



# Federer loses to Del Potro

## California

Juan Martin del Potro ended Roger Federer's best ever start to a season to become the first Argentine to win a top-tier Masters series event. Del Potro saved three match points in the deciding set in Indian Wells as the Swiss great failed to serve out for his 18th consecutive win at the start of 2018. The 36-year-old Federer won his 20th grand slam title at the Australian Open in

January and also triumphed in the Netherlands for his 97th ATP Tour victory last month. "I'm so happy to win a title like this," Del Potro told the ATP website, dedicating his maiden Masters 1000 victory to his beloved dog Cesar who recently passed away. "I lost many finals in Masters 1000s but today was the day for me. I played unbelievable tennis, almost three hours, and beating Roger for the first time this year, that means a lot to me." The 29-year-old Del Potro, who beat Federer in the US Open quarterfinal

last September, also won in Mexico earlier this month as he continues his rehabilitation from a series of injuries. Del Potro has struggled with injury since beating Federer in the 2009 US Open final to win his first grand slam, missing almost the entire 2010 season after undergoing surgery on his wrist. After slipping outside the world's top 400, Del Potro returned to the top five in 2013 but another wrist injury meant more surgery and led him to miss the majority of the 2014 and 2015 season. (CNN)

Juan Martin del Potro holds the trophy (Pic courtesy: Xinhua)

## Alonso a 'different' driver in 2018

London **Fernando Alonso** is a "different" Formula 1 driver heading into the start of the 2018 season, according to McLaren racing director Eric Boullier. McLaren has switched to Renault engines this year after three dismal seasons with Honda, and Boullier said Alonso has been revitalised by the change. The two-time champion has scored just 82 points in the last three seasons, with a pair of fifths his best results since returning to McLaren. Boullier told Autosport that "the drivers, especially Fernando, will not miss any opportunity to tell us where we are wrong".

He said: "Watch him, it's a different Fernando here this year. "You can see he's here [at the track in pre-season testing] before lunchtime when it's not his day to run. "I remember last year he was coming at 7pm. [This year] he's in before lunch." Boullier added: "He's happy, yes. He's a competitor, so he wants the best of the best and he wants more, always. "Alonso is in a different mindset this year. He's spending a lot of time here even when he's not driving the car, so he's quite interested and supportive of what we are doing." (Autosport)



Fernando Alonso (file pic)

## Osaka draws Serena in first round

### Miami

Indian Wells champion Naomi Osaka will have little time to celebrate in her first career victory with the Japanese drawing eight-time champion Serena Williams in the first round of next week's Miami Open. Osaka scored a commanding 6-3 6-2 victory over Russian Daria Kasatkina in a battle of 20-year-olds at the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells on Sunday. "I was extremely stressed and extremely nervous, but my plan was to fake that I'm very calm," Osaka told reporters. "I just knew that she was going to fight for every point, too, so

I couldn't afford to lose points based on nerves, and I had to keep making the right decisions." Osaka had defeated former grand slam champion Maria Sharapova, fifth seed Karolina Pliskova and then world number one Simona Halep on her way to the title and the \$1,340,860 first place money. "It was hard for me to get my nerves in check in the first game, especially since - I don't know why I decided to serve first," Osaka said. "We were playing some long points, and I wasn't really trying to hit hard today, because I felt like it would be better for her to take my pace." (Reuters)



Naomi Osaka (file pic)