

Eye on Sports

Federer and Williams Dominate Australian Open

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"Sweet 16!"

That is what was going through the mind of Rodger Federer; who won his 16th Grand Slam title when he beat Andy Murray of Scotland in straight sets. He won the match 6-3, 6-4, 7-6. The win gave him his fourth Aussie open title in his amazing career.

As many know Federer has become the greatest male tennis champion of all time and to watch him play is an incredible thing to witness. At only 28 years old he already holds the record for most male Grand Slam titles. Federer is projected to win many more titles before his career is over and everyone will be watching.

Federer wasn't the only winner in this open. Serena Williams won her 12th Grand

Slam title and in doing so she tied the legendary Billy Jean King.

Serena had to face an old nemesis of hers in the final match at the open. Justine Henin was her opponent who also has had an impressive career by winning 7 Grand Slam titles. Serena won the match 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, and in beating Henin she is now 8-6 all time against her.

This win give her 5 Aussie open titles, which is more than any female tennis player has ever accomplished. Even though she hasn't broken the record for the most titles by a woman, she is still going to go down in history as one of the best females players to play the game.

On the Watch: Favre Again Considers Retirement

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The annual Brett Favre retirement watch began anew on January 24th right after the New Orleans Saints had defeated Favre's Minnesota Vikings in the NFC Championship Game. Number four had just ended his third straight season by throwing an interception on his final pass. Yet as soon as the teams hit the showers, the questions of both fans and media from around the country started pouring in. They wanted to know if Favre would retire or not.

Frankly, this annual process has become a dull affair that shows that an entire sport and the population that follows it will pay credence to one individual solely for the hope that he will bring his diminishing abilities back for one final season to help their team.

Now Favre is a Hall of Fame caliber player, of that there is no doubt. He has used his incredible abilities to pass for nearly 70,000 yards and 500 touchdowns, both standards which are by far NFL records. However every year the entire nation is subject to being bent to Favre's will, and he thrives in the publicity. Every week a new

argument is made about whether Favre will return for one more season. It is an ongoing process that distracts from real NFL news such as trades, the draft, and training camp. Fans obviously resent the circus Favre puts on every year: "Favre needs to make up his mind and stick to it."

If he decides to unretired after training camp again I will lose the last sliver of respect I have for him" states Matt Bachman (soph. Civil Engineering). The players almost certainly resent Favre as well. Every year 70% of the players in the NFL go into training camp fighting for roster spots.

They spend their summer outside in the hundred degree heat punishing their bodies. And where is Favre? Sitting in his southern home for the majority of the day enjoying the air conditioning and listening to whatever the media has decided his decision is that day.

One can only imagine how his teammates truly feel when he finally joins the team. Alas, Favre Watch 2010 has begun, and one can only hope that it does not drag into the saga it has been in recent years.

A Classic in Boston: Fenway's New Look

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Under an overcast sky on a chilly New Year's Day in Boston, over 38,000 packed the hallowed grounds of Fenway Park to see two of the NHL's most storied franchises, the Philadelphia Flyers and the Boston Bruins, rekindle a rivalry of decades past. It was the NHL's third edition of its annual New Year's Day outdoor game, The Winter Classic.

"This is amazing," spoke Nick Graff of Abington. "Philadelphia is in the house!" Despite the 309 mile distance and the very limited ticket availability, Flyers fans scratched, clawed and fought (nothing new to them) their way to Beantown. "I wouldn't miss it for the world," said Lisa Combs of South Philly. "This is a once in a life time experience and happy to have been lucky enough to make it here."

The atmosphere was electric throughout the area the entire week leading up to the game. Diehard fans from both sides flocked to the Boston, some of whom didn't have tickets. "Just to be here and take in the sights and sounds of this historic game is amazing. I will be in a local pub showing bruins fans how we do it in Philly," said Jayson Hernandez of Port Richmond. Thanks to the NHL and Boston, fans from both sides were treated to plenty of activities away from the game.

A fan zone set up adjacent to Fenway Park allowed fans to create trading cards, shoot on goalies and meet NHL alumni. Shops on Jersey Street, directly behind Fenway, were loaded with Winter Classic merchandise which included official jerseys, shirts, hats and other memorabilia that flew quickly off the shelves and racks. Sports bars and pubs also capitalized on the game, offering food and drink specials; including no shortage on "Philly Style" cheesesteaks.

Game day was incredible. 38,112 filed into the historic ballpark, home to baseballs Boston Red Sox of the American League since 1912. On this day, the oldest surviving ballpark in major league baseball looked much different than it ever did before.



A view of Fenway Park hosting the 2010 NHL Winter Classic

(Photo Courtesy of www.eventdeck.com)

The outfield that was once patrolled by Ted Williams and Carl Yastrzemski was adorned with oversized Flyers and Bruins pucks, as well as a sheet of ice for youth hockey players both from Boston and from Philadelphia's Ed Snider Youth Hockey Foundation. On the infield lay the ice surface: a bright, glossy-sheet that seemed to light every fan in attendance eyes up when first gazed upon. Lastly, the Green Monster was dressed up for the occasion as well, displaying each team's banner and the score period by period, rather than inning by inning. A

sight so simplistic yet so historic.

The game itself was old school hockey at its best. Just 12 minutes into the game, the Winter Classic witnessed its first fight as Flyers winger Dan Carcillo and Bruins winger Shawn Thornton dropped the gloves much to the delight of the rabid crowd, who stood from their seats the entire game. After a scoreless 1st period, the Flyers struck first when defenseman Danny Syvret scored his first NHL goal, with the help of Scott Hartnell. Hartnell was knocked down by Bruins goalie Tim Thomas distracting him as Syvret took his shot. As the game wore on, the crowd remained at a fever pitch. Dueling "Let's Go Bruins" and "Let's Go Flyers" rang out in unison. Despite the rabid nature of both sides, the mood inside the park was one of joy. Fans from both sides exchanged in playful bickering and conversations throughout the day. The comroderoy was never more evident than when on multiple occasions a "Yankees Suck" chant erupted.

In the end, the Flyers would fall. A bad call by the officials put the Flyers shorthanded late in the 3rd period, allowing the Bruins to tie it with less than 3 minutes to play, diminishing the hopes of another 1-0 victory over Boston (much like the Cup clinching game 6 in '74). After amazing exchange of rushes in overtime, another officiating blunder allowed the Bruins to have six men on the ice, rather than allotted four, enabling them to score the game winning goal two minutes into overtime. Upon exiting the stadium both side seemed to agree that regardless of the outcome they had witnessed an amazing and historic game.

The Winter Classic 2010 was just that. . . A Classic!