



28 October 2018

ANDERSON CREATES HISTORY WITH FIRST-TIME NITTO ATP FINALS QUALIFICATION



LONDON – Kevin Anderson has become the first singles player from South Africa in 23 years to secure a berth at the Nitto ATP Finals as a result of lifting the Erste Bank Open 500 trophy on Sunday. Anderson joins Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, Juan Martin del Potro, Roger Federer and Alexander Zverev at the elite eight-man 2018 event, to be held at The O2 in London from 11-18 November. The two final places will be decided at next week's Rolex Paris Masters.

"It's been a huge goal of mine all year to make London," said Anderson. "I've said that right from the beginning, so to finally put my name there, it feels fantastic."

Anderson, who will finish in the year-end Top 10 of the ATP Rankings for the first time, is set to follow in the footsteps of Wayne Ferreira, who went 2-1 in round-robin play at the 1995 season finale in Frankfurt, Germany. At 32 years, six months, Anderson is also the fourth oldest first-time singles qualifier, behind Australia's Ken Rosewall (36, at the inaugural 1970 event in Tokyo) Andres Gimeno (35) and Bob Hewitt (32), who both competed at the 1972 event in Barcelona.

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Enjoying a career-best season, Anderson achieved a career-high No. 5 on 16 July — becoming the highest-ranked South African in ATP Rankings history (since 1973) — after advancing to his second Grand Slam championship final at Wimbledon (l. to Djokovic). He rallied from two sets down and saved one match point to beat Roger Federer in the quarter-finals and defeated John Isner 26-24 in the fifth set for the 300th match win of his career after six hours and 36 minutes.

The Florida resident captured his fourth ATP World Tour title – and his first since 2015 – at the inaugural New York Open (d. Querrey) in February. He also advanced to two ATP World Tour finals at the Tata Open Maharashtra in Pune (l. to Simon) and at the Abierto Mexicano Telcel presentado por HSBC in Acapulco (l. to Del Potro). He ended an 0-10 start to his career in ATP World Tour Masters 1000 quarter-finals by reaching the semi-finals at the Mutua Madrid Open (l. to Thiem) and at the Rogers Cup in Toronto (l. to Tsitsipas).

Anderson has now finished five of the past six seasons in the Top 20 (2013-15, 2017-18). His previous-best finish to a campaign came in 2015, when he was year-end No. 12 in the ATP Rankings (46-24 match record). Having first broken into the Top 10 at No. 10 on 12 October 2015, the South African was soon sidelined by a number of injuries and dropped to as low as No. 80 on 16 January 2017. But one of the sport's hardest working players broke back into the Top 10 on 19 February 2018.

With just one week left of the regular ATP World Tour season, Croatia's Marin Cilic and Austria's Dominic Thiem leads the battle to claim the last two spots. Three-time former qualifier Kei Nishikori, who lost to Anderson in the Vienna final, and American John Isner will also be pushing hard in Paris this week for a place at The O2 in London.

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In the doubles field, Oliver Marach/Mate Pavic, Juan Sebastian Cabal/Robert Farah, Lukasz Kubot/Marcelo Melo, Jamie Murray/Bruno Soares, Mike Bryan/Jack Sock, Pierre-Hugues Herbert/Nicolas Mahut, Raven Klaasen/Michael Venus and Nikola Mektic/Alexander Peya have secured their places.

Per ATP rules, the doubles field will be determined on 5 November following the conclusion of the Rolex Paris Masters, the final tournament of the regular ATP World Tour season. On that date, it will be determined what the eight teams will be as both Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan and also Mike Bryan and Jack Sock currently have sufficient points in the ATP Doubles Race To London to secure a place at the season finale. Bob Bryan has been sidelined due to a hip injury since May, but may be fit enough to return with his twin brother to the prestigious event.

The Nitto ATP Finals welcomes more than 250,000 fans to The O2 arena annually, as well as generating global viewership figures reaching an average of 95 million viewers each year, as the ATP's best eight singles players and doubles teams compete over eight days at the biggest indoor tennis tournament in the world.

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About the Nitto ATP Finals

The Nitto ATP Finals is the year-end climax to the men's professional tennis season, featuring only the world's best eight qualified singles players and doubles teams as they battle it out for the last title of the season. Players compete for ATP Rankings points throughout the season in a bid to earn one of the eight coveted berths and a chance to win the biggest indoor tennis tournament in the world. Played using a round-robin format, each player plays three matches as they compete for a berth in the knockout semi-finals and beyond. The prestigious tournament has been contested in major cities around the world with a rich history dating back to the birth of The Masters in 1970 in Tokyo. Since 2000 the event has taken place in cities such as Lisbon, Sydney, and Shanghai. In 2009 the tournament was moved to London, where it will be played through 2020. For more information, please visit www.NittoATPFinals.com

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