

# Alexandr Dolgoplov completes dream week

Buenos Aires

**A**lexandr Dolgoplov arrived at the Argentina Open with just one win in his past 11 matches, but leaves Buenos Aires as champion after defeating top seed Kei Nishikori 7-6(5), 6-4 in yesterday's final.

With his remarkable turn in

form this week, the Ukrainian earns his third ATP World Tour singles title and his first since prevailing in Washington, D.C., in July 2012. He also picks up his first win against his Japanese opponent, having lost all five of their previous FedEx ATP Head2Head meetings in straight sets. Dolgoplov gains

250 Emirates ATP Rankings points and receives a cheque for \$97,470.

Dolgoplov didn't drop a set throughout the week and advanced through a challenging draw. He defeated second seed Pablo Cuevas in the second-round and fourth seed Pablo Carreno Busta in the semi-finals before taking out Nishikori. Dolgoplov also handed Nishikori his first to a player outside the Top 50 since 2014, ending a 50-match win streak.

Nishikori was seeking his 12th ATP World Tour singles title, but finishes the week as the first Asian-born player to reach the Argentina Open final. He receives 150 Emirates ATP Rankings points and a cheque for \$51,335.

Nishikori and Dolgoplov will compete next week at the Rio Open presented by Claro. Nishikori is the top seed once again and faces Thomaz Bellucci in the opening round. ([atpworldtour.com](http://atpworldtour.com))



Alexandr Dolgoplov

## Kerber keen for revival, not top spot in Dubai

Dubai

**A**ngelique Kerber insisted yesterday that reviving her flagging fortunes on tour is her main priority rather than reclaiming the world number one ranking from Serena Williams at the Dubai Tennis Championships.

The German two-time Grand Slam champion took over top spot last September when she won the US Open.

However, she promptly lost the honour in Melbourne last month as Williams won the Australian Open, reclaiming her long-held number one ranking in the process.

Now Kerber, who went out in the Melbourne fourth round to American Coco Vandeweghe, is determined

to prove she can still pose a threat on a regular basis.

"I was not feeling good last week in Doha," the German said yesterday as she prepared to start in Dubai in the second round as top seed.

Kerber lost in her opening match in rain-hit Qatar, going down in three sets to promising Russian teenager Daria Kasatkina.

"I must bring that good feeling from the practise courts to the matches. It is just one or two matches that can change it because I am really feeling good."

Kerber will be playing in the Dubai main draw for a fifth time but has never been past the third round.

Should her game click

again, she would have the chance to return to the top ranking by winning the title, with Williams skipping the Middle East legs of the WTA Tour.

Kerber heads a Dubai field which includes US Open finalist and number three Czech Karolina Pliskova, who won the Qatar title on Saturday, WTA Tour Finals winner Dominika Cibulkova, and French Open champion Garbine Muguruza. (AFP)



Angelique Kerber

### Dubai WTA results:

#### 1st round

- Mona Barthel (GER) bt Jelena Jankovic (SRB) 6-1, 6-3
- Caroline Garcia (FRA x15) bt Johanna Larsson (SWE) 6-3, 6-3
- Samantha Stosur (AUS x12) bt Zhang Kai-Lin (CHN) 6-3, 6-3
- Ekaterina Makarova (RUS) bt Zhu Lin (CHN) 6-3, 6-1
- Kristyna Pliskova (CZE) bt Roberta Vinci (ITA x16) 3-6, 7-5, 6-3
- Naomi Osaka (JPN) bt Chang Kai-Chen (TPE) 6-2, 6-4
- Zheng Saisai (CHN) bt Lara Arruabarrena (ESP) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3
- Viktorija Golubic (SUI) bt Cagla Buyukakcay (TUR) 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-2
- Laura Siegemund (GER) bt Silvia Soler (ESP) 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 7-6 (7/3)
- Anastasija Sevastova (LAT) bt Irina-Camelia Begu (ROM) 6-1, 7-5
- Ons Jabeur (TUN) bt Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (RUS x14) 7-6 (8/6), 2-6, 6-4
- Wang Qiang (CHN) bt Jelena Ostapenko (LAT) 7-6 (7/1), 6-2



Jo-Wilfried Tsonga

# Tsonga secures Rotterdam crown

Rotterdam

**J**o-Wilfried Tsonga shrugged off the absence of his coach to defeat David Goffin 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 yesterday and earn a first career title at the Rotterdam World Tennis tournament.

The French sixth seed, who lost the 2011 final to Robin Soderling, took just under two hours to beat Belgian third seed Goffin, playing his second final in as many weeks after losing in Sofia last Sunday to Grigor Dimitrov.

Tsonga earned his fourth victory over Goffin, who at least had the consolation of

knowing he will be the first Belgian man to crack the world top 10 after his efforts in Rotterdam.

Tsonga, whose coach Thierry Ascione was not present for the final due to personal commitments, said he made many changes in his game for the indoor week.

"I changed my serve, I tried to work on my backhand and returns. I also changed strings. I changed a lot to try and improve my game."

Former world number five Tsonga, 31, will move back to 11th in the rankings on Monday after claiming his first ATP 500 series title since Vienna in 2011 when he beat Juan Martin del Potro.

"I'm just really happy,

this title comes at the right moment," said Tsonga, who now has 13 career titles.

"I put a lot of effort into the comeback, it's all a huge reward for me. This win gives me expectation for the rest of season

"My emotions were inside me, but I was really happy. I felt bad for David, who is a good friend, I wish we both could have won."

Goffin came to the Netherlands having never previously won a match at the event.

"I'm disappointed but at the end I played some good tennis. I started the match well but Jo played better than me, especially at the start of the third set." (AFP)