of the tournament. Christopher O'Connell was also here this year, but he didn't make it past the first round.



Popyrin faces Stan Wawrinka on Sunday, who defeated Italian Sonego without losing a single serve. He was faced with a single break point, at his serve for the first set, and the situation was somewhat similar at his match point serve, putting Sonego at a promising 0-30. But that was about it for Sonego...

This will be the 31st big finale for Wawrinka, but only his first since Antwerp in 2019. He has won 16 titles, including three singles titles at Grand Slam tournaments. "I have played my best match of the week, at a high level. I'm really happy to be in the final after all these years," said Wawrinka, who's semi-final victory came after midnight. "I've been attempting something like this ever since I returned to tennis after my surgeries. It was already a big deal to win the doubles tournament in Gstaad last week; that gave me an extra push," said the Swiss player, who was once the third best player in the world, and this year joined us in Umag (where he won his first ever ATP tournament title back in 2006), as the 72nd player in the rankings.

### OSKAR'S CORNER

*The final match of the doubles tournament was played on Saturday, when Nino Serdarušić and Blaž Rola faced off against Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori from Italy.*

*The Croatian-Slovenian team played an amazing match full of twists and turns, and in the end managed to win the Umag ATP tournament (4:6, 7:6, 15:13).*

*This is a tremendous success for them. Now all we've got left is the singles final match, taking place on Sunday.*



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## NINO SERDARUŠIĆ AND BLAŽ ROLA SAVE THREE MATCH POINTS ON THEIR WAY TO THE TOP IN UMAG!

Croatian Nino Serdarušić and Slovenian Blaž Rola won the doubles tournament at the Plava Laguna Croatia Open! Although they have never played together until this week, and they agreed to play in the tournament at the last moment, they won the title after a dramatic match, where their opponents had three match points. Having eliminated the second seeded team in the semi-finals, and disposing of the top-seeded pair, Italians Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori, in the finals (4:6, 7:6 (2), 15:13), they took what was the first doubles title for either of them in an ATP tournament. It was an extremely tense match, where the Croatian-Slovenian pair managed to take advantage of the third match point having previously saved three match points.

"It was crazy, This whole story is crazy. I came here to play in the qualifiers, didn't make it to the draw, and then Nino asked me if I wanted to play in the doubles. Tournament director Tomislav Poljak told us that they had an invitation for us maybe an hour before the draw, and I think it was worth it," said Rola. Nino

added: "I really hope that we will be able to play doubles in most of the tournaments, alongside our individual careers. Here we managed to defeat four extraordinary teams who play together week after week."

Bolelli and Vavassori were better at the start, and even had a 6:4, 3:1 lead at one point. Still, the Croatian-Slovenian pair fought back and took the tie break a bit later, leading to a third set nail-biter. Serdarušić and Rola had a 8:4 lead, but the Italians had three match points (9:8, 11:10 and 12:11), before Nino and Blaž managed to snatch the title. Several match points met with the net, which took the already high tension to the next level.

It should be noted that in the 33 years that the Umag tournament has been played, this is the first time that a Croatian player won the doubles title, after six defeats in final matches. A total of eight Croatian players played the finals in Umag, and Nino, as the ninth one, is the first to be crowned winner.

Bolelli was defending his title in Umag, after having won the doubles last year with fellow Italian Fabio Fognini. That final match was also very thrilling, as his team managed to save 8 match points (two at 5:6 in the second set, and when they were losing 0:6 in the tie break in the same set). He also won the title in Umag in 2011. Rola is the first Slovenian player ever with a doubles title at an ATP tournament.



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PHOTOS: PLITVICE LAKES NATIONAL PARK (GORAN ŠAFAREK);  
KOPAČKI RIT NATURE PARK (MARIO ROMULIĆ & DRAŽEN STOJČIĆ)



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## PETER PEVC WINS THIS YEAR'S JOURNALISTS' TOURNAMENT

The journalists' tournament, Ico Kerhin Memorial, played for the 33rd time during the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag, was won by Peter Pevc from Sport Klub Slovenija. Pevc defeated his colleague, journalist Ilvio Vidovich from Ubitennis, who had previously won the tournament for four years in a row.

"It's always great to play in the journalists' tournament, the energy is off the charts. When it comes to tennis, I think I played very well, but what mattered most to me was that we all have a good time together, and share our experiences and passion for sports," said Pevc after his victory.



The tournament was played on the courts at the ATP tournament in Umag. The winning trophy was awarded by Tomislav Puljak, tournament director. The prizes for the finalists were secured by VAT d.o.o., exclusive distributor for Babolat, and handed out by Iva Modrušan Dankić.

## THE FOURTH ANNUAL RECREATIONAL STARS OPEN TOURNAMENT COMES TO AN END WITHOUT A HITCH

The fourth annual recreational Stars Open tournament took place during this year's Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag. From 26 to 29 July, a total of 150 players showed their skills on the courts in Umag, competing in four categories: singles, pro singles, doubles, and pro doubles.



The Stars Open Tour is the largest recreational tournament in Croatia, taking place in multiple locations. More than 10 tournaments are usually played throughout the year, drawing in recreational players from all around the country.

Some of the players who played at Stella Maris were the famous attorney Mate Matić, chess master Alojzije Janković, Brazilian model and winner of last year's edition of Croatia's "Dancing with the Stars" Pedro Soltz, and many others.

The winner in the pro singles category was Dario Večerić, in the singles category Tomislav Miškić, in the pro double category the Božičević and Božičević team, and in the double category the Lažnjak and Pr-gomet team.

**TOMISLAV POLJAK, TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR**

**ATP STAFF IS OF GREAT ASSISTANCE DURING THE TOURNAMENT**



Umag is the smallest town in the ATP tournament calendar, and the smallest member of the ATP family, but there are certain advantages to this position, as it is somewhat easier to organise. Of course, the ATP is extremely generous with its assistance in so many aspects, such as marketing, rule interpretation, implementation and improvement of standards for tennis players, etc. It's all we have when we're preparing the tournament.

When it comes to the very operation during these ten or so days, of course there is no greater help than that provided by the ATP staff at everyone's disposal and leading the charge. This team is helmed by the head official, supervisor Gerry Armstrong, whose career is nothing short of impressive. If there is ever a Hall of Fame for officials, he's the prime candidate. His career at Wimbledon lasted for 50 years. A few days ago I asked him how many times he'd been in Umag. He couldn't remember, but in the end we came to the conclusion that this might be his 27th year at our tournament.

After all these seasons, he's become a sort of a trade mark at our tournament. He is entrusted with the implemen-

tation of the tournament, the scheduling, and ensuring that the matches are played in accordance with the ATP Tour rules in force. These rules are comprised in books 200 to 250 pages long, depending on the edition, and they cover absolutely everything: starting with the basis so that the tournament could even work – court size, light intensity, balls – all the way to precise instructions, such as what the players can wear, or what can and cannot happen when it comes to advertising. Gerry's job is implementing these rules. Another very important person is the Tour Manager. He's here to represent and protect the players' interests, take care of the schedule, make sure that the conditions, such as the hotel and transportation, are up to par, and that the players receive only the best in Umag, of course within reasonable limits.

There's also a multitude of people taking care of the players' health, including two physical therapists. We can't forget the chair umpires. We provide additional physical therapists, a doctor, and line umpires.

**COLUMN BY GORAN IVANIŠEVIĆ**

**WE'RE IN FOR A FANTASTIC FINAL MATCH**



We'll get to see an amazing final match on Sunday night, which makes us very happy and proves once again that year after year Umag is where good things happen. The first one was the way in which Nino Serdarušić and Blaž Rola even placed in the doubles tournament and ended up winning the title, so this season could be remembered for several big things.

When it comes to the singles tournament, Alexei Popyrin deserves to be in the final. He eliminated Matteo Arnaldi and he was definitely better in that match. Much better. The Australian could have won the first set as well, but Arnaldi bounced back having won both of his break points and eventually the set. In the second set, Popyrin lost multiple chances, and consequences could have been dire, but he made it through. He played very well and it's a very big deal that he is in the final. It goes without saying that his current ATP ranking (90th place) is far from realistic, as this tournament shows how good he actually is.

Stan played phenomenally. In the statement he gave on the court, he said that this was his best match of the week, and I fully agree. With the way he played, Sonogo never stood a

chance. It's now quite realistic to expect Wawrinka to win the title in Umag again, but he'll have to be at his best on Sunday. Both he and Popyrin are hard hitters and I think we can look forward to an amazing final match.

Nino and Blaž have done something truly wonderful. They agreed to play together in the locker rooms just before the draw, received an invitation and ended up winning the whole thing. The tie break was unbelievable, and I'm so happy that so many people came to see this match live and cheered loudly. The atmosphere was fantastic, and the guys truly deserved it. After all these years, it is awesome to have a winning pair include a Croatian player, although no one could have predicted this at the start.

And so the final match is all that is left. Umag always has at least one crazy story. We already saw one of them unfold in the doubles tournament, and another could be coming on Sunday. We've come to the end, only two players remain, both of whom have given their all thus far. If they keep it up in the final match, it will be the icing on the cake for the end of the 33rd edition of the tournament.

## A PHOTO MAKES A MEMORY LAST LONGER

Studenac, one of the leading retail chains in Croatia, continued an excellent partnership with the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag, which started in previous years.

Given that the week and the tournament are drawing to an end, everyone wanted to preserve the wonderful memories they've made during the tournament. Studenac to the rescue with its cute photo frame and friendly hostess there to assist everyone.



## THE BEST SMELLS ALWAYS COME FROM PODRAVKA'S KITCHEN



Podravka came to Umag to share some of its culinary secrets with us, and their creative chef served some amazing delicacies for everyone to enjoy.

As always, he focused on traditional recipes for our homemade dishes, using some well-known Podravka spices to help elevate these delicacies to a whole new level.

The fragrant smells quickly spread through the Umag tent and tickled everyone's fancy, and while visitors waited to taste some of the dishes, they curiously looked at the pots in hopes to discover a trick to try out in their own kitchens.

Visitors were also able to test some of the innovative Podravka products that have recently hit the market.



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## AGED TERAN CROWNED CHAMPION OF THE PLAVA LAGUNA CROATIA OPEN UMAG 2023

This year's Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag drew in lots of visitors who enjoyed the rich music programme and culinary offer. The Taste Istria zone was particularly popular, as it told the story of Istrian wines in six nights, through the Hidden charm of Istrian wine tastings, celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. These special tastings and discussions, which took place under the guidance of renowned

sommelier from the Croatian Sommelier Club, Lucija Matijević, enabled the participants to witness the constant progress made by the Istrian wineries, and learn what their inspiration has been year after year.

The wine story of this year's Umag ATP started with the tasting of fresh malvazija wines, aged terans, aged refoscis, red coupage wines, and aged malvazija wines,

and it culminated with the crowning of the winning ATP wine at the Grand Finale which took place during the 33rd Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag. The winning, and highest rated, wine was the aged teran by the CUJ winery from Farnažine, a village in the vicinity of Sveta Marija Na Krasu.

The tastings were carried out under the expert eye of the renowned sommelier Emil Perdec. "Another ATP Hidden charm of Istrian wine draws to an end, and we've managed to show the participants once again how wide the spectrum of the Istrian wine scene really is. This year, the tastings were held in five categories, and the daily winners from these categories ultimately competed in the Grand Finale. The finale was very interesting and it was clear

what the audience preferred. In the end, the wine chosen by the audience last year won again – the aged teran," said Perdec.

Apart from the wine tastings, the visitors to the Taste Istria zone tasting points can still enjoy the wonderful selection of wines produced by acclaimed Istrian wineries, whose countless international awards and recognitions contribute to strengthening Istria's image as a wine region. You can taste malvazija, teran and moscato from exquisite local wineries such as Fiore, Benčić, Bassanese, Ravalico, Cattunar, Brič, CUJ, Degrassi, Franković, Geržinić, Prelac, Tomaz, Roxanich, Coslovich, Fakin, Vina Zigante, Agrolaguna and Zigante, and don't miss Aura and their popular gin.





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## LUDOVICA PAGANI IGNITES THE ATMOSPHERE IN UMAG



In anticipation of the final day, last night's party programme was closed by the fantastic Ludovica Pagani, one of the most famous DJs in Italy and beyond.

She posted her first single "Tiki Taka" on YouTube in 2018, and it has since been viewed more than 4.5 million times. Her popularity has been on the rise ever since.

In 2021, she released "Life Is One", her most recent single, to the delight of her European and Italian fans. Ludovica "read" the audience very well, so every single one of her mixes only intensified the excitement all around. The impressive light show all over the arena contributed to the surreal feel of the performance.





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