

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 36 (2009)
Heft: 3

Artikel: Profile : in the shadow of the master
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-906386>

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In the shadow of the master. Stanislas Wawrinka, the Swiss number 2, still has significant potential. Having won Olympic gold in doubles alongside Roger Federer and risen to 9th position in the ATP rankings in 2008, the tennis star from the Canton of Vaud regularly reaches the fourth round of Grand Slam tournaments. By Alain Wey



Wawrinka came very close to winning a five-set thriller against crowd favourite Murray at Wimbledon.

Game, set and match. With the exception of Roger Federer, Stanislas Wawrinka is the only Swiss men's tennis player capable of competing with the best in the world. Currently ranked 18 by ATP, the right-hander from Saint-Barthélémy (Vaud) was defeated by Rafael Nadal in Miami in March after a contest lasting 2 hours 43 minutes which went to two tie-breaks. He even beat Roger Federer in the fourth round of the Monte Carlo Open in April. He told the press: "I've lost 7-6, 7-6 twice against Djokovic and Nadal. I'm not far

away from beating one of them." Stan Wawrinka continues to make progress and is in fact ranked third among current players for matches won over five sets (12/16). This is a profile of this studious, hard-working young man who has established himself on the world tennis stage.

2008 was the best season so far for Stanislas Wawrinka (aged 24) as he rose to 9th in the ATP rankings in June and remained in the top ten for 22 weeks. However, he finished the year in 13th position. Wawrinka started playing tennis at the age

of seven at the TC Stade-Lausanne and took part in tournaments on the international junior circuit from the age of 14. His parents run an organic farm which welcomes disabled visitors in the small village of Saint-Barthélémy. He left school to turn professional at the age of 15. In 2003, he won the junior title at Roland Garros. He then broke into the top 100 of the ATP rankings in April 2005, rising to 54th position at the beginning of 2006 and to 30th position a year later. Thanks to his performances in Barcelona (semi-final) and Rome (final), he forced his way into the top ten in 2008. In the same year, he won a gold medal in doubles at the Olympic Games in Beijing with his partner Roger Federer.

While clay is his favourite surface, it is on grass, at Wimbledon, and hard court, at the US Open, where Stanislas Wawrinka has reached the fourth round in Grand Slam tournaments. Coached by Frenchman Dimitri Zavialoff, Wawrinka also works with Roger Federer's physical trainer, Pierre Paganini. Paganini says: "Stanislas has defied the odds. When he was a junior, nobody believed in him. What he has achieved since is remarkable." While having slipped down the ATP rankings slightly, Stanislas Wawrinka's career is still on the up. During the Roland Garros tournament, he declared: "I feel more competitive than I did a year ago. I have become a more complete and physically stronger player". He added: "At the start of the season, I set myself the goal of being in the top ten, and, if possible, playing in the Masters." Whatever happens, the tennis sensation from Saint-Barthélémy will surely continue to spring a few surprises.

TOTAL DEDICATION TO TENNIS

Profile. Stanislas Wawrinka was born on 28 March 1985 in Lausanne. He says: "My mother is Swiss and my father is German. My paternal grandparents are Czech and German which explains my name, but I don't have any relations in the Czech Republic."* He is 1m 83cm tall and weighs 78 kg. He has two sisters, Djanaée and Naëlla, and a brother, Jonathan. He is dating Ilham Vuilloud, a former model and TV presenter for TSR.

Achievements. Currently 18th in the ATP rankings. He has won 128 matches and lost 106 in his career. Gold medal, alongside Roger Federer, in doubles at the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008. He won his only ATP ranked tournament, the International Series in Umag in Croatia in 2006. He was a finalist in Gstaad in 2005, Vienna and Stuttgart in 2007, and Rome and Doha in 2008. In Grand Slam tournaments, he reached the fourth round of the US Open in 2007 and 2008 and Wimbledon in 2008. He has won five Challenger tourna-

ments: Lugano (2009), Geneva (2003 and 2004), Barcelona (2004) and San Benedetto (2003).

Earnings. He has earned \$ 2.86 million since the start of his career.

Davis Cup. He has taken part since 2005. Owing to the repeat absence of Roger Federer, he is the Swiss team's strongest player.

Switzerland. "I love living here. It is the perfect country and my idea of paradise. I live near Lausanne, close to the lake. It's very peaceful, extremely beautiful and I can reach the mountains

and the snow in just an hour by car. As I'm always travelling, I appreciate the tranquillity of Switzerland."*

Favourite cities. Barcelona, Melbourne and Paris.

Cinema lover. He loves (French) comedies. "I loved The Dinner Game, by Francis Veber, and I am a big fan of Louis de Funès."*

Favourite group. U2.

www.stanwawrinka.com

* Quotations from "Le Matin" - 17 April 2009, TSR - 25 May 2009, "Coopération" - 18 June 2003 and 8 July 2008, "SonntagsZeitung" - 24 May 2009 and Swissinfo - 19 January 2009.