
PRESS RELEASE

Two Belgian leave honourable the singles tournament, Bergs will play after Murray on Tuesday

Antwerp, October 17, 2021 - The first Sunday of the European Open immediately produced some spectacular matches. The two Belgians who came into action today, Michaël Geerts (ATP-295) and Gauthier Onclin (ATP-524), both lost honorably.

In his first round match Onclin faced the experienced Italian Andreas Seppi (ATP-93). The 20-year-old from Liège surprisingly won the preparation tournament for the European Open in early September and thus pocketed a ticket for the qualifications. After an early break in the first set, the 20-year-old Belgian was soon forced to chase (3/0). Onclin broke back at a 5/3 set position, but that was not enough. In the second set our compatriot managed to go straight through Seppi's serve. Onclin could not keep up that momentum, because at 5/4 he could serve for the set, but the Italian of 37 fought back. Seppi cashed in another break point at 6/5 and won 6/4 and 7/5. Onclin could leave the singles tournament with his head held high. He showed flashes of his class, with several breaks against an experienced top 100 player and former top 20 player.

The second match on Center Court was between the experienced Spaniard Fernando Verdasco (ATP-137) and the American Brandon Nakashima (ATP-83). The American managed to win the first set (6/4). Verdasco did not give up easily and won the second set 2/6. In a decisive third set Nakashima stepped up a gear. He broke through Verdasco's serve once. That break was enough to win the set and the victory with 6/4, 2/6 and 6/4.

Michaël Geerts (ATP-295), our other compatriot, played the last match of the day on Center Court against the number five ranked Next Gen: Jenson Brooksby. Geerts regularly resisted, but lost the match in two sets: 6/4 and 6/2. In the first set Geerts could make a fist, but in the second set Brooksby steamed on.

Richard Gasquet (ATP-81) faces Dusan Lajovic (ATP-35) on Monday in the last but one match of the day. Dutchman Botic van de Zandschulp (ATP-66), who managed to qualify for Indian Wells for the first time this year, will next play Alexei Popyrin (ATP-71).

Andy Murray (ATP-121) plays his first match on Tuesday night against American Frances Tiafoe (ATP-49). Then Zizou Bergs (ATP-188) closes out Tuesday night on Center Court in his match against South African Lloyd Harris (ATP-31). In doubles, we look forward to the duel between Paire/Musetti and Monroe/Opelka.

The Flemish government joins hands with the city of Antwerp through EventFlanders to make this top event possible. EventFlanders operates within Tourism Flanders, but is a collaboration between Tourism Flanders, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Culture, Youth and Media and Sport Vlaanderen.

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