



****For Immediate Release****

2007 USTA Comerica Challenger
By USTA Press Aid Amy Larson
Sunday July 22, 2007
At Seascape Sports Club, Aptos, CA
Purse: \$75,000
Surface: Hard-Outdoor

17 Year-Old Donald Young Wins Comerica Challenger

APTOS, CA - As the ball landed out Donald Young fell to the ground and kissed the court floor. The day before his 18th birthday, the No. 290-ranked American not only competed in his first ever Challenger final, he won it.

In Sunday's \$75,000 Comerica Challenger championship, the unseeded Young denied No. 2-seed Bobby Reynolds from winning a single game in the second set, taking the match 7-5, 6-0.

Reynolds, who won the Naples Challenger in April, completely unraveled in the second set. The 24-year-old was furious over a handful of close line calls and was unable to adjust to his opponent's playing style.

"I rely mostly on my serve and forehand. It was tough that Donald is a lefty. He has a great forehand and is so fast," Reynolds said.

Reynolds' performance was a stark contrast to his semifinal match, when he demoralized Alex Bogomolov Jr of the United States 6-4, 6-1. Bogomolov received a player misconduct call when he failed to even attempt to return Reynolds' massive right-handed serve.

In Sunday's contest, both players started out playing conservatively, hitting from the baseline and making serves without full velocity.

During Young's serve at 2-2, however, the two men from Georgia suddenly looked like they were playing a match point when a long rally ensued. Reynolds shot a forehand bullet down the line, and Young answered back with two handed backhands that made his opponent sprint from sideline to sideline. Reynolds finally hit an unsuccessful return long, handed the game- as well as the entire match's momentum- to Young.

At 5-5, Reynolds screamed at the head umpire for calling his serve wide. While Reynolds' mentally crumbled, Young's turquoise shoes darted to seemingly unreturnable shots.

Up 2-0, Young's sprints between the net and baseline incited a roaring applause from the crowd. Young, who never lost a set in the entire tournament, said his fiery spirit comes from self-motivation.

"I just want to win so bad, for me," he said.

Reynolds double faulted three times in his last two serves, which was all Young needed to put the rest of the match away.

"My opponent played a great match today, he ran down every ball I hit," Reynolds said. "You will see a lot of him in the future."

After being defeated in singles, Reynolds got his revenge when he won the doubles final with Rajeev Ram, taking out John Paul Fruttero of the United States and Cecil Mamiit of the Phillipines, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 10-7.

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Sunday, July 22 – FINAL RESULTS

Men's Singles – Finals

Donald Young (USA) def. Bobby Reynolds (USA), 7-5, 6-0.

Men's Doubles – Finals

Rajeev Ram (USA) and Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. John Paul Fruttero (USA) and Cecil Mamiit (PHI), 6-7 (5), 6-3, 10-7.

CAL OPEN Women's Singles – Finals

Page Bartelt (USA) def. Stephanie Kusano (USA), 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-4.

CAL OPEN Women's Doubles– Finals

Amelia Ecalante (USA) and Page Bartelt (USA) def. Stephanie Kusano (USA) and Cristina Visico (USA), 7-6, 5-7, 6-0.



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Young Continues to Advance

APTOS, Ca—Down three games to Prakash Amritraj in the first set, Donald Young, playing in a singles semifinal, knew exactly who was to blame: his racket.

At the start of Saturday's match, the No. 335-ranked Indian pelted his opponent with volleys and strong forehands while the American played defensively at the baseline. Trailing 5-2, Young hurled his racquet across the court.

"When something is going wrong, you have to fault something," Young said. "So I faulted the racquet."

With a new racquet in hand, the 17-year-old from Georgia shocked and awed the crowd as he rapidly hammered one wicked slice after another.

"It was his set for the taking, and he let me in," Young said. "I started playing my game."

Young won eight consecutive games to steal the first set.

"If I had won that set 6-2, the complexion of the match would be much different," Amritraj said. "Once he won that first set it was a long way back."

Throughout the tournament, Amritraj's consistent serve was pivotal in getting past No. 3 seed Takahiro Terachi (JPN), Brian Wilson (USA), and Bruno Echagaray (MEX).

"I served well all week, and I think I served very poorly today," Amritraj, 23, said of his performance against Young.

A long and hard-fought match against Echagaray the night before had depleted Amritraj's energy level which showed when he started making several unforced errors.

In the second set, Young's serve alone blew through the first game and Amritraj answered back with quick serve-and-volley execution. But the flood gates had opened.

With a confident gleam in his eye, Young easily won the next five games, thereby advancing on to face No. 133-ranked Bobby Reynolds of the United States.

Sunday's finalists, who entered the tournament as the No. 32 (Reynolds) and 13 (Young) seeds, actually played against each other Saturday in a doubles semi-final match. Reynolds and Rajeev Ram (USA) defeated Young and Patrick Briaud (USA) in three sets.

Young, who turns 18 on Monday and is ranked 290 in the world, said winning his first-ever Challenger championship would be the ideal birthday present.

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Saturday, July 21 – FINAL RESULTS

Singles – Semifinals

Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA), 6-4, 6-1.

Donald Young (USA) def. Prakash Amritraj (IND), 7-5, 6-1.

Doubles – Semifinals

John Paul Fruttero, (USA), and Cecil Mamiit (PHI) def. Alex Kuznetsov (USA) and Scott Oudsema (USA), 7-5 3-6, 10-6.

Rajeev Ram (USA) and Bobby Reynolds def. (USA) Patrick Briaud (USA) and Donald Young (USA), 6-3, 2-6, 12-10.

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Sunday, July 22 - order of play

Matches start at 11 a.m.:

CAL OPEN Women's Singles Championship: Page Bartelt (USA) vs. Stephanie Kusano (USA)

Starting not before 1 p.m. Singles Championship: Donald Young (USA) vs. Bobby Reynolds (USA)

Followed by Doubles Championship: Rajeev Ram (USA) and Bobby Reynolds (USA) vs. John Paul Fruttero (USA) and Cecil Mamiit (PHI).

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Friday, July 20, 2007
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Young sprints to semifinals

APTOS, CA– Donald Young could have held his own in a 100-meter dash Friday as he sprinted his way to a 7-5, 6-4 win that trampled Alex Kuznetsov's chance of a repeat championship in Aptos.

The Comerica Challenger quarterfinal was a contest between the 17-year-old's sheer speed and Kuznetsov's cunning ball placement.

The No. 166-ranked Kuznetsov, 20, jumped out to an early lead in the first set 3-0. In first round play Kuznetsov had little trouble getting past Takao Suzuki of Japan, 6-3, 6-2.

Using his lightening quick reflexes Young returned ground shots with startling precision, enabling him to break Kuznetsov twice and force the set into a seventh game.

The young American, ranked No. 290 in the world, scored four consecutive points before utilizing his relentless left-handed serve for a set-winning ace.

Kuznetsov easily served through the second set's first game without Young scoring a single point. The teen clenched his jaw to keep himself from yelling a profanity that cost him a player misconduct penalty in a match against Rajeev Ram Wednesday.

"You playing like a – ooh I want to say it," Young said to himself in disgust. At 2-2, Kuznetsov's smart ball placement while volleying at the net snuck several crucial shots past his competitor. Again tied at 4-4, Young's cross-court slice came alive. Tension ran high when match point turned into a long rally; Kuznetsov returned a whipping backhand from his opponent, only for Young to smack down a final volley.

Young threw his head back and pumped his fist celebrating the victory that earned him a spot in the semifinals Saturday. Winning is nothing new for the teenage hotshot; from 2001 to 2005, he was number one in his age group in USTA and ITF.

But a Challenger championship would help Young solidify himself in the professional circuit, but first he will have to get past Indian Prakash Amritraj Saturday.

Friday, July 20 – FINAL RESULTS

Singles – Quarterfinals

Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. Andrea Stoppini (ITA), 4-6, 6-1, 7-5.

Donald Young (USA) def. Alex Kuznetsov (USA), 7-5, 6-4.

Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA) def. Noam Okun, (ISR), 6-4, 7-6 (2).

Prakash Amritraj (IND) def. Bruno Echagaray (MEX), 6-3, 1-6, 6-3.

Doubles – Quarterfinals

Rajeev Ram (USA) and Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. Kyu Tae Im (KOR) and Takahiro Terachi (JPN), 7-6 (6), 7-5.

Alex Kuznetsov (USA) and Scott Oudsema (USA) def. John Isner (USA) and Brian Wilson (USA), 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Patrick Briaud (USA) and Donald Young (USA) def. Adam Davidson (USA) and Pablo Pires De Almeida (USA), 6-3, 6-3.

Saturday, July 21, 2007 order of play

Starting at 12 p.m. Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA) vs. Bobby Reynolds (USA).

Followed by Prakash Amritraj (IND) vs. Donald Young (USA).

Followed by John Paul Fruttero (USA) and Cecil Mamiit (PHI) vs. Alex Kuznetsov (USA) and Scott Oudsema (USA)

Followed by Rajeev Ram (USA) and Bobby Reynolds (USA) vs Patrick Briaud (USA) and Donald Young (USA).



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Wilson Falls in Third Set Tie-Break

While many professional athletes have given up after injuries forced them onto the sidelines, Prakash Amritraj said a serious injury boosted his game.

When Thursday's quarterfinal match between Brian Wilson and Amritraj came down to a nail-biting third set tiebreaker, Amritraj, 23, said his strategy was not to win, but rather, "do the right thing."

The No. 335-ranked Indian ousted the No. 317-ranked American, 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (4).

"A year ago, I would have told myself 'this match should be over already,'" Amritraj said.

But last August a broken left wrist kept him off the court for eight months and he watched his rankings drop from 200 to 900. Amritraj came back in April with a new perspective.

At the start of the tiebreak, "I was enjoying the moment," he said.

In the first set Wilson, 25, appeared flat—a stark contrast to his fiery first round match when he defeated top seed Kristian Pless.

The American, nicknamed "beamer" for his BMW initials, double faulted and gave away the set.

Amritraj's equally effective forehand and backhand ground strokes as well as confident volleys continued into the second set. But after a few self-pep talks, Wilson's serve came around and brought the match to a set a piece.

During a tense tiebreak Amritraj never missed a first serve which proved to be the difference in the match.

Wilson's quarterfinal defeat was a hard loss to take, especially after losing in the quarterfinal in a Mexico City Challenger three months before.

Amritraj was asked how he felt about his victory.

"Fantastic, but I'm not satisfied. Every day you get better," he replied.

For Friday's semifinals, Amritraj will oppose the No. 1 Mexican Bruno Echagaray.

Thursday, July 19 – FINAL RESULTS

Singles – Quarter finals

Noam Okun, Israel, def. Scott Oudsema, United States, 7-5, 7-6 (2)

Bruno Echagaray, Mexico, def. Todd Widom, United States, 6-4, 6-1

Alex Bogomolov Jr., (USA) def. Scoville Jenkins, (USA), 6-7 (7), 6-3, 6-4

Prakash Amritraj, (IND) def. Brian Wilson, (USA), 6-4, 2-6, 7-6(4)

Doubles – Quarter finals

Rajeev Ram, United States, and Bobby Reynolds, United States, def. Satoshi Iwabuchi, Japan, and Takao Suzuki, Japan, 6-4, 6-3.

Donald Young (USA) and Patrick Briaud (USA) def. Colin Ebel Thite (AUS) and Nick Lindahl (AUS), 7-5, 6-2.

Singles qualifying started Saturday, July 14 and main draw began Monday, July 16. Singles and doubles finals are scheduled for Sunday, July 22.



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Donald Young Defeats Rajeev Ram

APTOS, CA- Eighteen-year-old Donald Young (No. 290) showed why he is predicted to be the next big thing in tennis, coming through with big points when it counted to defeat (No. 185) Rajeev Ram of the United States, in a close 7-6, 7-5 match at the Comerica Challenger Wednesday night.

Young blazed onto the tennis scene when he won the Junior USTA National Championship when he was just 14 and has been making his name known ever since.

Ram, 23, also had a strong career start, winning the NCAA doubles title with Brian Wilson while playing for the University of Illinois . This year he reached the quarterfinals in five Challengers.

Two months before Wednesday's competition, Young and Ram faced each other at the Tunica Challenger.

"He likes to serve and volley," Young said of his opponent. The southpaw found holes in Ram's technique by blasting shots to the back corners.

"It's always good to get the 'W'," Young said after the match.

Despite the victory, Young was far from content about the performance he showed on center court, stating that "none" of his shots were working.

Young received two player misconduct calls during the match.

"I had a couple of bad calls and got a little upset," he said.

For Friday's quarterfinals, Young said he is pumped up to play the Comerica Challenger's defending champion, Alex Kuznetsov (USA).

Wednesday, July 18 – FINAL RESULTS

Singles – Round of 16

Andrea Stoppini (ITA) def. Go Soeda , Japan , 6-2, 7-5.

Alex Kuznetsov (USA) def. Kamil Capkovic (SVK), 7-6 (3), 6-3.

Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. Brendan Evans (USA), 6-2, 6-4.

Donald Young (USA) def. Rajeev Ram (USA), 7-6, 7-5.

Doubles – Round of 16

Kyu Tae Im (KOR) and Takahiro Terachi (JPN) 6-1, 2-6, 10-7.

Alex Kuznetsov (USA) and Scott Oudsema (USA) def. Brian Cory (USA) and Rick Kepler (USA) 6-3, 6-2.

Alessandro Da Col (ITA) and Andrea Stoppini (ITA) def. Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA) and Todd Widom (USA) 6-4, 2-6, 10-6.

John Isner (USA) and Brian Wilson (USA) def. Bruno Echagaray (MEX) and Nicholas Monroe (USA) 6-2, 6-2.



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Wilson def. No. 1 seed Pless

APTOS, CA- The No. 317 ranked American, Brian Wilson, waged a major upset over top seed Kristian Pless of Denmark Tuesday, in a tense 3-6, 6-3, 6-1 match at the \$75,000 Comerica Challenger.

Pless was considered the man to beat within the field of competition, who entered the tournament as the only player ranked within the Top 100 of the main draw.

"It's added pressure for him being the number one seed; he's supposed to win the tournament," Wilson said.

In the 21-year history of the Comerica Challenger, the top seed has never walked away champion. The only wildcard winner was British sensation Andy Murray in 2005, who is now ranked No. 9 in the world.

At the start of the match, Pless outplayed Wilson with a deadly combination of hard hit shots and smart ball placement.

After losing the first set 6 games to 3, Wilson rocketed a ball out of the Seascope Sports Club complex and it appeared his mental game went right along with it.

But to the packed-crowd's surprise, Wilson instead picked up his aggression with serves quickly followed by volleys.

"That's my game," said Wilson, a native of Oceanside California. "I take chances."

With the match tied at a set a piece, Wilson said he mentally prepared for the third set by staying positive and taking advantage of his momentum.

Pless appeared furious about the linesman's calls. When he walked onto the court for the third set, Pless growled at the linesman as he traced the inside service line with his racquet.

"He was not liking my slice," Wilson said.

With his serve remaining consistent Wilson charged ahead three games to none.

Pless yelled in Danish and kicked the fence in disgust at his return game unraveling before him and fell 6 games to one.

"It's been a tough season. Then I lose to a guy is in the 300's," a disappointed Pless said after the match. "I cannot play much worse."

Pless's game has seen better days. He represented Denmark at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, and was a member of the Danish Davis Cup team between 1999 and 2001 with a 12-6 overall record.

Wilson credited his win with taking last week off to rest up for the \$75,000 Challenger and keeping mentally positive.

"I took him out ... it's a great feeling," Wilson said.

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Tuesday, July 17 FINAL RESULTS

Singles – Second Round

Prakash Amritraj (IND), def. Takahiro Terachi (JPN), 6-2, 6-4.

Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA) def. Tobias Kamke, (GER), 6-3, 6-0.

Bobby Reynolds (USA) def. Alessandro Da Col (ITA), 6-0, 6-4.

Fritz Wolmarans (RSA) def. Scott Oudsema (USA), 6-1, 6-4.

Kamil Capkovic (SVK) def. Satoshi Iwabuchi, (JPN), 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Andrea Stoppini (ITA) def. Cecil Mamiit (PHI), 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Donald Young (USA) def. Nick Lindahl (AUS), 6-2, 3-0.

Noam Okun (ISR) def. Jamie Baker (GBR), 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Brian Wilson (USA) def. Kristian Pless (DEN), 3-6, 6-3, 6-1.

Bruno Echagaray (MEX) def. John Paul Fruttero (USA), 3-6, 6-1, 6-2.



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Defending Champion Kuznetsov Wins First Match

APTOS – Alex Kuznetsov knew his opponent Takao Suzuki of Japan would come at him with wicked slice shots up at the net. To defend his only singles Challenger title, the American would have to execute ace serves to take No. 279 Takao's return game away

The No. 164 Kuznetsov did just that in the first round of the Comerica Challenger Monday with one stellar serve after another to earn a solid win 6-3, 6-2.

"I knew he was going to play an aggressive game, my serve was key today," Kuznetsov said after the match.

Both players struggled at the start of the match in return play. Kuznetsov finally settled into his zone and jumped ahead four games to one.

Suzuki started coming up to the net with drop volleys and overhead smashes which threw off Kuznetsov's rhythm, bringing the first set score to 5-3.

Kuznetsov, who turned professional in 2004, appeared more comfortable on Aptos' center court than his 12-year veteran opponent, and clinched the rest of the match with ease.

"I like the air in Aptos, it's a little thinner, I feel really comfortable here," the Ukraine native said.

Kuznetsov, who reached the second round at the Australian Open in January, said he is ready for another win. "It is a lot more competitive this year. I'm going to take it one match at a time," Kuznetsov said.

Monday, July 16 RESULTS -

Singles – First round

John Isner, United States, def. Brendan Evans, United States, 6-4, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (9),

Rajeev Ram, United States, def. Phillip Simmonds, United States, 7-6 (5), 6-0.

Go Soeda, Japan, def. Nicholas Monroe, United States, 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Scoville Jenkins, United States def. Ryan Sweeting, United States 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Todd Widom, United States def. Kyu Tae IM, Korea, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Doubles – First Round

Jamie Baker (GBR) and Fritz Wolmarans (RSA) def. Rodrigo Grilli (BRA) and Hiroki Kondo (JPN), 6-3, 6-2.

John Paul Fruttero (USA) and Cecil Mamiit (PHI) def. Brendan Evans, (USA) and Phillip Simmonds, (USA), 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Kamil Capkovic (SVK) and Kristian Pless (DEN) vs Adam Davidson (USA) and Pablo Pires De Almeida (USA).

Tuesday, July 17 Schedule:

Starting at 10 am:

Takahiro Terachi (JPN) vs Prakash Amritraj (IND)

Alex Bogomolov Jr. (USA) vs. Tobias Kamke (GER)

Followed by Alessandro Da Col (ITA) vs Bobby Reynolds (USA)

Fritz Wolmarans (RSA) vs. Scott Oudsema (USA)

Followed by Cecil Mamiit (PHI) vs Andrea Stoppini (ITA)

Kamil Capkovic (SVK) and Satoshi Iwabuchi (JPN)

Donald Young (USA) vs Nick Lindahl (AUS)

Not starting before 3:30 pm:

Jamie Baker (GBR) vs Noam Okun (ISR)

Not starting before 5:30 pm:

Feature match: Kristian Pless (DEN) vs Brian Wilson (USA)

John Paul Fruttero (USA) vs Bruno Echagaray (MEX)

Seascape Sports Club is located at 1505 Seascape Blvd. in Aptos. Ticket prices are \$16 Monday – Thursday, Friday \$20, Saturday 22, Sunday \$24. Weekend pass (Fri – Sun) \$50.

