16.-25.7.2021. PLAVA LAGUNA CROATIA OPEN UMAG

DAILY NEWS

#ATPUMAG • #31ATPUMAG • OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ATP TOURNAMENT • NO3 • 22.07.2021.

DUJE AJDUKOVIĆ GAVE A LOT OF HEADACHE TO THE TOP-SEEDED PLAYER

Duje Ajduković, a 20-year-old Croatian tennis player for whom this year's Plava Laguna Croatia Open was the first ATP tournament in his career, did not make it to the quarterfinals on Wednesday, but he showed to the big stage how good he is. The top seed of the tournament and the 43rd player in the world, the Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas, won with 7:5, 6:4, but only after a great fight and excellent tennis. Ajduković (pictured) had several moments in

the game that were far more valuable in quality than the current 275th place on the ATP list and that could be a good signpost for further progress of his career.'

"It was a good match, I played well, there were moments of technical errors, but for the most part I am satisfied," (continued on p. 6)



























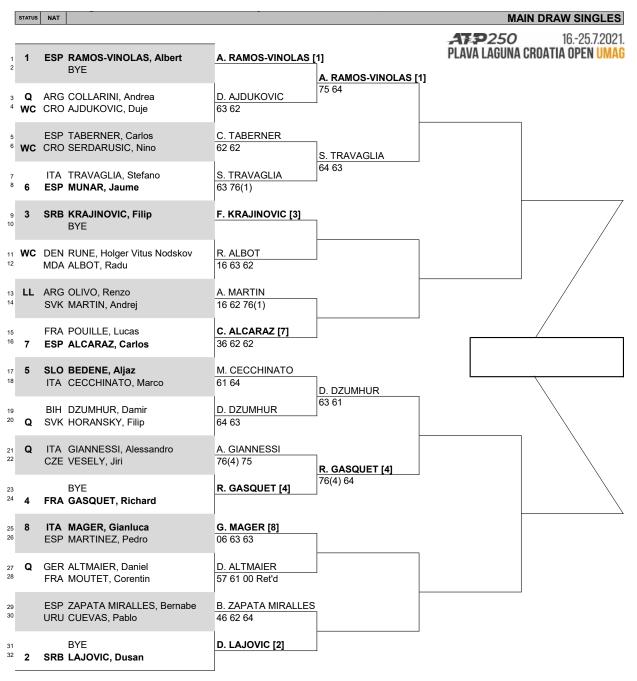








ORDER OF PLAY - THURSDAY, JULY 22ND 2021.		
STADION GORAN IVANIŠEVIĆ	GRANDSTAND	COURT1
16:30 Filip Krajinović (SRB) vs. Radu Albot (MDA) not before 19:00 Bernabe Zapata Miralles (ESP) vs. Dušan Lajović (SRB) followed by Andrej Martin (SVK) vs. Carlos Alcaraz (ESP)	16:30 Fernando Romboli (BRA) David Vega Hernandez (ESP) vs. Admir Kalender (CRO) Mili Poljičak (CRO) not before 18:00 Gianluca Mager (ITA) vs. Daniel Altmaier (GER) followed by Tomislav Brkić (BIH) Nikola Ćaćić (SRB) vs. Roman Jebavy (CZE) Jiri Vesely (CZE)	17:30 Ivan Sabanov (CRO) Matej Sabanov (CRO) vs. Damir Džumhur (BIH) Antonio Šančić (CRO) followed by Radu Albot (MDA) Pedro Martinez (ESP) vs. Marco Cecchinato (ITA) Stefano Travaglia (ITA)





"The times which we live in are changing unpredictably and we are facing many challenges, but I am extremely glad that some traditions remain. Tennis spectacle ATP Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag holds a special place among them, which has been supported by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports for many years. ATP Plava Laguna is an extremely important sport event, but also social event, for Croatia, and especially for Umag and Istria, because it promotes our country in the world with exceptional quality and is an additional motive for tourists to come to Umag. This year we have especially recognized the event as a place to meet people and find entertainment that will be held with high security and epidemiological measures, and therefore I congratulate the organizers on the top organization in these challenging circumstances. I wish all the competitors a lot of success, but also a pleasant stay in our country, to which, I believe, they will gladly return."

Nikolina Brnjac, PhD, Minister of Tourism and Sports:

Author of the photo: Robert Gašpert/Adria Luxury Society



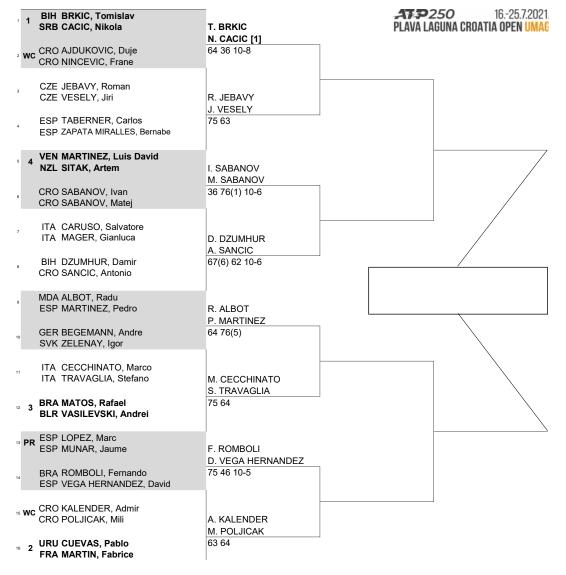
Safe travels

by











KOLUMNA GORANA IVANIŠEVIĆA

WE SAW AGAIN HOW MUCH THE WILD CARDS MEAN

Duje Ajduković had a great premiere at the ATP tournaments and it will be an interesting topic for a few more days, but there is something else important that must be mentioned. Invitations! They are very important when you have a tournament and even more important when you have someone to give them to. And we have players who have justified receiving them: Duje came to the first victory of his career in ATP tournaments, playing a phenomenal match. It's a great experience for him to see that he can play against the "big guys." This is very important to him.

Nobody expected Admir Kalender and Mili Poljiček to knock out the second qualifiers, and what to say about how great it was that they got it in the end! Let's face it, even if they had lost, it would have been a good investment, but this way it turned out phenomenal.

The worst thing that can happen to you is that you have a tournament and a few invitations at your disposal, and you have no one to give them to. Fortunately, we do not have such a problem, we are in a great situation, and that is promising for the future.

I think this is a good opportunity to

point out how much chances the tournament actually gives our tennis players. No way to make an accurate calculation, but more than 80% of the invitations in the last few seasons have gone to our players. And that's okay, that's how it should be. I don't know why we question such practice, it's the only way it should work. Some invitations should also go to a player who is not "yours," for one reason or another, but that must be a very good reason. For example, the Dane Rune had the opportunity to play in Umag this year, but he is one of the most talented players in the world and if he comes back to us in a few more vears when he is a real star and when he enters the tournament directly, that will be the right thing.

But I reiterate, our players are a priority, this is incredibly important to them. We help them break through, we help them gain experience because they get a chance to play against world class, and that's very important when you're 19 or 20 years old. It will also be very motivating, because you want to progress even more, to improve the game even more. Invitations are a great thing, especially, as I mentioned before, when you have someone to give them to.

TOMISLAV POLJAK, DIREKTOR TURNIRA

KALENDER AND POLJIČAK WERE SENSATIONAL

I think it's time to start my review of the day with couples and a sensational performance by young Croatian players Admir Kalender and Milija Poljička. The guys opened the program on Wednesday, played an amazing match and achieved their first ATP victories, defeating the other qualifiers, Fabrice Martin and Pablo Cuevas, who once won Roland Garros in doubles.

Although Kalender did not lag behind, Poljičak played great match, showing why he is one of the most talented Croatian players! Already on Thursday, a new match awaits them, in the same place at the same time, and maybe the outcome will be the same.

As for individual matches on Wednesday, Richard Gasquet had a by no means simple match against Alessandro Giannessi, who played here in the semi-finals four years ago. He is an incredibly uncomfortable opponent in such conditions, a fighter on the court, and that considering qualifications, he adjusted well. Still, Gasquet passed that exam and stayed in the tournament. He is now awaited by the brilliant Damir Džumhur, who set the tennis bar too high for our

2018 winner Marco Cecchinato. I don't remember the last time I saw someone "sell" as many drop shots as he played in a match at this level. He taught his rival a lesson in tennis.

I leave Duje Ajduković for the end, a guy who showed everyone what his future could be like. He has given so much trouble to Albert Ramos-Vinolas, a tennis plaver who is certainly among the top ten players in the world in terms of the percentage of wins on clay courts this season. With the speed of his ball, he brought him into very uncomfortable situations. He played fast and attractive game, which the audience at Stella Maris knew how to reward. A bit of lack of experience, a bit too much desire, a bit haste, and a few mistakes took the match to Ramos' side, but it was close and it was very good. I'm sure our first qualifier took a breather after this match as he went through great temptations to win. Now he goes to Stefan Travagli, a guy who goes "under the radar" and people don't talk much about him, but he plays very well. He has a very good forehand with which he does most of his problems to his rivals, and on Friday we will find out if he will do the same to the Spaniard.

DUJE AJDUKOVIĆ GAVE A LOT OF HEADACHE TO THE TOP-SEEDED PLAYER



(continued from p. 1)

Ajduković was perhaps too modest at the press conference held just before midnight, that is, after the doubles match in which he and Franko Ninčević gave excellent resistance to the first qualifiers Brkić and Čačić, but they were defeated 4:6, 6:3, 8:10.

The match against Ramos-Vinolas did not start well for the Split player, who, just like the day before against the Argentinian Collarini, lost his serve at the very beginning. But he retaliated just as quickly, so after an introductory 0:3 loss, he even came up with two break points for a 4:3 lead. At 5:6 he lost the serve again, which cost him the loss of the set, and in the second set he was the one who came to the advantage first. However, after a 3-1 lead, he won just one more game.

"Overall, it's a positive week. I achieved my first victory in ATP tournaments, which is always nice. I played two good matches, in both the first and second rounds, raised the level of tennis compared to what I played in recent months and saw that I could play with these guys."

Ramos-Vinolas will play in the quarterfinals on Friday against the Italian Stefan Travaglia, who passed the Spaniard Carlos Taberner without losing a set (6:4, 6:3). In the second half of the draw, one pair of quarterfinals is also known, as Frenchman Richard Gasquet

and Bosnian tennis player Damir Džumhur (pictured) will face off. He defeated the winner of Umag 2018 with a very convincing 6:3, 6:1. Marco Cecchinata, in a match in which the Italian tennis player did not have a single break ball.

This was their seventh match and Džumhur's third victory, and they met for the first time in 2013 at the ITF Futures tournament in Croatia. Although he did not have as much success in Umag as Cecchinato, Džumhur is not without good results at the Croatia Open, so this will be his second appearance in the quarterfinals, where he was already in 2016.

The tournament continues on Thursday, when the remaining matches of the second round in the individual competition will be played, as well as the quarterfinals in the doubles competition. For the first time this year, great tennis players from Serbia, who are among the main favorites to win the tournament, will join the action. Defending champion Dušan Lajović will face Spaniard Bernabe Zapata Miralles as his opponent, and Filip Krajinović, last week's finalist in Hamburg, will face Moldovan Radu Albot. And at the end of the program on the central court, the extremely talented Carlos Alcaraz will play against the 2016 Umag finalist Andrej Martin.

In the competition of doubles, the duel of Ivan and Matej Sabanov against Damir Džumhur and Antonio Šančić will be followed with great interest, and it will be interesting to see if Admir Kalender and Mili Poljičak will manage to pass another obstacle and qualify for the semifinals.

AFTER EIGHT YEARS, THE GREAT FRENCHMAN IS IN UMAG AGAIN

GASQUET'S SUCCESSFUL RETURN



Many top tennis players have played at the Umag tournament for thirty years, and among them as many as seven were "number 1" on the ATP list. There are even more participants of the Croatia Open who can boast of membership among the top ten players in the world at that time, and one of them is Richard Gasquet. Today, the

35-year-old Frenchman reached seventh place in the rankings in July 2007, which speaks volumes about his status among professional tennis players.

In Umag, however, he played only once, and almost a decade has passed since that tournament. He was the first qualifier of the tournament in 2013, lost at the start to the Spaniard Montanes, and did not return in the meantime. Until this year:

"I know that Umag is a great tournament. Although I lost then and never came back in the meantime, I knew I would come again one day. There are several reasons why I haven't done this before, from injuries, to appearing in the Masters 1000 Series tournament in Montreal, and similar things. But like I said, I knew I was going to come back and I'm very glad about that. And because of today's victory, of course."

As one of the four leading qualifier s, Gasquet was free at the start, on Wednesday he defeated Italian Giannesi 7:6 (4), 6:4, and will play in

the quarterfinals for the third time this season on Friday. He did not lose a single break point against Giannessi, semifinalist from Umag in 2017, which says enough about how he served.

"It was certainly welcome, because at my age it's important that 'free' points save your legs," said Gasquet, who has played in Croatia on several other occasions in addition to Umag. He has experience playing at the then ATP tournament in Zagreb, and in the semifinals of the Davis Cup in Zadar. He played in the 2006 premiere in Zagreb and passed the first hurdle, and in Zadar in 2016 he defeated Borna Ćorić on Friday, and on Sunday he lost to Marin Čilić, which was also the match that decided the winner of the match.







UMAG TENNIS ACADEMY





Rich history, sorted present and guaranteed future. This is the shortest possible cross-section of the Umag Tennis Academy, and tennis history in the Katoro Resort, where one of the most beautiful tennis academies in Europe was created. This tennis paradise, located in a great environment, practically leaning against the sea, has been an unavoidable stop in Croatian and European tennis for several decades.

From tournaments for children, which were held by all great Croatian tennis players, but also big

European and world names, to today's numerous tournaments for different ages and categories, and infrastructure, which offers excellent conditions for all age groups, Katoro is almost unthinkable without the seductive sound of hitting tennis balls.

Close to the sea, top hotels and beautifully landscaped surroundings, full of greenery and accompanying facilities, Umag Tennis Academy offers unique conditions for learning, entertainment, but also serious work for professionals and those who would like to become one. Programs adapted for all ages and levels of tennis knowledge allow all participants of the Academy an individual approach, work on segments of the game that are especially important to them, and focus on the most important things for their progress. A team of great coaches is in charge of this work. Among them are experts with astounding playing careers, but also people who have made name for themselves through work with different profiles of tennis players. The coaching staff who invest in their knowledge is the driving force of every academy, and the coaches at Umag Tennis Academy had the opportunity to learn from - the best. In 2014, Goran Ivanišević held a series of camps for many enthusiastic participants.



With coaches and managers, who are the driving force behind the success of the Umag Tennis Academy, the infrastructure is something our Academy is proud of. As many as 25 clay courts, four of which are covered - two with a hall and two with a balloon - and eight lighted courts and one concrete court guarantee perfect conditions for tennis players to develop their skills.

After working and having fun in the premises of the Academy, the participants of our programs have unique opportunities in choosing how to spend their free time. In addition to great accommodation, excellent hotels and luxury apartment complexes at your fingertips, there are many accompanying facilities such as beach volleyball, the possibility of engaging in numerous water sports, swimming and enjoying other sea activities.

More at http://www.umagtenni-sacademy.com/.



TRIGLAV TENNIS



Triglav osiguranje organized its traditional tennis tournament at the Umag Tennis Academy. Employees of Triglav osiguranje and their partners have been enjoying their tennis experiences during the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag for years. In addition to sports content, they organize a rich all-day pro-

gram and a selected gastronomic offer for participants and visitors of Triglav tennis. Umag is a gathering place of Triglavovaca (Triglav residents) from the entire region, and sports competitions end with watching matches at the Goran Ivanišević Stadium and having fun at the Stella Maris Resort.

CUBISMO MADE STELLA MARIS RESORT DANCE



Cubismo, a popular band that has been bringing Cuba's dance rhythms to our music scene for 25 years, made Stella Maris Resort dance on Wednesday. A pleasant Umag evening was a great backdrop for the salsa dance steps enjoyed by the audience after the tennis matches. Great matches and great music were a proper reason to enjoy today in and around the Goran Ivanišević

Stadium, and they were spiced up by a great offer of food and drinks that can be enjoyed until 2 a.m. Entry into the zone is allowed only with a green COVID certificate, and it is also possible to do a test at the entrance. On Thursday, the fun continues with Neno Belan & Fiumens, who we also believe will be a good occasion for an evening out at the Stella Maris Resort.

MORE THAN 200 RECREATIONAL PLAYERS WILL PLAY IN THE UMAG STARS OPEN TOURNAMENT

The second edition of the Umag Stars Open recreational tennis tournament will be held from 22nd to 25th of July at the Stella Maris Resort, as one of the accompanying sport events of the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag. A draw was held today that determined the pairs of the first round of this tournament, in which more than 200 former athletes, celebrities, and other recreational athletes who want to test their skills will play.

One of the organizers of the tour-



nament is former football player Silvio Marić, and he will be joined on the court by other celebrities, including former football players Antonio Franja and Hrvoje Čale, Croatian chess grandmaster Alojzije Janković, champion Croatian golfer Ivan Vučemil, Parni Valjko drummer Berislav Blažević and Zagreb lawyer Mate Matić.

"The goal is to offer recreational tennis players the opportunity to play a big tournament, accompanied by socializing and friendly atmosphere. All recreational players can play, even those who play briefly and want to try. We have a record turnout, and we hope to grow even more in the coming period. We want everything to be at a high level, so we are grateful that Plava Laguna recognized us and that they

supported the tournament as partners. We have great conditions here, and we would like to be the biggest recreational tournament in Croatia in the future, and also to include players from other countries." - said Silvio Marić, the legendary Dinamo player and organizer of the Umag Stars Open.

96 tennis players in singles and 64 in doubles will play at the Umag Stars Open, and such a large number of competitors shows that this is one of the largest tennis tournaments for recreational players in Croatia. The tournament is in the second edition and with international participation, since recreational players from BiH, Italy, Slovenia and Austria will take part. Matches will be played on six courts, starting at 9 a.m. until 8 p.m.

OSCAR'S CORNER

The program began on Wednesday at the central court with the defeat of Italian tennis player Alessandro Giannessi against Frenchman Richard Gasquet for the result 6:7,4:6. Croatian tennis player Duje Ajduković failed to make it to the quarterfinals, being beaten by Albert Ramos-Vinolas 7:5,6:4.

At the Grandstand, Stefano Travaglia easily finished the game against Spanish tennis player Taberner, beating him in two sets with a score of 6:46:3

At the end of the day, Damir Džumhur and Marco Cecchinato played a match on the central court in which the winner of the 2018 title was defeated. Congratulations to Džumhur on great

Written by Oskar Visintin

TOMISLAV DRUŽAK, STATE SECRETARY



"The tennis elite is returning to Umag, and with it many guests who will enjoy the attractive content of a top tennis spectacle. I believe that in addition to the already world-renowned players, this year's ATP Umag will produce some new generations that we will see at the very top of world tennis in a few years, as has been the case in recent years. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports provides them with strong support through nu-

merous activities, including investment in the construction of sports infrastructure in Croatia, which we recognized as an extremely important investment to provide conditions for top athletes and all recreational players. I wish all competitors and visitors of the ATP Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag a good time with responsible behavior and respect for the prescribed epidemiological measures."

RICH WINE OFFER IN STELLA MARIS RESORT



After enjoying tennis, guests can relax in the Stella Maris Resort this year as well and enjoy the rich eno-, and gastronomic offer with musical rhythms brought to them by the Open Air stage.

We present you some of the winemakers who offered their top wines, and the audience accepted them very well.

Like-minded members of the Veralda team have been promoting their wines at the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag since 2008. Marina Vizintin told us that they are happy to participate in an event like this, which deserves to be accompanied by great wines.

Top tennis and top wines complete the image of the Umag tournament,

we use this opportunity to present our new wines directly to consumers. This year, we present Istrian brut sparkling wine made by classic method, Malvasia 2020, as well as aged Malvasia 2018. We are especially proud of the black Xtrian refošk, which won the title of best in show DWWA decanter 2016, the most prestigious award won by a Croatian wine. We noticed that for now, the visitors of the tournament are happy to enjoy our sparkling wine because it is a nice refreshment in this summer heat, and invites fun and arousing positive emotions.

Natasha Brljafa, a sommelier at the Arman Winery, emphasizes: This year we are present at this important event because we want to be always available to our consumers. For now, our Malvasia and Rosé arouse the most interest. Given these strange times, we do not have excessive expectations, but we still hope for a solid response and good reception of our wines.

Regular participants in the Plava Laguna Croatia Open Umag for about 10 years are Catunar Wines. Moreno Đurđević, sales manager emphasizes that they participate in 5-6 big events, and the Umag tournament is definitely on that list and greatly contributes to wines. The emphasis this year will be on our famous brands Malvasia and Teran, which represent local tastes and experiences. I'm sure tournament visitors will enjoy them.

Tea Bucaj from Franković Wines points out that this year they are



representing Malvasia Luna Bianca, Muscat Momjanski and Stella sparkling wine. All these wines are of top quality from the 2020 vintage, while the sparkling wine is from the 2018 vintage and they fit perfectly into an event of this reputation. Malvasia is especially sought after, which is typical for our climate, it is very drinkable and suitable for tasting in these hot summer evenings. We are also happy to offer Muscat, which is specific because of its sweetness and the climate in which it is grown, and it is preferred by ladies.

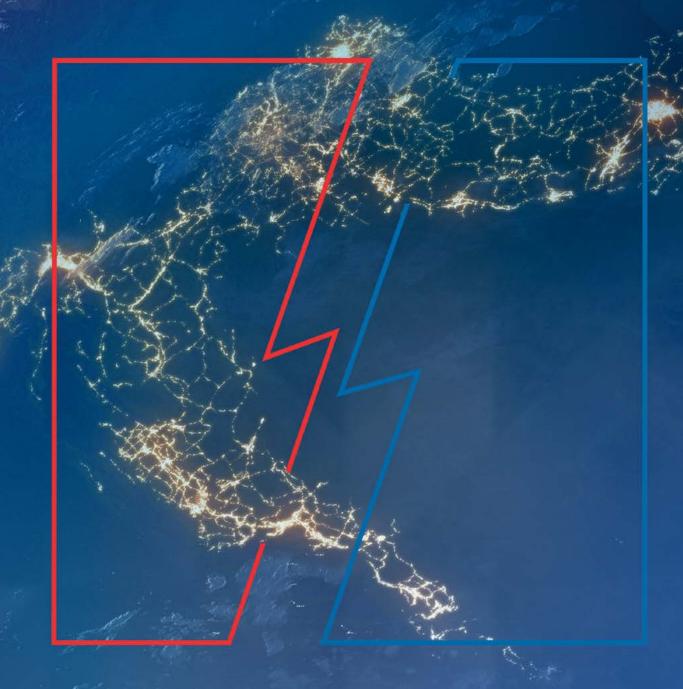
This year, Laguna Wines presents Malvasia Festiga, Rose Perla and Castello Festigo. All these top Laguna wines meet with an excellent response from the audience, which will surely be more numerous in the coming days. Visitors to the Umag tournament already know about our wines and just a few minutes ago they were explicitly looking for Castello Festigo. We are pleased to have the opportunity to expand the good reputation of our wines and in this way as much as possible, says Emili Olić.



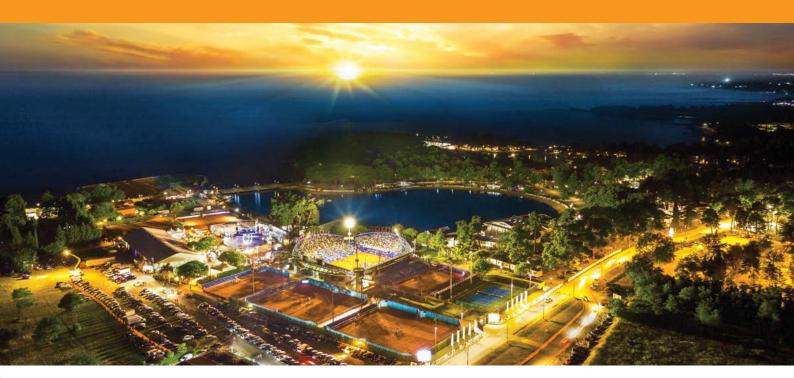


Energija koja pokreće Hrvatsku

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