



NICOLAS ALMAGRO (ESP)

**Age** 26 (21.08.1985)  
**Born** Murcia, Spain  
**Lives** Murcia, Spain  
**Height** 6'0"  
**Weight** 179lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 9  
**Career titles** 12  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** 3R 2009, 11

Determined and resilient with one of the more overwhelming forehands in the men's game, this Spaniard deserved more credit than he earned for one particular performance at last year's Championships. He dared to venture on to Court 18, John Isner's adopted territory complete with a plaque to commemorate the 2010 marathon, and beat the giant American despite having 28 aces propelled past him. He didn't allow his opponent a break point opportunity and such a tactic underlines his on-court approach. To date that four-set win was his most memorable victory at Wimbledon and in seven visits he has yet to survive the first week of competition. That should not be surprising for a player who was raised on clay from the age of eight and has won every one of his ATP World Tour titles on the terre battue. He is unlike so many of the modern-day Spaniards in that he plays right-handed and employs a single-fisted backhand. Add to that he regularly plays on the edge of his emotions and has been known to lose his temper. This year at the Australian Open he was involved in controversy when Tomas Berdych refused to shake his hand after the match following a rally that saw Almagro hit the ball straight at his Czech opponent as he approached the net. As Andy Murray's coach Ivan Lendl will attest, this is more than a legitimate tactic.



TOMAS BERDYCH (CZE)

**Age** 26 (17.09.1985)  
**Born** Valasske Mezirici, Czech Rep.  
**Lives** Monte Carlo, Monaco  
**Height** 6'5"  
**Weight** 200lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 6  
**Career titles** 7  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** RU 2010

Ask Tomas Berdych to sum up his personality away from the tennis court and he will correctly tell you he is quiet, bordering on shy with abhorrence for fuss and a distinct aversion to offending people. Yet position him on a baseline with a racket in his hand and the opposite applies. Cast the mind back to January's Australian Open when he ignited a cacophony of booing by refusing to shake the hand of Nicolas Almagro after claiming the Spaniard tried to drill a ball directly into his face. Think further back to the Madrid tournament of 2006 when he beat Rafael Nadal and then angered a Spanish full-house by raising his fingers to his lips in a gesture designed to illustrate they had nothing to shout about. The Wimbledon crowd have happier memories of his progress to the 2010 final when his powerhouse tennis, great reach and thankfully calm mind allowed him to beat first Federer and then Djokovic before losing to Nadal. Since then his membership of the elite world top 10 has been unbroken and his adaptability is illustrated by the fact his list of ATP World Tour titles includes triumphs on grass, clay, carpet and hard courts, indoors and out. Clearly a man of all seasons.

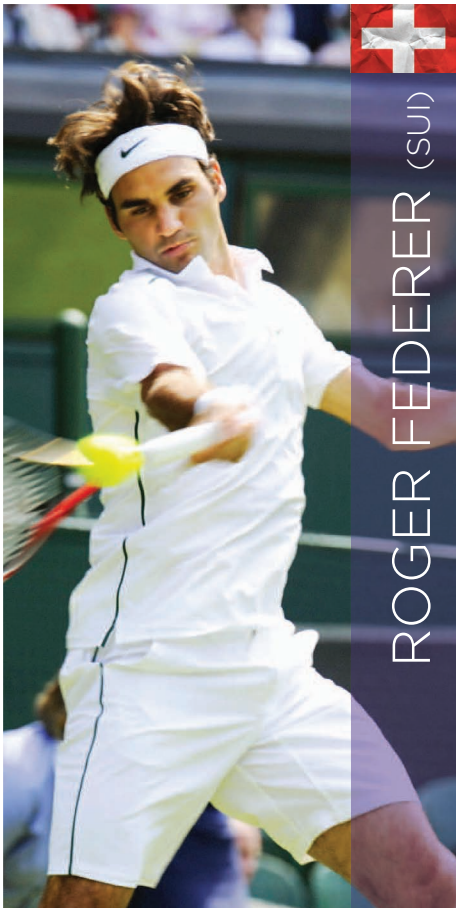


JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO (ARG)

**Age** 23 (23.09.1988)  
**Born** Tandil, Argentina  
**Lives** Tandil, Argentina  
**Height** 6'6"  
**Weight** 214lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 4  
**Career titles** 11  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** R16 2011

There is nothing quite as gratifying in sport as a good comeback story and that of this imposing but quietly spoken Argentine stands up against most. After winning the 2009 US Open title and becoming the first player ever to beat both Federer and Nadal in the same Grand Slam tournament, he was perceived as potentially a multiple major champion. Then tragedy struck with damaged right wrist tendons wiping out most of his 2010 season. Del Potro's world ranking, once as high as No.4, duly plummeted. He could not play for nine months and on 31 January last year he was ingloriously listed as the world's 485th best player. After career-saving surgery, the climb back gained momentum. Here last year he reached the last 16, but it took a defeat to convince him he was again able to compete with the best and 2011 concluded with Del Potro applauded off court after losing out a brutal five-set encounter with Nadal in the Seville-staged Davis Cup final. A rich run of form early this year saw him collect a 10th career title in Marseille and beaten finalist Tsonga summed up the thoughts of all: "He's one of the best players in the world, and his place is in the top five, maybe even higher."

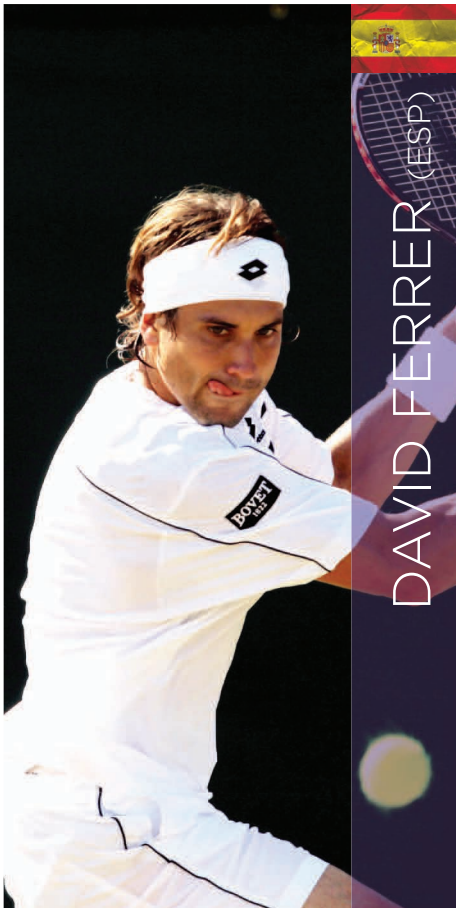




ROGER FEDERER (SUI)

**Age** 30 (08.08.1981)  
**Born** Basel, Switzerland  
**Lives** Bottmingen, Switzerland  
**Height** 6'1"  
**Weight** 187lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 1  
**Career titles** 74  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** W 2003, 04, 05, 06, 07, 09

Across the Atlantic, there is perpetual conjecture on whether the imperious Swiss is the GOAT of tennis – Greatest Of All Time. In Britain similar discussions may take place without the farmyard terminology, but what is irrefutable is 16 Grand Slam singles titles make the six-times Wimbledon champion the most successful male in tennis history and another success at this year's Championships will equal Pete Sampras's All England Club record. Some were prepared to write Federer's competitive obituary when he allowed a two sets lead against Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga slip in last year's Wimbledon quarter-final but how wrong they would have been. Given the form shown by Federer to reclaim the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals title at London's O2 at the end of last year and then backing that up with more early 2012 success at Rotterdam, Dubai and Indian Wells, added to his deep-rooted affection and respect for the lawns of London SW19, nobody should be too surprised if he ends a run of two fallow years and once again lifts the trophy on the final Sunday. Paul Annacone is in the perfect position to make a comparison between the two great multiple champions, having coached both. He maintains when Sampras got past his 30th birthday, top-flight tennis became a distinct effort while Federer manages to maintain the enthusiasm of a 20-year-old.



DAVID FERRER (ESP)

**Age** 30 (2.05.1982)  
**Born** Javea, Spain  
**Lives** Valencia, Spain  
**Height** 5'9"  
**Weight** 160lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 4  
**Career titles** 14  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** R16 2006, 10, 11

Vince Lombardi, the legendary American football coach wasn't much of a tennis player. But he knew all about the difference between winning and losing and one of his most famous quotes perfectly fits David Ferrer: "The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand." The Spaniard may be the most diminutive member of the world's top 10, one of the oldest and doesn't possess a killer shot like some, but nobody runs further, trains harder or puts more effort into every single point. No wonder his peers have given him three nicknames; The Wall, The Grinder and The Rabbit. Late last year at the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals in London he admitted to being physically drained but a week later he was sufficiently strong to fight back from a losing position in the Davis Cup final and win in five sets against Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro after almost five hours of attritional tennis. Admittedly grass is his least favoured surface, or to be more accurate the least conducive to his talents, but he never misses the Championships like some of his compatriots in years gone by and has reached the last 16 on three occasions.

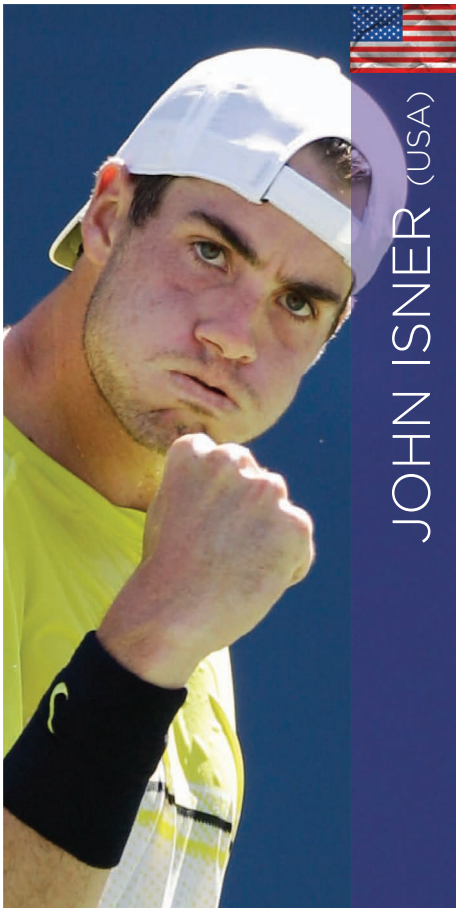


MARDY FISH (USA)

**Age** 30 (09.12.1981)  
**Born** Edina, Minnesota, USA  
**Lives** Los Angeles, USA  
**Height** 6'2"  
**Weight** 180lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 7  
**Career titles** 6  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** QF 2011

After a decade of Andy Roddick being the standard bearer for the United States at Wimbledon, the star-spangled banner has been passed to his friend and school-mate who was born in Minnesota, grew up in Florida but these days has an impressive home address in Beverley Hills. Currently the senior member of men's tennis elite, he registered a best ever finish to last year's Championships by reaching the quarter-finals for the first time, ousting the 2010 runner-up Berdych on the way. Four months later he was back in London as the only American to qualify for the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals after an impressively consistent summer on the hard courts of his native continent, winning the Atlanta title and reaching finals in Los Angeles and Montreal. The common perception is Fish only became a top-class competitor after some serious self-assessment following knee surgery in late 2009, which saw him embark on a diet that dispensed of more than two stones in weight. By his own admission, a leaner body manifested itself in greater stamina, speed and focus. However he won the Olympic silver medal in singles at the 2004 games, which is some achievement considering he thought his sporting future might lay on the basketball, rather than tennis, court up to the age of 15.





JOHN ISNER (USA)

**Age** 27 (26.04.1985)  
**Born** Greensboro, USA  
**Lives** Tampa, Florida, USA  
**Height** 6'9"  
**Weight** 245lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 9  
**Career titles** 3  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** 2R 2010, 11

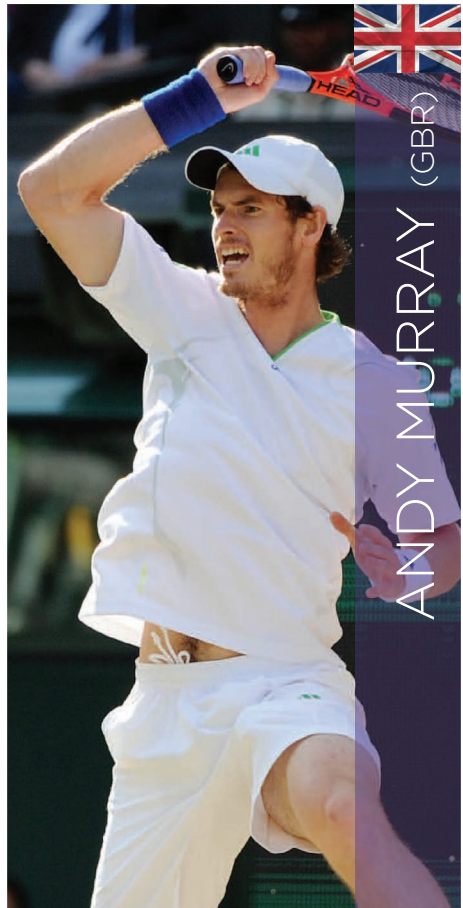
What does John Isner have that revered multiple Wimbledon champions such as Laver, Sampras, Borg and Federer can only dream about? Besides the obvious ability to stand out in a crowd by virtue of his towering height, the answer is a special plaque on the wall of Court 18 here at the All England Club, in honour of that record-breaking 11 hours and five minutes epic with Frenchman Nicolas Mahut that spread over three days of 2010. But this year the giant from North Carolina has ensured he's known for more than just being a big-serving marathon man. First Isner achieved what no other player had managed since 2001 and beat Roger Federer in Davis Cup singles on Swiss soil. A month later he cracked the world's top 10 for the first time in March after ousting world No.1 and defending champion Novak Djokovic in Indian Wells. Immediately after last year's Championships, he travelled back across the Atlantic Ocean and won the first ever grass court singles title of his career at Newport, Rhode Island, and many now believe his power, physique and concentration make him a potential major champion. However, this fortnight provides a more achievable aim; in three previous Wimbledon campaigns he has only won two matches and never reached the third round.



FELICIANO LOPEZ (ESP)

**Age** 30 (20.09.1981)  
**Born** Toledo, Spain  
**Lives** Madrid, Spain  
**Height** 6'2"  
**Weight** 187lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 15  
**Career titles** 2  
**Plays** Left-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** QF 2005, 08, 11

It's a little-known fact, but no current player has contested more fifth sets that have extended beyond 6-6 with no tie-break, which says a lot for the staying power of this Spaniard who is rather unique in his home country, in that he is happier on grass courts than clay. Lopez has finished the ATP World Tour calendar in the world's top 50 for eight of the last nine years, but in 2011 he figured in the top 20 for the first time. In common with friends, compatriots and Davis Cup winning team-mates such as Nadal and Verdasco, he plays left-handed but employs a single-handed backhand. Ally that to a strong serve and the ability to play both at net and on the baseline and it's easy to see why he's such an accomplished grass court performer. British fans may remember him as the man who finally ended Tim Henman's last Wimbledon at the second-round stage in 2007, but in 10 previous main draw visits to these lawns, he has also claimed the notable scalps of Roddick, Safin, Baghdatis and Ancic. Add to that a win over Nadal at Queen's Club two years ago and it's easy to see why his is a name many want to avoid when the draws for grass court events are made.



ANDY MURRAY (GBR)

**Age** 25 (15.05.1987)  
**Born** Glasgow, Scotland  
**Lives** Oxshott, England  
**Height** 6'3"  
**Weight** 185lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 2  
**Career titles** 22  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** SF 2009, 10, 11

In the past 12 months, the player revered as Britain's most talented male tennis player since Fred Perry has taken significant steps to increase his chances of winning that elusive major title. However the weight of expectation has become that fractional bit heavier with the passing of another year and it's now 76 summers since the only man with a statue dedicated to him within the grounds of the All England Club lifted the prized trophy. By his own admission, Murray is now more mature, pragmatic, controlled and ready to win and for the most part the reason is the influence of Ivan Lendl, the former world No.1 and twice Wimbledon runner-up who became coach in January. There has rarely been any doubt that the British No.1 had the game of a champion, but under the tutelage of 52-year-old Lendl, he is now developing the requisite mind-set. With the exception of just a handful of weeks, this gifted counter-puncher is closing in on four years as one of the elite quartet in an era accepted as one of the finest in men's tennis. Last year he became only the seventh player in the Open era to reach the semi-finals of all four Grand Slam events and that run continued in January with another impressive show at the Australian Open, halted in a gargantuan tussle over five sets with eventual champion Djokovic.



JANKO TIPSAREVIC (SRB)

**Age** 28 (22.06.1984)  
**Born** Belgrade, Serbia  
**Lives** Belgrade, Serbia  
**Height** 5'11"  
**Weight** 183lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 8  
**Career titles** 2  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** R16 2007, 08

The statement was one of insistence and non-negotiable at a tournament earlier this year: "Please, from now on, no more questions about the tattoos." Clearly the time has come, in Janko Tipsarevic's mind, for him to be regarded as truly a top-flight competitor rather than just something of a cameo because of his decision several years ago to be have the words of Dostoyevsky and Schopenhauer indelibly inked on to his body. And there is certainly rationality in the Serb's demand; for the first time, he ended 2011 as a top 10 player after winning late-year titles in Kuala Lumpur and Moscow. Understandably, the majority of Tipsarevic's career has been played in the shade of his compatriot Djokovic, but by virtue of three year's seniority, he was first to serve notice to the tennis world by winning the 2001 Australian Open junior title. At last November's Barclays ATP World Tour Finals across town at the London O2 Arena, he beat Djokovic for the first time in a recognised match and can regard the victory alongside wins over other former world No.1s such as Roddick, Moya, Hewitt, Ferrero and Safin. With competition forgotten, the pair of regular Davis Cup team-mates then set off for a relaxing holiday together with respective partners on the Maldives where tennis was very much off limits.



BERNARD TOMIC (AUS)

**Age** 19 (21.10.1992)  
**Born** Stuttgart, Germany  
**Lives** Monte Carlo, Monaco  
**Height** 6'4"  
**Weight** 170lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 28  
**Career titles** 0  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** QF 2011

No nation has a greater heritage of champions at Wimbledon than Australia and although this tall teenager might be German-born of Croatian parents and currently based in Monte Carlo, he arrived in Queensland as a three-year-old toddler and is unquestionably the new standard bearer of the six-starred national flag. So far controversy has tainted much of Tomic's career but, there is no doubting his talent, demonstrated on these lawns last year when, ranked 158th in the world and forced to win through qualifying, he became the youngest player since Boris Becker in 1986 to reach the last eight. His victims included former top 10 performers Nikolay Davydenko and Robin Soderling, and 2002 semi-finalist Xavier Malisse before eventual champion Novak Djokovic ended the run. An outstanding junior career thrust him on to the world stage as he became the youngest ever champion of the Australian Open junior singles title, aged just 15. The following year he went on to also win the US Open boys' title and here at the All England Club he was a semi-finalist in the junior singles and runner-up in doubles. Some describe his game style as tempo tennis; played at a much slower speed to suit himself and un-nerve the opponent. Nevertheless he can still unleash the power when the opportunity presents itself and his first serve is a definite weapon.



JO-WILFRIED TSONGA (FRA)

**Age** 27 (17.04.1985)  
**Born** Le Mans, France  
**Lives** La Rippe, Switzerland  
**Height** 6'2"  
**Weight** 200lbs  
**Career-high ranking** 5  
**Career titles** 8  
**Plays** Right-handed  
**Best Wimbledon** SF 2011

A long look down the honour roll is required to find the last Frenchman to lift the Wimbledon trophy; Yvon Petra in 1946, the first Championships after World War Two. He was athletically tall with an attacking game full of volleys and a serve so strong it actually broke a net. So aside from the fact nets are considerably more durable these days, there are several striking similarities with this year's man most likely to achieve on the grass from across the English Channel. Last summer the player known simply as Jo reached the final of the Queen's Club tournament and Wimbledon's semi-finals, completing one of the most stunning Centre Court fight-backs from two sets down to beat Federer. Add the fact Tsonga also reached the final of the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals and it's abundantly clear a London title cannot be far away. Talent has never been an issue for this quiet and unassuming performer from Le Mans, he was the world's second-ranked junior and won the US Open boys' title a year before Andy Murray. Avoiding injuries has been the major problem, most notably in the knees, back and shoulder. Thankfully he is now enjoying a period of concerted fitness so this could be the year for that long overdue French triumph.