

2009 USTA Comerica Challenger
By Leslie Lopez
Sunday, July 19, 2009
At Seascape Sports Club, Aptos, CA
Purse: \$75,000
Surface: Hard-Outdoor

[Chris Guccione Beats Lindahl: Video Interview ~ By Jerry Hoffman](#)

Guccione Sweeps Challenger Takes Singles Title and Doubles Championship Along with Partner Ball

APTOS, CA – Twenty-four-year-old Australian Chris Guccione looked today like a force of nature as he blasted his way through singles and doubles finals today, to become the 2009 Comerica Challenger Champion twice in the same day, as a packed crowd at the Seascape Sports Club watched every play, gasping and cheering to the end.

Guccione, the #2 player in Australia right now and the 7th seed in this \$75,000 tournament, first defeated fellow Australian Nick Lindahl in singles, 6-3, 6-4. Then he and countryman Carsten Ball, the third-seeded doubles team, met the #1-seeded team, twin brothers Sanchai and Sonchat Ratiwatana, from Thailand. Guccione's afternoon game did not seem at all diminished, and he and Ball won the match with apparent ease, again in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2.

In singles, Lindahl was serving and controlling his returns well, but Guccione seemed to have hit his rhythm yesterday and was unstoppable today. In the second set, both had held their serves were holding their serves to 4-4, when the umpire gave Guccione the break point on a very close call, putting him in the lead 5-4. Guccione finished the next game with one of his overhead smashes, and coasted to the win.

In an interview after the Lindahl match, Guccione said he had not budgeted his energy for his second match. "I laid everything I had out on the court," he said. "Nick's a great player, and he's been playing great all week."

Renowned for his monstrous serve, Guccione yesterday and today in particular proved that he is an all-around smart and disciplined player, able to get drop-shots off the second serve, and play a sensitive, varied game.

Asked about his strategy against Lindahl, he said, "I just tried to keep it away from Nick's forehand."

Lindahl, age 20, was "pretty tired" after the match, the tenth he played this week, but chuckled when he was asked about Guccione's comment.

"That's my strength: my forehand," he acknowledged. "My tennis is built around my forehand."

He said he gained confidence with this week's wins. He entered the main draw by winning three brutal qualifying rounds, and today faced "one of the best servers in the world. He's beat Nadal, he's been all over the place."

Lindahl will also take away a \$6,350 check for his appearance in the final round.

In doubles, Guccione partnered with Carsten Ball. The two of them fill up the court—Guccione is 6'7" tall and Ball is 6'3". But although their combined arm-span and lunging distance decrease the odds of a ball getting past them, they clearly won because they filled the court with powerful skill.

To watch either of them serve is a little frightening, like observing a breed of wild tennis animal whose height and speed make them dangerous to interrupt. While Guccione is famous for his serve, partner Ball plays a similar game; the team finished the match when Ball nailed three ace serves down the middle.

However, it is clear that they could not have won without their remarkable returns today, as Sanchai Ratawatani observed.

"Chris made a lot of good returns today, and that's why they won the match," he said. "They move well together too, and quick, not just on the back court, but on the net," he added.

The Ratawatanis have played the Ball/Guccione team before and lost, at the Davis Cup in Thailand this year. But the twins were cheerful, both during the game and after.

"It doesn't help if you get disappointed," said Sanchai, as his brother nodded. In Thailand, they explained, there is a concept called "sanook," which means "to enjoy life." "You have to enjoy tennis," they said.

Guccione echoed their sentiments. He recommends that young players try to enjoy the sport, enjoying seeing improvement in their game without putting too much pressure on themselves. Like the Ratiwatanas, he and Ball kept an even keel throughout their matches, smiling and laughing even when play did not move in their favor.

"I've never really enjoyed seeing tantrums on the court," he said.

As far as his own success is concerned, he credits his parents, who have been very supportive.

Guccione will take away a champion's check for \$10,800, and he and Ball will each receive \$2,325 for their doubles win. The Ratiwatanas each won \$1,370.

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THE COMERICA BANK CHALLENGER - USA
\$75,000.00
JULY 11 - JULY 19, 2009

RESULTS - JULY 19, 2009

Men's

Singles – Semifinals

Chris Guccione, Australia (7) vs. Nick Lindahl, Australia , 6-3, 6-4

Men's

Doubles-Semifinals

Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, Australia (3), def. Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana, Thailand (1), 6-3, 6-2

2009 USTA Comerica Challenger
By Leslie Lopez
Saturday, July 18, 2009
At Seascape Sports Club, Aptos, CA
Purse: \$75,000
Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Guccione and Lindahl Dominate in Semifinals
Aussies Guccione and Ball Also Win in Doubles;
Tomorrow They Meet Ratiwatana Twins

APTOS, CA – Australians Chris Guccione and Nick Lindahl powered through their singles semifinals matches at the Comerica Challenger today, eliminating Somdev Devvarman and Michael Yani in surprisingly easy wins. Guccione and Lindahl will meet tomorrow no earlier than 1:00 in the finals round.

Somdev Devvarman of India, the #6 seed of the tournament, fell quickly to the big winner of the day, #7 seed Guccione, 6-2, 6-1. Guccione broke Devvarman's serve in the fourth game of the first set, then held on to his own easily in the next. Devvarman regained his rhythm and his serve in the next game, but Guccione's phenomenal serve and his mastery of the court already seemed unbeatable at that point.

The second set belonged to Guccione. He won the first five games, including the third game, which he finished off with three blinding ace serves. Guccione's long reach didn't hurt—he is 6'7" tall—and twice he took advantage of opportunities to deliver unreturnable overhead smashes, one of which was break point. He also seemed to build momentum even as Devvarman lost his. He made few mistakes, while Devvarman lost his characteristic composure at one point, smashing his racket against the ground and breaking it after losing a point to an out serve.

"Somdev is a great player," said Guccione after the match, downplaying the easy win. "Everything was working for me today. These days don't come too often, so you just take 'em when you get 'em."

He broke his game down with further understatement, saying, "I served well, and that helped. But I also returned well, and that's key for me, to get into the rallies so I can use my forehand."

Twenty-three-year-old Guccione is the #2 player in Australia right now, second only to Lleyton Hewitt, and represented Australia at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Also in singles, unseeded Lindahl defeated American player Michael Yani in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2. Yani's shoulder started bothering him in the first set and he was not playing his usual game, showing a diminished serve and numerous unforced errors.

He said he has been having problems with his shoulder now for a while. "Yeah, it hurts on the serve," he said. "I've been playing a lot of tennis."

Yani finished up a disappointing day when he and fellow American lost a close doubles match with the Ratiwatana twins of Thailand, Sanchai and Sonchat, 6-4, 6-3. Although the Ratiwatanas won in straight sets with a comfortable margin, it was in many ways a close match. Cook and Yani turned in a powerful, coordinated performance, despite Yani's shoulder hitch.

"I had a good tournament," said Yani afterwards. "Nick is playing really well, and he deserves to be there. He's a good player and he's got a lot of confidence right now. And in doubles, we played a good team. It was a close match, with a few important points. They won them, and that's how it goes."

Sanchai Ratiwatana commented that even though Yani was not feeling well, "his serve still made problems for us." And he concurred with Yani about how the match turned:

"It was a matter of one or two points. We were lucky they were in our favor."

He and Sonchat said they were worried when they were down 4-3 in the second set, Sonchat serving at love-40. Cook and Yani had earned points with some tremendous smashes down the line and were on the verge of breaking the serve, when Sanchai saved the game with an amazing play at the net.

"And after that we came back well," said Sonchat.

Luck and pivotal points aside, the Ratiwatanas were steady today. "I think we played well for the whole match," said Sonchat. "Maybe we missed some balls but we gave 100% today."

Tomorrow the Ratiwatanas, the #1 seed in doubles, will face off against Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, the #3 seed team, who won their match against second-seeded team Harsh Mankad and David Martin today, 6-3, 6-3.

In that match, Guccione continued to playing the same kind of huge game we saw earlier in the day, and was accompanied by another rangy talent, fellow Australian Carsten Ball. Together, the two of them fill up the court—Ball is 6'3"—and between their big serves and their coordination in the rallies, they were an unbeatable machine.

Mankad, of India, and Martin, an American, served consistently, and played great all-around doubles, responding to Ball and Guccione with some impressive rallies, but sent too many into the net. By the second set, after Ball and Guccione had won the second game at love with an ace serve by Guccione, prospects looked dim for Mankad and Martin. The umpire called the ball in at Martin's deuce point, giving Ball and Guccione the break and putting them in the lead 3-2. In the next game Guccione held the pattern by winning his serve with a towering overhead shot, and despite a nice rally in the following game, Mankad and Martin could not come back.

Carsten Ball, age 22, acknowledged that he and Guccione were serving well today; he added that the umpire's call in their favor was a bad one and gave them an important advantage.

He and Guccione first paired up at the Australian Open this year, where they made the third round, and have since played a couple tournaments, including the Davis Cup. According to him, they will continue to play together "as much as we can."

Tomorrow's match against the Ratiwatana brothers will be interesting, as the teams are physically very distinct, with very different playing styles. As Ball put it, "Chris and I are one-shot hits." But what hits those are.

This is the 23rd annual Comerica Bank Challenger tournament held at Seascapes Sports Club in Aptos, making it the longest running Challenger event in the country, with one of the top purses.

Finals matches will be held tomorrow, Sunday, July 19 starting at 11:00 a.m.

Kids age 6 - 12 half price, age 5 and under free. Ticket prices are Saturday \$22, Sunday \$24. Weekend pass (Fri – Sun) \$60. For ticket information call 831-688-1993 or visit www.seascapesportsclub.com.

THE COMERICA BANK CHALLENGER - USA
\$75,000.00
JULY 11 - JULY 19, 2009

PARTIAL RESULTS - JULY 18, 2009

Men's

Singles – Semifinals

Nick Lindahl, Australia, def. Michael Yani, United States, 6-3, 6-2

Chris Guccione, Australia (7) vs. Somdev Devvarman, India (6), 6-2, 6-1

Men's

Doubles-Semifinals

Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana, Thailand (1), def. Lester Cook and Michael Yani, United States (Wildcard), 6-4, 6-3

Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, Australia (3) vs. Harsh Mankad, India, and David Martin, United States(2), 6-3, 6-3

ORDER OF PLAY - SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2009

CENTER COURT start 11:00am

Women's Cal Open Finals

Men's Comerica Finals

Not Before 1:00 PM

Nick Lindahl, Australia, vs. Chris Guccione, Australia (7)

Followed by:

Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana, Thailand (1), vs. Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, Australia (3)

2009 USTA Comerica Challenger
All Press Releases By Leslie Lopez
Friday, July 17, 2009
At Seascope Sports Club, Aptos, CA
Purse: \$75,000
Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Quarterfinalists Put Up a Fight at Comerica Challenger Devvarman Swings into Semifinals; Odesnik Falls to Guccione in Close Match

APTOS, CA – If there's one word to describe 24-year-old Somdev Devvarman of India, it's "smooth." Devvarman, the #6 seed in the Comerica Bank Challenger at the Seascope Club in Aptos, never lost his cool today in a match against South African Izak Van Der Merwe, and won in straight sets, 6-4, 6-2.

Devvarman's disposition seems to echo his game: steady and disciplined. He sliced through his earlier matches this week, and has been visible on the practice courts every day, working hard at making it look easy.

Van Der Merwe delivered a good match, which was notable for its terrific long volleys, especially in the second set. But by the middle of the second set, when Devvarman was leading 3-1 and broke Van Der Merwe's serve, the outcome seemed inevitable.

With Devvarman leading 5-1 in the second set, Van Der Merwe rallied, with an ace serve and a couple brilliantly played shots that earned him a game. After one incredible long exchange, Van Der Merwe performed a backward overhead save, but couldn't recover in time for Devvarman's inexorable straight return. After a twelve point rally, Van Der Merwe hit it out. The next point was match point for Devvarman's match point.

"He started serving well," said Devvarman, "and we both had chances. I stuck to my game plan and got lucky here and there."

Tomorrow Devvarman will meet Australian Chris Guccione in the semifinals. “It will be a tough match,” said Devvarman. “He’s obviously going to serve really well. Holding on to my serve will be key.”

Guccione prevailed over #3 seed American Wayne Odesnik today, but it was not an easy win. Odesnik stretched him into three sets with two tie breakers, with a final score of 7-6(5), 2-6, 7-6(2).

Nick Lindahl, also of Australia, won his quarterfinals match against Korean Kyu Tae Im in straight sets, 6-3, 6-3.

And tomorrow he will play Michael Yani in the semifinals. Yani, of the United States, eliminated Australian Marinko Matosevic, 6-4, 6-4, after an inspiring performance by both players.

Matosevic showed his strength with a ferocious serve and a deadly two-fisted backhand, but sometimes could not get there fast enough to keep up with Yani’s accurately-placed drives. Both played intelligent, varied games, although when Yani finished a game in the second set with an ace to lead 4-2, the match seemed to turn.

Next, with Matosevic serving, Yani won without ceding a single point, earning the game point when Matosevic could not make it up to the net in time to send Yani’s tap back over. Matosevic returned the favor during Yani’s next serve with a similar shot, and despite a sliding side-split maneuver, Yani missed it. And during his own serve, when he was down 30-40, Matosevic took advantage of Yani’s dash to the corner to pause, and pop the ball into the opposite corner with a gentle bounce.

Ultimately, however, Yani’s powerful serve and his rangy but consistent returns were unbeatable.

“Marinko is a tricky guy to play,” said Yani after the match. “He’s very talented, and he mixes up his game pretty well. He can play with a lot of feel, you know, some soft touches, that kind of thing—or he can play hard, powerhouse tennis. You can’t get a handle on his rhythm. So I was happy with the way I played today. He’s a very tough opponent.”

Tomorrow is also the semifinals of tournament doubles. The top-seeded team, twin brothers Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana of Thailand, will face off against wildcard team Lester Cook and Michael Yani of the United States.

And the #3 seed in doubles, Australian team Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, will play against the second-seeded team, Harsh Mankad of India, and David Martin of the United States.

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THE COMERICA BANK CHALLENGER - USA

\$75,000.00

JULY 11 - JULY 19, 2009

PARTIAL RESULTS - JULY 17, 2009

Men's

Singles - Quarterfinals

Chris Guccione, Australia (7), def. Wayne Odesnik, United States (3), 7-6(5), 2-6, 7-6 (2)

Nick Lindahl, Australia, def. Kyu Tae Im, Korea, 6-3, 6-3

Michael Yani, United States, def. Marinko Matosevic, Australia, 6-4, 6-4

Somdev Devvarman, India (6), def. Izak Van Der Merwe, South Africa, 6-4, 6-2

ORDER OF PLAY – SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2009

CENTER COURT starting at 11:00am

Nick Lindahl, Australia, vs. Michael Yani, United States

Followed by Chris Guccione, Australia (7) vs. Somdev Devvarman, India (6)

Followed by Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana, Thailand (1), vs. Lester Cook and Michael Yani, United States (Wildcard)

Followed by Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, Australia (3) vs. Harsh Mankad, India, and David Martin, United States(2)

**The Seascope Curse Continues:
#1 Seed Kim Eliminated in First Round**

APTOS, CA – In the past 22 years, no #1 seed has ever managed to win the \$75,000 Comerica Bank Challenger tournament, held at the Seascope Sports Club in Aptos. It is known as “The Seascope Curse.” Today, when Japanese player Takao Suzuki defeated Kevin Kim in the first round, the curse held firm, making it 23 years.

Suzuki, age 33, has already had an interesting career, with impressive matches against greats like Federer, and a high ranking of 102 in the world in 1998. Currently he is ranked at 351, while Kim, after a break-neck climb in the rankings this year, is #78 in the world.

Due to long matches yesterday, the Suzuki vs. Kim match was postponed until this morning. “For me, it was good timing to play this morning,” said Suzuki, smiling. “I’ve played many times here, including one final. I like it. Good weather, nice people.”

Suzuki characterized Kim as a “tough opponent. We’ve played three times already. Each time I do my best, and keep trying.”

On the other hand, #3 seed of the tournament, American Wayne Odesnik, prevailed over Belgian Xavier Malisse in a dramatic feature match, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5. Both players delivered exceptional performances in the second set, stretching each other into overhead backwards reaches and alternating impossible corner shots with impossible net taps.

“Yeah, he’s a pretty good shot-maker,” said Odesnik, stretching after the match as the fog settled in. “He came up with some pretty good shots.”

Until 5-5 in the third set, Odesnik and Malisse each held their serves. Finally, though, after two and a half hours, Malisse showed signs of tiring, and Odesnik broke his serve.

Odesnik commented, “we were working each other pretty hard. It seemed like a pretty physical match.” But he credits his success to “having a good game plan going in.”

While he wouldn’t reveal the details of that plan, he said, “one of the key things was to stay with it mentally. When [Odesnik] gets on a roll he’s hard to beat. I was able to hold serve pretty well, and then he gave me some chances there at the end of the match and I took them.”

In doubles matches today, the #3 seeded team, Australians Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, defeated wildcard team Rick Kepler and Rick Leach, 6-1, 6-4. Leach reached the World #1 doubles ranking in 1990, and owns 9 Grand Slam doubles titles, and today paired up with his former USC teammate and current Seascope Sports Club Tennis Director Kepler.

And so far this year, the Seascope Curse has not visited the #1 seeded doubles team, the phenomenal Ratiwatana brothers Sonchat and Sanchai, of Thailand. They defeated Somdev Devvarman, of India, who was paired with Treat Conrad Huey of the Philippines, 7-6 (5), 6-4. The Ratiwatanas have taken five Challenger titles this year alone, to add to their already impressive list, and reached the second round at Wimbledon.

“They’re a tough team,” said Sonchat. “In the second set it started getting dark and that was lucky for us.” About the Ratiwana juggernaut, he said, “It feels good. We’re trying to make points for the Open. It’s a good win for the first tournament of the summer.

In tomorrow’s feature match, Takao Suzuki will face Korean Kyu Tae Im at 5:30 on center court.

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RESULTS - JULY 15, 2009

Men's

Singles - Second Round

Wayne Odesnik, United States (3), def. Xavier Malisse, Belgium, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5
Somdev Devvarman, India (6), def. Alex Kuznetsov, United States (Wildcard), 6-1, 6-3
Chris Guccione, Australia (7), def. Yuichi Sugita, Japan, 6-2, 6-3
Izak Van Der Merwe, South Africa, def. Simon Stadler, Germany, 6-3, 6-4

First Round

Takao Suzuki, Japan, def. Kevin Kim, United States (1), 7-5, 6-3
Kyu Tae Im, Korea, def. Phillip Simmonds, United States (WC), 7-6 (10), 7-5

Men's

Doubles - First Round

Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana, Thailand (1), def. Somdev Devvarman, India and Treat Conrad Huey, Philippines, 7-6 (5), 6-4
Harsh Mankad, India, and David Martin, United States(2), def. Go Soeda, Japan and Danai Udomchoke, Thailand, 6-3, 6-2
Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, Australia (3), def. Rick Kepler and Rick Leach, United States (WC), 6-1, 6-4
Scoville Jenkins and Donald Young, United States, def. Hiroki Kondo and Yuichi Sugita, Japan, 6-3, 6-4
Lester Cook and Michael Yani, United States (Wildcard), def. Kyu Tae Im, Korea and Kevin Kim, United States, 6-3, 6-4

ORDER OF PLAY - THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2009

CENTER COURT starting at 11:00 AM

Marinko Matosevic vs. Alex Bogomolov Jr.
Followed by Nick Lindahl vs. Andrea Stoppini
Followed by Michael Yani vs. Ryler Deheart

Not Before 5:30 PM

Takao Suzuki vs. Kyu Tae Im

COURT 5 Not Before 1:00 PM

Alex Bogomolov Jr. and Samuel Groth vs. Harsh Mankad and David Martin (2)
Followed by Nick Lindahl and Izak Van Der Merwe vs. Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione (3)

Not Before 4:00 PM

Sanchai Ratiwatana and Sonchat Ratiwatana vs. Scoville Jenkins and Donald Young

2009 USTA Comerica Challenger

By Leslie Lopez

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

At Seascapes Sports Club, Aptos, CA

Purse: \$75,000

Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Long Second-Round Matches as Players Battle for Position at Comerica Bank Challenger

APTOS, CA – Players in the \$75,000 Comerica Challenger tournament tested their physical endurance—and occasionally their tempers—today in several long matches, three of them lasting more than two hours. In the occasionally surprising mix that characterizes Challenger tournaments, world-renowned players faced off with young pros here at the Seascapes Sports Club, while other matches brought together talents at similar points in their careers.

In a barn-burning feature match that lasted three and a half hours, the #5 seed, French player Arnaud Clement, fell to Alex (“Bogie”) Bogomolov, Jr., 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (10). This is the second time this month Bogomolov has beat Clement, the first time at the Hall of Fame Championships. Clement is the most highly decorated player in this year’s draw, and is currently enjoying a career resurgence, including two impressive performances at Wimbledon: in 2007 he won the Doubles Championship, and last summer he reached the quarter-finals there for the second time.

Even deep into the third set, both players delivered extraordinary performances, including several ace serves from Clement that were so fast they were invisible. Although the near-miss at the chance to advance in the tournament is hard, Clement said he is here because he likes to play tennis. “It’s not about ranking. I’m in love with this game. I’m very lucky to be on tour and to do what I like to do.”

Wayne Odesnik, of the US, the #3 seed of the tournament defeated German player Tobias Kamke, currently ranked #344, but only after a long, close match, 1-6, 6-2, 7-5. Kamke commented afterward that Odesnik deserved to win. In the first set, as he was winning, he “didn’t expect it was going to be that easy, but [Odesnik] was making a lot of mistakes,” but later, he lost his concentration. Still, the loss was not painless; as Kamke put it, “When you’re 5-2 up in the third set, you want to win.”

In another close match, 20-year-old Yuichi Sugita of Japan, who is still working to move beyond quarter-finals in a Challenger, beat another up-and-coming player, Australian Samuel Groth, age 21. The wiry, diminutive Sugita proved a formidable opponent for Groth, a very different kind of player at 6 feet 4-1/2 inches. Sugita was “very happy”

after winning the three-set match, 5-7, 6-3, 7-6 (2), and apologized for his English while explaining his strategy: "If he gets tired, it's better for me. I move from side to side."

And although the match between Italian Andrea Stoppini and Donald Young was not as long, finishing after an hour and 38 minutes, it was electrically charged. Both players were playing hard, hitting powerful drives low over the net and running each other across the court in the heat of the day. "It wasn't an easy match," said Stoppini, who was the Comerica runner-up last year, and won the match today, 6-4, 6-4. "Young played well. I came back in the second set and started to play well though." Young has been reaching quarter-finals or better in the Challengers this year, and won the Comerica Challenger in 2007. Today he was giving it his all. But after slamming the ball back and forth throughout the match, Stoppini scored the winning point when he took advantage of a rare moment near the net for a gentle tap. "It was the perfect shot at the perfect moment," grinned Stoppini.

In other singles matches, #6 seed Somdev Devvarman of India eliminated American Lester Cook, 2-6 (7), 6-2. Australian Marinko Matosevic prevailed over Seascapes pro Brad Weston, 6-4, 6-4; Australian Nick Lindahl eliminated American Ryan Sweeting after almost three hours, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 7-6 (7); and Ryler Deheart of the US defeated Australian Carsten Ball 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

As Kamke explained, this is par for the course in a Challenger tournament. "At the Challenger level, all the players are good," he said. "Wayne [Odesnik], for example, has already been in the Top 100. If they are ranked like that, then they drop, and play again, you have to play really hard to win and get your ranking up, or else you'll lose your ranking for sure."

But, like Clement and the rest of the players, Kamke says it's worth it. "All these players are really professional, and it's really fun to practice with them and play against them."

Highlights of tomorrow's line-up include a doubles match featuring Rick Leach former world #1-ranked doubles player, who has won 9 Grand Slam doubles titles. Rick Leach will play with former USC teammate and Seascapes Sports Club Tennis Director Rick Kepler and his partner Rick Leach. They will face off against Carsten Ball and Chris Guccione, both of Australia.

And in the feature match at 5:30, Belgian Xavier Malisse will meet Wayne Odesnik of the US.

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RESULTS - JULY 14, 2009

Men's

Singles - First Round

[3] W Odesnik (USA) d [Q] T Kamke (GER) 16 62 75
A Bogomolov Jr. (USA) d [5] A Clement (FRA) 64 36 76(10)
[6] S Devvarman (IND) d [WC] L Cook (USA) 76(7) 62
A Stoppini (ITA) d [8] D Young (USA) 64 64
[Q] N Lindahl (AUS) d R Sweeting (USA) 67(4) 64 76(7)
R Deheart (USA) d C Ball (AUS) 36 61 64
M Matosevic (AUS) d [WC] B Weston (AUS) 64 64
[Q] Y Sugita (JPN) d S Groth (AUS) 57 63 76(2)

Men's

Doubles - First Round

N Lindahl (AUS) / I Van Der Merwe (RSA) d [Q] J Fruttero (USA) / B Joelson (USA) 61 75

ORDER OF PLAY - WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2009

CENTER COURT start 11:00am

[1] K Kim (USA) vs [Q] T Suzuki (JPN)
G Soeda (JPN) / D Udomchoke (THA) vs [2] H Mankad (IND) / D Martin (USA)
[6] S Devvarman (IND) vs [WC] A Kuznetsov (USA)

Not Before 4:00 PM

[WC] R Kepler (USA) / R Leach (USA) vs [3] C Ball (AUS) / C Guccione (AUS)

Not Before 5:30 PM

X Malisse (BEL) vs [3] W Odesnik (USA)

COURT 5 start 11:00am

[WC] P Simmonds (USA) vs K Im (KOR)
[7] C Guccione (AUS) vs [Q] Y Sugita (JPN)
I Van Der Merwe (RSA) vs S Stadler (GER)
K Im (KOR) / K Kim (USA) vs [WC] L Cook (USA) / M Yani (USA)

First Round Upsets at Comerica Bank Challenger

Top Seeds Cipolla, Udomchoke Eliminated in First Round; Malisse Advances

APTOS, CA – Two of the top-seeded players in the \$75,000 Comerica Bank Challenger tournament were eliminated in the first round of the main draw today. German player Simon Stadler defeated #2 seed Flavio Cipolla from Italy, 7-6, 7-3, 7-5, while Michael Yani of the U.S. beat the #4 seed of the tournament, Danai Udomchoke of Thailand, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

Other singles winners were Chris Guccione, of Australia, currently ranked 137 in the world, who won his match with top Japanese player Go Soeda, ranked 106, in a tie-breaker set: 6-4, 7-6, 7-5. Wildcard Alex Kuznetsov defeated fellow American Scoville

Jenkins in a three-set match with a tie-breaker, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6, 7-1. Izak Van Der Merwe of South Africa advanced to the second round when fellow South African Rik De Voest injured his lower back during the second set.

In the feature match on Seascapes Club's center court, Belgian tennis star Xavier Malisse prevailed over US player Todd Widom, 6-3, 6-2. Malisse, who has a career high ranking of 19th in the world, has been working steadily this year on a come-back after a series of injuries took him out of the game in 2007 and 2008.

"It's been a tough year," he said. "After seven years in the top 50, it's very difficult mentally. I decided to take two weeks off to work out, and now I've set my mind to it. For me that's the only way to come back."

Malisse says his wrists are giving him no further problems, and his focusing strategy seems to be paying off. He says he feels good about his play at the moment: "I'm not making a lot of mistakes, I'm serving well, not coming in at the wrong time, not doing anything crazy."

The final qualifying rounds of doubles wrapped up today, and the first round concluded as well. In qualifiers, John Paul Fruttero and Brett Joelson trounced Alex Clayton and Pablo Pires de Almeida, 6-1, 6-1. In the first round, Brian Battistone and Nicholas Monroe defeated Phillip Simmons and Ryan Sweeting in three sets, 6-4, 5-7, 10-8. All of these players were from the US. And Alex Bogomolov, Jr., of the US paired with Samuel Groth of Australia to defeat another US-Australian team: Ryler Deheart and Marinko Matosevic, 6-2, 7-6, 7-4.

This is the 23rd annual Comerica Bank Challenger tournament held at Seascapes Sports Club in Aptos, making it the longest running Challenger event in the country, with one of the top purses.

Main draw matches begin at 11:00 every day this week through Sunday, July 19, with feature matches each weeknight at 5:30 pm.

Kids age 6 - 12 half price, age 5 and under free. Ticket prices are \$16 Monday – Thursday, Friday \$20, Saturday 22, Sunday \$24. Weekend pass (Fri – Sun) \$60. For ticket information call 831-688-1993 or visit www.seascapesportsclub.com.

RESULTS - JULY 13, 2009

Men's

Singles - First Round

S Stadler (GER) d [2] F Cipolla (ITA) 76(3) 75

M Yani (USA) d [4] D Udomchoke (THA) 64 36 63

[7] C Guccione (AUS) d G Soeda (JPN) 64 76(5)

X Malisse (BEL) d T Widom (USA) 63 62

[WC] A Kuznetsov (USA) d S Jenkins (USA) 64 16 76(1)

I Van Der Merwe (RSA) d R de Voest (RSA) 76(6) 43 Retired

Men's

Doubles - First Round

[4] B Battistone (USA) / N Monroe (USA) d [WC] P Simmonds (USA) / R Sweeting (USA) 64
57 10-8

A Bogomolov Jr. (USA) / S Groth (AUS) d R Deheart (USA) / M Matosevic (AUS) 62 76(4)

Mens

Qualifying Doubles - Finals

Qualifying - [1] J Fruttero (USA) / B Joelson (USA) d [2] A Clayton (USA) / P Pires de Almeida
(USA) 61 61

ORDER OF PLAY - TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2009

CENTER COURT start 11:00am

[Q] T Kamke (GER) vs [3] W Odesnik (USA)

A Stoppini (ITA) vs [8] D Young (USA)

Not Before 1:00 PM

N Lindahl (AUS) / I Van Der Merwe (RSA) vs [Q] J Fruttero (USA) / B Joelson (USA)

Not Before 3:30 PM

M Matosevic (AUS) vs [WC] B Weston (AUS)

Not Before 5:30 PM

A Bogomolov Jr. (USA) vs [5] A Clement (FRA)

COURT 5 start 10:00 AM

[Q] N Lindahl (AUS) vs R Sweeting (USA)

S Groth (AUS) vs [Q] Y Sugita (JPN)

[6] S Devvarman (IND) vs [WC] L Cook (USA)

R Deheart (USA) vs C Ball (AUS)

Not Before 4:00 PM

[1] K Kim (USA) vs [Q] T Suzuki (JPN)

**** For Immediate Release ****

2009 USTA Comerica Challenger

By Peter Kepler

Saturday, June 11, 2009

At Seascope Sports Club, Aptos, CA

Purse: \$75,000

Current Ranking: 377

2009 Highlights

Won futures matches in Florida and Great Britain. Reached semi-finals in doubles at the U.S.A. F13 in Sacramento in June. Other Career Notes: Earned over \$150,000 in winnings since 2004.

Alex Kuznetsov

Country: U.S.A. (Born in Kiev, Ukraine)

Residence: Tampa, Florida

Age: 22

Turned Pro: 2004

Height/Weight: 6'0/168

Plays: Right-Handed

Career High Ranking: 158 (4/07)

Current Ranking: 271

Alex was the 2006 Comerica Bank Champion at age 19 in 2006.

2009 Highlights

Alex Won the Winnetka Challenger in Illinois in May 2009, his last tournament before Seascapes. He was also a finalist at the Savannah (GA) Challenger in April.

Other Career Notes: Alex was the 2006 Comerica Bank Champion at age 19 in 2006 Served as a practice partner for the 2004 U.S.A. Davis Cup team. Alex also helped the U.S. to a quarterfinal finish at the 2003 Junior Davis Cup.

Brad Weston

Country: Australia

Residence: Aptos, Ca.

Age 27

Career High Ranking: # 540

Career High Doubles Ranking: # 351 in doubles.

Currently the #2 Player in Northern California.

He has been a singles finalist at the South Australian Championships; a Singles Semi-Finalist in Kenosha, Ill.; Singles Semi-Finalist in Wollongong, Australia; Yuba City doubles champion: and Doubles Finalist in Tallahassee.

Brad is also the 2009 Granite Construction Wildcard Champion, defeating doubles partner an friend Chris Wettengel. Chris is ranked # in singles in Northern California. Brad has been given a direct Wildcard into the main draw Monday by-passing the qualifying rounds.

Chris Wettengel is also 27, and works with top 20 sectional and national players as a teaching Pro. His students see first hand what a positive attitude brings to one's tennis

game. That's Chris's motto, stay positive. His Favorite place to play is Center court at Seascape. Chris and Brad recently won the Mountain View Open Doubles and including Mountain View they have four Open Doubles Titles for this year.