

## MURRAY VS. RODIONOV ON CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY

*The grass-court season kicks off in style at the Lexus Surbiton Trophy, with Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club playing host to the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the prestigious ATP Challenger Tour event.*

### SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP

- **Andy Murray (GBR) [Age: 36; Rank: 43]** – It's home cooking for Murray this week in Surbiton, as the Brit is thriving once again on home soil. For the second straight year, Murray is into a grass-court final, having finished runner-up at the ATP Tour stop in Stuttgart in 2022. In search of more match play on grass ahead of Wimbledon, he has dropped just one set en route to Sunday's final. The 36-year-old has history in Surbiton, having first competed here at the age of 17 in 2004.

Victory for Murray would also make him the oldest grass-court winner in Challenger history, at the age of 36. The previous oldest was 33-year-old Antony Dupuis at Nottingham 2006.

- **Jurij Rodionov (AUT) [Age: 24; Rank: 134]** – Rodionov has been a force on the lawns of Surbiton this week, not dropping a set in four matches. He has denied all four break points faced in total. The Austrian, who qualified for his first ATP Masters 1000 main draw in Madrid in April, has made a seamless transition from clay to grass. It was in 2021 that he enjoyed his best result on the ATP Tour, on grass, reaching the semi-finals in Stuttgart. On the Challenger circuit, he recently lifted his sixth trophy, prevailing on the hard courts of Biel, SUI, in March.

**ATP Rankings Update** – Rodionov will climb to a career-high No. 105 with the title. Murray will drop one spot with the title, falling to No. 44, as his Stuttgart (ATP 250 level) final points from a year ago will come off his ranking on Monday.

**Head-to-Head** – Murray dominated their lone previous meeting, right here in Surbiton in 2022. He took the first-round encounter 6-2, 6-1 in just 58 minutes.

### Past Finals

**Murray:** This is Murray's 11<sup>th</sup> career grass-court final and first at the Challenger level. He owns an 8-2 record in 10 previous finals on grass, across Wimbledon, Queen's Club, Stuttgart and the 2012 Olympics. He is seeking his first title on the surface since Wimbledon 2016 (d. Raonic). Last month, in Aix-en-Provence, he won his first Challenger crown in 17 years, 8 months, the longest gap between titles in Challenger history.

**Rodionov:** Rodionov carries a 6-1 record in Challenger finals into Sunday's championship. He has never lifted a trophy on grass in his young career. The Austrian most recently triumphed on the hard courts of Biel, Switzerland, in March.

### Stat of the Day

Champion on the clay of Aix-en-Provence, last month, Murray is bidding to lift a Challenger trophy on multiple surfaces in the span of just six weeks. He would become just the sixth player to win Challenger titles on both clay and grass in the same season, since the tour's inception in 1978. The most recent to do so was Nick Kyrgios in 2014 and Marton Fucsovics in 2017.

### WHAT IS THE ATP CHALLENGER TOUR?

The ATP Challenger Tour is the second-highest level of men's professional tennis in the world. Since its inception in 1978, competition on the tour has been intense, with players fighting for critical ATP Rankings points and prize money. These tournaments (more than 180 events in 40 countries) give fans the excitement of watching world class tennis in a smaller, more intimate setting.

The purpose of the ATP Challenger Tour is to provide opportunities for players to develop their talents and skills from a young age, while gaining valuable experience against strong competition. The circuit has been the first step for the sport's most accomplished stars, including Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. Regardless of talent and potential, every player must work their way up the ATP Rankings, as they strive to reach the Top 100 and compete on the ATP Tour and in Grand Slam tournaments.

<b>TOURNAMENT LEVEL</b>		<b>WINNER</b>	<b>FINALIST</b>
Grand Slam		2000	1200
ATP Masters 1000		1000	600
ATP 500		500	300
ATP 250		250	150
Challenger 175		175	100
Challenger 125		125	75
Challenger 100		100	60
Challenger 75		75	50
Challenger 50		50	30