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## **Swiss ace Federer cruises to greatness**

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**4 July, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Swiss ace Federer cruises to greatness**

**BNE:** Swiss tennis ace Roger Federer etched his place in the game's history books as he cruised to his third successive Wimbledon victory. Federer put on a powerful and relentless display to completely overwhelm and destroy his opponent, the hapless Andy Roddick. Federer becomes only the third man to achieve three victories in a row in modern times. At the age of 23, he is nicely poised to carve a name for himself as one of tennis's greatest ever players. He seems well equipped with all the tools to continue his formidable dominance of the game, which have helped him win his last twenty finals.

Sunday's final was a display of flawless tennis. Federer's highly talented and powerful foe Andy Roddick simply had no answer to the versatility, athleticism, precision and sheer brilliance of the Swiss genius's play. The 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 win suggests a total whitewash. In fact, Roddick played incredibly well and put in a commendably gutsy performance. Unfortunately for him, it wasn't good enough against the peerless Federer. Even a delay for rain offered little respite for Roddick as the Swiss master continued his blend of exquisite and destructive tennis to cruise to a comprehensive three sets victory.

## WARM-UPS

**1. SPORTS CHAMP:** Imagine you have just won a major world sporting crown. People are saying you are one of the best ever. Decide what your sport is and what you have won. Walk around the class and talk to the other “sports champs” about your sport and your life as a great champion.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Switzerland / Swiss things / Swiss people / tennis / history books / Wimbledon / destroying opponents / athleticism / brilliance / rain*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. TENNIS:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with tennis. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**4. TENNIS OPINIONS:** In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with these opinions.

- a. Tennis is the world’s greatest sport.
- b. Women’s tennis is much more exciting and interesting than men’s tennis.
- c. Only rich people can play tennis.
- d. Tennis players get far too much money.
- e. Roger Federer is too young to be called one of the greatest ever players.
- f. It’s unfair that men get more prize money than women in tennis tournaments.
- g. Tennis players have no manners these days.
- h. I’d love to be a tennis superstar.

**5. SPORTING GREATS:** In pairs / groups, talk about which of these sporting champions deserves to be called the best ever in their sport.

- Soccer - Pele
- American Football – Brett Favre
- Baseball – Joe DiMaggio
- Tennis – Martina Navratilova
- Boxing – Muhammad Ali
- Golf – Annika Sorenstam
- F1 – Michael Schumacher
- Other

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A tennis star has broken the record for sailing around the world. | T / F |
| b. A tennis ace has won Wimbledon for the third successive time.     | T / F |
| c. He is the only man to win three titles in a row in modern times.  | T / F |
| d. The tennis superstar has won all of his last twenty finals.       | T / F |
| e. His opponent had all of the answers to beat him.                  | T / F |
| f. The 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 result wasn't the walkover it suggests.         | T / F |
| g. A delay for rain greatly re-energized the champion's foe.         | T / F |
| h. The champ played a blend of exquisite and destructive tennis.     | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| a. etched     | unfortunate     |
| b. cruised    | beautiful       |
| c. hapless    | walkover        |
| d. poised     | eased           |
| e. formidable | perfect         |
| f. flawless   | absolute        |
| g. sheer      | breathing space |
| h. whitewash  | carved          |
| i. respite    | impregnable     |
| j. exquisite  | positioned      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. etched his place in the game's | and destroy his opponent |
| b. put on a powerful and          | tennis                   |
| c. overwhelm                      | history books            |
| d. nicely                         | dominance of the game    |
| e. continue his formidable        | little respite           |
| f. a display of flawless          | poised to ...            |
| g. Roddick simply had             | whitewash                |
| h. a total                        | performance              |
| i. a commendably gutsy            | relentless display       |
| j. a delay for rain offered       | no answer                |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**WHOOPS:** There are five incorrect words in each paragraph among those in bold. Find and circle them. Try to think of a better word.

### Swiss ace Federer cruises to greatness

**BNE:** Swiss tennis ace Roger Federer **etched** his place in the game's history books as he **cruiser** to his third **successive** Wimbledon victory. Federer put on a powerful and relentless display to completely **underwhelm** and destroy his opponent, the **hapless** Andy Roddick. Federer becomes only the third man to achieve three victories in a **draw** in modern times. At the age of 23, he is nicely **poised** to **crave** a name for himself as one of tennis's greatest ever players. He seems well **equipment** with all the tools to continue his formidable **dominance** of the game, which have helped him win his last twenty finals.

Sunday's final was a display of **flawed** tennis. Federer's highly talented and powerful **fee** Andy Roddick simply had no **answer** to the versatility, athleticism, precision and **sheer** brilliance of the Swiss genius's play. The 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 win suggests a total **whitewash**. In **factual**, Roddick played incredibly well and put in a commendably **stomach** performance. Unfortunately for him, it wasn't good enough against the peerless Federer. Even a delay for rain offered little **respite** for Roddick as the Swiss master continued his **bland** of exquisite and destructive tennis to cruise to a **comprehensive** three sets victory.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'history' and 'book'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WHOOPS:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about any relationships between the correct and incorrect words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT TENNIS SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about tennis and champions.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- etched
- display
- hapless
- row
- carve
- tools
- flawless
- answer
- whitewash
- gutsy
- respite
- blend

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
- c. Do you often read the news on tennis?
- d. Is tennis one of your favorite sports?
- e. Who do you think is the greatest tennis player ever?
- f. Do you prefer watching men's or women's tennis?
- g. What kind of lifestyle do you think tennis stars have?
- h. What do you think it's like to be 23, a world champion and very rich?
- i. Is it boring if one player or team dominates a sport?
- j. What images spring to mind when you hear the name 'Wimbledon'?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think Roger Federer is one of the greatest ever?
- d. Do you like tennis?
- e. When was the last time you played tennis?
- f. Do you think tennis is a rich person's sport?
- g. Why aren't there many famous tennis players from developing countries?
- h. Do tennis stars get paid too much?
- i. Do you think tennis is a tough sport?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## **SPEAKING**

### **INTERVIEW:**

Students A are Roger Federer's public relations agents. You are responsible for maintaining his squeaky clean image. He has a press conference tomorrow. You have the questions he'll be asked. In pairs / groups, think of the perfect answers to make sure Roger's international image remains perfect.

Students B are scandal-hungry journalists. You are desperate to make Roger say something that will create headlines. He has a press conference tomorrow. The questions you'll ask are below. Think of how you can use these questions to make Roger say something that will give you a juicy headline or two.

### **QUESTIONS FOR ROGER FEDERER:**

1. Why are 95% of top tennis stars white?
2. Is there any racism in tennis?
3. Do you think top tennis stars get paid too much?
4. Will tennis become boring if you keep winning?
5. What do you think when people say you are the greatest ever?
6. Do you think you are unbeatable?
7. What goes through your mind when you prepare for a final?
8. Do you think women's tennis is inferior to men's tennis?
9. Do you think tennis players should stick to tradition and always wear white?
10. How tough is playing tennis?
11. Do you have an easy life?
12. Your question

\_\_\_\_\_?

Change partners. Role play the interview between the squeaky clean Roger and the scandal-hungry journalists.

Change partners (find a new Roger / journalist) and repeat the role play.

After you have finished, talk about the role plays and what you thought of each other's questions and answers.



## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Swiss ace Federer cruises to greatness

**BNE:** Swiss tennis ace Roger Federer \_\_\_\_\_ in the game's history books as he \_\_\_\_\_ third successive Wimbledon victory. Federer put on a powerful \_\_\_\_\_ to completely overwhelm and destroy his opponent, the hapless Andy Roddick. Federer becomes only the third man to achieve three \_\_\_\_\_ in modern times. At the age of 23, he is nicely \_\_\_\_\_ name for himself as one of tennis's greatest ever players. He seems well equipped with all the tools to continue his \_\_\_\_\_ of the game, which have helped him win his last twenty finals.

Sunday's final was a \_\_\_\_\_ tennis. Federer's highly talented and \_\_\_\_\_ Andy Roddick simply had no answer to the versatility, athleticism, precision and \_\_\_\_\_ the Swiss genius's play. The 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 win suggests \_\_\_\_\_. In fact, Roddick played incredibly well and put in a \_\_\_\_\_. Unfortunately for him, it wasn't good enough \_\_\_\_\_ Federer. Even a delay for rain offered little respite for Roddick as the Swiss master continued his blend \_\_\_\_\_ tennis to cruise to a comprehensive three sets victory.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Roger Federer. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. THE GREATEST:** Create a poster on who you think is the greatest ever sports person. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did anyone agree on who is the greatest ever sports person?

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to Wimbledon tennis champion Roger Federer. Tell him what you think of his winning Wimbledon for the third successive time. Ask him for advice on how to be a winner. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. etched	carved
b. cruised	eased
c. hapless	unfortunate
d. poised	positioned
e. formidable	impregnable
f. flawless	perfect
g. sheer	absolute
h. whitewash	walkover
i. respite	breathing space
j. exquisite	beautiful

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. etched his place in the game's	history books
b. put on a powerful and	relentless display
c. overwhelm	and destroy his opponent
d. nicely	poised to ...
e. continue his formidable	dominance of the game
f. a display of flawless	tennis
g. Roddick simply had	no answer
h. a total	whitewash
i. a commendably gutsy	performance
j. a delay for rain offered	little respite

### WHOOPS:

#### Swiss ace Federer cruises to greatness

**BNE:** Swiss tennis ace Roger Federer etched his place in the game's history books as he **cruised** to his third successive Wimbledon victory. Federer put on a powerful and relentless display to completely **overwhelm** and destroy his opponent, the hapless Andy Roddick. Federer becomes only the third man to achieve three victories in a **row** in modern times. At the age of 23, he is nicely poised to **carve** a name for himself as one of tennis's greatest ever players. He seems well **equipped** with all the tools to continue his formidable dominance of the game, which have helped him win his last twenty finals.

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