The US Open qualifying rounds are taking place now, which means it’s only a matter of days before the real action on the iconic blue courts gets underway when **America’s Grand Slam celebrates its 50th Anniversary** in the grandest of ways! To kick things off, the 50th Anniversary is being celebrated with [**Fan Week**](https://www.usopen.org/en_US/news/articles/2018-08-21/watch_nadal_federer_and_more_top_players_practice_for_free_during_the_us_open.html?promo=nextArticle), which is underway now in the week leading up to the official start of the tournament on **August 27, 2018**.

The Schedules have just been released and can be viewed below:

* [Tournament Schedule](https://www.usopen.org/en_US/about/eventschedule.html)
* [Schedule of Play](https://www.usopen.org/en_US/scores/schedule/index.html)

**50th Anniversary Celebrations**

Today, Wednesday, August 22, 2018, **Roger Federer** will participate in the newly remodeled [Louis Armstrong Stadium Dedication Ceremony](https://www.usopen.org/en_US/news/articles/2018-08-21/2018-08-21_watch_the_louis_armstrong_stadium_dedication_ceremony_for_free_at_the_us_open.html). Federer will honor the event by hitting the first ball during a practice round from 10:00 - 11:00 am EST. The Dedication Ceremony will continue after Federer’s practice round and feature Queens native, **John McEnroe**, who won all four of his US Open men's singles championships in the old Louis Armstrong Stadium. After the ceremony, McEnroe, his brother, **Patrick McEnroe**, plus **James Blake** and **Michael Chang** will play the honorary first match in the new stadium.

Back in 2016, Federer’s fiercest competitor, **Raphael Nadal**, graced the then newly-remodeled **Arthur Ashe Stadium** with his own Stadium Dedication Practice Round.

The remodeled indoor stadiums at the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center are milestone events because the original grounds were built all the way back in **1964**, when the needs of tennis players and spectators were not quite what they are today. According to [Director, David Brewer](https://www.usopen.org/en_US/news/articles/2018-08-21/2018-08-20_improved_player_facilities_new_brand_identity_highlights_upgrades.html), “[In the past], the dynamic with the players was quite different. It was not unusual for a player to have a coach. It was unusual for a player to have a physio and a traveling massage therapist and other accoutrements. The entourages have grown dramatically because there’s just so much more at stake in professional tennis these days." Additionally, New York City’s unpredictable summer weather has caused many rain delays in the past for some of the biggest and most sensationalized matches, leaving both players and spectators suspended in restless anticipation for the weather to pass for the match to begin.

**Players**

Now, let’s get to the real reason people rush Queens during the last two weeks of August: The Tennis Players! Since the US Open follows the other major Tennis Opens (Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon), experts and fans have already had a chance to see how players are performing, allowing them to make predictions about favorites and potential winners. We’ll run down the list of champions and close seconds who we will be keeping our eyes on during this year’s US Open.

**Rafael Nadal (Spain)**

* Won Men’s Singles of the French Open (against del Potro, and then Thiem in the finals)
* Lost to Djokovic in the semi-finals of Wimbledon
* Lost to Čilić in the quarter-finals of the Australian Open

**Novak Djokovic (Serbia)**

* Won Men’s Singles of Wimbledon (against Marin Čilić, and then Federer in the final round)
* Lost to Cecchinato in the quarter-finals of the French Open
* Lost to Paire in the finals of the Miami Open
* Lost to Chung in the finals of the Australian Open

**Roger Federer (Switzerland)**

* Won the Men’s Finals of the Australian Open (against Chung, and then Čilić in the final round)
* Lost to Anderson in the quarter-finals of Wimbledon

**Marin Čilić (Croatia)**

* Lost to Federer in the finals of the Australian Open (after beating Nadal, and then Edmund in the semi-final)
* Lost to del Potro in the quarter-finals of the French Open

**Simona Halep (Romania)**

* Won Women’s Singles of the French Open
* Lost to Wozniacki in the finals of the Australian Open
* Lost to Maria Sharipova in the finals of last year’s US Open

**Angelique Kerber (Germany)**

* Won Women’s Singles of Wimbledon (against Pavlyuchenkova, and then Keys in the final round)
* Lost to Stephens in the quarter-finals of the Miami Open
* Lost to Halep in the semi-finals at the Australian Open, and in the quarter finals of the French Open

**Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)**

* Won the Women’s Singles of the Australian Open (against Mertens, and then Halep in the final round)

**Pierre Hugues Herb & Nicolas Mahut (France)**

* Won Men’s Doubles of the French Open

**Mike Bryan (USA) & Jack Stock (USA, \*not playing the US Open)**

* Won Men’s Doubles of Wimbledon

**Oliver Marach (Austria) & Mate Pavić (Croatia)**

* Won Men’s Doubles of the Australian Open

**Kateřina Siniaková & Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic)**

* Won Women’s Doubles of the French Open & Wimbledon

**Timea Babos (Hungary) & Kristina Mladenovic (France)**

* Won the Women’s Doubles of the Australian Open

**Latisha Chan (Taiwan) & Ivan Dodig (Croatia)**

* Won Doubles Mixed of the French Open

**Alexander Peya (Austria) & Nicole Melichar (USA)**

* Won Doubles Mixed of Wimbledon

**Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) & Mate Pavić**  **(Croatia)**

* Won Doubles Mixed of the Australian Open

**Practical Matters**

If this is your first time visit to America’s Grand Slam, then take a glance at a few tips to ensure you have an expert experience:

* View matches on the **side courts**, as these are smaller and allow you to view the action up close. You may not see top talent, but how often to you get to see a 120 mph serve from a few feet away?
* Get the US Open signature drink, the **Melon Ball**: ice, vodka, and a skewer of honeydew melon balls.
* If you want to spend more money on Melon Balls than on tickets, opt for games earlier on in the tournament, as tickets will get more expensive the closer we get to the final matches.
* If you are coming from Manhattan, take the [LIRR](http://www.mta.info/lirr) to the event, and grab a beer at Penn Station for the ride.
* Pack a hat and sunscreen! Many of the seats are in direct sunlight, and no one likes to go home at the end of the day wearing a sunburn.