

## **AOW 3- Happening Now- The Australian Open and a Bit About Tennis**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hour:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **About Grand Slams:**

The four top prizes in the world of professional tennis are the Grand Slam tournaments, each taking place on a different surface. This fact often leads to players whose style of play suits a particular surface being more successful at some Slams than others. The four Slams (and their surfaces) are:

- The Australian Open (Hard Court)
- The French Open (Clay Court)
- Wimbledon (Grass Court)
- The US Open (Hard Court)
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The Australian Open is the first Grand Slam of the year, and for many of the top players in the game, it is also the first competitive tournament of the year that they'll play. Like the other slams, the winner of the Australian Open takes home a table-topping 2,000 ranking points, a significant haul given that, typically, many players in the top 20 don't have that many ranking points from a whole season of play.

The various Grand Slams take place on different playing surfaces. The Australian Open—like the US Open—is a hard court tournament. Unlike the US Open, however, the Australian court utilizes a cushioned polyurethane rubber court, which is different to the US Open's acrylic-based hard court. The Australian Open courts are distinctive from the green grass of Wimbledon, the red clay of Roland Garros, and the blue/green courts of Flushing Meadows as they are entirely blue.

### **Australian Successes**

As with the other Grand Slams, some players seem to have more success than others. For the Australian Open, Roy Emerson and Novak Djokovic hold the record for most titles with Emerson winning the event six times in the Amateur Era and Djokovic taking the same number of titles in the Open Era. On the women's side, Margaret Court overshadows both with a record-breaking eleven titles.

### **Always a Bridesmaid...**

Between 2010 and 2016, Andy Murray reached the final of the Australian five out the seven times, losing each time. All but one of these losses came at the hands of Novak Djokovic, with the other final being a loss to Roger Federer.

### **Age Gap**

Ken Rosewall has the unique honor of being both the youngest and the oldest men's single's player to win the Australian Open. He first took the title in 1953, aged just 18, but would go on to win it again in 1972 at the ripe old age (for a tennis player) of 37. Conversely, the youngest women's single's player was Martina Hingis, who took the title at the young age of 16 in 1997.

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### U.S. Invasion

Though the tournament takes place on the other side of the world, the United States have enjoyed more success at the Australian Open than any other nation—including Australia! Players from the US have taken the title thirteen times, while Australia and Sweden come in second with six titles.

### Heated Contest

The temperatures which the competitors of the Australian Open must endure have been known to reach as high as 45 degrees celsius, or 113 degrees fahrenheit.

### 10 red-hot reasons to tune in (literally) to the Australian Open



#### 1. It's warm (maybe even hot) in Melbourne

Had a little bit too much bomb cyclone, Arctic blast and thundersnow in your world lately? In Melbourne, the most likely sources of bluster are Nick Kyrgios and Fabio Fognini. It will be hot (literally). Really hot. Allow Eugenie Bouchard to illustrate.

#### 2. Lucky seven for Sloane?



First things first: US Open champion Sloane Stephens will be called US Open champion Sloane Stephens for the first time at a major. After that, there is one potential problem: Stephens hasn't won a match since her magical run in New York. Since winning seven straight at Flushing Meadows to win the Open in September, Stephens has lost seven straight in various spots across the globe. Do we call that a trend? And, if

a trend it is, does it indicate that she'll go back-to-back in majors?



#### 3. And that's just the tip of the iceberg

Sorry about the frigid reference, fellow shiverers. But Stephens is not the only American who could contend for the women's singles title. CoCo Vandeweghe has cracked the top 10 and made it to the semifinals at both the Australian Open and US Open a year ago. This time around she's got Aussie legend Pat Cash on her side ([literally and figuratively](#)). And then there's Madison Keys, she of the mighty forehand and the 2017 US Open runner-up title. Don't forget 2017 Australian Open runner-up (not to mention seven-time Grand Slam champion) Venus Williams. How great would it be to see Billie Jean King, scheduled to present the trophy to the winner, hand off to Venus? Chills.

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### 4. Maria, mates!



Love her or hate her, believe her or don't believe her, there's no denying that Maria Sharapova draws a crowd and makes everything around her a bit more interesting. The 2008 Australian Open champion, who missed last year's Aussie Open because she was serving a suspension for failing a drug test at the 2016 Australian Open, is back. But

without a seed. What's more, she is a win away from another collision with Anastasija Sevastova, who eliminated her at the 2017 US Open. Maria Sharapova and Angelique Kerber are the only two former Australian Open champions in the women's singles field.

### 5. Rooting for Petra



Rarely has it been easier to root for a player than it is for Petra Kvitová. The two-time Wimbledon champion missed last year's Australian Open while she recovered from the serious knife wounds to her left hand that were inflicted by an intruder at her home in the Czech Republic. The lefty made it to the quarterfinals at the US Open last

year and says she's back to feeling normal on tour.



### 6. Woz in Oz

She (Caroline Wozniacki) is arguably the best player in the women's field who has never won a major. And she closed 2017 by winning the biggest of her 27 titles, the year-end WTA Finals. Tuning in to see if the player who has won nearly \$27 million in prize money can win her first major in her 43rd attempt just makes good sense. She's seeded second and opens against Mihaela Buzarnescu, the only person she beat at the 2017 US Open.

### 7. Work, work, work, Simona



Like Wozniacki, top-seeded and world No. 1 Simona Halep is looking for the first Grand Slam title of her career. The pros? Halep was an Aussie Open quarterfinalist in 2014 and 2015. The cons? She hasn't won an Australian Open match since that 2015 run. She was ousted in the first round in 2016 (by Zhang Shuai) and

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2017 (by Shelby Rogers). She opens against Australian teen Destanee Aiava this time around.

### 8. Repeating Roger?



The prospect of seeing Roger Federer win major No. 20 could be reason enough to tune in. The thing is, you can't wait until the final to do it. The defending champion wasn't exactly given the kindest of draws in pursuit of his sixth Australian Open title. Among those who could stand between

Federer and the final (is that synonymous with Rafael Nadal?) are Sam Querrey, Juan Martin del Potro, Novak Djokovic, Stan Wawrinka and Sascha Zverev.



### 9. Will he or won't he?

We're talking Nadal here. But we're not talking about whether or not the 2017 runner-up (not to mention 16-time Grand Slam champion) will play. And we're not talking about whether or not he'll use the Australian Open as a springboard to narrow the gap on Federer.

Listen to this: Word on the web is that Nadal is turning back the clock and cutting back the sleeves, a la 2008. That bomb cyclone's got nothing on the swoon bomb about to strike Melbourne.

### 10. Only in Australia



And finally, you just know all is right with the world when Vegemite is the official Australian Open ball kid partner. Australian Ashleigh Barty, for one, is on board. "I've grown up eating Vegemite and now travel the tennis circuit with a tube of Vegemite in my luggage," she says. Cool?

*Article compiled from:*

*By Susie Arth | Jan 11, 2018*

*espnW.com*

*<http://www.espn.com/espnw/sports/article/22045712/10-red-hot-reasons-watch-2018-australian-open>*

*John Bullock:*

*<https://howtheyplay.com/individual-sports/All-You-Need-to-Know-About-the-Australian-Open-Tennis-Championships>*

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1. Who was the 2017 Australian Open runner up?

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2. Name the four tennis Grand Slams:

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which men's player has the possibility of winning his 20<sup>th</sup> Grand Slam at the Australian Open?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The temperature has been known to reach as high as \_\_\_\_\_ degrees Fahrenheit

5. What is Vegemite? Describe it.

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6. Name one of the best female players that has yet to win a Grand Slam.

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7. Have you ever played tennis? What do you think the hardest thing about playing tennis would be?

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8. Explain one thing that you learned in the article about tennis/Australian Open that you didn't know before.

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