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QUALIFIERS 2ND ROUND

AUSTRALIA
VS
BELGIUM



13-14 SEPTEMBER 2025 | KEN ROSEWALL ARENA, SYDNEY
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Getty Images, Tennis Australia,

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Tennis Australia acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people as the Traditional Custodians of Meanjin (Brisbane), the lands on which we work, rest and play on. We pay our respects to Jagera and Turrbal Elders past, present and emerging.



INTERNATIONAL TENNIS FEDERATION

► It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Ken Rosewall Arena in Sydney for this 2025 Davis Cup Qualifiers 2nd Round tie between Australia and Belgium, with both nations looking to secure a place at the Final 8 in Bologna in November.

Davis Cup, the men's World Cup of Tennis, was founded in 1900 and has grown to become the largest annual international team competition in sport. 159 nations have entered Davis Cup this year and will compete across multiple levels of the competition from regional events to the pinnacle of the Davis Cup Final 8.

The Davis Cup is a true celebration of men's team tennis, culminating at the Final 8 Knockout Stage at the end of the season. This year, Italy begins a three-year deal to stage the Finals, building on the successful events that we have hosted in Malaga since 2022.

With the Italian team having now won back-to-back titles, I am sure that the rest of the field in 2025 will be even more determined to finish the season holding the famous Davis Cup trophy aloft. Italy's triumph in Malaga in 2024, where they

defeated first-time finalists The Netherlands, saw them become the first team to successfully defend the Davis Cup title in more than a decade.

This weekend's Qualifiers 2nd Round ties are the next step on the road to deciding the 2025 world champions. The changes we have made to the format for this season means 13 of the 14 teams competing this weekend are contesting their second home-or-away tie in 2025, with 2024 runners-up the Netherlands competing for the first time in 2025. The 7 winners of this weekend's ties will join 2-time defending champion Italy at the Davis Cup Final 8 in November.

I would like to give special thanks to the players, the captains and the National Associations who give so much to making the Davis Cup such a special competition. The revenue that the ITF generates from Davis Cup is reinvested into the development of tennis at national level. By competing in Davis Cup, the players contribute to delivering tennis for future generations.

I wish all of you an enjoyable and successful weekend.



David A. Haggerty

David Haggerty
President, ITF



TENNIS AUSTRALIA

► Welcome to the Davis Cup Qualifiers 2nd Round where Australia will face Belgium.

Ken Rosewall Arena will host the tie, offering Australian fans an exciting opportunity to watch passionate Davis Cup competitors, all world-class athletes, on home soil for the first time in more than three years. It is the 20th time the Harbour City will host the prestigious event.

Leading the Culture Amp Australian Davis Cup team is Australia's top-ranked man, Alex de Minaur, who is thrilled to represent his home state of New South Wales. The Aussie No.1 has spoken often, and proudly, of how much he loves to compete in Sydney, where he claimed the

first of his 10 career titles at age 19 in 2019.

Lleyton Hewitt will lead his 34th tie as Australian captain. Australia, currently ranked No.2 in the world, is chasing a fourth consecutive appearance at the Davis Cup Final 8, which this year will be held in Bologna in November.

These events wouldn't be possible without the incredible team behind the scenes – from event operations to our ballkids, volunteers and officials – and we extend our thanks to each of them for their unwavering commitment and hard work.

We wish all teams the best of luck in this tie and thank our dedicated fans for their passionate support.



Jayne Hrdlicka

Jayne Hrdlicka
Tennis Australia Chair



NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Alex de Minaur will lead the Australian Davis Cup team at a happy hunting ground in Sydney.
By DAN IMHOFF

Summoned to the depths of a Swedish winter in Stockholm's historic Royal Tennis Hall in February, the Australian team knew the reward for more than three years waiting if they stood their ground.

The chance to secure a first home Davis Cup tie since March 2022 was added incentive for this close-knit bunch, which through an evolving line-up had fallen just short of the ultimate prize in Malaga in two of the past three years.

Victory over Sweden was the next step towards the overriding ambition of shared success, a prize the men in green and gold continued to chase 22 years since their predecessors - including their now captain Lleyton Hewitt - last landed the trophy.

Following a gruelling summer campaign some 15,600km across the globe, which culminated in a fourth straight Grand Slam quarterfinal - his first at Melbourne Park - Alex de Minaur wouldn't have missed it for quids.

He was again the linchpin, this time against the Swedes, when his 13th Davis Cup singles victory helped secure the 3-1 result.

The 'Demon' was instrumental to Australia's victory the last time the team faced Belgium in Hamburg in the group stage of Davis Cup 2019 when as a 20-year-old he thwarted then-world No.11 David Goffin in straight sets to guide his nation to a 2-1 win.

He was the blueprint of the side the last time Australia hosted a home tie - also at Ken Rosewall Arena - when he claimed both singles matches to claw back a 1-2

deficit and avoid an upset against Hungary in a 2022 qualifier.

The now 26-year-old has carried the hopes of a home crowd at Ken Rosewall Arena since 2018 where on debut he reached his first ATP final.

A year later it was the site of his maiden career title, while in 2023 he scored his first defeat of Rafael Nadal there at the United Cup.

It is an affinity for a site that began well before he impressed as a wiry teenager at a professional level.

"It's no secret it's one of my favourite courts to play on. It probably has to do with me growing up, training here at Homebush, watching at that stage the Apia International, watching

'I'VE HAD SOME GREAT MEMORIES HERE ... SOME VERY GOOD MATCHES WHERE I'VE GOTTEN UP FOR AND I PLAYED SOME OF MY BEST TENNIS. IT'S JUST PLAYING AT HOME, SO THAT'S WHY IT'S SO SPECIAL.'

ALEX DE MINAUR

ALL FIRED UP: Alex de Minaur, who has led Australia to Davis Cup runner-up performances in two of the past three seasons, is set to bring his best on home soil.

the matches, the players playing on that court and wishing to be able to compete on that court one day," De Minaur said.

"I've had some great memories here. It's been, you know, some very good matches where I've gotten up for and I played some of my best tennis. It's just playing at home, so that's why it's so special."

It is not just a welcome homecoming for the nation's sole top-10 star.

Alexei Popyrin and Jordan Thompson also spent their formative years honing their craft on the same courts as De Minaur in the Harbour City.

Ahead of their fourth-round clash at last year's US Open, De Minaur recounted the almost sibling role Thompson - five years his senior - played.

"In Sydney growing up he was kind of the guy I was looking up to and he's always given me a lot of time of day," De Minaur said. "He's helped me out a lot ... Sydney, Homebush I don't know exactly the first time, but I would have been 13 or 14 and again I was delighted to be able to hit with the older kids."

"Jordan was establishing himself as a professional at the time. I remember one of the biggest things at the time was he had a car, so he'd drive us to the gym, which would've been a 15 to 20-minute walk, so it was greatly appreciated at the time. I won't name the car, but it did the job. He's had plenty of dinners at my family's restaurant as well, so we go back plenty of years."

While De Minaur claimed that showdown for his maiden US Open quarterfinal, Thompson went on to claim his first men's doubles major with Max Purcell. It came amid a hot stretch for Popyrin, who joined the duo in the fourth round after a colossal upset of reigning champion Novak Djokovic - this on the heels of his first ATP Masters 1000 title in Montreal.

"Alexei, I've grown up with him. He's one of the best blokes out there so the fact that this is happening to him I think everyone in Australia couldn't be happier for him that's just the kind of guy he is," De Minaur said at the time.

"He's always had this big game but for me, how I'm seeing it is, in his mind it's clicked, it's clicked exactly his game style ... I'm just happy to see Popyrin breaking through those barriers."

All three have endured stints on the sidelines this year due to injuries or mental exhaustion and



COLLECTIVE PRIDE: Thanasi Kokkinakis, John Peers, Matt Ebden, Alex de Minaur, Lleyton Hewitt and Aleksandar Vukic represented Australia at the Davis Cup qualifying tie in Sweden.

have emerged better for the breaks.

Following an abbreviated grass-court swing, De Minaur hit the ground running in Washington where he saved three championship points against Alejandro Davidovich Fokina for his 10th ATP title. A week later, Popyrin won his first matches back since his return, including upsets of Daniil Medvedev and Holger Rune, before a narrow loss to No.1 seed Alexander Zverev in the quarterfinals of his Masters title defence.

After hauling his battered body to the fourth round at Wimbledon, Thompson - who cracked the top 30 in singles last year - was back too in time for most of the US hard-court season at the Cincinnati Masters, where he teamed with Davis Cup teammate Matt Ebden in doubles following his singles exit.

It was a glimpse into a combination that could well transpire against Belgium in what would be the 31-year-old Thompson's first Davis Cup outing in his home city.

He is the only team member left who faced

the Belgians when they last tasted victory - in the 2017 World Group semifinal in Brussels. The Aussies have since claimed two encounters for a narrow 4-3 head-to-head ledger.

During this year's Australian Open Thompson tipped his hat to his compatriots' success, including the team's talisman, to whom he paid special tribute.

Thompson - like De Minaur,

Popyrin and Ebden - is prepared to fill whatever role is required of them at Homebush.

"I think we're all just pushing each other," Thompson said. "We want to get better, just keep pushing up the rankings, all of us ... [De Minaur's] just continually getting better. He's constantly improving. He works so hard. He's very professional."

"Guys in the locker room know

ON THE MOVE: Alexei Popyrin claimed a breakthrough ATP Masters 1000 title in 2024 and cracked the top 20 this year.



SPIRITED STARS: Matt Ebden and John Peers (above) and Alex de Minaur are passionate team players.



it's going to take a big effort for them to beat him. His movement is unreal. I said at the US Open [2024] when I lost to him that he doesn't really have a weakness. Like, it is really hard to hurt him on the court because of his speed."

Ebden and Thompson reprised their occasional partnership in June when they claimed the trophy in 's-Hertogenbosch in their first ATP tournament together.

Following his Olympic doubles gold medal win in Paris alongside John Peers last year, the 37-year-old Ebden also thrived with Thompson in Davis Cup doubles.

The pair united to seal a 2-1 upset against the United States in Malaga last November, which sealed a semifinal berth for the third straight season.

"I'm just happy to be in this team and be able to play my part and be relied on and play well when it matters," Ebden said after the win over Ben Shelton and Tommy Paul. "So, you know, with all these guys behind me and beside me and pushing me, yeah, it's helped me go to new heights, for sure."

Popyrin has praised the team's captain, Hewitt - who has been at the helm for every tie since 2016 -

for galvanising the men's cohort in or around the Davis Cup fold.

He said the team's back-to-back finals in 2022 and 2023 would not have happened if the extended squad, players with whom he occasionally hit the golf course, did not get along.

Fellow 26-year-old De Minaur was, in his eyes, the perfect example of someone who constantly sought improvements.

"I've known Demon for a long time," Popyrin said. "I think we've always had the same mentality of hard work and constant just backing yourself and trusting yourself, and I think that's just kind of what he shows everyone in Australian tennis is that you don't have to be 6ft 5in with a big serve to kind of make it to the top."

"He has maximised everything and I think he'll be the first one to say he's got more improvements to make. I think knowing him, he'll put in the hard work and do it, and I think that's just a great person to be leading Australian tennis."

"I think it's someone that every junior player, no matter how talented, should aspire and look up to, just the way he goes about his business."

AUSTRALIAN TEAM



ALEX DE MINAUR

SINGLES RANK 8
DOUBLES RANK 345
W-L RECORD 16-10 (0-1 doubles)
DAVIS CUP TIES 23

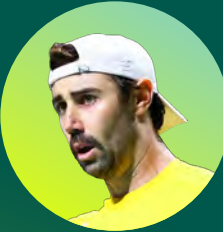
Australia's most capped active player, the 26-year-old has been the spearhead of the team that reached the final in 2022 and 2023. He climbed as high as world No.6 in 2024 amid a run of four straight Grand Slam quarterfinals.



ALEXEI POPYRIN

SINGLES RANK 40
DOUBLES RANK 126
W-L RECORD 4-3 (all singles)
DAVIS CUP TIES 7

The 26-year-old, who has played just one of his seven Davis Cup ties on home soil, became the first Australian since Lleyton Hewitt in 2003 to win a Masters 1000 title in Montreal in 2024 and cracked the top 20 for the first time in August this year.



JORDAN THOMPSON

SINGLES RANK 77
DOUBLES RANK 43
W-L RECORD 10-6 (5-2 doubles)
DAVIS CUP TIES 14

A Davis Cup debutant in 2017 in which he helped Australia reach the semifinals, the 31-year-old claimed his maiden ATP singles title last year in Los Cabos and rose as high as world No.3 in doubles as US Open champion alongside Max Purcell.



MATT EBDEN

SINGLES RANK -
DOUBLES RANK 54
W-L RECORD 15-3 (11-3 doubles)
DAVIS CUP TIES 17

A former world No.1 doubles player with two majors to his name, the 37-year-old first donned the green and gold in Davis Cup in 2012 and capped last year with Olympic gold in Paris alongside John Peers.

BELGIAN

Best

Zizou Bergs leads the charge of an increasingly influential Belgian contingent vying for success in the team setting. **By DAN IMHOFF**

A chant not commonly heard around tennis courts rang out across the southern reaches of Roland Garros last year after a Belgian qualifier booked his first third-round appearance at a Grand Slam.

It was a chant more expected at a football match, which was appropriate given the player at the centre of the celebrations, Zizou Bergs, was named after French football legend Zinedine 'Zizou' Zidane.

Moments after his victory, Bergs played conductor as he bellowed and orchestrated the predominantly Belgian crowd to reply on cue.

"Where is the party?" he screamed in Flemish.

"The party is here," the crowd roared back in his native tongue time and again before chants of "Zizou, Zizou!" ensued.

Initially better known for his social media presence

on TikTok, in which he built a sizeable following with his light-hearted, behind-the-scenes glimpses into life on tour, this was a player who increasingly commanded an audience for his on-court exploits.

Bergs has since grown into his role as the spearhead of the Belgian Davis Cup team, which now included rising singles prospect Raphael Collignon and former junior Roland Garros champion Kimmer Coppejans, as well as established doubles pair Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen for the Qualifiers 2nd Round against Australia at Ken Rosewall Arena.

The 26-year-old Bergs has grown substantially as a person and a player in the four years since his Davis Cup debut.

After falling to his idol Rafael Nadal in a tight three sets in Rome last year, he stood on the cusp of the top 100 and spoke of his lifelong goal to achieve that milestone.

It was always a fine line between making those ambitions

heard growing up in the Limburg region in the north of the country and keeping those expectations in check.

"We in Belgium, especially how I grew up, the dedication I have, we're very humble, we're down to earth," Bergs said. "If you say at school, 'I want to be top hundred,' which I had to say to skip lessons at school to go training, everybody is looking at you like, 'Who do you think you are?'"

"This goal has been there since I'm probably conscious about tennis, which is the age of seven ... It's such a tough ride that only you as a person, as a tennis player, you can experience and tell to other people.

"Even me going to the village where I used to live or going out, people not only in the professional area but also in the friend area are constantly talking about the top hundred."

That top-100 debut came a month later following his Roland Garros defeat of Maximilian Marterer, after which he had the crowd in full party-chant mode at his request.

Further ground has since been broken when in just his second event this season Bergs qualified in Auckland and reached his maiden ATP final.

French veteran Gael Monfils had his measure there but a month later, there was more to celebrate after he reached the

"BEING NOW THE NO.1 IN BELGIUM WITH A RANKING OF 50 I FEEL LIKE IS QUITE NICE [BUT] OBVIOUSLY, YOU WANT TO GO HIGHER." ZIZOU BERGS





Marseille semifinals to crack the top 50.

A first top-10 win over Andrey Rublev booked a maiden ATP Masters 1000 third round in Miami, and the switch to grass in June proved immediately fruitful.

After he eked out a third-set tiebreak win over Australia's Alexei Popyrin in 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands, Bergs didn't drop a set en route to his second final of the year, including a win over former world No.17 Reilly Opelka, before a narrow defeat to Gabriel Diallo.

Following his maiden third-round appearance at the US Open – the second time he has advanced as far at a major – Bergs arrives in Sydney at a career-best mark.

"Being now the No.1 in Belgium with a ranking of 50 [now up to No.45] I feel like is quite nice," he told *usopen.org*. "Obviously, you want to go higher. My goal is actually to really hype tennis up again in Belgium. I'm growing as a person, I'm growing as an athlete and having joy."

Belgium's No.2 for the tie, world No.91 Collignon, ensured it was a US Open to remember when

in just his second Grand Slam appearance he too reached the third round following a five-set upset of 12th seed Casper Ruud.

It marked the first time since Wimbledon 2015 that two Belgian men featured in the last 32 and came after he and Bergs combined in doubles at Flushing Meadows.

"First match in five sets of my life and I win it, so very good," Collignon said following the biggest win of his career over Ruud, 7-5 in the fifth. "I think it's the best day of my life."

The 23-year-old son of a brain surgeon was due to make his major debut at Roland Garros in May, but a broken thumb suffered during a lead-up event in Hamburg cost him his place and it was not until Wimbledon that he took his place in the starting field.

Following his first ATP match win over former world No.9 Fabio Fognini in Morocco in April, Collignon backed it up a week later with his fourth ATP Challenger title for a career-high ranking of world No.81.

While still a way off his coach – now also his Davis Cup Captain – Steve Darcis' highest mark, Collignon has already

BELGIAN HOPES: Raphael Collignon (above) and Kimmer Coppejans (right) bring youth and experience; Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen (below) have successfully combined in doubles, while Captain Steve Darcis has featured in two Davis Cup finals.



matched the deepest run at a Slam for the former world No.38, whose third-round finishes came at Melbourne Park and Roland Garros.

"It's funny because I like to ask him questions about his career, and at the beginning of the tournament I asked him what his best result was [at Flushing Meadows]," Collignon told *ATPTour.com* of Darcis. "...It's great to go further than him in one thing at least, because he had so many good results in his career."

Once a top-20 duo in doubles, Gille and Vliegen look set to reprise their partnership in Sydney. The pair reached the Roland Garros 2023 final and secured the Monte Carlo Masters last year among eight ATP titles together.

Like Bergs, they too have faced Australia before – all three were part of that most recent showdown between the two nations, which Australia swept 3-0 in the 2022 round-robin stages of the Davis Cup Finals in Hamburg. Belgium has reached the competition's final three times – including twice in three years in 2015 and 2017.

In 2015, it was Great Britain that

ended hopes of a breakthrough in Ghent, when former top-10 talisman David Goffin, current Belgium Captain Darcis and Ruben Bemelmans – who has since coached Bergs – fell 3-1 to an Andy Murray-led team on clay.

Two years later, on an indoor hard court in Lille, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga led the French to a narrow 3-2 triumph over Goffin, Darcis, Bemelmans and Joris de Loore.

That run came after the Belgians narrowly upstaged Australian Captain Lleyton Hewitt's men in Brussels, when the hosts came from a 1-2 deficit on the final day as Goffin and Darcis stamped out Nick Kyrgios and Jordan Thompson, respectively.

In addition to the 2022 round-robin clash, Australia also claimed the honours between the two nations in 2019 at that stage in Madrid.

Bergs and his compatriots have every intention of drawing that head-to-head ledger back level at 4-all and ensuring their smaller but vocal contingent among a sea of almost 10,000 at Ken Rosewall Arena have reason to break out the post-match chants.

The Belgians plan to make the Sydney-side party their own.

BELGIUM TEAM



ZIZOU BERGS

SINGLES RANK No.45
DOUBLES RANK No.899
W-L RECORD 8-6 singles
DAVIS CUP TIES 10

Belgium's top-50 flag-bearer made his Davis Cup debut against Bolivia in 2021 and went 4-1 in singles in the competition last year, including wins over former world No.3 Marin Cilic and Italy's Flavio Cobolli.



RAPHAEL COLLIGNON

SINGLES RANK No.91
DOUBLES RANK No.527
W-L RECORD 0-2 singles
DAVIS CUP TIES 2

The newcomer of the team, who supports football teams Standard Liege and Barcelona, 23-year-old Collignon made his debut last year with narrow singles losses to Botić van de Zandschulp and Joao Fonseca at the Davis Cup Finals in Malaga.



KIMMER COPPEJANS

SINGLES RANK No.181
DOUBLES RANK No.508
W-L RECORD 4-5 (singles 3-5)
DAVIS CUP TIES 5

A singles and doubles debutant in Belgium's 5-0 blitzing of Canada in the 2015 quarterfinals, former top 100 player Coppejans has been recalled to the team after former junior Australian Open champion Alexander Blockx's withdrawal.



SANDER GILLE

SINGLES RANK -
DOUBLES RANK No.58
W-L RECORD 9-8 doubles
DAVIS CUP TIES 17

Former doubles world No.18 Gille is the most capped player of the current Belgian team, having competed alongside Joran Vliegen for his country for all but one of the team's ties – with David Goffin – since 2018.



JORAN VLIENEN

SINGLES RANK -
DOUBLES RANK No.67
W-L RECORD 9-7 doubles
DAVIS CUP TIES 16

Vliegen, who has been as high as No.17 in doubles, has played all his 16 rubbers with Sander Gille, his partner in the Roland Garros final in 2023. Off court, both players have earned business degrees.

Alex de Minaur and
Ajla Tomljanovic
Tennis Superstars

TEAM SPIRIT



PASSING *the* TORCH

Thirty-one years after their tenure as Australian Davis Cup captain and coach began, John Newcombe and Tony Roche's legacy lives on. **By JACKSON MANSELL**

AUSSIE CAMARADERIE: Australian Davis Cup Captain Lleyton Hewitt, with Alex de Minaur, is building on the team spirit he demonstrated early in his career.

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When John Newcombe and Tony Roche took over Australia's Davis Cup leadership from retiring captain Neale Fraser in 1994, they were on a mission.

Despite winning four titles during Fraser's tenure, Newcombe and Roche – as captain and coach respectively – recognised work to be done in Australian men's tennis.

Pat Cash, the 1987 Wimbledon champion, was the lone Australian man to lift a Grand Slam singles trophy in the previous 18 years. With experienced campaigners including John Fitzgerald, Wally Masur and Darren Cahill at the twilight of their careers, Newcombe and Roche identified the opportunity for a culture shift.

"We had a new team," Newcombe said. "So we got the young team together and said, 'The Australian players at the

moment are very happy if they get to the round of 16 or quarterfinals of a Grand Slam.

"We're not about that. We are going to win Grand Slam tournaments, and we are going to win the Davis Cup, and we're going to become the best team in the world."

"It's not going to be easy. It's going to be a hard road. But if you guys want to put in the hard work, we'll be there with you."

The foundation of trust that Newcombe and Roche implemented between 1994 and 2000 not only led to Davis Cup success, but also unearthed the trademark Aussie spirit displayed today.

Newcombe and Roche guided Australia to the 1999 Davis Cup title – their first in 13 years. The players who represented Australia during that period also accounted for 14 Grand Slam titles across singles and doubles.

Achieving that success was no

'FOR FIVE YEARS, WE WENT THROUGH A LOT OF HARDSHIPS, A LOT OF UPS AND DOWNS, BAD LOSSES, GOOD WINS, IT WAS A REAL MIXTURE.' JOHN NEWCOMBE

easy feat. In 1995, Australia was relegated to Group I of the Asia/Oceania Zone for the first time. Three years later, they lost to Zimbabwe in one of the biggest upsets in Davis Cup history.

"For five years, we went through a lot of hardships, a lot of ups and downs, bad losses, good wins, it was a real mixture," Newcombe said. "Every time the boys were knocked down on the ground, we'd say, 'Guys, come on, here's your test of your character. When you stand up again, you've got to stand taller than when you were knocked down, and we will be with you every inch of the way.'"

Newcombe and Roche's

greatest exponent of on-court character was arguably a blond-haired, ponytailed teenager from South Australia.

An 18-year-old Lleyton Hewitt, who had been Orange Boy for the past five ties, made his Davis Cup debut in the 1999 quarterfinal against the United States.

In what was expected to be a baptism of fire for the South Australian youngster, Hewitt stood tall. He recorded victories over world No.9 Todd Martin and Jim Courier as Australia defeated the United States in enemy territory for the first time in 26 years.

However, it was during

Newcombe's final tie at the helm – the 2000 Davis Cup final against Spain in Barcelona – where Hewitt's character was on full display.

"He hadn't been that well during the four months leading in [to the final] with a constant cough, so he wasn't able to train as hard as he'd like to," Newcombe told *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

"After two-and-a-quarter hours, he changed ends and his whole body was shaking from exhaustion. He looked at me and said, 'I'm stuffed.' He couldn't even hold the water in his hand; it was spilling out of the glass.

"Two-and-a-half hours later, he served for the match at 5-4 in the fifth. He got down 0-30, each time he threw the ball up to serve, 13,000 Spaniards whistled and booed ... He went back and reeled off the next five points to win the match. I think that was one of the greatest fighting efforts that I've ever seen. It was in hostile territory,

and it was just sheer willpower that got him over the line."

A quarter of a century later, Australia's most capped player continues to fly the flag at Davis Cup. Hewitt is in his ninth season as captain, the fourth-longest tenure behind Fraser, Harry Hopman and Fitzgerald.

While only two of his 20 Davis Cup seasons as a player were under Newcombe and Roche – Hewitt also served under Fitzgerald, who led Australia to the 2003 title and in Pat Rafter's tenure between 2010 and 2015 – he was forever indebted to the duo.

"I couldn't have had two better teachers in Newk and Rochey," Hewitt said.

INSPIRATIONAL LEADERS: John Newcombe guided Australia to Davis Cup glory in 1999 (below left); Newcombe and long-time coach Tony Roche (below) have helped instil leadership qualities in Lleyton Hewitt (bottom with Alexei Popyrin) and Aussie No.1 Alex de Minaur (bottom right).

"It was all about hard work, putting in the long hours on the practice courts, so you could go out there and give yourself the best opportunity to get the result that you deserve on match days.

"It is a different kind of pressure playing in Davis Cup and not playing for yourself. In terms of them instilling that belief into me – I had their backing to go out and play in the big matches – was something I really drew on as well."

In recent years, Alex de Minaur has thrived in a similar role. De Minaur's unwavering, fighting spirit draws comparisons to Hewitt's never-say-die attitude.

"I think it's awfully important to have somebody step up to the mark in that [leadership] role and he's certainly been able to do that," Hewitt said.

"It's not just what he does on the match court for us in Davis Cup, it's behind the scenes in the locker room or in the team meetings, on the practice court.

"It makes my job a lot easier to go out there and captain these boys when they know exactly what it takes and what the other guys – and especially a top 10 player – are doing to give themselves the best chance of playing for their country."

With Hewitt's guidance and De Minaur's leadership, the Australian Davis Cup team has developed a strong culture.

Since Hewitt became captain in 2016, Australia has transformed into a genuine Davis Cup contender – runners-up in 2022 and 2023, semifinalists in 2024. Ranked world No.2, Newcombe believes the team is in safe hands.

"I give a lot of credit to Lleyton, the way he's kept the group together and really pushed," he said. "The boys punch above their weight in Davis Cup matches. They're so proud to be representing Australia.

"They all give everything they have."



For the RECORD

Facts and figures from the world team competition.

DAVIS CUP TOP 20 RANKINGS

NATION	PTS
1. Italy	573.25
2. Australia	470.75
3. Netherlands	432
4. Germany	421
5. United States	419.5
6. Canada	408.25
7. Spain	386.75
8. France	381.5
9. Czechia	376
10. Argentina	374
11. Belgium	368.5
12. Croatia	360.75
13. Hungary	355.5
14. Finland	354.5
15. Serbia	354.25
16. Great Britain	349.5
17. Chile	340.75
18. Denmark	339.75
19. Brazil	337.25
20. Austria	334.25

REIGNING CHAMPIONS:
Italy claimed back-to-back Davis Cup titles in 2023 and 2024.

MOST TIES PLAYED (ACTIVE WORLD GROUP PLAYERS)

Marin Cilic (CRO)	34	2006-current
Robin Haase (NED)	28	2006-current
Marton Fucsovics (HUN)	26	2010-current
Nicolas Mahut (FRA)	24	2015-current
Marcel Granollers (ESP)	23	2010-current
Alex de Minaur (AUS)	23	2018-current
David Goffin (BEL)	22	2012-current
Jan-Lennard Struff (GER)	22	2015-current
Tallon Griekspoor (NED)	21	2019-current
Mate Pavic (CRO)	20	2013-current

STRONG START: The Australian team (from left, Matt Ebden, Thanasi Kokkinakis, Aleksandar Vukic, John Peers, Alex de Minaur and Captain Lleyton Hewitt) successfully launched its 2025 Davis Cup campaign in Sweden.

AUSTRALIA vs BELGIUM

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Australia leads Belgium 4-3

FIRST MEETING 1922 World Group First Round - Australasia d Belgium 4-0 (Scarborough, England)

LAST TIME THEY MET 2022 Finals Round Robin - Australia d Belgium 3-0 (Hamburg, Germany)

AUSTRALIA

TITLES 28 **LAST TITLE:** 2003 **FIRST YEAR PLAYED** 1905
TIES PLAYED 285 (205-79) **YEARS IN WORLD GROUP** 37

LAST FIVE FINISHES

2024	Semifinals
2023	Final
2022	Final
2020/21	Group Stage
2019	Quarterfinals

MOST TIES PLAYED

Lleyton Hewitt	43	1999-2018
Todd Woodbridge	32	1991-2005
Adrian Quist	28	1933-1942
Mark Woodforde	24	1988-1998
Jack Crawford	23	1928-1936
John Bromwich	23	1937-1944
John Fitzgerald	23	1982-1992
Alex de Minaur	23	2018-current
John Alexander	20	1968-1979
Pat Cash	19	1983-1991

MOST TIES PLAYED (ACTIVE PLAYERS)

		Debut
Alex de Minaur	23	2018
Matthew Ebden	17	2012
John Peers	16	2016
Thanasi Kokkinakis	14	2014
Jordan Thompson	14	2017

MOST RUBBERS WON

Lleyton Hewitt	59	1999-2018
Adrian Quist	43	1933-1942
John Bromwich	39	1937-1944
Jack Crawford	36	1928-1936
Roy Emerson	34	1959-1968
Gerald Patterson	32	1919-1925
Pat Cash	31	1983-1991
Todd Woodbridge	30	1991-2005
Norman Brookes	28	1905-1914
James Anderson	28	1919-1924

MOST SINGLES WINS Lleyton Hewitt (42)

MOST DOUBLES WINS Todd Woodbridge (25)

BELGIUM

TITLES 0 **FIRST YEAR PLAYED** 1904
TIES PLAYED 208 (105-102) **YEARS IN WORLD GROUP** 26

LAST FIVE FINISHES:

2024	Group Stage
2023	Won World Group I
2022	Group Stage
2020/21	Won World Group I
2019	Group Stage

MOST TIES PLAYED:

Jacques Brichant	42	1949-1966
Philippe Washer	39	1946-1960
Olivier Rochus	30	2000-2015
Andre Lacroix	25	1928-1941
Steve Darcis	25	2005-2017
Ruben Bemelmans	24	2008-2019
David Goffin	22	2012-current
Patrick Hombergen	21	1966-1981
Filip Dewulf	21	1991-2002
Leopold de Borman	19	1930-1940

MOST TIES PLAYED (ACTIVE PLAYERS)

		Debut
David Goffin	22	2012
Sander Gille	17	2018
Joran Vliegen	16	2018
Zizou Bergs	10	2021
Joris de Loore	8	2016

MOST RUBBERS WON:

Jacques Brichant	71	1949-1966
Philippe Washer	66	1946-1960
Andre Lacroix	35	1928-1941
David Goffin	29	2012-2022
Patrick Hombergen	26	1966-1981
Steve Darcis	24	2005-2017
Olivier Rochus	23	2000-2015
Bernard Boileau	22	1977-1986
Filip Dewulf	16	1991-2002
Bart Wuyts	15	1988-1995

MOST SINGLES WINS Jacques Brichant (52)

MOST DOUBLES WINS Philippe Washer (20)

FAST FACTS

► Australia has won five ties and lost one at Ken Rosewall Arena since the venue began hosting Davis Cup ties in 2001. Their most recent tie at the venue is also their most recent tie on home soil. Australia defeated Hungary 3-2 to advance to the Finals in Hamburg.

► Lleyton Hewitt has featured in the last five ties between these two countries. The current Australian Davis Cup captain holds a 4-1 record in rubbers played and 7-4 in rubbers coached.

► His only loss to a Belgian player was against Kristof Vliegen in 2007. Their battle lasted four hours and 30 minutes, which is the longest rubber featuring an Australian in Davis Cup history.

► Belgian No.1 Zizou Bergs has won six of his last eight Davis Cup matches, recording wins against players including Flavio Cobolli, Marin Cilic, and Tallon Griekspoor.

QUALIFIERS
1ST ROUND FEBRUARY

QUALIFIERS
2ND ROUND SEPTEMBER

QUALIFIERS 1ST AND 2ND ROUND WILL BE PLAYED HOME OR AWAY.

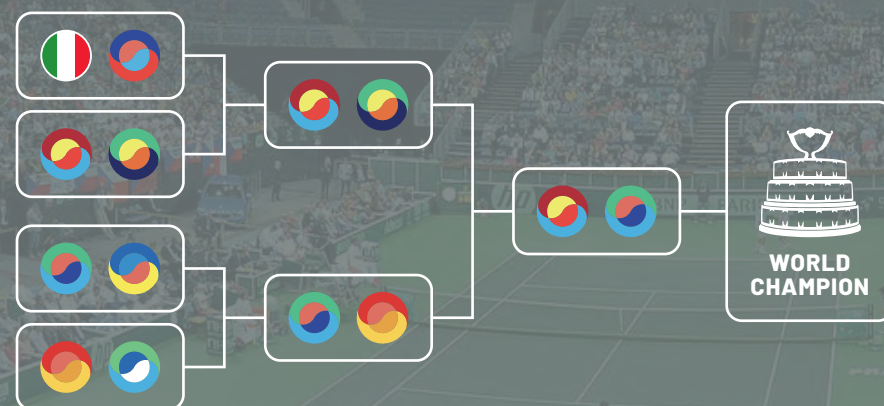


13 losing nations to play World Group I
home-or-away ties in September

7 winning nations progress
to Final 8 in November

FINAL 8 18-23 NOVEMBER
BOLOGNA, ITALY

SCAN FOR DAVIS CUP
FINAL 8 TICKETS



CHAMPIONS

Australia is among 16 nations crowned Davis Cup champions since 1900.

CHALLENGE
ROUND

1900	USA d British Isles	3-0
1902	USA d British Isles	3-2
1903	British Isles d USA	4-1
1904	British Isles d Belgium	5-0
1905	British Isles d USA	5-0
1906	British Isles d USA	5-0
1907	Australasia d British Isles	3-2
1908	Australasia d USA	3-2
1909	Australasia d USA	5-0
1911	Australasia d USA	4-0
1912	British Isles d Australasia	3-2
1913	USA d Great Britain	3-2
1914	Australasia d USA	3-2
1919	Australasia d Great Britain	4-1
1920	USA d Australasia	5-0
1921	USA d Japan	5-0
1922	USA d Australasia	4-1
1923	USA d Australia	4-1
1924	USA d Australia	5-0
1925	USA d France	5-0
1926	USA d France	4-1
1927	France d USA	3-2

1928	France d USA	4-1
1929	France d USA	3-2
1930	France d USA	4-1
1931	France d Great Britain	3-2
1932	France d USA	3-2
1933	Great Britain d France	3-2
1934	Great Britain d USA	4-1
1935	Great Britain d USA	5-0
1936	Great Britain d Australia	3-2
1937	USA d Great Britain	4-1
1938	USA d Australia	3-2
1939	Australia d USA	3-2
1946	USA d Australia	5-0
1947	USA d Australia	4-1
1948	USA d Australia	5-0
1949	USA d Australia	4-1
1950	Australia d USA	4-1
1951	Australia d USA	3-2
1952	Australia d USA	4-1
1953	Australia d USA	3-2
1954	USA d Australia	3-2
1955	Australia d USA	5-0
1956	Australia d USA	5-0
1957	Australia d USA	3-2

1958	USA d Australia	3-2
1959	Australia d USA	3-2
1960	Australia d Italy	4-1
1961	Australia d Italy	5-0
1962	Australia d Mexico	5-0
1963	USA d Australia	3-2
1964	Australia d USA	3-2
1965	Australia d Spain	4-1
1966	Australia d India	4-1
1967	Australia d Spain	4-1
1968	USA d Australia	4-1
1969	USA d Romania	5-0
1970	USA d Germany	5-0
1971	USA d Romania	3-2
1972	USA d Romania	3-2
1973	Australia d USA	5-0
1974	South Africa d India	Walkover
1975	Sweden d Czechoslovakia	3-2
1976	Italy d Chile	4-1
1977	Australia d Italy	3-1
1978	USA d Great Britain	4-1
1979	USA d Italy	5-0
1980	Czechoslovakia d Italy	4-1

WORLD GROUP
FINAL

1981	USA d Argentina	3-1
1982	USA d France	4-1
1983	Australia d Sweden	3-2
1984	Sweden d USA	4-1
1985	Sweden d Germany	3-2
1986	Australia d Sweden	3-2
1987	Sweden d India	5-0
1988	West Germany d Sweden	4-1
1989	West Germany d Sweden	3-2
1990	USA d Australia	3-2
1991	France d USA	3-1
1992	USA d Switzerland	3-1
1993	Germany d Australia	4-1
1994	Sweden d Russia	4-1
1995	USA d Russia	3-2
1996	France d Sweden	3-2
1997	Sweden d USA	5-0
1998	Sweden d Italy	4-1
1999	Australia d France	3-2
2000	Spain d Australia	3-1
2001	France d Australia	3-2
2002	Russia d France	3-2
2003	Australia d Spain	3-1

2004	Spain d USA	3-2
2005	Croatia d Slovakia	3-2
2006	Russia d Argentina	3-2
2007	USA d Russia	4-1
2008	Spain d Argentina	3-1
2009	Spain d Czech Republic	5-0
2010	Serbia d France	3-2
2011	Spain d Argentina	3-1
2012	Czech Republic d Spain	3-2
2013	Czech Republic d Serbia	3-2
2014	Switzerland d France	3-1
2015	Great Britain d Belgium	3-1
2016	Argentina d Croatia	3-2
2017	France d Belgium	3-2
2018	Croatia d France	3-1
2019	Spain d Canada	2-0
2020	Finals not played	
2021	RTF d Croatia	2-0
2022	Canada d Australia	2-0
2023	Italy d Australia	2-0
2024	Italy d Netherlands	2-0

Viva ITALIA

A golden age for Italian tennis gathered momentum as the nation's Davis Cup team became the first since Czechia in 2012 and 2013 to win consecutive titles. **By JACKSON MANSELL**

Italy closed out 2024 with a strong statement of intent, downing the Netherlands in Malaga to secure a second straight Davis Cup title and signal an ongoing period of dominance.

Led by multiple Grand Slam champion Jannik Sinner, nine Italians were ranked inside the ATP top 100 when they lifted the trophy - Sinner, Lorenzo Musetti, Flavio Cobolli, Matteo Berrettini, Matteo Arnaldi, Luciano Darderi, Lorenzo Sonego, Fabio Fognini and Mattia Bellucci - almost double the five they celebrated with in 2022.

For Sinner, the triumph capped a career-best season in which the 24-year-old rose to world No.1 and won both hardcourt majors. Undefeated in Davis Cup play, he was nonetheless outshone statistically by Matteo Berrettini, whose flawless 6-0 record underscored his return to form.

Berrettini, sidelined through injury until June, stormed back to win 27 of 37 matches in the second half of the season, including a 10-match streak in July. The 29-year-old delivered crucial singles wins against Australia's Thanasi Kokkinakis and Dutchman Botic van de Zandschulp, and combined with Sinner to clinch a deciding doubles rubber against Argentina in the quarterfinals.

Musetti, Cobolli and Arnaldi also had seasons



to remember. Musetti reached finals on grass, clay and hard court, finishing the year at No.17. Cobolli climbed 69 places to No.32, his Australian Open third-round breakthrough as a qualifier setting the tone. Arnaldi peaked at No.29 and reached his

first Masters 1000 semifinal in Montreal, while also grinding out a pivotal group-stage win over Thiago Monteiro that kept Italy on course.

"It doesn't matter who is playing, we always put our heart on the court. Everybody

is giving their best; that is the secret to our team," Berrettini told *ATPTour.com*. "The guys back home, Flavio Cobolli, Matteo Arnaldi, they won some matches in the previous stage that were really important. It's a really big team and I'm very happy with the trophy."

Italy's success was mirrored on the women's side, with Jasmine Paolini guiding her nation to a fifth Billie Jean King Cup crown - their first in 11 years - placing them alongside Russia and Spain for the fourth-most titles in history.

In the men's competition, Italy became the first nation since Czechia in 2013 to defend the Davis Cup, and their victory guaranteed direct passage to the 2025 Final 8 in Bologna this November. The Netherlands, runners-up in Malaga, also earned a bye and will face Argentina for a place in the knockout rounds.

The Davis Cup Final 8 will take place from 18-23 November.



WORLD CHAMPIONS:
Jannik Sinner and Matteo Berrettini (above) starred for their nation as Italy secured back-to-back Davis Cup titles in 2024.



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