
PRESS RELEASE

Murray goes through to second round after a thriller, last year's finalist loses

Antwerp, 19 October 2021 - Andy Murray has qualified for the second round of the European Open after a marathon match. The Scot won from American Frances Tiafoe on Tuesday night, after a fantastic spectacle, in three sets and after three tiebreaks (6/7, 7/6, 6/7). There were a few surprises in Antwerp: Jenson Brooksby took the measure of his compatriot Reilly Opelka, last year's finalist Alex de Minaur lost in two sets to Brandon Nakashima.

A true thriller. That's the best way to describe the match between Andy Murray (ATP-172) and Frances Tiafoe (ATP-48). Tiafoe started best with a break in the third game. The set eventually turned into a tiebreak. Murray struck and decided the first set in his favor with two aces in a row: 6/7 (2/7). In the second set Tiafoe again started promising and with a sense of spectacle, again it went equal to 6/6. And in this tiebreak the roles were reversed: now Tiafoe won with 9/7. In a nerve-racking third set it remained extremely exciting. The audience went crazy several times, and rightly so. What a match, what a kind of publicity for tennis! In the end, it was the two-time Olympic champion who won: Murray defeated a very deserving Tiafoe 6/7 (8/10) in the deciding tiebreak. "I've never experienced this before", Murray said in a first reaction after the match that lasted 3:45 hours (!).

Alex de Minaur, last year's finalist in Antwerp and number 26 on the ATP ranking, did not extend his performance from last year at the European Open. The Australian faced Brandon Nakashima (ATP-79) in the first round, who already showed some nice flashes. In an exciting first set, the American won 6/4. The 22-year-old de Minaur could not fight back and lost the second set: 6/0. In the second round, Nakashima will play against another qualifier, Henri Laaksonen (ATP-99). The Swiss turned out with consistent tennis on Tuesday, sending Frenchman Benoit Paire (ATP-47) empty-handed towards the locker rooms with 4/6, 6/0, 6/3.

Jenson Brooksby (ATP-70), who took a set against Novak Djokovic in the eighth final of the US Open this year, also showed his good form on Tuesday. In an American clash against Reilly Opelka (ATP-25) he could hardly be caught out with a mistake: it was 4/6 twice. Striking: Opelka - a serve canon of 2.11 meters - got to deal with a love game in the second set at 2/4 by his compatriot, on his own serve.

Ruben Bemelmans and Kimmer Coppejans could not win the opening match on Tuesday on Center Court: they lost to the second set leaders Nicolas Mahut and Fabrice Martin. They did not waste any time: they immediately went through Coppejans' serve and ran out to 0-3 and 1-4. The Belgian duo kept on chasing but eventually lost the first set: 3/6.

Also in the second set Martin and Mahut were too strong. The French went through the Belgians' serve in the third game and quickly climbed to a 2/5 bonus. Despite the support of an atmospheric Lotto Arena and some nice points, the Belgians could not make the stand anymore. Mahut and Martin lived up to their favorites role and won the second set too: 2/6.

At this moment, Zizou Bergs is still playing his first match against the South African Lloyd Harris, the pupil of Xavier Malisse.



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